Mining

Social and Environmental Upheaval
Upheaval

- Mining & resource development provokes upheaval in the social and physical environments
- In boom and bust
- **Routinely not well managed**
Uranium City

- Mines ripped out of the bush
- Tailings dumped in lakes, allowed to pollute Lake Athabaska
- Old mines abandoned without cleanup
  - Belated and expensive taxpayer-funded cleanup under way
- Wood Buffalo National Park logged for mine timber
Uranium City

- SK government tried to create a planned urban settlement (Uranium City) to replace male-dominated bunkhouse life
  - “A community born in an atomic test tube”
    - Regina Leader-Post 1953
Uranium City

• Developed class segregation
  – Workers vs. Management
Uranium City

• Planning challenged by continued staking rush, squatter camps, aboriginal migrants
  – 450 aboriginal ‘squatters’ by 1955
  – Mines employed few aboriginals except in menial roles

• Uranium City deployed a racialised economy
  – Mining was for white folk
Elliot Lake ON

• **Another uranium mining boomtown**
• Boomed in the 1950s, overwhelmed efforts at planning
  – US nuclear weapons demand
• Boomed again in the 1970s
  – Ontario Hydro’s nuclear programme
• Busted, became a retirement centre
Elliot Lake ON

• Town built around a defective shopping mall which collapsed in 2012.
Labrador Trough

- Mont Wright QC is an active ArcelorMittal/China Steel iron ore mine
- With an active community, Fermont, nearby
- Heavy rail shipping of the ore to Port Cartier
Labrador Trough

• But other iron ore mining centres have boomed and busted:
  – Schefferville QC
  – Gagnon mine site
  – Gagnon town site
Bell Island, Newfoundland

• Mined Iron Ore for the steel works in Sydney NS
• Mines closed in the 1960s
• Community remains
Sudbury Basin

- Earliest smelting used local firewood and drove off the sulphides in open roast beds
- Devastated the local vegetation
- Created the black rock
- By the 1910s the place was a moonscape
Sudbury Basin

- Tailings being re-used and rehabilitated, or so we are told.
- Mines still operating
- Some ghost towns
- Smelters still running, with improved pollution controls