

Not So Simple!
**Caro, Moses, and the Impact
of the Cross-Bronx Expressway**

by
Ray Bromley

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The Bronx County Historical Society
3309 Bainbridge Avenue
The Bronx
New York 10467

Telephone (718) 881-8900
<http://www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org>



East Tremont near its peak in population as a "subway suburb," 1930s. This photo shows East Tremont Avenue, the heart of the area, looking west from a rooftop on the northeast corner of East Tremont and Vyse Avenues. The Cross-Bronx Expressway was built two blocks south of the area shown in the photograph.

Photo gift of Jeffrey Silber.

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NOT SO SIMPLE!
CARO, MOSES, AND
THE IMPACT OF
THE CROSS-BRONX EXPRESSWAY¹

Ray Bromley

In Chapters 36, 37 and 38 of his monumental biography *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*, Robert Caro described the seven-mile Cross-Bronx Expressway (CBE) as a “huge trench gouged across a city” (p. 839), and “the most expensive road constructed in all history” (p. 886).² He provided a detailed case study of the devastation wreaked by the Expressway’s construction in a one-mile stretch through the East Tremont neighborhood, describing the ruthless way in which Robert Moses managed to overrule community opposition to the highway’s routing and push the project through as originally planned. The official records that Caro used indicated that 5,000 people had to be evicted from 1,530 apartments, so that the 159 buildings they inhabited could be demolished to make way for the Expressway to pass two blocks north of Crotona Park. The alternative route, prepared by professional engineers and advocated by local community leaders, would have run two blocks further south along the northern fringe of Crotona Park. According to Caro, it would have required the demolition of only “the Third Avenue Transit depot. . . (and) six’ old, small dilapidated brown-stone tenements, housing a total of nineteen families” (p. 878).

The three chapters reviewing the impact of the CBE on East Tremont take up 58 of the 1,162 pages of text in *The Power Broker* (pp. 837-894), and they have been very widely read and quoted. Caro presented East Tremont as a case study, one of the many neighborhoods devastated by Moses’ Expressways, and he indicated that “To build his highways, Moses threw out of their homes 250,000 persons” (p. 19). Largely as a result of

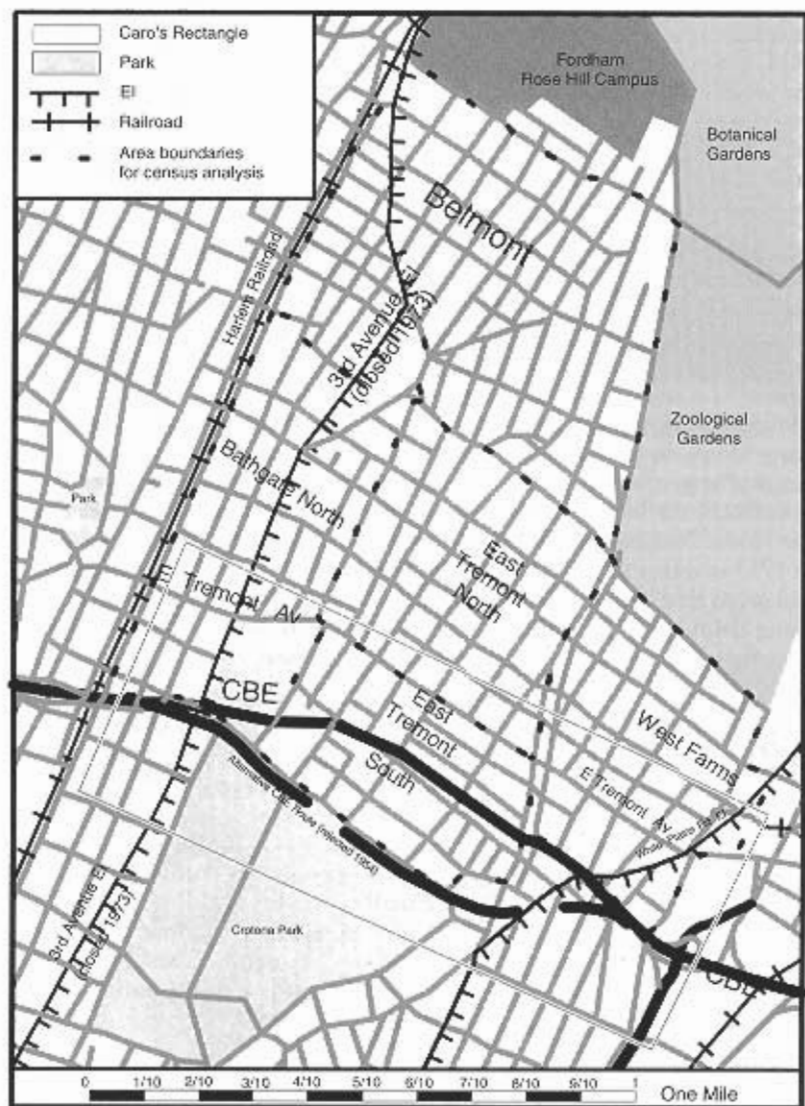
Caro's biography, with its tremendous rhetorical power and prosecutorial zeal, Moses and the CBE have acquired national notoriety, viewed not only as the instruments of East Tremont's demise, but often also as prime causes of the great South Bronx crisis of the 1960s and 70s.

I argue that Moses' role has been exaggerated, and that the roots of crisis are much more diverse and complex. *The Power Broker* is brilliant and immensely thorough as a biography, but its relentless focus on Moses' life and work draws attention away from other changes which are vital to understanding the fate of East Tremont, the South Bronx, and the City of New York. East Tremont's century of growth, crisis and partial recovery cannot be understood without consideration of a much broader range of people, places and historical events than can be encompassed in a brilliantly focussed biography.

My interest in this case stems from social and historical research on East Tremont and adjacent neighborhoods,³ and from hearing and reading Caro's published keynote speech at the Preservation and Development Conference held at the New School for Social Research on December 1, 1994. At the conference, Caro, a Manhattan-based professional author, doubled his *Power Broker* estimate to say that "Half a million people were evicted from their homes to make room for Robert Moses' highways." He described East Tremont as one of twenty neighborhoods that "had their hearts taken out of them and (were) essentially destroyed for Moses' projects."⁴ Despite the pivotal significance of the East Tremont case for his book, however, he revealed that: "I haven't been back to East Tremont since I finished *The Power Broker*, 20 years ago, but while I was working on that book, I used to spend a lot of time walking around there."⁵

Early reviews of *The Power Broker*, published shortly after the first edition of the book came out in 1974, included numerous laudatory and uncritical summaries, and only one outright rebuttal.⁶ A few more insightful reviews praised the thoroughness of Caro's research and the passion of his writing, but complained at the excessive length of the book, the frequency of repetition, and Caro's over-reliance on 522 untranscribed interviews.⁷ In the first review article in a scholarly journal, Herbert Kaufman very perceptively argued that "Caro ascribes to Moses much that doubtless would have happened anyway, and Moses therefore takes on the proportions of a colossus." He called for "specialists who are better informed about the details of specific periods, projects, and events" to come forward and discuss: "Is Caro right? Are his facts straight?"⁸ This paper responds to Kaufman's appeal, focusing on East Tremont, the CBE, and Caro's contribution to Bronx history.

The Power Broker is outstanding investigative reporting based on seven years of research, but it lacks many of the attributes of a social and historical research monograph. The 69 pages of notes at the end are



The Cross-Bronx Expressway routing through Bathgate, East Tremont and West Farms.

Map courtesy of Ray Bromley.

organized by subsections of chapters, rather than tied to individual footnotes, and so it is often difficult or impossible to trace the source of Caro's information. "The most expensive road constructed in all history" statement, for example, can be linked to nothing more specific than "RM, various brochures" (p. 1,229), with no information whatsoever on the worldwide research, inflation factors and currency conversions that would have been necessary to prove such an assertion. More fundamentally, despite the great length of his book (ca. 650,000 words), Caro gave little attention to broader global and national changes, or to the enormous number of works for which Moses was not responsible.

Around and after the 1988 centenary of Moses' birth, conferences at Hofstra University and Columbia University, a PBS video and various publications considerably enriched the literature on Moses' impact and on Caro's biography.⁹ Jameson Doig richly documented the history of the Port Authority, and provided major examples of the limitations to Moses' power.¹⁰ Leonard Wallock criticized "the Moses cult"—both the laudatory admirers of Moses, and also Caro's highly critical biography—for exaggerating Moses' significance and losing all sense of context about the enormous changes which were occurring throughout the United States.¹¹ Specifically for the East Tremont case, Kenneth Jackson pointed out that the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), a Federal Agency created in 1933 to refinance mortgages and promote accurate real estate appraisal, had given East Tremont its lowest rating on a scale from A to D, with "D" being defined as "Hazardous" for investors. In short, the neighborhood was officially rated as rundown and ripe for "renewal."¹²

Caro apparently didn't consult the HOLC ratings or census data on Bronx neighborhoods in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, and he structured the East Tremont story in a very simple fashion. First, he portrayed the brutal highway, making dramatic and sometimes exaggerated assertions about its engineering, its cost, and its running through "the very heart of the neighborhood" (p. 850). Then, he made an idyllic portrayal of the East Tremont neighborhood before the highway was constructed, with excellent transportation, a good job market, quality retailing, recreation and schools, inter-ethnic harmony, and tremendous community spirit. East Tremont was portrayed as poor and predominantly Jewish, but with growing religious and ethnic diversity—a successful and integrated working-class neighborhood which contrasted dramatically with the slums to the south. Quoting Caro at some length:

Morrisania, just on the other—south—side of Crotona Park, had become a predominantly Negro slum about 1930. But the people of East Tremont had not fled. Since about 1940, the less desirable tenements in the shadow of the noisy El along Third Avenue had been filled with Negroes. But the neighborhood had held.



Demolition for the Cross-Bronx Expressway, June 12, 1956.

View looking west from 176th Street and Prospect Avenue.

This portion of the CBE was constructed as an underground cut through the area. From Prospect Avenue to a point midway between Clinton and Crotona Avenues the trench is covered over and is now the site of public parks and play areas.

Ronald Schliessman Collection.

The Bronx County Historical Society Research Library.



Demolition for the Cross-Bronx Expressway, June 13, 1956.

View looking west across Bathgate Avenue from 175th Street. Here, the CBE now passes through the Bathgate area as an elevated highway.

Ronald Schliessman Collection.

The Bronx County Historical Society Research Library.

Standing astride its whole southern border, Crotona Park provided East Tremont with a natural shield, a comfortably wide—and at that time heavily policed—dike against the decay flooding up from the south. Its brunt broken on the park's slopes, the decay oozed around its sides, searching for an opening into the clean streets beyond, but against it the park flung upward, at both its northern corners, extensions that were protecting arms. (p. 857)

This passage and many other sections of Chapter 37 portrayed a sharply divided Bronx, with underclass slums south of Crotona Park, and extending northward along the Third Avenue and Southern Blvd./Boston Road (White Plains Road IRT, current #2 and #5 subway services) El axes. Caro portrayed Crotona Park as a protective shield, and in praising East Tremont so highly and emphasizing how bad the predominantly African-American and Puerto Rican areas further south were, his text could easily be read as racist—an accusation which he made against Moses in numerous sections of *The Power Broker*.¹³

Having set the scene, Caro provided a gripping description of the arrival of the eviction notices in December 1952, the community opposition to the Expressway routing through East Tremont, the eventual defeat of that opposition in November 1954, the completion of the "One Mile" in 1960, and the final completion of the CBE in 1963. Both in construction and in operation, the CBE was portrayed as causing widespread devastation, culminating in appalling scenes which Caro witnessed during his visits to the area on unidentified dates prior to 1974. He described the ethnic and geopolitical change as follows:

The people moving into the vacated apartments were mostly Negroes. . . impoverished Negroes—many on welfare, many newly fled to New York from the rural slums of the Deep South—to whom the Jews found it impossible to relate, even had they wanted to. Frightened because the newcomers seemed the advance guard of the ravaging army that had previously been kept at bay on the far side of Crotona Park, they didn't want to. "The vandalism started then all over the neighborhood," one housewife recalls. (p. 888)

Many obnoxious aspects of the Expressway were described in great detail. At rush hour, for example, the sound:

is a roar, punctuated by the snarl and grind of shifting gears and the snort and growl of acceleration, and, of course, the sudden, loud harsh backfires—and all of this sound magnified by the underpasses and the high brick walls that line the sides of the expressway cut, comes out of that cut and over the neighborhood as if out of a gigantic echo chamber. (p. 889)

Five thousand people were evicted for the Expressway in the 1950s. Caro asserted that a further 10,000 left the East Tremont apartment

buildings immediately adjacent to the Expressway in the early 1960s (p. 890), and he described East Tremont in 1965 as follows:

The apartment buildings that had been so precious to the people who had lived in them, were ravaged hulks. Windows, glassless except for the jagged edges around their frames, stared out at the street like sightless eyes. The entrances to those buildings were carpeted with shards of glass from what had been the doors to their lobbies. In those lobbies, what remained of the walls was covered in obscenities. And not much remained. Plaster from the walls lay in heaps in corners; the bare wood which had been exposed was shattered and broken. The pipes which had been behind the wood were gone, ripped out, melted down and sold for the few dollars that would buy the next fix. . . . The stench of stale urine and vomit filled the nostrils. One tried to look down only enough to avoid stepping on the piles of feces, whether mercifully dried or reeking fresh—animal and human. There was no heat in those buildings; if they were homes, they were homes as the cave of the savage was a home. (p. 893)

One would think that such a world could be inhabited by only a few destitute people, but Caro went on to destroy any such illusion:

And yet they were homes—homes for tens of thousands of people. They were homes for welfare tenants and for the poorest of the working poor, for families that drift from one apartment to another without, seemingly, ever paying a month's rent in full—urban gypsies. . . . After seven o'clock, the residential streets of East Tremont are deserted, roamed by narcotics addicts in gangs like packs of wolves. . . . The streets of East Tremont are carpeted so thickly with pieces of shattered glass that they shine in the sun. Garbage, soaked mattresses, bits of broken furniture and, everywhere, small pieces of jagged steel fill the gutters. The sidewalks are full of holes, the streets. . . with the hulks of stripped automobiles. (p. 893)

For Caro, the devastation of East Tremont by 1965 was near total, and the sole identifiable cause was Robert Moses and his Expressway. A public work of the 1950s caused great damage at the time, and then triggered urban devastation in the 1960s.

In his single-minded determination to portray Moses as omnipotent, arrogant, and a brutal destroyer of residential neighborhoods, I believe that Caro frequently overstated and oversimplified his case. The residents of East Tremont suffered great inconvenience as a result of the construction of the CBE, 5,000 people were evicted, the support provided for relocation was hopelessly inadequate, considerable damage was done to the local environment, and reasonable community opposition advocating a superior alternative route was callously defeated. Caro went

way beyond these points, however, to suggest that the neighborhood became "a slum as bad as any I've ever seen,"¹⁴ and that its demise was directly caused by Moses and his Expressway.

Caro described the East Tremont neighborhood as having 60,000 residents in 1950, 44,000 of them Jewish (p. 856). Sadly, however, he provided little information on the boundaries of the neighborhood, making it very difficult for the reader to interpret his subsequent statements on the impact of the Expressway. Bronx neighborhood names and boundaries have shifted through time, and some areas have more than one neighborhood name.¹⁵ There is no universal agreement on the boundaries of the East Tremont neighborhood, but most knowledgeable observers would consider the area bounded by Crotona Park North, Southern Boulevard, East 182nd Street and Arthur Avenue as the essential core. Caro's "protecting arms" of Crotona Park statement (p. 857) suggests that he follows this definition. According to the 1950 census, however, this area had only 43,462 inhabitants.¹⁶ To reach the 60,000 figure, areas beyond the "protecting arms" of Crotona Park must be included, either to the west in the area between Arthur and Park Avenues, or to the east between Southern Boulevard and the Bronx River. The western area, usually known as Bathgate North, has almost exactly the 1950 census population to complete the 60,000 figure. The three census tracts of the eastern area, usually known as West Farms, do not offer any combination to generate a total of 60,000, and Caro explicitly describes West Farms as a separate neighborhood (p. 879). It seems reasonable to assume that, for statistical purposes at least, Caro's East Tremont is bounded by Crotona Park North, Southern Boulevard, East 182nd Street and Park Avenue, and that Arthur and East Tremont Avenues divide it into three major subareas: East Tremont South, East Tremont North, and Bathgate North. The least residentially desirable of the three has long been Bathgate North, which has a low-lying valley site, the oldest housing stock, the routes of the Harlem Railroad and the former Third Avenue El, and various old industrial sites.

Though the addition of Bathgate North is necessary to make sense of Caro's population figures, he made little reference to this area in his text. The CBE is elevated as it crosses Bathgate, yet Caro keeps writing about a trench. His description of the Expressway trench, the residents, the buildings and the Park's "protecting arms" all clearly focus on East Tremont South, an area which had about 20,600 inhabitants in 1950, and about 14,500 in 1960 after the eviction of 5,000 people for the construction of the CBE.¹⁷ Caro's focus on East Tremont South is confirmed by his local map (p. 864), which justifies his assertion that Moses' CBE runs through the heart of the neighborhood (p. 851). Considering any normal definition of East Tremont, however, East Tremont Avenue runs through the heart of the neighborhood and the CBE runs through the

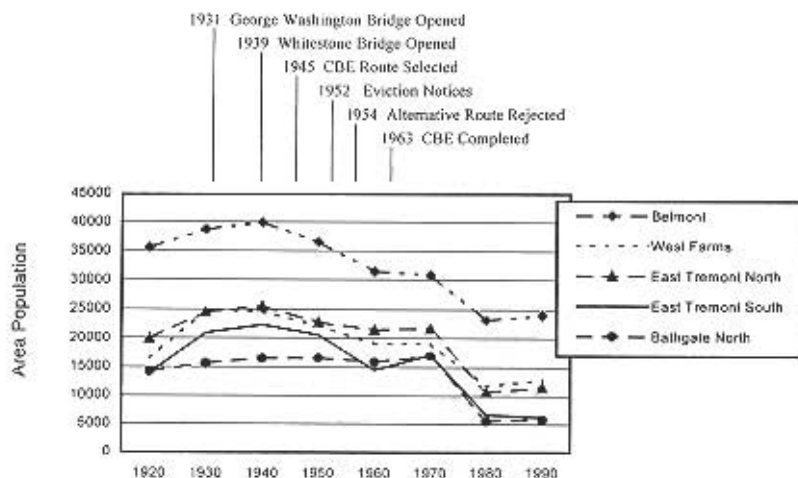
southern part. (See the map in this article for the route.)

Caro oscillates between describing East Tremont South, and describing a Greater East Tremont including both East Tremont North and Bathgate North. These inconsistencies make it very difficult to interpret his description of the CBE's impact on East Tremont. When he describes the "tens of thousands of. . . urban gypsies" in 1965 (p. 893), for example, he must be referring to Greater East Tremont. There simply were not enough buildings to accommodate so many "gypsies" in East Tremont South. When Caro refers to the solid apartment buildings and cohesive community which was destroyed along the CBE axis, however, he is describing East Tremont South. Where the CBE crosses Bathgate, community organization was less evident, and fewer evictions were necessary because the residential buildings were generally smaller, older, and mixed in with industrial and commercial properties and a few vacant lots.

If Moses and the CBE were the sole causes of devastation and ethnic change, we should expect a distance decay effect, with impacts diminishing as we move away from the Expressway. Even if, paraphrasing Caro, there were great reservoirs of underclass slums and blight oozing around Crotona Park, the devastation caused by the Expressway would diminish dramatically a few blocks north. If the CBE was the sole cause of crisis, why didn't East Tremont North continue as a smaller, but still vibrant, predominantly-Jewish neighborhood?

In describing the CBE's route, Caro says (p. 850) that "during that one mile (through East Tremont) the road swerves, bulging abruptly and substantially toward the north." His local map (p. 864) seems to indicate at least a northward curve, though not an "abrupt bulge." All the same, the map has no north arrow, and his "Landscape by Moses" map inside the front cover of *The Power Broker* shows something very different: a CBE which runs smoothly west-east between the Alexander Hamilton Bridge and the area north of Crotona Park, and then curves south-eastward to cross the Bronx River. Caro failed to notice that most Bronx maps are rotated by roughly 30 degrees, so that northeast rather than north is at the top. For over half a century it has been customary to ignore this map rotation, to assume that north is at the top of the rotated maps, and to describe the Bronx in south-north terms, with blight advancing from the south. By portraying Moses' desired routing for the CBE as thrusting northward, Caro co-opts the Bronx north-south metaphor and continues his relentless indictment of Moses as the bringer of blight and destruction.

Though Caro quoted various population statistics, he made no systematic analysis of the U.S. census data for East Tremont and adjacent neighborhoods. Decennial census tract data for the five major areas north of the "one-mile" of the CBE, East Tremont South, East Tremont



Population Change in East Tremont, Bathgate North and West Farms, 1920-1990.

Courtesy of Ray Bromley.

North, Bathgate North, West Farms, and Belmont, show a consistent pattern of population change.¹⁸ The whole area grew rapidly in population till 1930, then slowly in the 1930s. There was a modest population decline in the 1940s, averaging 8 percent, and a more substantial decline in the 1950s, averaging 14 percent. Population rose slightly in the 1960s, then fell catastrophically in the 1970s with an average decline of 45 percent, and then rose slightly again in the 1980s. East Tremont South suffered the sharpest decline in the 1950s (30 percent) because of the evictions for the CBE, but then it experienced a sharp surge in the 1960s as some vacated buildings were reoccupied and the new 281-unit Arthur Murphy Public Housing Project beside the Expressway was opened in 1964.¹⁹ In the 1970s, two decades after the CBE evictions, demolitions and construction, East Tremont South underwent a 61 percent decline. In the 1980s, it lost a further 8 percent of its population. Clearly the CBE had a strong negative impact on East Tremont South, but there are broad similarities with changes in other areas, including the Belmont neighborhood at distances between 0.6 and 1.2 miles from the Expressway. The CBE's causal role in East Tremont South's 1970s population decline is far more difficult to demonstrate than its role in the 1950s, and many other factors may have come to complicate the situation. Caro makes no reference to the population decline in the 1940s, to the Arthur Murphy Houses, or to the broader parallels between population changes

in East Tremont South and those of many other areas of the South Bronx at considerable distances from Expressways. (See the graph for the population changes from 1920-1990.)

The idea of a CBE originated with the 1929 *Regional Plan of New York and its Environs* and the construction of the massive George Washington Bridge, projects for which Moses bore little responsibility.²⁰ The 1929 *Regional Plan* proposed an enormous Metropolitan Highway Loop as the primary truck-route around New York, with five great bridges to span the major waterways in its path: the Goethals, completed in 1928, the George Washington, completed in 1931, the Bronx-Whitestone, completed in 1939, the Alexander Hamilton, completed in 1963, and the Verrazano Narrows completed in 1964.²¹ The *Regional Plan* showed remarkably little interest in residential communities and housing conditions in New York City's outer boroughs, and no vision was developed for the Mid-Bronx beyond serving as the crucial highway axis. The CBE was originally to be routed along East 170th Street, just south of Crotona Park, but in 1945 the route was realigned to pass north of the Park. Bronx Borough President James J. Lyons' office was involved in discussions and studies of the CBE routing from the mid-1940s, Moses' pronouncements on routing and construction were published in the Board of Trade's magazine *Bronxboro*, and the Borough's leaders seemed concerned with local details rather than with proposing a radical alternative to the whole scheme.²²

While Jill Jonnes, in her outstanding book, *We're Still Here*, reported the early community protests over the CBE routing between 1945 and 1948,²³ Caro chose to ignore them. By 1946, a Cross-Bronx Protective Association and a Cross-Bronx Tenants Association had already been formed, and 31 Bronx civic, religious and veterans associations were battling the Expressway project. Meanwhile, Moses was battling to prevent the use of vacant city-owned buildings along the CBE axis so as to minimize the number of evictions which would be needed. The City Administration was already treating some areas as "condemned," and a tract of land just south of the Expressway axis by the Bronx River was designated for the incineration of old wooden Subway and El cars.²⁴

If the George Washington Bridge had been built six miles further north, from the Palisades to Yonkers, or further south around 125th Street or 57th Street, other Expressways could have borne the traffic load and the CBE would not have been necessary. With the George Washington Bridge in place and with no prospect for other Trans-Hudson bridges south of the Tappan Zee, however, there was only one real alternative to building the CBE: expanding the traffic axis along both sides of the Harlem River between the George Washington Bridge and the Triborough Bridge, and expanding the Bruckner Expressway axis through to the Whitestone Bridge and the New England Thruway. That

was a real possibility which could have saved the Mid-Bronx, just as the construction and use of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway near the East River and the Shore (Belt) Parkway around the south side of Brooklyn helped to save Brownsville, Flatbush and Borough Park from a projected Cross-Brooklyn Expressway which would have linked the Interborough Parkway and the Verrazano Narrows Bridge. Sadly, however, from 1926 when the CBE was first projected in preliminary studies for the *Regional Plan*, till the late 1940s when major construction was initiated, these grand alternatives to the CBE never received much discussion.

From 1931 onwards, the George Washington Bridge was like an enormous cannon, pointed at the Mid-Bronx and discharging more and more cars and trucks. During the 1940s and 1950s, with traffic increasing rapidly on all the major west-east streets of The Bronx, there was pressure for the CBE to be built as a means of relieving axes like Gun Hill Road, Fordham Road, East Tremont Avenue and East 161st St. In August 1949, over three years before the fateful eviction notices were received in East Tremont, the *Constructioneer* published an article called "Cross-Bronx Expressway progressing under five contracts," which commented that:

Traffic crossing the George Washington Bridge from New Jersey has long been stymied by the maze of cross-streets and intersections in crossing the Bronx to gain the Parkways to Connecticut and New England and also Queens, Long Island and the Borough of Manhattan. The new expressway will greatly alleviate this by providing a direct access to the Hutchinson River Parkway. . . and also provide connections with the proposed (partially under contract) Major Deegan Expressway for north-south traffic and the Bronx River Expressway (now under construction) for central north-south traffic.²⁵

Though Caro exaggerates the surprise of the December 1952 eviction notices and the idyllic character of the area north of Crotona Park before they were delivered, his description of the community campaign for an alternative route to save the homes of 5,000 local residents (pp. 860-879) is accurate in all but one important respect—the name of the campaigning group. He relied heavily on untranscribed interviews with Lillian Edelstein, one of the organizers, but since 1991 a set of manuscripts from the campaign has been available to researchers.²⁶ Some of these manuscripts are included in the Museum of the City of New York's year-long *New Metropolis: A Century of Greater New York, 1898-1998* exhibit, which assigns each of the City's five boroughs a theme. The Bronx theme is "We Stay"—neighborhood organizing against displacement—and Caro's East Tremont narrative is the prime case. At the "Bronx Night," held at the Museum on January 22, 1998, Caro raised

the stakes, saying that Moses had "turned East Tremont into one of the world's most terrible slums!"²⁷ At the Museum, however, all the vivid documents exhibited are in the name of the Crotona Park Tenants Committee for an Alternate Highway, with no mention of East Tremont. In *The Power Broker*, Caro avoided mentioning the full name of the Tenants Committee which led the campaign against the Expressway, always using the neighborhood name of East Tremont so as to give his narrative greater clarity and geographical scope. The tenants' preference for the Crotona Park name probably reflected their more localized view, limiting their perceived neighborhood to what I have defined as East Tremont South; a small neighborhood they clearly preferred to call Crotona Park North, and which is sometimes also known as Fairmount.

There is no obvious correlation between levels of abandonment in the South Bronx in the 1970s and the proximity of expressways.²⁸ Many of the most devastated areas, such as Morrisania, Melrose, Charlotte Street and the 'Fort Apache' area, were not those closest to the expressways, but those with the oldest and most deteriorated housing stock. The areas along the Harlem Railroad and Third Avenue axes, south of Fordham Road, had the highest proportion of old-law tenements in The Bronx, and they had generally been developed before zoning was introduced in 1916 to separate future housing types, commerce and industry. Like most other South Bronx neighborhoods east of Webster Avenue, East Tremont had a mixture of structures of different bulk, style and use. The gradual process of replacing older low-rise structures with 4-6 story apartment buildings might have eventually produced a higher-density, higher-standard neighborhood with uniform streetscapes, like many areas close to the Grand Concourse. In the 1920s, however, new construction in East Tremont and other old neighborhoods began to diminish as immigration to the U.S. dropped precipitously, as Queens overtook The Bronx as New York's fastest-growing borough, and as the Concourse area, the North Bronx and the East Bronx attracted most of the borough's new construction. Then came the Wall Street Crash of 1929, the Great Depression and the Second World War, suspending hopes of large-scale rebuilding, and reducing building owners' capacity to maintain and modernize their properties.

From the 1920s till the 1960s, social scientists, bankers, real estate brokers and government officials tended to view mixed land use, mixed building age, mixed building bulk, ethnic pluralism and ethnic change as indicators of old, deteriorating, unplanned neighborhoods. Residential areas with these attributes were considered outmoded and due to be replaced by modern housing projects and suburban development. The Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) Report on The Bronx, dated April 1938,²⁹ was based on field surveys and extensive consultation with

local real estate brokers. The Federal inspectors portrayed an East Tremont very different from the one Caro learned about through interviews with former residents, nostalgic for their youth and "the good old times." They described East Tremont as "congested" with "lower class encroachment, surrounded by a poorer area and getting a steady infiltration of lower class Italians." The inspectors also noted that assessed values were "about 140% of market value," the highest ratio in the borough and a major reason for landlords to neglect and even abandon their properties. The general description of "D: hazardous" neighborhoods like East Tremont was that: "They are characterized by detrimental influences in a pronounced degree, such as undesirable population or an infiltration of it; very poor maintenance of homes; possible vandalism; unstable incomes which often make collections difficult etc."

The future South Bronx was already mapped out by the HOLC in 1938 as a continuous "D: Hazardous" south-north axis from Mott Haven to the Fordham Road, bounded by Webster Avenue to the west and the Bronx River to the east. Other areas of The Bronx had much better ratings, led by Riverdale, graded as "A: Best." Woodlawn, Bedford Park, Norwood, University Heights and the Grand Concourse axis all had "B: Still Desirable" ratings, while the other areas west of Webster and east of the Bronx River were generally rated "C: Definitely Declining." The HOLC Residential Security Maps and other government surveys probably induced some Federal, State and City Government officials to cut back public investments, loans and services to the "D: Hazardous" areas, viewing them as substandard and effectively "condemned." Many landlords, prompted by the banks' unwillingness to lend for properties in these areas, began to "disinvest," cutting back on building maintenance and investing their rental incomes elsewhere. All these factors would have encouraged upwardly-mobile tenants to leave, contributing to Greater East Tremont's 7 percent population decline during the 1940s.

Until the mid-1950s people living on the western side of East Tremont had excellent public transport links to Midtown and Downtown Manhattan via the Third Avenue El and the Harlem Railroad. In 1955, however, direct El service to Manhattan was terminated (service on the Bronx portion of the line was terminated in 1973). Moreover, between 1955 and 1980 the number of local Harlem Railroad stations and the number of trains stopping at those stations was reduced almost to zero, so as to speed the journey for commuters travelling between Westchester and Manhattan.³⁰ With the closing of the Third Avenue El and the reduction of service on the Harlem line (now operated by Metro-North Railroad), the only direct public transport to Manhattan since then has been the White Plains Road line of the IRT Subway (which is elevated in most of The Bronx). The other alternative has been to take a bus to Fordham, the Concourse, West Farms or the Hub,

and then to transfer to Metro-North Railroad or the Subway. This loss of the Third Avenue El made the Bathgate North area very inconvenient as a place of residence for most working people.

The Power Broker was published 19 years after Third Avenue El services were terminated in Manhattan, and a year after the El was finally shut down in The Bronx. Nevertheless, Caro's only passage on the Third Avenue El (pp. 851-852) describes it and the White Plains Road El (current #2 and #5 services) as neighborhood assets leading directly to the jobs of Manhattan's Garment District. By not mentioning its curtailment in 1955, and its termination in 1973, Caro continues his relentless persecution of Moses and the CBE.

Ironically, while the Third Avenue El was disappearing, so were many of the jobs for Bronx Jews in the Garment District and in garment production elsewhere in Manhattan and The Bronx. New York City suffered a net loss of 213,000 apparel industry jobs between 1947 and 1975, and Bronx Jews were also subjected to growing competition for the remaining jobs from Puerto Ricans and new immigrants.³¹ More broadly, the number of manufacturing jobs in New York City diminished from 962,900 in 1959 to 766,000 in 1970, to 496,000 in 1980, and to 337,500 in 1990.³² During the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s New York City's labor market underwent massive restructuring, and millions of people changed their jobs, their means of travelling to work or to their places of residence.

Even if Caro's harmonious residential community of East Tremont existed as he described it in the early 1950s, and even if the CBE had never been proposed and Robert Moses had never been born, East Tremont would have been subjected to enormous tensions by the economic, social and demographic restructuring of New York City over the succeeding decades. As Alan Ehrenhalt has explained so well in his book on Chicago neighborhoods, *The Lost City*,³³ American lifestyles and values have changed enormously since the 1950s, and the unstated social compacts holding traditional neighborhoods together were broken in the 1960s.

Marshall Berman, who is Jewish and grew up in the Claremont Park area south of the CBE axis, described Moses and the damaging impact of the Cross-Bronx Expressway construction in his classic book, *All That is Solid Melts into Air*.³⁴ Like Caro, he despised Moses' authoritarian style and relish at cutting through dense residential neighborhoods, yet he was clearly fascinated by Moses' determination and by his reputation as a "Master Builder" and "Political Genius." Berman vividly described the spectacle of the CBE construction, and the damage to the immediately adjacent areas as the Expressway cut across the Grand Concourse axis. Unlike Caro, however, Berman forcibly argued that most of the Jews of East Tremont would have moved out of the neighborhood during the

1950s and 1960s, even if the Expressway had never been built. Jewish New Yorkers, like most other Americans in the post Second World War era, had an expectation of onward and upward mobility. East Tremont was generally considered inferior to areas like the Grand Concourse and Pelham Parkway in The Bronx, and to many potential destinations in the New York suburbs and further afield. The old manufacturing jobs were disappearing, and the younger, more highly-educated generation of Bronx Jews had greater material and professional expectations than their parents. Faced with the choice between moving to achieve upward social mobility and staying put to conserve a coherent neighborhood community, few would have chosen to stay! Many had travelled and learned new skills during the Second World War. After the War, the GI Bill and related legislation brought unprecedented opportunities to get a college education and purchase a new suburban home. Then, during the 1950s, came the greatest continuous economic expansion in the history of the United States, with mass car ownership and major migrations to the suburbs, the sunbelt, and the west coast.³⁵

Brownsville, Brooklyn, provides an intriguing comparison with East Tremont because no Expressway has ever passed through it. In the 1890's and early 1900's, many Jewish households moved out from the overcrowded Lower East Side to Williamsburg, Brownsville, East New York and New Lots in Brooklyn, to Harlem and the Upper East Side in Manhattan, and to various parts of the South Bronx.³⁶ In his book on Brownsville, Greg Donaldson describes it as follows:

In the first half of the century, Brownsville was a thriving Jewish enclave. But as viable a community as it was then, it was never a destination for the Jews who filled its roiling streets, looked out over its clothes-line-crossed yards and ramshackle homes. It was, in Alfred Kazin's words, "a place that measured all success by our skill in getting away from it." The war provided the prosperity; the free-ways and the automobile, the means. . . . Between 1940 and 1950, the black population of Brownsville doubled. The synagogue on Riverdale Avenue near Hertzl Street became the People's Baptist Church. Integration in the projects, crime, and fear of crime spurred the departure of the remaining low-income Jews to nearby East Flatbush or Canarsie. Fires devoured the frame houses that were still standing. Weed-wild lots dotted the landscape. The 1960s brought the scourge of heroin. . . . By 1970, in a community of 1.9 square miles, there were seven hundred completely deserted buildings. The city took the opportunity to load the area with clinics, halfway houses, and rehabilitation centers for the dysfunctional and the troubled.³⁷

The likelihood that most of the early 1950s residents of East Tremont would have moved elsewhere over the next 20 years, just as their coun-

terparts in Brownsville did, does not in any way excuse or reduce the suffering of those who were evicted for the CBE construction, or of those whose lives were made miserable for months or years by the construction noise, dirt and vibration. A forced move is usually more stressful and often more costly than a voluntary one, and few people would ever choose to live next to a construction site. Those who were evicted usually got some inadequate help and compensation, but those whose businesses, commuting, shopping, social networks, or child and elder care arrangements were hit by the construction received no compensation whatsoever. From the late 1940s till the early 1960s, the CBE construction had a brutal negative impact on a seven-mile strip of The Bronx, 4-6 blocks in width. It also cut off some commercial strips, including East Tremont Avenue, from substantial parts of their traditional market areas. Most of those strips were already declining because local consumer habits were changing as purchasing power shifted to the new supermarkets, department stores and shopping malls, but for many small businesses within a few blocks of the construction area, the Expressway was "the last straw." Though damaging, however, the CBE's impact was limited to certain areas, and primarily felt during the demolition and construction phase. Broader and longer-term changes were similar to those occurring in some other parts of the city, region and nation, and responded to much more complex processes of growth and decline.

While emphasizing the stability and harmony of East Tremont before the fateful eviction notices arrived in December 1952 (pp. 851-855), Caro acknowledged that the neighborhood was a "staging area" for upwardly mobile peoples of different ethnicities (pp. 856), and particularly for Jewish immigrants who had previously lived on the Lower East Side. He even acknowledged that a few East Tremont Jews were able to move to the Grand Concourse and Pelham Parkway. Nowhere in the CBE chapters, however, did he discuss the much more substantial impact of 15,382 new apartments, filled between late 1968 and early 1972 in Co-op City.³⁸ Because of its favorable financial terms, its northeast Bronx location and its sponsorship by the United Housing Foundation led by Abraham Kazan, Co-op City was particularly attractive to Jewish households from the South Bronx. Caro mentioned it briefly at the end of *The Power Broker* as yet another public work that Moses "had played a key role in conceiving and organizing" (p. 1151), but he made no connection between its opening and the Jewish exodus from East Tremont and the Concourse.

Co-op City was merely the largest housing project among a great variety of 1950s, 1960s and 1970s Bronx construction projects, most of which had no direct link to Moses, and many of which were never built. This was the era of "Modernism" and "Urban Renewal." Most of America's elites believed that slums should to be cleared away, that metropolitan

regions should be integrated with state-of-the-art highway systems, that construction and public works were driving forces for economic growth, and that mass consumption of new houses, automobiles and other consumer goods would carry the economy forward to ever-higher levels of prosperity. Under Governors Harriman and Rockefeller, and Mayors Wagner and Lindsay, East Tremont and the rest of the South Bronx east of the Grand Concourse axis underwent massive "land use and population churning." Well-intentioned policies eliminated mixed-use areas, replaced tenements and private houses with public housing and industrial parks, cut back on mass transit, and created spaces for new public institutions, many of them never built. Numerous cases of "planning blight" occurred, whereby new projects and the likelihood of expropriations and demolitions persuaded property owners not to maintain or invest. Many investors sought speculative gains, and some businesses failed because of the local disruption caused by construction projects. The constant uncertainty generated by real and proposed changes disrupted community life and public services, deterred private investment, and provoked resident and landlord flight, building abandonment, vandalism and arson. Furthermore, of course, the grand projects and big spending of the era helped to create the great fiscal crisis of the mid-1970s, and that fiscal crisis and the associated cutbacks in public services were most severely felt in the poorest neighborhoods.

In the late 1960s, when Caro was researching *The Power Broker*, the Lindsay Administration was proposing a remarkable array of projects for every part of New York City, including East Tremont. Most of these projects are listed in the Bronx volume of *Plan for New York City 1969: A Proposal*,³⁹ which included the large Twin Parks "vest pocket" renewal scheme along the axes of Southern Boulevard and Webster, and numerous public and affordable housing schemes. The Harlem Railroad in Melrose, Morrisania and Bathgate South was to be capped by a massive linear air-rights development which would end at the CBE.⁴⁰ New schools, playgrounds, police precincts and firehouses were projected in many areas, and demolitions were widespread in preparation for the new facilities. The late Harry Keifetz, a Jewish Community Board Six leader from East Tremont who was interviewed by Caro, created a book-length monograph describing the debates of the 1964-74 period.⁴¹ Instead of lamenting the CBE or portraying an urban jungle populated by gypsies, he discussed the changes which were taking place project by project, and the need to achieve coterminality between the Community Board, Police, School, Health, Sanitation and Electoral Districts so as to achieve effective representation of community needs. In addition to Twin Parks, two other major projects were discussed at length—Fordham Plaza, and the new Fordham Hospital. Several alternative sites for the new Fordham Hospital were discussed before a site was chosen in the northeast corner of East Tremont, beside St. Barnabas Hospital. 2,700



The Cross-Bronx Expressway trench through East Tremont in Spring 1991. View is looking west from Crotona Avenue. One of the 20-story houses of the Arthur Murphy housing project is on the left.

Courtesy of Ray Bromley.



The Cross-Bronx Expressway trench through East Tremont in Summer 1991. View is looking east from Arthur Avenue

Courtesy of Ray Bromley.

people were evicted in 1969, their homes were demolished, and then the new hospital—which had not even been designed when the demolitions took place—was canceled in the 1970s fiscal crisis. The resulting wasteland of rubble remained deserted for over a decade until it was finally replaced with 42 row houses and two ballfields in the early 1980s.⁴²

In the 1990s, walking the areas of East Tremont beside the CBE, Caro's descriptions of the Expressway's traffic, noise and pollution seem highly exaggerated. Of course such a major highway is congested, noisy and polluting, but there are many comparable expressways in New York and other major cities around the world, and millions of people live along these routes. Unlike the elevated sections of the CBE across Third Avenue and the Bronx River, which Caro hardly mentions, the trench sections of the Expressway are somewhat hidden from view and have the potential to be decked over, a neighborhood revitalization project which would reduce noise and pollution and create new open-space recreational areas along the axis.

In his single-minded determination to indict Moses, Caro told us nothing about the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic, Gethsemane Baptist, and St. Mary Protectress Ukrainian Catholic churches which have continued to function very effectively close to the Expressway, the latter two attracting commuter congregations from the suburbs. Similarly, he did not mention the closure of the Third Avenue El, the major demolitions for Twin Parks, or the frustrated new Fordham Hospital. Most notably of all, he did not mention the historic Biograph Movie Studio, located in East Tremont South between the Expressway and Crotona Park. Biograph was first opened in 1912 and was an important center for filming silent movies. It was remodelled in the early 1930s, but by 1949, it was derelict, visited only by youth gangs—a "Deserted Movie Studio—Where Kids Play Tag with Death."⁴³ Around 1950 it was reoccupied by some industrial workshops, one of which was seized by the Federal Alcohol Unit in April 1951 for operating an illegal still "capable of producing between 800 and 1000 gallons a day of 185 proof alcohol."⁴⁴ Subsequently, the building was refurbished, and it was reopened in 1956 as the Gold Medal Studios. One of the first Directors to film at Gold Medal was Elia Kazan, who described the space as "the best that I have seen in New York." Several full-length movies were made there in the late 1950s while the CBE was being constructed just a block away. In the 1960s it was used as a TV Studio, producing many commercials and the series *Car 54 Where are You?*⁴⁵ All this rich detail of neighborhood change was clearly visible and widely discussed while Caro was researching *The Power Broker*, yet he either did not see and inquire about it, or he chose to ignore it because it did not support his narrative.

The CBE, justifiably nicknamed "Heartbreak Highway" by some of

the residents fighting displacement (p. 867), was an important factor in East Tremont's demise, but one of many. Even if the Expressway had been built further south through Morrisania, East Tremont would have been pulled into the broader crisis of the South Bronx and many other parts of urban America. Caro paid little attention to the massive national changes which occurred in the 1950s, 60s and 70s—social, economic, cultural and demographic transformations associated with suburbanization, economic restructuring, and changing lifestyles. Moses helped to accelerate some of these changes in New York State, but he did not cause them. Caro also neglected to discuss many of the other changes occurring in The Bronx and directly affecting East Tremont.

In explaining the impact of the CBE on East Tremont, Caro overstated his case and relied on a simplistic geopolitical theory: that if the Expressway had been built along the northern edge of Crotona Park, it would have combined with the Park as a barrier to the northward flow of blight and impoverished migrants into East Tremont. Nevertheless, *The Power Broker* has been distorted and oversimplified by many casual readers, leading to the frequently expressed view that the construction of the Cross-Bronx and other expressways, directed by Robert Moses, caused the 1970s crisis of abandonment, arson and outmigration in the whole South Bronx. "Whodunnit?" is a very appropriate question in murder mysteries! In urban studies, however, infatuation with individuals can generate a smokescreen which hides national trends and prevents the development of timely policies to counter those trends.

Numerous authors have come up with different explanations for the 1960s and 1970s crisis of New York City and the South Bronx. Caro's focus on Moses and expressways contrasts dramatically with Robert Fitch's focus on Rockefeller, deindustrialization and the growth of finance, insurance and real estate, with Jason Epstein's blaming the 1929 *Regional Plan*, and with Ken Auletta's focus on "Liberalism's Vietnam," a city brought to its knees by the social policies of the Wagner and Lindsay administrations.⁴⁶ All these personalistic and plan-based explanations, however, run up against the obvious fact that most U.S. cities have experienced prolonged urban crises since the early 1960s, and that those crises have been more stark and prolonged in Detroit, Camden, East St. Louis and many other cities than they have been in New York. Caro's argument that officials from every other city either visited New York or invited Moses to visit them, learnt Moses' methods, and then applied all his ideas in their cities⁴⁷ is hardly plausible. Some other cities and innovators were genuine pioneers, sometimes ahead of New York and Moses, and no other cities and states were so dependent on public authorities, Moses' crucial power base. If Moses was so extraordinary as to merit a 1,246-page biography, it is difficult to imagine that others could learn his

ways and imitate all his works just by visiting him in New York or by inviting him to their city for a few days!

Less personalistic treatments of urban crisis⁴⁸ have blamed national urban policies and the suburbanization process, tax incentives to home ownership, cheap fuel, the national obsession with the automobile, mismanagement by state and city governments, aging deteriorated housing stock, deindustrialization and restructuring, the low levels of foreign immigration to the U.S. between late 1920s and the early 1960s, municipal service cuts and the "planned shrinkage" of selected neighborhoods, rent control, welfare regulations, over-zealous municipal codes and byzantine bureaucratic procedures, the impact of fuel oil price rises between 1973 and 1980, mortgage and insurance redlining, greedy and fraudulent landlords, regulations to jump fire victims to the top of the housing queue, the repercussions of race riots and looting, and the gross mismanagement of many federal urban programs, aided and abetted by local "poverty pimps." Though they vary enormously in scale, significance and directness of causality, every one of these factors may be related to the 1970s New York City and South Bronx crises, and many relate to the similar crises which occurred in numerous other U.S. cities. The debate will continue for many years as to which causes are more important, and how different factors link up with one another. What is painfully obvious, however, is that Robert Moses wasn't singlehandedly responsible for "the fall of New York." Similarly, the Cross-Bronx Expressway wasn't the only or even the main cause of the 1960s and 1970s crisis in East Tremont, let alone in the South Bronx as a whole.

NOTES

¹A preliminary version of this paper was presented at Columbia University's Seminar on the City on February 25, 1997. The author is indebted to all the participants in that seminar and also to Marshall Berman, Peter Derrick and Cliff Ellis for their additional insights and suggestions of sources.

²Robert A. Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974). All chapter and page numbers cited in the text of this paper refer to *The Power Broker*.

³See Ray Bromley, "Globalization and the Inner Periphery: A Mid-Bronx View," *Annals of the American Association of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 551 (May 1997), pp. 191-207, and, "Reporting Mass Tragedy," in Bruce J. Evenson ed. *The Responsible Reporter* (Northport, AL: Vision Press, 1995), pp. 184-188.

⁴Robert A. Caro, "Keynote Address," in New School for Social Research, *Preservation and Development: Why We Need Both* (New York, 1994), pp. 13 and 15.

⁵Robert A. Caro, "Keynote Address," p. 11.

⁶For a summary, see Gore Vidal "Emperor of Concrete," *New York Review of Books*, Oct. 17, 1974, pp. 3-9. The sole outright rebuttal is B. Bruce-Briggs, "Master Builder," *Commentary*, Vol. 58, No. 6, pp. 74-79.

⁷See, for example, Richard C. Wade, "The Power Broker," *The New York Times Book Review*, Sept. 15, 1974, pp. 1-3; Jane Holtz Kay, "The Master Builder and His Works," *The Nation*, Sept. 28, 1974, pp. 277-278; Jack Chatfield, "If You Seek His Monument, Drive Around," *National Review*, Dec. 6, 1974, pp. 1419-1421; August Heckscher, "The Man Who Collected Power," *Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 18, 1974, p. 13.

⁸Herbert Kaufman, "Robert Moses: Charismatic Bureaucrat," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 90 (1975), pp. 521-38; quotes on pp. 536 and 529-30.

⁹See Joann P. Kreig ed., *Robert Moses: Single-Minded Genius* (Hempstead, NY: Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University, 1989); Corporation for Public Broadcasting, *The World that Moses Built* (Alexandria, VA: PBS Video, The American Experience, 1988).

¹⁰Jameson W. Doig, "Regional Conflict in the New York Metropolis: The Legend of Robert Moses and the Power of the Port Authority," *Urban Studies*, Vol. 27 (1990), pp. 201-232.

¹¹Leonard Wallock, "The Myth of the Master Builder: Robert Moses, New York, and the Dynamics of Metropolitan Development since World War II," *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 17 (1991), pp. 339-362.

¹²Kenneth T. Jackson, "Robert Moses and the Planned Environment: A Re-evaluation," in Joann P. Kreig, ed., *Robert Moses*, pp. 21-30. See also C. Lowell Harriss, *History and Policies of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation* (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1951).

¹³See, for example, the passages beginning on pages 318, 490, 512, 557, 578, 736, 834, 968 and 1101.

¹⁴Robert A. Caro, "Keynote Address," p. 11.

¹⁵See Evelyn Diaz Gonzalez, "City Neighborhoods: Formation, Growth, and Change in the South Bronx, 1840-1940" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1993, UMI 9318242).

¹⁶U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Population 1950: New York, NY, Census Tracts* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952). The analysis which follows is based on this census and comparable tract data from each Bureau of the Census decennial census from 1920 through 1990. See also Walter Laidlaw, ed., *Statistical Sources for Demographic Studies of Greater New York, 1920* (New York: Cities Census Committee, 1922); idem. *Population of the City of New York 1890-1930* (New York: Cities Census Committee, 1932).

¹⁷Prior to 1970, tract 365 included areas north and south of East Tremont Avenue. In 1970 it was divided into two tracts, 365.01 north of the Avenue, and 365.02 to the south. Data for tract 365 prior to 1970 is adjusted to make an estimated split between those areas north and those south of East Tremont Avenue.

¹⁸Southern East Tremont is tracts 365.02, 367, and 369 (split into 369.01 and 369.02). Northern East Tremont is tracts 365.01, 371 and 373. The Third Avenue axis is tracts 375.0 (split into 375.01 and 375.02), 375.1 (renamed 375.03), and 377. West Farms is tracts 359, 361 and 363. Belmont is tracts 385, 387, 389, 391 and 393.

¹⁹New York City Housing Authority, *Project Data* (New York, 1992), p. 28.

²⁰See Regional Plan of New York and its Environs, *Volume I, The Graphic Regional Plan*, (New York, 1929), pp. 217-227; David A. Johnson, *Planning the Great Metropolis: The 1929 Regional Plan of New York and its Environs* (London: E. and F.N. Spon, 1996).

²¹See Regional Plan Association, *From Plan to Reality: Three* (New York: Regional Plan Association, 1942), Ch. 3; Gary D. Hermalyn and Rebecca Read Shanor, "Bridges," in Kenneth T. Jackson, ed., *The Encyclopedia of New York City* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1995), pp. 137-139.

²²Jill Jonnes, *We're Still Here: The Rise, Fall, and Resurrection of the South Bronx* (Atlantic Monthly Press, Boston, 1986), pp. 119-122; *Bronxboro*, Feb.-March 1944 and Feb.-March 1945.

²³Jonnes, *We're Still Here*, pp. 119-126; "Bar Bronx route to save homes," *New York Daily News*, May 12, 1946; "Mayor repeats eviction pledge," *New York Post*, May 23, 1946 "Pledge homes to all faced by project ouster," *New York Daily News*, 1.16.47; "Lyons moves to open flats on road route," *New York Post*, June 15, 1948.

²⁴"City-owned houses boarded up by Moses despite vets' pleas," *New York Post*, July 25, 1946; "Moses padlocks vacant homes to aid his pet project," *New York Post*, Oct. 11, 1946. Lawrence Stelter, *By the El: Third Avenue and its El at Mid-Century* (Flushing, NY: H&M Productions, 1995), pp. 114-115.

²⁵*Constructioneer*, August 15, 1949, pp. 22-23.

²⁶The Lew Tenneriello Collection, Lehman College Archives.

²⁷"Bronx Night" videotape, available at The Bronx County Historical Society.

²⁸See, for example, the detailed map of vacant land and vacant buildings in May 1979, published on p. 45 of South Bronx Development Office, *Areas of Strength, Areas of Opportunity: South Bronx Revitalization Program and Development Guide Plans* (New York, 1980).

²⁹Federal Home Loan Bank Board and Home Owners' Loan Corporation, "The Bronx, New York: Security Map and Area Description Folder" (mimeo, Washington DC, 1938); located in Record Group 195, Box 58, at the National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.

³⁰Louis V. Grogan, *The Coming of the New York and Harlem Railroad* (Pawling, NY: Private Publication, 1989), pp. 46-57; Lawrence Stelter, *By the El*, pp. 108-116; Idem. "Analysis of Demolishing New York City Elevated Transit Lines," *Municipal Engineers Journal*, Vol. 88, No. 2 (1990), pp. 21-47.

³¹Roger D. Waldinger, *Through the Eye of the Needle: Immigrants and Enterprise in New York's Garment Trades*. (NYU Press, New York, 1986), p. 56.

³²Robert Fitch, *The Assassination of New York* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 279.

³³Alan Ehrenhalt, *The Lost City: Discovering the Forgotten Virtues of Community in the Chicago of the 1950s* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), pp. 254-272.

³⁴Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982), pp. 290-329; See also Berman's "Buildings are Judgment," *Ramparts*, Vol. 13, No. 6 (1975), pp. 33-39 and 50-58, with commentaries in Vol. 13, No. 8 (1975) pp. 45-55.

³⁵See David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York: Villard Books, 1993), pp. 116-187 and pp. 508-520.

³⁶Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers: The Journey of the East European Jews to America and the Life they Found and Made* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976), pp. 130-133.

³⁷Greg Donaldson, *The Ville: Cops and Kids in Urban America* (New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1993), pp. 2-3.

³⁸Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), pp. 286-287; Linton, Miels, and Coston Inc., *The Effects of Co-op City on the Bronx and on Conditions in Bronx Neighborhoods* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1972); Betsy Brown, "Co-opting a Dream: The Making of a Financial Nightmare," *Empire State Report*, March 1977, pp. 105-110.

³⁹New York City Planning Commission, *Plan for New York City 1969: A Proposal: Volume 2, The Bronx* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969), pp. 73-84.

⁴⁰New York City Planning Commission, *6100 New Homes in Air Rights and Parkland: A Plan for Melrose/Morrisania* (New York, 1971).

⁴¹Harry Keifetz, "A Decade of Service: Community Board Six - The Bronx" (mimeo, New York, 1974).

⁴²Julia MacDonnell Chang, "The South Bronx's Troubled New Homes," *City Limits*, Vol. 8, No. 5 (May 1983), pp. 21-25.

⁴³"Deserted Movie Studio—Where Kids Play Tag with Death," *New York Post Home News*, May 2, 1949

⁴⁴"Still Raided in Former Movie Studio Here," *The New York Times*, April 14, 1951.

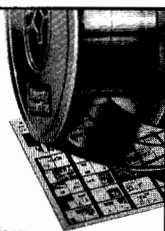
⁴⁵On the Biograph and Gold Medal Studios, see the Clippings Files of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center. The Studios fell into disuse in the late 1960s and the building was severely damaged by fire in 1980; "Bronx Blaze Damages Old Biograph Studios," *The New York Times*, July 9, 1980.

⁴⁶Robert Fitch, *The Assassination of New York*; Jason Epstein, "The Tragical History of New York," *New York Review of Books*, Vol. 39, No. 7 (April 9, 1992), pp. 45-52; Ken Auletta, *The Streets Were Paved with Gold: The Decline of New York, An American Tragedy* (New York: Random House, 1975).

⁴⁷Caro, "Keynote Address," pp. 19-20.

⁴⁸On the national crisis, see Robert A. Beauregard, *Voices of Decline: The Postwar Fate of U.S. Cities* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993); Jon C. Teaford, *The Rough Road to Renaissance: Urban Revitalization in America, 1940-1985* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990). On the Bronx crisis, see Jill Jonnes, *We're Still Here*; Herbert E. Meyer, "How Government Helped Ruin the South Bronx," *Fortune*, November 1975, pp. 140-154; Nathan Glazer, "The South-Bronx Story: An Extreme Case of Neighborhood Decline," *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol. 16 (1987), pp. 269-276.

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