

APPENDIX A
INFORMATIONAL LETTER AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Tagliamonte (2001-2003)

To be printed on University of Toronto letterhead

DATE

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am a student at the University of Toronto working under the supervision of *Professor Sali Tagliamonte*. We are conducting a study called *Innovation and Change in Toronto Entering the 21st century*. Our goal is to study how social and cultural changes are taking place in Toronto, and in society more generally, and how these are reflected in the way people express themselves.

So, we're interviewing Torontonians like you and talking to them about their experiences, memories and stories about living in Toronto. We're also trying to find out whether you've heard any new changes in the way people talk and what you think about them. We hope our research is going to shed new light on the nature of current social and cultural changes and innovations in Toronto and thus provide a view of what is coming in the 21st century.

For example, one of the things we are interested in studying is a number of new features of English that seem to be very frequent among young people — things like *like* and *all* and *so*. Do you ever hear young people saying things like this:

1. *I'm like, what? and He's like, yeah.*
2. *She's all weird*
3. *I'm so there* [e.g. this was the slogan on a billboard advertising cars this spring [2003]]

What we do is simply sit down and talk to people for about an hour, or as long as you feel comfortable talking to me. The conversation could take place right now, or I could come back another time. We'll talk together about topics such as your community, your neighbourhood, the games you used to play as a kid, your hobbies and pass-times, your work life and general personal experiences about living in Toronto. We are particularly interested in the types of changes people have experienced in living in the community over their lifetimes from their own perspective. What has changed? Who has changed? How? Because you were born and raised in Toronto you can give us an insider's perspective on these issues and what's been happening in Toronto over the last few generations.

Because we won't be able to remember everything everyone says exactly, we ask your permission to tape-record our conversation. However, everything that is said is kept entirely confidential and you will remain entirely anonymous. The audio-tapes will be archived in the University of Toronto and conserved for posterity. No one will have access to the data except academic researchers and no one will have access to the tapes unless they follow the same procedures as we do for keeping it confidential and anonymous.

Participation in the project is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time if you choose. You

can tell us not to record part of what you say, or to erase part of it. It is entirely up to you.

Although the findings of this study will not benefit you directly, by participating in this study you will be contributing to the production of new and potentially important knowledge about the changes going on in Toronto these days and how these changes are influencing the way Torontonians express themselves. We would be happy to send you a summary of our findings at the end of the project if you like to know how our research turns out.

Would you be willing to help us with this research by providing your point of view?

Innovation and Change in Toronto Entering the 21st Century

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to take part in a study of innovation and change in Toronto.

I understand that to take part in the study I will participate in an audio-taped conversation, involving discussion such topics such as the following:

- My neighbourhood/my community
- My school days/ The games I used to play as a kid
- My family and our traditions/My peer group
- Life in Toronto, work, play, etc.
- Important events I remember that happened to me in my life time
- The changing generations in Toronto
- Changes in the way we speak English in Toronto

I understand that the interview will take about an hour or however long I wish. I understand that the interview can occur at a time and place that is convenient for me.

I understand that I am under no obligation to participate and that I may refuse to answer any questions, to stop the interview at any time, or withdraw from the study at any time.

I understand that my specific answers and comments will be kept entirely confidential. I understand that neither my name nor my address will be identified in any report or presentation that may arise from the study. I understand that only academic researchers will have access to the information collected during the study and they too will be required to keep all the personal information confidential.

I understand that I will not benefit directly from the study. However, I also understand that the information gained may assist both researchers and other professionals to better understand the role of Torontonians and Toronto varieties of English as part of the rapid and ongoing social and cultural changes occurring in Canadian society and in societies all over the world.

I understand that I may obtain information of the results of this study by contacting the principal investigator.

I understand what this study involves and agree to participate. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

Signature

Date

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact:

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