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Kelley A. McClinchey

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University

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Going Forward by Looking Back: Memory, Nostalgia and Meaning-Making in Marketing for a Sense of Place

Kelley A. McClinchey
Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
Wilfrid Laurier University

ABSTRACT

In recent years tourism scholars and practitioners have been keenly interested in tourist experience. Researchers have also made connections between tourism and meanings of place. What is still needed is to examine tourists' emotional connection to place, to philosophical understandings of sense of place, and how to harness these intimate characteristics for place marketing. This paper is "going forward by looking back" by first discussing similarities between the dimensions of the tourism experience and a sense of place suggested by Lew (1989) and, second, by introducing a conceptual model of the interconnections among sense of place, memory, nostalgia and the tourist experience. A review of interdisciplinary literature and results from a qualitative study on sense of place are used to demonstrate the basis for the model. A discussion outlines why senses of place are important in an era where the threat of placelessness is an on-going concern. A final section provides suggestions for applying these relationships to the marketing of place.

Key words: *sense of place, visitor experience, tourist experience, nostalgia, place marketing, globalization*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years tourism scholars and practitioners have been keenly interested in tourist experiences (Morgan, Lugosi & Ritchie, 2010). Researchers have also made connections between tourism and meanings of place (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2006). What is still needed, however, is to examine tourists' emotional connection to place, philosophical understandings of sense of place, and how to harness these intimate characteristics for place marketing.

This paper is "going forward by looking back" by first discussing similarities between the dimensions of the tourism experience and a sense of place suggested by Lew (1989) and, second, by introducing a conceptual model of the interconnections among sense of place, memories, nostalgia and the tourist experience. Results from a qualitative study on sense of place (the author's doctoral thesis), a review of interdisciplinary academic literature as well as examples from contemporary travel literature are used to demonstrate the basis for the model. A discussion outlines avenues for future research in the marketing of place.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sense of Place

The concepts of place and sense of place can be traced back to the ancient Greeks, including Aristotle, and the Romans who talked of the “spirit of a place”, as well as First Nations peoples and aboriginals who hold places as sacred (Windsor & McVey, 2005). But it is only until recently that researchers have acknowledged that in contemporary society, we too, can have an attraction, emotional reaction, or pleasant feeling in relation to the atmosphere, personality of, or environment of a place (Jackson, 1994; Tuan, 1980).

Relph (1976) and Tuan (1977) have referred to this humanistic approach to place as having a *sense of place*. In particular, Relph (1976) devised various notions of ‘insiderness’ and ‘outsiderness’ based on people’s level of experience with place. Insiders’ feel at one with a place and have deep experiences with place whereas outsiders feel alienated or perceive place as little more than the background or setting for activities. Relph defined a sense of place as originating from lived experience, understanding the intangible essence of a place, experiencing place as an insider. Steele (1980) discussed how sense of place is not limited to the experience of which the person is consciously aware but also includes unnoticed influences such as a consistent avoidance of doing certain things in that particular place. However, Tuan (1980) differentiated sense of place which is a conscious experience from ‘rootedness’ which is an unconscious experience. He described how sense of place can be achieved and maintained but rootedness cannot, one must have lived in a place for a long time. Hummon (1992) suggested that sense of place involves both an interpretive perspective on the environment and an emotional reaction to it.

Place meanings have interested scholars from numerous disciplines yet a surge of multi-disciplinary attention on place meanings since the 1990s has led to confusion (Relph, 2008). Thus Relph (2008) turned to the work of philosophers to more deeply understand the meaning of place. Place is described as inextricably bound to ‘being’ in such a way that being emerges only in and through places and place is a complex unity, an open, boundless region that can turn outwards to reveal other places or inward to reveal its own character (Malpas, 1991; Relph, 2008).

Academic scholars have approached sense of place from a variety of conceptual angles. Some have preferred to investigate sense of place’s multi-dimensions and measure components through detailed quantitative analysis (e.g. Jorgenson and Stedman, 2006; Shamai and Ilatov, 2001; Snepenger *et al*, 2007). Others have examined sense of place in a holistic sense, using subjective data collection techniques such as in-depth interviews or focus groups to assist with its objective measurement (e.g. Williams *et al*, 2008; Bricker and Kerstetter, 2006). Others perceived sense of place to be about individuals’ narratives, stories and deep emotional experiences that may not fit easily into pre-determined categories (e.g. Gustafson, 2001; Bird, 2002). Sense of place has been further conceptualized through empirical analysis on urban, rural, wilderness or recreation spaces (e.g. Gibson and Davidson, 2004; Mazumdar *et al*, 2000; Bricker and Kerstetter, 2000). Other fields such as environmental psychology, forestry, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, urban studies, architecture, leisure studies and tourism have investigated place meanings taking their own particular conceptual angle (e.g. Davenport

and Anderson, 2005; Williams and Stewart, 1998; King and Stewart, 1996). Scholarly attention on philosophical conceptualizations of sense of place is lacking. More attention needs to be made considering the lack of clarity in the definition, analysis and interpretation of sense of place on its own and in conjunction with the tourist experience.

Tourist Experience

The tourist experience is a complex psycho-social process and providing a succinct, all-encompassing definition is a difficult task (Jennings, 2006; Selstad, 2007). Through a review of the tourist experience literature, Quinlan-Cutler and Carmichael (2010) developed a model depicting the dimensions of the tourist experience. For a full analysis of the tourist experience refer to Morgan *et al* (2010), however, a brief description will be relayed here. In short, the tourist experience includes various phases, influences and outcomes relating to personal and influential realms. The influential realm consists of the physical and social environment. The physical environment provides the setting for tourist activities and a space for social interaction (Mossberg, 2007). The social environment includes interactions with tourist workers, personal relationships, interactions with other tourists and host/guest interactions (Mossberg, 2007). The personal realm consists of all the elements of a tourist experience that are within the individual such as motivation, expectation, satisfaction/dissatisfaction, knowledge, memory, perception, emotion and self-identity. Memory, specifically, links the emotional and perceptual outcomes of a tourist event (Oh *et al*, 2007). Perception is influenced by the inner workings of an individual including motivations, emotions, values, opinions and worldviews as well as the characteristics of the environment (Quinlan-Cutler and Carmichael, 2010). Perception can also be a social construction, impacted by collective perceptions and political ideologies.

Emotional responses to places and memories of experiences are seen as intertwined, highly individual and very complex and even border on the spiritual. As Wilkie (2003 p.29) noted “many times our relationship to a certain place is entirely unique to a particular time or series of events.” Noy (2007) commented, the act of tourism offers complex experiences, memories and emotions related to places. Some have linked tourist experiences within specific forms of niche tourism such as rural tourism to religion and spirituality (Sharpley and Jepson, 2011). However, Sharpley and Jepson concluded that the emotions and memories associated with these tourist experiences may relate more closely with perceptions of a sense of place. Yet very little attention has examined the relationships between the tourist experience and a sense of place.

METHOD

This paper introduces a conceptual model of sense of place and the visitor experience. Visitor experience in this context comprises both visitors to a place, perhaps for leisure or recreational pursuits, as well as tourists, those staying at least one night. The model is justified through results obtained from an empirical qualitative study on sense of place perceptions and festival experiences (the author’s doctoral thesis research). For a full review of the methods of this research refer to McClinchey (2010; 2011). The discussion also reviews interdisciplinary academic research (human geography, leisure, recreation, tourism, and environmental psychology) as well as contemporary travel literature (travel articles, promotional material,

literary travel books) in order to grasp a greater understanding of sense of place and the visitor experience. Another section explains how memory of places and nostalgia play an important role in sense of place perceptions as well as the visitor experience. A final section discusses how the conceptual model can be used to improve place marketing.

CONNECTING SENSE OF PLACE AND THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Emotional attachments and feelings associated with places we visit whether for tourism or recreation is discussed in academic literature (Gibson and Davidson, 2004; Mazumdar *et al*, 2000; Bricker and Kerstetter, 2000). But most attention has been paid to the place attachment concept in recreation in the past 10 years (Backlund & Williams, 2003). Connections made between sense of place and visitor experiences is still in its infancy. The model of Sense of Place and the Visitor Experience demonstrates how perceptions of place, that is, the deep emotional and intimate feelings associated with place (i.e. sense of place) are the binding components between the destination (place) and the visitor experience (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Connecting Sense of Place and the Visitor Experience



This working model examines the relationships among hosts, visitors, tourism/resource managers, and marketers and their senses of place. Place/environment consists of the physical and social environment including all attributes related to the destination such as natural and man-made attractions, accommodations, restaurants, shopping and other services/products. It also consists of the socio-cultural environment such as interactions between the visitor and hosts; hosts being service personnel, residents, managers, and other visitors. Place/environment also includes the ethno-cultural traditions of the destination and political processes. But the place itself also consists of its sense of place. In other words, if those who influence the visitors

experience such as hosts, residents, service personnel have a strong sense of place then these perceptions are more apt to be carried over in their actions towards the place itself and to visitors. These actions could be in the way of stewardship and proper management for natural and cultural resources important not just for tourism but for community development as a whole. If natural and cultural resources are maintained properly keeping in tune with strong senses of place then this connects more with sustainability. Actions can also be in the form of appropriate strategic marketing that involves marketing intrinsic and authentic qualities of the place rather than idealized and “fashionable” products. If the destination is promoted in such a way that it stays true to its sense of place then this is noticed within the visitor experience. The model suggests that if these physical, social and cultural interactions are positive, this contributes to a positive visitor experience through the motivation, expectation, and satisfaction with that experience (Oh *et al*, 2007). Furthermore, visitors will remember the experience more intimately and be more apt to re-visit the destination and even more importantly recommend the destination to others. Visitors in fact become informal tourism brokers through the relaying of their memorable travel experiences. Therefore, just how important is this connection between a sense of place and the visitor experience?

Lew (1989) initially explained that visitors to a place often have the desire to feel a sense of belonging akin to that felt by residents and a greater similarity should exist between insider and outsider perceptions of a place. However, understanding the ways in which sense of place and the visitor experience connect is in need of more attention conceptually and empirically. In this paper the author demonstrates how these phenomena relate at many different dimensions. Both consist of relationships involving the physical and social environments generally and the personal and social interactions occurring in particular places. The following discussion examines these similarities.

Some debate has existed on whether an individual can develop a sense of place for a destination only visited for a relatively short period of time. However, Hay (1998) suggested tourists can gain a fleeting appreciation for destinations that leads to a sense of place. Furthermore, Wilkie (2003 p.31) stated

“Special places can bring back a broad range of emotional feeling and intellectual responses when they are revisited, or even when visiting for the first time, places about which one has only read about or heard stories. For many people the discovery of special places through one’s explorations can be nearly as powerful as revisiting one’s sacred place”.

Sense of place is perceived as having a feeling of belonging to a place and identifying with that place. Perceptions of sense of place of urban residents interviewed in the author’s dissertation connect overwhelmingly with the themes of belonging and identity. Several comment on a sense of belonging acquired through feeling as if the place was “home” to them. Clearly they relate their insiders’ experiences of place to memories for home. This sense of belonging is articulated well through Sandra (a woman I interviewed), *to feel that you belong, that you’re valued, that you have something to contribute*. Some respondents also had a sense of place for places where they felt comfortable and felt “like home” even if it was a cultural community centre or place of employment. As these respondents discuss their senses of place they articulate them as places they know intimately.

In terms of how sense of belonging relates to visitor experiences, Lew argued that visitors should experience more of an insider's perception of place in order to gain a greater sense of belonging. This is also explained by an author of an article in *National Geographic Traveler Magazine* who wrote about traveling to a region of Spain and how his travel experiences invoke intimate feelings of belonging. This destination in Spain definitely initiated that response in him, "This may seem like a paradox, but I travel to belong; a sense of belonging is the ultimate gift a place can bestow" (Andres, 2009 p.92). A woman interviewed by the author for her doctoral dissertation talked extensively about how places have meaning for her. This quotation shows how place and sense of place relate through the social and physical environment and this in turn influences the visitor experience,

The places that have meaning to me and that I can relate to also have a sense of place. When my husband and I choose where to travel and spend our leisure time it is places that have a history, are very walkable with good urban design, and have a strong sense of community with great people. Two places we continue returning to are Savannah and New Orleans.

Another component of sense of place that connects with the visitor experience is how visiting places initiates a reaction with our senses. These sensuous geographies have been discussed in conjunction with a sense of place for quite some time (e.g. Rodaway, 1994; Buttimer, 1980; Steele, 1980). The use of our senses through perception of the world aids our understanding of geographical experience at individual and social levels, and in different historical and cultural contexts (Rodaway, 1994). These "Sensoryscapes" can create rich experiences through "visuascapes", "olfactoryscapes" and "soundscapes" and can sharpen our senses (Mazumdar, 2003). Goodine (2011) in an excerpt in *Canadian Geographic Travel Magazine* described "sensuous dining" and how restaurants are now deliberately trying to connect their patrons with their senses other than tasting such as feel, smell and sound. An article in *National Geographic Traveler* magazine discusses this very phenomenon specifically in the tourist experience context. Lindblad (2010 p.220) an entrepreneur interviewed for *National Geographic Traveler* explained that specific aspects of place such as those that connect simply with our senses are what are most important, "I always advise people to go to the local market: that's where you are most likely to get the sense and the smell of a place, to really get under its skin." (Lindblad, 2010 p.220) In a literary travel novel, Shalleck (2007) wrote about the food he prepares while working for two summers as a personal chef on a yacht as it tours the Mediterranean. His employer wanted every meal to convey a sense of place for each port that they visited. McLane (2011) described how her travel experiences connect on many different levels with the senses of a place whether it is feeling the rain, hearing characteristic noises or smelling certain scents – all of which remind her of specific places. "The smells we encounter on the road probably rate as our most intense – and lingering – travel experiences." (McLane, 2011 p.13).

Travel experiences that invoke a sense of place are evidently perceived as significant by the travel magazine industry overall. For instance, the mission statement of *National Geographic Traveler* magazine clearly points to the importance of sense of place to the tourist experience:

"National Geographic Traveler reports on destinations of distinction and character and we support efforts to keep them that way – believing that to enhance an authentic 'sense of place'

will benefit both travelers and the locations they visit.” [quotation in the original] (National Geography Traveler, 2010 p.10).

Furthermore, *Afar* magazine’s mission statement also exemplifies this point suggesting that travel that connects one with a sense of a place will promote education and cultural understandings of difference: “Afar is devoted to experiential travel, which connects you with the authentic essence of a place and its people, deepening your understanding of the world, its cultures, and yourself”. (Afar, 2012 p.9).

Memory and the Visitor Experience

Social networks and personal histories also contribute to stronger senses of place (Kianicki *et al*, 2006). Memory, emotion and personal connection are ways that individuals connect with one’s roots and feelings of home. Eyles (1985) referred to this as nostalgic senses of place which is the recalling of past sentiments related to place. This sense of “looking back” or remembering the past is referred to as nostalgia in the scholarly literature especially with regard to tourist experiences. Nostalgia involves particular constructions of the past with particular constructions of the present such that the past is associated with beauty, pleasure, joy, simplicity and the present is viewed as more bleak, unfulfilling and difficult (Davis, 1973; Caton and Santos, 2007). In tourism scholarship, nostalgia is associated most with heritage tourism motivations. In this context, Vesey and Dimanche (2003) argued that tourists seek a simplified, romantic version of place and history without the reality of day to day life. However, Caton & Santos (2007) countered that the nostalgia critique oversimplifies tourists’ ability to critically construct aspects of the past and present as well as their ability to evaluate places based on logical reasoning understanding that there are both positives and negatives to both past and present. Caton and Santos commented on an alternative view which sees both managers and tourists as active participants in the construction of meanings within heritage tourism experiences. They concluded that nostalgia theory did not explain the experiences of the tourists they interviewed; however, nostalgia must play a role in the tourist experience of Route 66 in so far as it is the driving of Route 66 that remains a key element of the experience. Thus it is suggested by the authors that Route 66 managers preserve the driveability of the route as many of these sections are deteriorating and that maintaining them as hiking/cycling trails would not convey the same meaning for travelers.

In this paper, nostalgia is explained as playing a role in contributing to the sense of place of a destination by remembering what is deeply intimate and meaningful to a place and thus connecting with people’s nostalgic senses of place. Through the author’s dissertation research, respondents’ senses of place connected with their experience of their countries of origin, their roots and back home, especially when they return to visit. These perceptions were deep, emotional, personal, individual and at times difficult to articulate. A woman who is part of a German cultural club feels meaning there, *It’s my heritage and my culture, my parents belong and this feels I’ve connected to my German heritage and roots – like I have left but gone back.* Another woman, originally from Jamaica explains, *even though I’ve lived here longer than Jamaica, home will always be Jamaica. Here I’ll never be me but when I return home I always feel I am who I am.* In this regard, remembering the past is a positive element of nostalgia and memory.

Nostalgia, Place and Placelessness

As an extension to existing scholarly research, this model explores the importance of memory and nostalgia to sense of place and the visitor experience. Memory and nostalgia are mentioned within tourist experience research (Caton and Santos, 2007; Selstad, 2007) but less attention has been given to its importance in the development of a strong sense of place. Massey (1991) perceives nostalgia to be equated with static notions of place. However, this paper argues that nostalgia is an important component of how people establish a sense of place and continue to value distinctive place experiences. Caton and Santos (2007) explain that

“many of the celebrated episodes described by participants, such as becoming fully absorbed in sensory experiences while touring, interacting with local people and places in ways that defied the norms of the prevailing consumer culture in which tourism encounters are typically situated, and bonding with fellow tourists . . . seem to resonate strongly with Wang’s (1999) notion of existential authenticity”.

However, this paper suggests that those experiences may in fact coincide with meaningful senses of place for Route 66. Furthermore, Sharpley and Jepson (2011) discussed how rural tourism experiences in the English Lake District coincide with elements of spirituality, perhaps not in a religious sense but in connecting tourists with their sense of place. This paper then questions, why is there such an intrinsic or even subconscious motivation to connect with places on such intimate levels? Why is there a deep desire to remember and even feel nostalgic for places that we experience through leisure, recreation and travel?

Part of this need to experience distinctive places that have remained real and “authentic” is due to the notion that society is losing its distinctive places through cultural globalization. Embarking on a detailed discourse of cultural globalization is beyond the scope of this paper but a brief definition will suffice. Generally speaking, globalization can be defined as the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa (Giddens, 1990). Cultural globalization can be viewed as an expansion that has involved the incorporation of all parts of the world into capitalist production and consumption practices that took shape in the West. In terms of travel, there are many places that look similar no matter what country one is in. Auge (1995) gave the examples of airport lounges, hotels, resorts, and sports centres. One fears that these similarities will extend into deeper, more difficult to reach places and be in the form of similar tourist attractions offered pretty much anywhere. While not discussed directly in tourism literature, cultural globalization is often referred to through its manifestation such as a loss of authenticity or the commodification of culture through forms of production/consumption based capitalist focused systems such as mass tourism. But the author of this paper suggests that forms of niche tourism, if they are not developed keeping in mind the intangible essences of place, may contribute to the cultural globalization phenomena.

What are the implications of cultural globalization on sense of place and the visitor experience? Relph (1976) described “placelessness” as places that have no sense of place, having been stripped of their unique attributes. Similarly, Ritzer (1993), alarmed at the homogenizing effect of the speed with which cultural influences spread around the globe, argued that particular distinctive places disappear only to be replaced by universal homogenous “non

places”. Could this be why tourists desire intimate and distinctive visitor experiences and do feel nostalgic senses of place for destinations they have visited in the past? Is this why some are vehemently opposed to certain locales becoming “developed”?

Several tourism examples document this phenomenon. For instance, an article by Gerrie (2011) about traditional cuisines in the southern “instep” of Italy’s boot examines this often neglected region and its individual peasant culinary traditions born out of necessity from living in hard landscapes. But this *cucina rustica*, cuisine of poverty, consists of food traditions that are gaining widespread attention in tourism and hospitality circles as consumers are motivated by slow food movements, organic products and the 100-mile diet. Several old-world food traditions are gaining ground in hospitality and tourism as rustic cuisines and “villager foods” and thus becoming highly demanded gourmet cuisine. Valicenti, a chef in this region of Italy is quoted by Gerrie (2011 p.36) “We used to consider ours a cuisine of poverty . . . but now we see it as a cuisine of richness. Everything I cook with comes from within one kilometre of where I live as my protest against globalization and homogenization.” In *France* magazine, Bryant writes an article about leisure experiences and café society. He quoted Jayet a café owner and she stated, “In today’s modern, excessive world, we need to find places where we can still share the true meaning of life, where there is no risk of spoiling those rare moments of happiness and friendship” (2012 p.49). In another instance, Bellows (2011 p.30) interviewed Richard Florida, author, professor and urban theorist. Bellows asked Florida what he thinks is going to happen to destinations we cherish for their sense of place. Florida responded,

“ . . .I am struck by the degree to which our world has become homogenous. Whether we’re in France, the United States, China, or Japan, we tend to eat the same foods, wear the same clothes, and drive the same cars. But then simultaneously, people are trying to find what’s unique and authentic in the world, and that interest makes those things rise in value. In some ways, capitalism is wrapping its arms around a place’s sense of history and authenticity, viewing them as economic assets, a storehouse of value and profits. And yet, popularity threatens those assets. Coming to grips with that contradiction is an important challenge, because once that history and authenticity are eradicated, they’re impossible to get back.”

Finally, McIntosh *et al* (2011) comment in their study on commercial home owners and visitors’ desire for real experiences. “Featherstone (1987) believes the death of the social and the loss of the real leads to a nostalgia for the real, that is, a fascination with and desperate search for real people and real values” (p.517).

These examples illustrate the relationship between cultural globalization processes, placelessness and the loss of meaningful visitor experiences. This is where nostalgia and memory become crucial to maintaining strong senses of place and distinct visitor experiences. The next step is to work at ways to incorporate these dynamics into the marketing and management of places involved in leisure, recreation and tourism.

MARKETING FOR A SENSE OF PLACE

Relph (1976) explained that experiencing place as an insider is knowing the intangible essence of a place and Lew (1989) argued that visitors desire a similar experience as residents; that of insider. Thus, destination marketing may need to take a step back and look, not to the future, but to the past. Questions that need to be asked are; what intangible qualities have and do exist here? What intimate relationships are present between humans and the environment? What

is the essence of the place? What are individuals' senses of place? Is there a collective sense of the place?

What the model in this paper hypothesises is that if residents and other key individuals/groups lack a strong sense of place for the destination, then the destination is less likely to be immune to outside development initiatives and place marketing images. The result of such inauthenticity is the alienation of the resident, since they no longer feel an attachment to a distinctive place (Lew, 1989). This is an especially sensitive issue in instances where tourism development is based on a local resource with which residents feel a strong identity (Lew, 1989). Lew asked how to maintain a sense of intimacy and attachment to a unique place, while at the same time promote and share the place with large numbers of outside visitors. It takes the initiative of those with a long term and real vested interest in maintaining positive and strong senses of place. According to the model, if sense of place is maintained then there is more intrinsic motivation for managing resources responsibly.

For example, mass tourism in Florence, Italy is doing more damage than service to its resources and reputation and residents are feeling disenfranchised. Florence is becoming less of the Renaissance City it once was and more of a commercialized version of itself. Shollenbarger (2011) explained how citizens from civil servants, businesspeople, hoteliers, families, artists and curators are working together to help Florence recapture the title of contemporary hub, some six centuries after first holding it. In addition, an ethnic neighbourhood in Toronto, Canada with a strong sense of place and community among its residents and Business Improvement Area members is able to encourage local business entrepreneur development and discourage large-scale franchises (McClinchey, 2010). A KFC franchise opened up at the north end of Roncesvalles Village but a community wide "boycott" of the restaurant forced its closure less than a few months after it opened.

In other situations, it may take active social entrepreneurs or former residents of a community with a strong nostalgic sense of place in order to develop tourism resources in close ties with local cultural heritage. Zita Cobb, a social entrepreneur is aiming to transform Fogo Island (where she grew up) off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada into an arts and cultural tourism attraction aimed at maintaining cultural heritage and develop the local economy. She is interviewed by Bellows (2012 p.18) and discussed how Newfoundland's cultural traditions are dying out,

"I'm also terrified that as we try to hang on to our traditional viewsapes, the fast-food chains will set up house. The question is, can we partner with the local government to prevent having our culture flattened? If people want McDonald's, Subway, Burger King, and Tim Hortons, they have every right to them, but we have to help them understand what lies down the road. By the time we figure out that we've invited the beast into the living room, it's too late."

Destinations should not only be viewed as products but as *places* comprised of intangible resources. There needs to be an intangible view of destination as place, and even more so, as a sense of place. Places are made up of meanings and experiences, emotions and feelings all difficult to quantify and measure. In fact, tourism managers and marketers need to think about sustaining and maintaining, not the product or the destination or even the tourism resource per se, but sustaining instead the sense of place. This might require us to re-evaluate people's

memories and nostalgia for place and what it is that we desire through both resident and visitor experiences that connect us to these distinctive spaces. The author of this paper is keen to apply the conceptual relationships presented within the Sense of Place and Visitor Experience model to empirical cases. Future research needs to analyze individuals' sense of place both inside and outside the tourism context in order to understand how places are conceptualized. It is especially important to study the narratives of residents, service workers, return visitors – those individuals who have intimate senses of place and whose nostalgia and memories for place would be strongest. Moreover, visitors to the destination who have strong, positive senses of place are then more likely to, not only return to the destination through repeat visitation, but more importantly, act as informal tourism brokers.

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