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# Spring Break: The Economic, Socio-Cultural and Public Governance Impacts of College Students on Spring Break Host Locations

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Spring Break: The Economic, Socio-Cultural and Public Governance Impacts of College
Students on Spring Break Host Locations



A Dissertation




Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of




Doctor of Philosophy
in
Urban Studies
Economic Development




by

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B.A., Flagler College, 1997
M.S., University of New Orleans, 2002

December, 2008

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, David and Sandra Laurie, who have always believed
in the value of education, and made many sacrifices that allowed me to complete this pursuit.
This would not have been possible without your support.
Thank you.

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Special thanks go out to Ivan Miestchovich, my advisor and committee chair, who not only helped me clear the normal hurdles in writing, refining and defending the dissertation, but went above and beyond in fighting the battles, roadblocks and unforeseen obstructions that have, unfortunately, also become part of the process. Without such help, the difficult would surely have been impossible.

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ABSTRACT

Spring Break, which has been transformed from a rather mild mid-winter vacation to a cultural rite over the past seventy-years, allows students to bring their values en masse to the host locations they visit. While only visiting these locales for a short time, college students nonetheless significantly impact the economic, public governance and socio-cultural processes of their Spring Break host locations. This dissertation explores the process of how and why students choose these locations and the impacts that occur as a result. A quantitative approach is used to determine the level of impact on a host location's economic, socio-cultural and public governance processes and what role city policies have in affecting these impacts. The data comes primarily from public sources – national, state and local – between 1995 and 2005. This investigation helps to answer the question 'Is Spring Break worth the cost of the student impacts?' In doing so, it will allow for current Spring Break cities in the U.S. to determine what role the event plays in their future and provides potential Spring Break locations with the information necessary to determine whether or not to court the next generation of Spring Breakers.

Spring Break, Economic Development, Public Governance, Socio-Cultural, Students, Universities

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION


Introduction

There are nearly 16 million students of higher education enrolled in over 4,148 public and

private, four-year, colleges and universities within the United States (Chronicle of Higher

Education: 2004). And while they value an education enough to be enrolled, their values also

produce durable impacts within those same university towns.  These impacts occur under three

headings: economic, socio-cultural and public governance.  For example, their economic impacts

include purchasing of food, rent, supplies, and liquor from businesses.  Because most of this flux

of voting-qualified money-carrying migrant population arrives in the fall and leaves in spring,

additional governance and police control concerns also occurs.  And while these three forces

have occurred within university cities for many years, allowing mutual growth, adaptive, and

revisional relationship responses by communities towards their student populations, it is also

recognized that not all cities are the same. All cities do not necessarily have the equal luxury of

long-term trial-and-error relational exchanges with students.

From the beginning of March until the second week of April, colleges and universities across

the United States schedule a week-long vacation near the middle of the semester. This vacation is

a national, cultural event for both the U.S. student population and the locations to which they

travel. As the culture of the U.S. student population has changed over the last fifty years, so too

has the formerly mild spring vacation. This vacation has become known as Spring Break, which

has become a yearly ritual for young adults in colleges and universities across the country since

the early 1960's. From its humble beginnings as a 'spring vacation' in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida,

the Spring Break phenomenon has expanded to many locations across the gulf coast and beyond.

And if these locations are not prepared for Spring Break pilgrimages, then the burden of this relationship dynamic can lead to disruption and fraying of each city's social fabrics. This is because increased staffing and training of police forces, hotel personnel, wait and bartending staff are needed to guide, govern, and care for a potential fifty-fold population spike of students on Spring Break.

Tourism is the number one industry worldwide, accounting for almost $3.5 trillion (U.S.) in 2001 and generating 207 million jobs (Travel Industry Association of America: 2003). Cities and towns across the U.S. are increasingly seeking to capitalize on their own tourism potential. Tourists have become a commodity to those seeking them, to be attracted, induced, and placated by communities across the U.S., who value the revenue that is generated by their visit. While a number of cities attempt to use tourism to generate additional capital, many small towns view tourism as a savior, a key component of their economic development plan, helping to ensure 'progress.' This is especially true if the area is economically depressed. The annual impact of tourist $3.5 trillion US dollars is difficult to ignore. As such many groups want a piece of the tourist pie, from travel agents to souvenir shops and international countries. Merely attracting one percent would mean an annual budget increase of $3.5 million, making tourism an attractive gain to pursue. And with fiscal budgets being limited by frozen tax rates, cities can be blind-sided into only seeing benefits and limited costs to entertain Spring Break participants.

Spring Break is a unique phenomenon, perpetuated and influenced by collegiate culture, pop culture, and the U.S. higher education system. Across the demographic landscape, few groups can claim the ability to acutely affect a particular location such as the 18-24 demographic of the U.S. undergraduate student population. College students travel en mass during Spring Break, focusing predominantly on locales which offer sun and surf combined with a permissive "party

atmosphere." Nearly 38% of college students traveled during Spring Break in 2003, and they

spent nearly $1 billion partying at locations in Florida and Texas alone (Reynolds: 2004). The

current top Spring Break location is the tiny town of Panama City Beach, Florida which hosted

half a million college students in 2003. These Spring Break revelers spent $170 million within

Panama City Beach during the six week period (Reynolds: 2004). And while $170 million in

combined revenue and tax revenue for little more than a month of behavior tolerance can bring

many businesses and urban fiscal budgets out of the red, the cost of that $340 per person average

also includes drunken and lawless behavior, plus strong inconveniences to local residents.

Through this research, I will quantify measurement indicators of Spring Break destination

cities which can be used in later studies as a standard of value against current and new Spring

Break cities. There are three anticipated impact categories, economics, socio-cultural influence,

and public governance. This baseline assessment has particular significance to United States

communities, especially small gulf coast towns which may be considering Spring Break tourists

as a viable part of their economic development plan. Specifically, this research addresses three

questions:


Research Questions

1. How do U.S. college students on Spring Break impact the host location's economy?

2. How do U.S. college students on Spring Break impact the host location socio-culturally?

3. How do U.S. college students on Spring Break impact the public governance of the host
   location?

Several key terms are used throughout this dissertation. Some vary due to the context in

which they are used, and others are so broad that it is necessary to define them through the use of

sub-definitions. The following section provides both the terms and their definitions.

Operational Definitions

*Spring Break*

According to Henderson (1997) Spring Break is "an annual celebration of spring – and of
school vacations by….college students who whoop it up, sunbathe, party, drink (alcohol), dance,
and listen to loud music" (pg. 321). While this description is a good beginning, other elements,
such as suggestive or minimal dress, increasingly lewd public behavior and sexual activity have
become associated with the event. In fact, the American Medical Association (AMA: 2006)
recently described Spring Break "as a dangerous alcohol and sex binge fest." All together these
elements give a description of a 'party atmosphere,' an essential component of Spring Break. For
the purposes of this dissertation the components that comprise Spring Break will include a locale
that provides the sun, beach or water, and a 'party atmosphere.' The necessity of satisfying these
components relegates Spring Break to warm climates, primarily in the Gulf Coast region of the
U.S. and/or Mexico. The level of 'party atmosphere' provided by each locale varies, but is a
necessity for Spring Break to occur.

Spring Break has a temporal as well as descriptive definition. Spring Break as it is celebrated
by the majority of U.S. college students occurs yearly, from the beginning of March through the
first week of April, when most U.S. educational institutions schedule this event. Other U.S.
institutions, namely Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's), intentionally
schedule their spring break period for the end of April. Known as 'Black Spring Break', the
number of participants is much smaller and the locales few and static compared to the Spring
Break period attended by most U.S. college students. Additionally, Canadian college students
visit the southern U.S. as well. However, 'Canadian Spring Break' as it is known, occurs in the

beginning of February, preceding U.S. spring break by at least two weeks. For the purposes of this dissertation neither 'Black Spring Break' nor 'Canadian Spring Break' will be studied.

### Alternative Spring Break

Alternative spring break occurs during the same time frame as spring break in the U.S. However, there are two distinct differences which set alternative spring break apart. Alternative spring break is not comprised of the components of Spring Break in that the students are not specifically seeking locations which provide sun or the beach, nor are they seeking a 'party atmosphere.' Students on Alternative Spring Break travel for the express purpose of participating in some form of volunteer work with other students. Typically this is done in conjunction with non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, and is coordinated through an administrative unit of each student's educational institution. Because volunteer efforts are widespread, they are not linked to any particular locale or even region. As such, Alternative Spring Break locations vary yearly, by locale, and even type of volunteer activity.

### Tourist

The definition of tourist varies widely, depending on the source. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), "tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, or other purposes" (WTO: 2001). Additionally, tourists are often categorized regarding their length of stay or the distance they travel from their home. For the purposes of this dissertation, the term tourist will be used synonymously with the terms traveler or visitor. However, college students on Spring Break or Alternative Spring Break are considered a specific type of tourist and will be defined specifically as a *college student.*

*College Student*

The term college student can generally be used to refer to anyone taking college courses. According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (4th Addition, 2006), a college student is "…an undergraduate who has not yet attained a bachelor's or similar degree. However, even this definition is far too general for the purposes of this dissertation. Specific parameters must be used to ensure that this study maintains validity. For the purposes of this dissertation a college student will be defined as a person (male or female), ages 18-24, enrolled in a four-year college or university, in an undergraduate program in the U.S. While typical undergraduate programs consist of four years of study, the average U.S. college student now takes 5.5 years to complete an undergraduate degree. This accounts for the six-year age parameter (18-24) for this dissertation.

*Host Location*

The host location is the locale to which students travel for Spring Break. Because the quantitative methods used in this dissertation require uniformity in order to accurately measure impacts, the term host location will refer to micropolitan statistical area that encompasses the locale. This is explained in the methods section. Whenever the necessary data is unavailable at the micropolitan statistical area, host location will refer to the entire county in which the locale is located. This will be noted whenever such an instance occurs.

*Socio-Cultural Effects*

Socio-cultural effects are directly related to the concept of social evolutionism, which provides an understanding of the relationship between the technologies, social structure and the values of society and how and why they change over time (Trigger: 1998). In the case of Spring Break, it is the interaction between the students and the local population of the host location, who

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are sometimes outnumbered by a multiple of fifty where these potential effects can occur. While

many social effect consequences have been incurred from being a Spring Break site, the

importance of using indicators or markers to quantify the overall process of cannot be ignored.

As such, church formation over a ten year period compared to the population change will be

used. Additionally, these changes will be measured against nearby locales with similar

populations and tourism visitation, which do not draw students for Spring Break. This theory is

further discussed in the case study section.

*Public Governance Effects*

Public governance broadly refers to a set of government systems that sets and enforces

regulations and manages policies. These systems, taken together form an administrative process

by the government – in the case of Spring Break, the local government – for the public good. For

the purposes of this dissertation, public governance effects specifically refer to hospital and

health systems (healthcare), the local police force, and public administration and planning

departments.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter One provides a description of Spring Break and the relationship between Spring

Break, its host locations and the students who attend this annual ritual. It also provides an

overview of the lucrative nature of the tourist industry and the powerful draw of the industry to

cities and towns that may view tourism as a way to augment or drive the local economy.

Following an overview of these relationships, the remainder of Chapter One contains of the

significance of the research, research questions, and operational definitions. Chapter Two

provides a history of Spring Break, from the spring rituals of the Greeks and Romans of antiquity

to the origins of collegiate spring vacation in the 1930's through the modern incarnation that we

recognize as Spring Break. Chapter Three consists of the literature review, which deals not only

with the broad themes of tourism and economic development, but also ties them to the behavior

of college students. Specifically, the review focuses on; tourism as economic development, the

economic, socio-cultural, and public governance impacts of tourism, tourist motivations, and the

impacts which govern student behavior. Chapter Four details the methods used to collect data as

well as the four case study areas explored in this research: Daytona Beach, Florida, Panama City

Beach, Florida, South Padre Island, Texas and Lake Havasu City, Arizona. The findings of the

case study areas are presented at the end of the chapter. Chapter Five contains my conclusions of

the analysis of the case study areas, the difficulties in obtaining critical information, and my

policy recommendations as well as avenues for future research in the area of Spring Break.

CHAPTER 2 – HISTORY OF SPRING BREAK

A Historical Perspective of Spring Break

While the images of throngs of drunken college students partying on sandy, white beaches is commonly portrayed by media and in promotional material by the Spring Break locales themselves, Spring Break has not always existed in such a form. Spring Break has its roots in the spring festivals dating back thousands of years to the Greeks and their mythological celebrations. Modern Spring Break, which dates to the early 1930's in the United States, has undergone a series of changes over the last seventy years. These changes, caused by media perception, shifts in the priorities of academic institutions, pop culture and even the threat of war, led to four distinct phases in the modern incarnation of Spring Break.

*Classical Period*

Spring Break, at least in its current incarnation, began in 1960 following the release of the movie 'Where the Boys Are" starring Connie Francis and Frankie Avalon. However, the origins of Spring Break can be traced back over two thousand years, to the ancient Greeks. The Greeks celebrated the coming of each spring with a festival called the Anthesteria, at which young men and women would honor the god Dionysus (Curow: 2006). Dionysus, as did many gods, played an important role in the highly ritualized lives of Greeks. Dionysus was the god of wine, agriculture, fertility and nature and of the stage (Gross and Grote: 2006). Additionally, Dionysus was also the god of ecstasy, who promised personal delivery from everyday life through physical and spiritual intoxication (Gross and Grote: 2006).

Most historians believe Anthesteria was celebrated for over two thousand years, from 1500 BC to 500 AD, across both Greek and then Roman cultures. The Anthesteria festival was a three

day long event, coinciding with the February/March full moon. It began with plays, usually in the form of tragedies or comedies played out on stage. While part of the ritual of honoring Dionysus, these plays continued throughout the festival for the purposes of entertainment. Poets, orchestras, and singers performed throughout the festival as well. Many of these performances held a competitive aspect, with winners selected and awarded prizes. This bears close resemblance to modern Spring Break, at which music is provided on one or more stages, usually by or in association with MTV, and contests are held for the students in attendance (wet T-shirt, alcohol consumption, dance).

Anthesteria had an 'upside down' effect on daily living, where people could break from the norm of daily routines and act in a manner not considered socially acceptable the rest of the year. It was most highly anticipated and celebrated by society's youth and even slaves – one aspect of Anthesteria allowed for society to become 'inverted' with slaves temporarily holding higher status than their masters. These festival aspects share striking similarities with today's version of Spring Break and demonstrate a celebration of spring (of some aspect of spring) by youth and young adults across the millennium. The rise of Christianity eventually put an end to such festivals as the church declared such ritualistic celebrations to be pagan and they had no place in a proper, god fearing society. As a result, celebratory spring rituals among western society's youth would not occur again until the mid-twentieth century.

*First Modern Phase*

What can be considered the first modern version of Spring Break in the United States began in 1934 when Colgate University swim coach Sam Ingram brought his team to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida during the school's Christmas break so that his swimmers would stay in shape and keep their competitive edge. Ft. Lauderdale, which has very mild winters compared to most of the rest

of the U.S., was at the time a small town, with less than 18,000 residents and a relatively unknown locale. Ingram was made aware of the area by the father of one of the swimmers, who was familiar with south Florida. Word of Ft. Lauderdale spread among college swim coaches and increasing numbers of swim teams began to arrive, although the students numbered less than 500 and this still occurred during Christmas break, and not during the spring.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, Ivy League students had been traveling south during the spring semester's vacation period (not yet known as Spring Break), but to Bermuda, not Florida. The number of students who did this was relatively small, as only a portion of the students had the means to travel to Bermuda and accommodations at the time were comparatively small. However, the onset of World War II was a turning point in the vacation habit of college students. German U-Boats were rumored (and later confirmed, although in small numbers) to be sailing the waters of the Caribbean. This was enough to convince Ivy League students and their families to abandon Bermuda, but not spring vacation. Thanks to accounts of college swim team members, Ft. Lauderdale had developed a reputation as an ideal place to spend a few weeks, while the weather was still frigid in the Northeast. As a result, students began to make Ft. Lauderdale a regular visit during their spring vacation.

*Second Modern Phase*

While as many as 20,000 college students had come to Ft. Lauderdale by the mid-1950's for spring vacation, it was still a relatively little known and low key affair. This began to change when Glendon Swarthout's novel, 'Where the Boys Are' was published in 1958, effectively ushering in the second modern phase of Spring Break. The concept of Spring Break gained additional traction when a *Time Magazine* article titled "Beer & The Beach" appeared in 1959 (Liss, 2006). Swarthout's 1958 novel was quickly made into a movie of the same title in 1960,

popularizing…"the myth throughout the nation of the epic journey of college-age men and women to the idyllic shores of Florida - Ft. Lauderdale, to be precise - to find fun, sun, and true love" (Springbreak.com, 2004). This version of Spring Break did not exist before Swarthout's novel, but in an act of life imitating art, college students transformed this myth into reality, as tens of thousands began migrating to Ft. Lauderdale and engaging in the behavior depicted in Swarthout's movie.

Ft. Lauderdale, although it had experienced a population boom following World War II, was still a relatively small urban area, with 83,648 people in 1960 (U.S. Census). And the city was not prepared for the students who were about to make Ft. Lauderdale a yearly spring pilgrimage. As many as fifty thousand students visited Ft. Lauderdale during Spring Break in the early 1960's. Although a small in comparison with today's numbers, this comprised nearly every student who participated in Spring Break, as Ft. Lauderdale was the singular location for this type of mass activity. The relatively small beach town struggled to cope as their population nearly doubled during Spring Break. As the number of students increased, arrests became more frequent, often numbering in the hundreds. Additionally, there were even occasional riots, with out of control students throwing rocks and bottles.

### Third Modern Phase

The late 1960's marked a time when alcohol and recreational drugs began to play a more central role in the lives of college students. This trend extended to the festivities of Spring Break as well (Springbreak.com). Being able to stay drunk for an entire week was a legitimate goal of many of the students. However, this type of behavior began to lead to some resistance from city residence and business owners, a number of whom were growing weary of the students, even though produced a sizeable and growing economic influx during the spring.

In the late 1970's Daytona Beach, located three hours to the north of Ft. Lauderdale, and with a more permissive party atmosphere, gladly welcomed students for Spring Break. By the early 1980's as the number of college students was increasing, as were those participating in Spring Break. Ft. Lauderdale and Daytona Beach both drew large crowds – from 250,000 to 350,000 each. The 1983 movie, *Spring Break,* starring Tom Cruise served to bolster the notion of sun, surf, sex and beer to the nation's youth and by 1986 MTV had begun broadcasting live from Daytona Beach during Spring Break, beaming images of college revelers to American youth nationwide. In part, because of MTV's presence, Daytona Beach eventually supplanted Ft. Lauderdale as the Spring Break capital in the late 1980's. The influence of MTV would be a key factor from this point, both in reporting Spring Break activities and drawing students to whatever Spring Break locale they were broadcasting from.

Eventually, the economic impact of the students was not enough to offset the growing resentment in either Ft. Lauderdale or Daytona Beach from the number of student revelers and their increasingly outrageous behavior. Traffic gridlock, public nudity, property destruction, and lewd behavior had become overwhelming to many residents and business owners. Ft. Lauderdale mayor Bob Cox went as far as publicly declaring that students were no longer welcome (Liss, 2006). By 1992 the number of students visiting Ft. Lauderdale during Spring Break had decreased by 20,000 to 30,000 and the city began focusing on cruise ships as a major part of their tourism promotion (Liss, 2006).

While a record crowd of 400,000 attended Spring Break in Daytona Beach in 1989, a self imposed decline would occur over the next three years as the city's residents and business owners decided that the economic benefit of the students was not enough to offset the negative student behavior. New state laws and local ordinances were enacted that raised the legal drinking

age and limited the number of people permitted in hotel rooms, streets were reconfigured to discourage cruising and barricades were erected, separating the beach from the streets (Orange County Register, 2006). This legislation was grass roots-level based effort by residents who did not agree enough with Spring Break revelry and chose legislative responses to Spring Break activities which they found to be offensive.  In doing so, the residents' response to un-approved behavior was to re-structure the environment towards limiting said behaviors. These and subsequently began to push students toward other locations.

*Fourth Modern Phase (Current)*

The fourth and current modern phase began in the early 1990's and can be traced to the migration of college students away from Ft. Lauderdale and Daytona Beach because of  the adoption of new legal restrictions in addition to a more strict enforcement of existing laws, which were directly aimed at college students on Spring Break.  Such legislation pushed students toward other locations which provided similar amenities but with far fewer legal restrictions, such as Panama City Beach, located on Florida's west coast. Locations such as Lake Havasu City, Arizona and Palm Springs, California began to draw students – despite being in the desert and not a coastal region. Additionally, a number of students began traveling to international locations, such as Mexico and Jamaica – which were attempting to attract the college students and their money.

This phase is marked by diversification – not only in the number of Spring Break locations, but also in student behavior and activities offered by each location. While alcohol and the level of permissiveness of local law enforcement are still the primary drivers for students on Spring Break, planned activities have become more prominent – scuba diving, sporting events and trips to theme parks. In response, marketing towards college students on Spring Break has become

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more diverse as well, both from the locations themselves and from those offering goods and services. While alcohol and cigarette companies had been the primary advertisers in previous phases during Spring Break, credit card companies, clothing retailers, video game companies among a host of others began not only advertising but sponsoring events, hoping to separate the 18-24 year old demographic from their money. The opportunity to access the mass gathering of college students is enough of a draw that job fairs and military recruiting stations are also commonplace at Spring Break locales.

Because there are a number of locations, both domestic and international, that are vying for college students, the level of competition has risen dramatically in the last fifteen years. Panama City Beach, which became the undisputed Spring Break capital in 1993, remains so today and regularly draws over 500,000 students. But the southeast U.S. no longer has the exclusive rights to Spring Breakers. South Padre Island, Texas, which has been hosting students since the mid-1980's remains popular as does Lake Havasu City, Arizona. And all of these locations have competed against Mexico, the Caribbean, and the Bahamas for students since the mid-1990's.

What draws students to these diverse locations today? To a great extent it is still the 'sun, surf, sex and beer' element combined with the level of permissiveness of the locale. As the level of permissiveness or tolerance for Spring Breakers eventually decreased in Ft. Lauderdale and Daytona Beach, the students sought out other locations where the 'sun, surf, sex and beer' requirement plus a permissive attitude toward student behavior was accepted, in large part to attract the students and their money. However, as the level of competition between locations has increased, each has attempted to add amenities in the form of activities in conjunction with national corporations to increase their draw. This activity and event diversification is viewed as necessary to attract a share of the student visitors.

Media has begun to play a greater role than ever before in helping to determine what locations the students will travel to. In particular, MTV has the greatest influence in determining where college students will travel for Spring Break. MTV helped to make Daytona Beach the Spring Break capital of the country in the mid to late 1980's by broadcasting live there beginning in 1986. The last year MTV visited Daytona Beach during Spring Break was 1993 – which is also the last year Daytona Beach drew a significant number of students. Panama City Beach, which has been the Spring Break Mecca since 1993, owes part of its popularity to MTV. MTV has visited the tiny town for Spring Break four times in the past decade - in 1996, 1999, 2003, and 2006. Panama City Beach now considers MTV such an asset that the Bay County Tourist Development Council will spend $150,000 in a marketing partnership with MTV for Spring Break 2008 (Offley, 2007). In return, MTV will broadcast for 10 days from its "Spring Break Village" in Panama City Beach (Offley, 2007). Additionally, MTV will promote both the locale and the event on its cable channel and online network, where it expects to reach 7 million college students (Offley, 2007).

*A Brief History of Spring Break in the U.S.* (Orange County Register: 2005, McLeod: 1998)

**1934** Colgate University swim coach Sam Ingram brings his swim team to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida during Christmas break so his swimmers can stay in shape.

**1935** The first annual College Coaches Swim Forum is held in Ft. Lauderdale in December 1935; 300 college students enjoy the beachfront pools and local bars.

**1941-1945** German submarines frighten Ivy League college students away from their traditional spring vacation location, Bermuda. Instead, students travel to Ft. Lauderdale, which has developed a reputation as the ideal place to spend two weeks soaking up the rays.

**1954** Twenty thousand college students arrive in Ft. Lauderdale. The ensuing mayhem, two death and eleven arrests, makes national headlines.

**1958** Glendon Swarthout's "Where the Boys Are" is published. The novel features

hormonally charged college students in Ft. Lauderdale during Spring Break.

**1960** "Where the Boys Are," the movie version of Glendon Swarthout's novel, wins mass teen popularity. Filmed on location in Ft. Lauderdale, it stars Connie Francis, who sings the hit title song.

**1961** Fifty-thousand college students descend upon Ft. Lauderdale, and 3,500 of them, armed with rocks and bottles, pour onto Atlantic Boulevard (A1A), crippling traffic. More than 100 are arrested.

**1962** The reverend Billy Graham preaches to 35,000 college students on Spring Break in Ft. Lauderdale. Thousands of college students riot, 200 are arrested.

**1963** Connie Stevens and Troy Donahue star in "Palm Springs Weekend," the first Spring Break movie to focus attention on the West Coast of the U.S.

**1978** Penrod's, a chain of bars in Ft. Lauderdale, Daytona Beach, and Miami Beach, invents the wet T-shirt contest.

**1981** Daytona Beach attracts 300,000 college students, overtaking Ft. Lauderdale (200,000) as the Spring Break capital of the nation.

**1982** The tiny Texas town of South Padre Island begins hosting Spring Breakers from Mid-western states. From 1984 on, 200,000 college students attend each year, attracted in part by an unusually understanding attitude toward marijuana on the part of local law enforcement officials.

**1983** The Ft. Lauderdale police department introduces a Spring Break jail, complete with TV and unlimited phone calls home.

**1985** Ft. Lauderdale Spring Break reaches its peak year, with a record 350,000 college students spending $140 million. Three are killed and 100 are injured in automobile-pedestrian accidents. Police make 896 Spring Break related arrests.

**1985** In Daytona Beach, three students fall to their deaths from hotel balconies.

**1985** Florida raises its legal drinking age from 18 to 21 in July.

**1986** MTV airs its first Spring Break special, broadcast live from Daytona Beach, Beginning the youth marketing opportunities during Spring Break.

**1986** On March 28th, The Good Friday riot breaks out in Palm Springs, California, when a woman exposes her breasts to a mob of drunk men, who begin to throw rocks and tear biking tops off frightened women. Two hundred police officer in riot gear arrest 100 college students. Seventy people are sent to the hospital.

**1989** Daytona Beach is overwhelmed by 400,000 college students, double the usual
   Number, over a three week period (half the usual time).

**1991** In Palm Springs, California, Mayor Sonny Bono bans the thong bikini in an attempt
   to avoid more riots. The town's popularity as a Spring Break destination
   diminishes.

**1992** Panama City Beach, Florida takes over as the nation's Spring Break capital,
   attracting 500,000 college students.

**1994** MTV moves its Spring Break headquarters to San Diego, the first time for a
   California destination.

**1996** MTV moves its Spring Break headquarters to Panama City Beach. The 5,000
   resident town with twenty-seven miles of beaches receives 550,000 college
   students.

**2003** Panama City Beach remains the Spring Break capital, with an estimated 540,000
   college students arriving for Spring Break.

**2005** An estimated 15,000 students visit Ft. Lauderdale during Spring Break – down 96
   percent from 1985.

CHAPTER 3 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism Events

The definitions or categorizations of different types of events vary greatly and there is little agreement on standardized terminology. Often, events are categorized by size, although they can also be categorized according to impact or scale or in combination. According to Hall (1997) "Mega-events such as World Fairs and Expositions, the World Soccer Cup Final, or the Olympic Games, are events which are expressly targeted at the international tourism market and may be suitably described as 'mega' by virtue of their size in terms of attendance, target market, level of public financial involvement, political effects, extent of television coverage, construction of facilities, and impact on economic and social fabric of the host community" (Hall: 1997, pg. 5). 'Hallmark' events on the other hand, while still large in size, tend to be associated with the very essence or spirit of a particular location. Getz (2005) describes hallmark events as those " … that possess such significance, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, quality or publicity, that the event provides the host venue, community, or destination with a competitive advantage. Over time the event and destination can become inextricably linked, such as Mardi Gras and New Orleans" (Getz: 2005, pgs. 16-17). However, some authors have categorized hallmark events as a sub-category of mega-events and vice-versa. In addition, the terms have been used interchangeably with one another. As such, by following the hierarchy format of mega-events being the largest events with international markets and hallmark events being more local in nature, Spring Break is a hallmark event.

There was particularly little research done on mega-events until the last twenty-five years. Since then, a growing amount of literature has focused on the mega-event, although much remains centered on so-called 'hallmark' events (Higham: 1999, Deccio and Baloglu: 2002,

Waitt: 2003). When such events are studied, the research has focused almost exclusively on their effects - particularly the economic effects that are associated with them (Roche: 1993, Gratton, Dobson and Shibli: 2000). Regardless of labeling the event size, key economic indicators for the urban perspective are such things as tax revenue, income and poverty levels. Subsidiary research has primarily dealt with sports as a tourist attraction and the role of sporting events in public policy decision making (Weed: 2001, Higham and Hinch: 2003) and promotional effects of the events (Bamossy and Stephens: 2003, Chalip, Green and Hill: 2003, Oldenboom: 2006). Few studies have delved into the strategic decision making processes that drive event impacts (O'Brien: 2006).

While many mega-events are a yearly occurrence, such as the Superbowl, World Series and World Cup Soccer, they typically do not take place at the same location. Those events which do occur on a yearly basis at the same location tend to have pronounced features, such as: a general pattern of seasonality, with the event taking place at the same location at the same time of the year; the likelihood that the host location will develop a sense of ownership or stewardship of the event; a lower level or perceived danger or risk and the reduction of uncertainties by local residents, which also causes an increase in confidence by the visitor; a process of adaption between the host community and the visitors, potentially leading to greater visitor loyalty (Higham: 1999, Kim and Chalip: 2004).

Mega-event have been shown to have the potential for creating significant impacts on the host location, although much of the literature regarding these impacts are associated with large, sports related events, such as the Olympics. Positive effects include the creation or enhancement of infrastructure and event facilities, the regeneration of neglected or poverty stricken areas of the city, increased tourism, the development of  local business opportunities and increased

employment for the local population (Bramwell: 1997, Robin: 1988, Roche: 1993, Solberg and Preuss: 2007, Walle: 1996). However, not all of the associated effects have been positive. Negative effects related to mega-events include high construction costs which may be borne by the local population, temporary problems with overcrowding, the increased cost of goods and services and a disruptive effect on the host communities known as the 'Gillette Syndrome,' which includes divorce, delinquency, drunkenness and depression (Higham: 1999, Hiller: 1990, Leonardsen: 2007). However, other studies have subsequently come to conclude that the Gillette Syndrome does not occur (Leonardsen: 2007).

Planning for mega-events presents its own set of complexities. While planning is a rational, knowledge based decision making process with recognized goals and stakeholder input, mega-event planning has not always followed this pattern. Often, it is the critical step of local involvement that has been left out of the process (Hall: 1997, Leonardsen: 2007). Additionally, it has been recognized that the planning process of mega-events has become increasingly political (Hall: 1989, Hall: 1997, Hiller: 1989, Leonardsen: 2007, Roche: 1993). Such politicization has turned the planning process non-rational and non-democratic with the power holders acquiring more power and the local community being removed from the planning process.

<center>Rationale for Tourism as Economic Development</center>

Tourism has become an increasingly attractive option at the local level for economic development. Tourism is attractive, in part, because it is the number one industry worldwide, generating $3.5 trillion (U.S. dollars) and employing over 200 million people (Gmelch: 2004). While much research has focused on tourism in developing nations, tourism has become a focal point for economic development in western nations as well. Fainstein and Gladstone (1999)

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suggest that tourism is a popular tool for economic development initiative simply because cities, regions, and countries may be out of other viable options to generate money. Hall and Hubbard (1996) offer that this decline in the viability of options is due to the deindustrialization of western economies, and the attempts at economic restructuring and remediation that follow. Urry (1990) cites the need for declining cities that were once manufacturing and mercantile centers to reinvent themselves as centers with tourist friendly components. This may be especially true in locations that have an intact urban core, with structures considered historic that have outlived their previous purpose (Maharaj: 2002). Such amenities allow for an area to capitalize on existing infrastructure, without a substantial infusion of capital.

In terms of financing, the cost of implementing tourism tends to be low. In the U.S. local government leaders favor tourism ventures if they do not burden the local taxpayer. Often, funding for tourism facilities and programs comes from the state level, resulting in local support (Singh, Timothy, and Dowling: 2003). Additionally, tourism is considered an 'invisible' export industry, one that the consumer (tourist) must visit, as opposed to the product actually being transported to the market (Mathieson and Wall: 1982). In contrast to other export industries, tourism generally requires little in the way of imports for the foreign exchange that it generates (Mathieson and Wall: 1982). The opportunity for high profits with little in the way of direct, local financial and infrastructure investment has helped to spur the use of tourism as an economic development initiative.

While tourism does have many benefits that make it a viable and attractive option to locations seeking ways to spur economic development, caution and planning are viewed as a necessity for tourism to be a productive venture. Simply embracing tourism without regards to the types and levels of impacts is risky. According to Mathieson and Wall (1982), tourism can suffer from

instability of demand. This can occur on global, regional, and local levels. Because of this, tourism is best suited to be a complementary rather than primary player in the local economy (Godfrey and Clark: 2001). Local destination areas also need to address potential costs, terms of commitment and resources, and how they will impact the community. Even this may not be enough, as understanding how tourism at the local level is related to global outcomes is also viewed as a necessity.

Tourism has demonstrated a capacity to be highly profitable, but this profit is not necessarily uniform at all levels. Godfrey and Clark (2001) have observed that tourism yields high revenue at the national and international level, but profitability at the local and regional levels is much less consistent. According to Milne and Ateljevic (2001) understanding the concept of the 'global-local nexus' is necessary to explain the lack of consistent profitability at the local and regional levels. The complex interrelationships between the global and local forces involving economic, cultural, and environmental elements shape the nature of tourism as the actors on all levels influence and are influenced by one another, though not evenly. While tourism in large part is heavily influenced by global drivers, understanding the complexities of local interactions – residents, visitors, governments, and entrepreneurs, are central to successful tourism development outcomes (Milne and Ateljevic: 2001).

Impacts of Tourism

Tourism carries with it both positive and negative impacts to the host area. These impacts are typically classified into three categories; economic, socio-cultural, and physical. The level of these impacts on the host community varies depending on the size of the location, rate and scope of the development, and the number of tourists who visit. Historically, the economic impacts

have received the most attention, but recent emphasis has been placed on studying the socio-cultural and physical impacts as well.

Although college students descend on a Spring Break locale for a limited time, no more than six weeks total, their impacts can carry lasting effects. While an economic powerhouse, the throngs of students, sometimes as many as 540,000 in a given location, can be a disruptive force. Their short term presence can create long term difficulties if the area is not prepared or equipped to deal with them. Potential problems such as unchecked development, inflation, and the loss of local culture are serious concerns which can offset the potential benefits of tourism without proper understanding and planning.

*Economic Impacts*

Research has indicated a number of positive economic impacts of tourism. Two primary positive effects are generation of employment and generation of income (Mathieson and Wall: 1982). Secondary positive effects such as enhanced transportation systems and community and heritage conservation projects also occur (Nickerson: 1996; Singh, Timothy, and Dowling: 2003). Additionally, the increase in entrepreneurial activity and enhancements to the area's economic structure are sometimes cited as primary effects, although they are typically subsidiary to employment and income.

Because in most instances tourism tends to be a labor intensive operation as opposed to one that requires large amounts of capital, a large workforce is typically needed. According to Godfrey and Clark (2001) a large number of local applicants are typically qualified to work in the tourist industry because tourism jobs often require minimal education and skills. While a significant percentage of these jobs can be classified as 'direct' employment – those in the hospitality industry - indirect employment is also created. Mathieson and Wall (1982) list income

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earning opportunities for support services such as taxi drivers, travel agents, and entertainment, as examples.

Though tourism's economic benefits can be enticing, researchers have cautioned that it should not be viewed as an economic panacea. While a large number of jobs are created, the work is often seasonal and service oriented, and as a result, a number of the jobs are on a part-time basis (Krotz: 1996; Godfrey and Clark: 2001). These factors also tend to produce limited career advancement opportunities. Additionally, hospitality workers often work non-traditional hours and the boundaries that separate work from leisure can disappear, isolating them from other areas of life (Urry: 1990).

Income generated from tourism occurs at multiple strata of the destination area. Tourists spend money that directly benefits business owners and employees involved in the hospitality industry in the form of income. As well as taxing local individuals and entrepreneurs, local and regional governments generate income via taxes on hotels and other tourist activities, often in the form of an entertainment tax (Mathieson and Wall: 1982). However, benefits of increased income are rarely spread evenly throughout society. Those who profit the most tend to be heavily involved in the tourist industry, while the costs are often carried by those who derive little benefit (Brougham and Butler: 1981; Cohen: 1984). Furthermore, the scale and scope of tourism development influences the distribution of wealth. Large scale developments, especially those initiated by outside developers have been shown to yield relatively small benefits to the local population (Hiller: 1979; Tsartas 1992).

While it is well accepted that tourism produces increased income at multiple strata, accurately measuring how much can be difficult. Gauging how the tourist dollar impacts income is typically calculated through equations known as income multipliers, which measure how many times

tourist dollars circulate through the local economy. Multiplier equations are based on direct expenditures, indirect spending, and induced spending (Mathieson and Wall: 1982). The multiplier effect may be significantly altered depending on the income level of tourism employees and the size of the tourist destination. Because of this, calculating the actual generation of income through tourism is only as accurate as the analysis techniques used (Fletcher: 1989).

*Socio-Cultural Impacts*

According to Dogan (1989) socio-cultural impacts are a concern for the local population in a tourist area because tourism has an impact on resident's daily routines, values, and social life. Whether or not these impacts are real or perceived by the host population, they occur through interactions with the tourist population. General frameworks regarding host-tourist interactions have been postulated as a way to understand these impacts. One of the best known frameworks was developed by Bjorkland and Philbrick (1972) to analyze the process that takes place when different culture groups (and individuals within those groups) interact, and has been applied to tourism. A similar framework developed by Doxey (1976) is based on the rising irritation level of residents toward tourists, known as the 'Irridex.' Markedly similar, these frameworks differ only in the rigidity of how change is measured. While Doxey considered change to be unidirectional (from euphoric to anger) Bjorkland and Philbrick allow attitudes and behavior to change in multiple directions (Mathieson and Wall: 1982).

Regardless of the framework used, the effect that tourism has on host attitudes appears to be most directly related to the *number* of tourists that the local population is forced to interact with. According to Ap (1990) there is a tolerance threshold that hosts are willing to accept before tourists are viewed negatively. As long as the number of tourists and their impacts remain below

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the threshold, they will be viewed favorably (Mathieson and Wall: 1982; Ap: 1990). Where this threshold is set appears to vary based on the size of the locale and the scope of the development. However, attitudes have also been found to be influenced by whether or not the hosts directly benefit from tourism. Those who benefit economically are most likely to view tourism in a positive light (Brayley, Var, and Sheldon: 1989). Studies of host attitudes toward tourism based on whether residents are native born or recent transplants are inconclusive. Some have found that high levels of attachment (native born) favorably correlate with a less accepting attitude toward tourists (Broughham and Butler: 1981; Lankford and Howard: 1994). However, these results have been disputed in other studies (Davis: 1988; McCool and Martin: 1994).

One positive outcome of host-guest interactions is that people in the host community may gain a greater understanding of world affairs and foreign customs. However, the social exchange that occurs as tourist and locals interact can best be viewed as a slippery slope. Exposure to new customs, ways of thinking and material goods can lead to what is known as the 'demonstration effect.' Mathieson and Wall (1982) define this as the process of locals being influenced by the symbols of superior material wealth brought by tourists. This can lead the local population to strive for the type of lifestyle that can provide such wealth and goods, even though they may be out of reach. It may even lead to misconceptions about the tourist's attitudes, values, and beliefs. While the demonstration effect is likely to be far more prevalent, or at least more intense in non-Western cultures, it can occur in the U.S. as well. This may be particularly true of more rural areas which witness a rapid increase in tourism development. If true, Spring Break may be a catalyst for the demonstration effect to occur, as students, representing the relatively affluent, white, middle class of America descend on lightly populated areas without strong economic bases.

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The shift in values which can occur due to the demonstration effect can also lead to the commercialization (commodification) of local culture (Greenwood: 1977; Cohen: 1988). Through this process local culture becomes something that is marketed or sold to tourist populations through either material goods or entertainment. This is most often recorded in developing nations with non-Western cultures (Mathieson and Wall: 1982). Although a possibility, Gmelch (2004) points out that the occurrences of cultural commodification happen far less often in host areas of the U.S., which tend to suffer far more from simulations of reality or hyper-reality – whereby an attraction is manufactured as a substitute for a 'real' attraction. These replications of reality have been described as 'quintessentially American' and prominent examples include Disney World and Busch Gardens (Gmelch: 2004).

Shifting personal values have been demonstrated to cause changes in the social structure of the local population. Interpersonal relationships have been shown to decrease and a greater shift toward individualism takes place (Scott: 1978). In an attempt to achieve the level of wealth of the tourists, more locals may take jobs in the tourist industry, leaving behind jobs that have been traditional sources of employment in the area (Mathieson and Wall: 1982; Tsartas: 1992). This may create or accentuate class conflict, as members of the local population seek greater upward mobility. In some instances, family conflict has occurred as children have become economically independent at an early age, as documented by Tsartas (1992).

Finally, one of the least desirable socio-cultural effects of tourism is the encouragement of deviant behavior. Deviant behavior can take a number of forms in destination areas and can been observed in tourists and hosts alike. The increase in petty criminal behavior, such as theft and fraud has been well documented (Mathieson and Wall: 1982; Cohen: 1983; Brunt and Courtney: 1999; Tosun: 2002). Activities such as pick pocketing, car theft, and personal assault accompany

increased tourism. Such crime is not caused by visitors, but by those singling out visitors because they are easy targets, typically unfamiliar with the area and with disposable income (Smith: 1977; Godfrey, Kerry, and Clark: 2000). Prostitution is another concern for host areas. While prostitution has been documented to increase at tourism locations (Cohen: 1988; Lankford: 1994; Lindberg and Johnson: 1997), there is debate as to how much prostitution is actually be attributed to tourism (Mathieson and Wall: 1982). While much of the criminal activity is directed toward tourists, less serious breaches of behavior, which may or may not be against the law, is undertaken by tourists. Specifically, the increase in alcohol consumption and the openness of sexual behavior at tourist destinations has been noted (King, Pizam, and Milman: 1991). This is most likely to occur in warm climates and can also be attributed to the temporary relationship that the tourist has with the area. Given that Spring Break centers on alcohol and at least the possibility for sex, it is probable that much of the behavior described by King, Pizam and Milman (1991) occurs at Spring Break destinations.

*Public Governance Impacts*

Because Spring Break locations tend to attract a student populations often many times the size of the local population, generating large sums of money in a short time period, host communities (and potential host communities) should be keenly aware of tourism's physical impacts, which center mainly on public administration issues. Any type of development will change a location's physical appearance. The same holds true for development brought about by tourism. Development associated with tourism is not without its drawbacks. According to Hammes (1994) increases in tourism and subsequent development effectively cause the bidding up of land prices in response to resort development. Because land is less expensive away from the core, subsequent development is likely to radiate outward, often haphazardly, to locations where land

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is most affordable. Second home or vacation home development, which often follows in tourist destination, may further induce this pattern of urban sprawl as land values continue to rise further away from the core, necessitating the search for affordable land. Unfortunately, this type of development seeks out the most scenic areas, including coastlines. Known as architectural pollution, much of the development may be of low quality and aesthetically unpleasant due to incompatible building styles and remain unoccupied much of the year (Mathieson and Wall: 1982).

Development and speculative development has been shown to have an inflationary effect on the local economy (Cohen: 1982). Businesses which seek to make profits from tourists raise the prices of goods and services, which can lead to higher prices paid by the consumer. Residents often have to travel further to purchase everyday goods as local businesses are pushed to the periphery by increasing rents. Such actions can greatly impact the quality of residential life (Robbins: 1994).

Many of the negative effects of tourism development could be avoided or mitigated if public governance and planning efforts were initiated prior to the inception of development. Not only are these efforts well advised for locales which may be destined for tourist development, they may be a necessity. Unfortunately, planning for tourism does not often happen. Not every location is large enough to warrant its own planning department. Many small towns and unincorporated areas fall under the auspices of county planning departments, whose responsibilities often encompass large areas. Because Spring Break locations have typically been small locales with the aforementioned features, planning considerations for such events are unlikely to have been undertaken.

Inskeep (1987) points out that even when planners attempt to create a regulatory framework for tourism, they are not always trained sufficiently in the discipline to do so. Additionally, rapid tourism growth can place certain pressures on planners and local governments, especially when the realization of wealth occurs. Short term planning goals, especially those linked to economic development become dominant (Mathieson and Wall: 1982). Regulatory efforts may be resisted or stifled by both tourism developers and members of the local population. Often, planners are confronted with a practice Hammes (1994) describes as 'regulation mining' as landowners spend time and money to have land rezoned so that it will be most conducive to profit gain. Such activities are disruptive to local governments and lead to haphazard or short-term decision making, but are prevalent in tourist destinations. Given that Spring Break has the capacity to generate $500 million for a local economy in a one month period, pressure to zone for maximum profit gain is a reasonable effect.

Travel and Motivation

The fundamental questions in studies involving tourism center on the questions of why should one travel and why should one travel to a particular destination or environment? This is primarily a question of motivation. In this sense, college students traveling for Spring Break are no different than any other tourists. Understanding their motivations for traveling and where they are likely to travel to be of central importance not only to current Spring Break locales, but also to the locales of the future regarding the issues of economic impact, socio-cultural impact, and physical impact.

*Push-Pull Framework*

According to Dann (1977), the push-pull framework provides a simple approach for explaining the underlying motivations of tourist behavior. This framework is largely derived from Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, which contends that as humans meet their basic needs (i.e. physical, safety), they increasingly seek to satisfy higher needs, such as esteem and self-actualization. Researchers have often used this framework, because understanding human needs are viewed as essential for understanding tourist motivation and decision making.

The push-pull framework works well for tourism because it is not rigid. Its two components encompass both the motivations for travel and the destination selection process that follows. Push factors are those that relate to the needs or desires of the tourist, such as adventure, social interaction, or escape. Pull factors are those which are the attributes of a destination or location. In terms of college students traveling on Spring Break, these are likely to include sunshine, the beach, and destination cost. Push and pull factors are generally viewed as separate decisions, with push factors preceding pull factors (Dann: 1977). However, some researchers such as Crompton (1979) and Uysal and Jurowski (1994), have argued that the decisions are not entirely separate of one another. Regardless of whether or not these decision making processes are separate or more symbiotic, they will be discussed in separate sections for the purposes of this dissertation.

*Why Should One Travel During Spring Break?*

While there are a number of theories regarding people's motivations to travel, the one that fits best with Spring Break is tourism as a secular ritual or pilgrimage. Moore and Myerhoff (1977) used the term 'secular ceremony' to describe the change of a ritual as a term that expressed religious beliefs to one that expressed the communication of beliefs within a particular social

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context in industrialized western nations. Myerhoff (1977) defines a secular ceremony as consisting of the following five features:

- A collective dimension expressed in the ritual's message of social meaning

- Repetition of content, form, and occasion

- Deliberate action by participants as part of the distinct behavior

- Orderly action achieved through exaggerated precision

- Evocative style and staging to engage and focus the audience's attention

The ceremony of Spring Break can be found within the features that Myerhoff describes. The collective dimension of the ritual's message can be found among not only students who attend Spring Break but among college students in general, through the themes of freedom and fun. Additionally, repetition and deliberate action are found repeatedly, from the process of traveling to the Spring Break destination to the sunbathing, drinking, and sex that follows. These actions, especially sunbathing and drinking are done with precision. Sunbathing typically occurs en masse, beginning at noon. Conversely, while drinking is viewed by students as a near continual activity, there is great emphasis on making sure that everyone in a given group is properly dressed and at the bars for the beginning of happy hour. The role of focusing the audience's attention is filled by organizations such as MTV and major beer and alcohol companies, which provide music, events, and a variety of games to keep participants engaged in the practice of Spring Break.

While the ceremony of Spring Break is extremely popular with students and generates large sums of money for Spring Break locales it occurs only once per year, for a six week period. This is also in keeping with the characteristic of a secular ceremony or ritual. According to Turner

(1977), the most important rituals are performed the least often. Gmelch (2004) points out that these rituals act to define and relieve the ordinary. If they were to occur frequently, they would lose their uniqueness (Goody: 1977). This explains why little to no emphasis is placed on 'fall break,' which occurs during a similar interval in the semester, for a similar length of time, with similar weather patterns in the typical Spring Break locales.

The concept of liminality plays an important role in understanding ritual behavior. Turner (1969), expanding on Van Gennep's research, defined liminality as a 'space' in the social structure. Liminal space is created during ritual action when people change from one role to another. In terms of Spring Break, this liminal space is created as students change from (presumed) academics to party-goers. Students of various backgrounds shed their previous collegiate roles, whatever they may be, and transform into sun bathing, beer drinking partiers. As Morgan (1984) observed, "liminal spaces are those that bring together and mix contrary or incompatible but meaningful categories" (pg. 89). As Spring Break ends, these roles change again, as the participants transform back into students, adopting the language, symbols, and behavior of such.

*Where Should One Travel During Spring Break?*

The question of where one should travel refers both to pull factors and tourist attractions. Pull factors are not necessarily tied to a specific place. For example, if students are looking for a Spring Break location that is sunny with beach access, there are many such areas to choose from. For Spring Break, the 'tourist attraction' that helps students to distinguish one warm, beach going spot from another is the combination of features that allow for a 'party atmosphere' to occur, where drinking, semi-nudity, and generally boorish behavior are at least tolerated.

Historically, Spring Break locales have been in warm, sunny, beach areas from the times when Spring Break was merely 'spring vacation,' participated in by only a handful of students from institutions in the northeastern U.S. Why is this? This would seem logical, with that particular section of the country experiencing traditionally long, harsh winters. So, at the very least, students traveling south as the north begins to thaw out makes logical sense, as well as providing at least some level of historical inertia which carries over today. But how do the students choose which of numerous beachside locales to travel to?

Fortunately, the few Spring Break studies conducted have focused on the pull factors for destination selection among students. A study done by Butts, et al. (1996) found that the most attractive factors to students in choosing their Spring Break location are: a sunny climate, accommodations, price, and the nightlife reputation of the destination. Sirakaya and McLellan (1997) found similar responses, with the highest rated factors being climate, beaches, accommodations, large hotels, and feeling welcomed. When looking at the pull factors for the most popular Spring Break locations (Florida and Mexico), the primary factor, other than beaches, was party atmosphere. It is clear from this that while many locations big and small have the potential to be Spring Break destination, only those that provide a 'party atmosphere' are considered by the vast majority of students. Whether or not the locale is willing to provide such an atmosphere is purely optional.

## Student Culture

The most important component of Spring Break is the students because they are what defines Spring Break and key destination locations. And more important is our understanding of the concept of 'culture' as it applies to students and their behavior. Recognizing that there is no

singular, encompassing definition of culture, we subscribe to Bates and Plog's (1990) premise

that it is shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that members of society use to

cope with their world and with one another that are transmitted from generation to generation. It

is also recognized that every human group creates its own reality of a shared culture (Spradley

and Mann: 1975) and this holds true for college students as well. During their four to six years as

undergraduates they have time to learn the culture of becoming a college student. Specifically,

we follow Durst and Schaeffer's definition of a college students culture in that they "…possess a

distinct set of symbols, norms, values, ideals, customs and artifacts that set them aside from non-

students" (Durst and Schaeffer 1992: 1). Key examples of this difference are evidenced in

student drinking habits, time management, and personal relationships.

And while the concept of Spring Break seems static and as an end results, we note the grand

change that has occurred with the entire Spring Break process from World War II to the present

time. It is widely acknowledged that student culture has changed over time, especially since the

end of the Second World War (Bronner 1990; Willimon and Naylor 1995; Sperber 2000; Nathan

2005; Seaman 2005). And it is this change in student culture that has prompted the

corresponding change in Spring Break. This section will deal with both the external and internal

forces which shape student culture, from the post-World War II period to the present.

*Institutional Impacts*

Peer influence and popular culture have the most impact on students and hence, student

culture. This is especially true when viewing student culture through a specific time period.

However, it is important to recognize that people both shape their environment and are shaped by

it (Banning 1975). Therefore, when viewing changes in student culture and relating them to

Spring Break, it is necessary to take a longitudinal view of not only internal (peer) impacts to

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student culture, but external (institutional) changes as well. Institutional factors such as university control, admissions standards, corporate philosophy, and curriculum focus among others are acknowledged to have helped student culture evolve to its current point (Willimon and Naylor 1995; Rojstaczer 1999; Johnson, Kavanagh and Mattson 2003; Seaman 2005).

*G.I. Bill*

Institutional changes would take place following World War II which would have a definitive influence on student culture. The first event resulting in institutional change was the advent of the Serviceman's Readjustment Act – commonly known as the G.I. Bill, signed into law in 1944. The act allowed for the training and education of returning servicemen. The number of veterans attending college was initially predicted to be low, with no more than 150,000 in classrooms in any given year (Olson: 1973). However, over the following four years a total of 2,233,000 veterans utilized the G.I. Bill to attend college (Olson: 1973). It is believed that between 10-30 percent of returning veterans would not have been able to attend college if it were not for the G.I. Bill (Nam: 1964; Olson: 1973).

There is general agreement that the increase in college students via the G.I. Bill had much less of an impact in institutional change than did the change in perception that it created. Prior to World War II, college students were comprised mainly of the upper and middle classes (Levine: 1986; Clark: 1998). College was perceived as a place for the elite of society at a time when "Americans still embraced the self-made, self-educated man as a cultural icon of America" (Clark: 1998, pg. 169). The average American did not see the value in college, and it was not a requirement for the majority of available jobs. However, veteran performance in the classroom would give rise to the change in the way students and universities viewed each other, and what

the purpose of each would be. It is this change in perception that began the transformation of Spring Break from a time to relax to a powerful industry, focusing on beer, sun, surf, and sex.

Academically, veterans proved they were not only equal to but surpassed non-veteran students. Frederiksen and Schrader (1951) found that veterans were older; more motivated and received superior grades to their non-veteran counterparts. That the veterans, who were regarded as 'average Americans,' could attain academic distinction, changed the perception of college for the public (Clark: 1998). College became looked upon as an opportunity and a right, and coincided with the post-war perceptions of the average American's place in the new corporate and consumer culture of the U.S. (Clark: 1998).

The veteran presence and success provoked changes within the institutions as well as within American society. Because veterans outperformed non-veterans, their attitudes toward curriculum had to be taken into account. Veterans felt that college courses should be more streamlined and practical. Vincour (1947) believed this thinking was due to a combination of factors, including: age, military training, and increasing consumerism. In response, colleges and universities began offering more vocational courses and began the modern expansion of curriculum.

*Student Self-Autonomy*

Many researchers have argued that student rebellion and radicalism has existed on American campuses, at least in some form, for over a century. While this is true, it is also acknowledged that no previous rebellions impacted higher education as those in the 1960's (H. Horowitz: 1986). There is little doubt that the social upheaval of the 1960's encompassed and impacted the whole of American societal beliefs and views, of which the college campus is a part. In attempting to explain student uprisings, authors such as Salter (1973) have proposed causes such

as adolescence, family values, conspiracy, and devaluation. However, to others, such as Johnson, Kavanagh and Mattson (2003), conflict on college campuses that shaped higher education centered on reaction against the concept known as the 'multiversity.' To support this position, Johnson, Kavanagh and Mattson (2003) point to the protests and UC Berkley, beginning in 1964, in which students specifically spoke out against the concept of the university's role and purpose as producing good workers for corporations. This concept was advocated by Berkley President Clark Kerr, and was being emulated by other institutions around the country.

The components of the multiversity concept were adopted as a response to student-veteran influences of the late 1940's and early 1950's. Many of the institutions had doubled their enrollment by the 1960's but had not increased buildings, classrooms and professors to keep pace (Olson: 1973). Increased student-teacher ratios and the advent of the mega-university had become an accepted practice. Even before 1950 authors such as Feder (1947) and Wheeler (1947) noted student displeasure with large class sizes, and impersonal, production line like education. By the mid-1960's these complaints fostered student backlash against the perceived constraints of higher education.

Campus conflict that centered on whether or not schools should move away from the multiversity concept and back toward a more pure form of education for the purpose of knowledge and exploration was eventually won by the students. Student led reform was made possible because students became a fourth power, along with the administration, faculty, and trustees, and became aware of this power (Katz and Sanford in Yamato: 1968). Widespread changes occurred, both directly and indirectly to higher education as a result. The need for student directed self-exploration and expression on the college campus became an accepted norm. Previous to this time, schools largely operated on the notion of *In Loco Parentis,* literally

meaning 'in the absence of parents.' Schools, from the earliest times, had taken on the authoritarian role of parents with regards to the student population (Levine: 1986). Now, students became more self-autonomous, regulated largely by resident advisors (fellow students) instead of faculty or administration. Seaman (2005) believes the perceived rigidity in academics gave way as well, with the elimination of Saturday classes (and eventually the informal elimination of Friday classes) and the introduction of pop culture into the curriculum. Some, such as Kimball (1991) and D. Horowitz (2005) believe that these changes have given rise to the 'radical left', professors who came of age during the 1960's and their current protégés, who push a radical, liberal agenda in the classroom. While these arguments may have merit, at least in part, a number of researchers point out the greatest effect would be dramatic changes to student behavior, primarily an increased emphasis on socialization, which would further influence institutional and student cultural norms.

*Business Model of Education*

Sperber (2000) asserts that the combination of changing social perceptions about college, overbuilding for the baby boom generation, and student pressures of the 1960's caused schools to view students more as customers (consumers) rather than young adults to be educated and trained. Ritzer (2000) and Roberts and Donahue (2000) refer to this trend as the 'McDonaldization' of higher education. According to Leik (1998), this implies "…the main job of academe is satisfying the immediate and likely short-term goals of the students…" (Leik: 1998, pg. 751). While this concept is more prevalent at state universities, it is present at elite private institutions as well.

If the schools have indeed become customer oriented, then they would have developed strategies to increase their customer (student) base. In support of this notion, Sperber (2000) cites

the decrease in admissions standards, causing many public institutions to now have acceptance rates of 80-100%. Van Valey (2001) and Seaman (2005) agree with this line of thought as well, arguing that schools are now market themselves as a lifestyle experience as much as an educational one, trying to be all things to all students. Research by Rojstaczer (1999) appears to support these claims, pointing out that support services for students now constitute a significant expenditure for colleges and universities. Services such as psychological counseling, academic advising, tutoring, job placement, and resident life are offered at most institutions (Rojstaczer: 1999).

Current research indicates the philosophy of catering to the student population exists in the academic as well as the administrative sectors of institutions. Willimon and Naylor (1995) have strongly criticized the university-as-corporation model for forcing many departments, schools, and colleges within institutions to attract students to compete for resources and prove their viability. The manipulation of curriculum is one way this is accomplished. While curriculum has gotten more diverse since the 1960's evidence shows it has also spawned an abundance of new courses that often incorporate 'pop culture' in part or as the focus of the class in order to capture the students' interest. By the late 1990's professors were frequently building courses around TV shows such as *The Simpsons* and *Star Trek,* as well as rock bands and comic books (Seaman: 2005).

According to Van Valey (2001) a primary result of the adoption of a business model by schools is that it shifts accountability from the student to the faculty. As a result, course material and requirements have diminished, as has the amount and quality of work expected of students. Johnson, Kavanagh and Mattson (2003) have attributed this trend to the use of part-time faculty, which has risen from 22% to 45% from 1972 to 2000, and whose employment is largely

dependent upon positive student evaluations. A number of studies have concluded that students give instructors higher ratings on evaluations when they expect to receive higher grades (Feldman: 1976; Hamilton: 1980; Callahan: 1991). This has resulted in a corresponding rise in grade point average (GPA's), for diminished student work output. Research by Rojstaczer (1999) demonstrates that this trend, known as 'grade inflation' has become especially prevalent over the last 20 years, with GPA's rising .25 since the mid-1980's.

Faculty members (both full and part-time) understand that less work for students can be beneficial to themselves. Conversely, the student, who now has less work, has more time for social activities (Rojstaczer: 1999). Faculty have relative security in high performance evaluations and greater personal time, but students now expect high rewards for low output (Willimon and Naylor: 1995; Rojstaczer: 1999). Professors now lament that many students seem to have a pre-determined limit as to how much work they are willing to do (Seaman: 2005). To a great degree, the policies of a corporate model of education have shifted control from institution to students, altering higher education, which has in turn, altered student culture.

*Internal Impacts*

*Explanations of Student Behavior*

Overall, students are directly influenced by the college experience to the extent that both the institution and other students profoundly impact their behaviors. While early efforts to explain student culture and behavior focused on the students themselves, student sub-cultures and the use of typologies became popular beginning in the 1960's. These explanations were based on the notion that students differentiated themselves from one another by their goals, attitudes, and background, forming sub-cultures within the overall student culture (Trow and Clark: 1960; Newcomb and Flacks: 1964; Astin: 1965; Stern: 1965). The most identifiable work was done by

Trow and Clark. They explained student culture, particularly peer group influence through the use of a sub-culture typology. Trow and Clark (1960) identify four (4) student subcultures; a) collegiate, b) academic, c) vocational and d) non-conformist. Recognizing the danger in such a typology, Trow was quick to point out that these subculture types were not types of students, but "…fluid systems of norms and values, which overlap and flow into one another…" (Trow: 1962). In other words, students may participate in or 'try on' more than one subculture in the course of their college career. More recently, authors such as Helen Horowitz (1987) continued with sub-culture typologies as a way of explaining the complex of student behaviors, attitudes, and values. The labels used to define sub-cultures changed and became more exacting, with terms such as 'outsiders', 'rebels', and 'new outsiders' and 'new rebels' being introduced. However, the concept of the sub-culture typology remained the same.

Critics as far back as Warren (1968) pointed out those typologies; specifically the one developed by Trow and Clark lacked the flexibility necessary to adequately explain student behavior. Many current researchers have dismissed typologies as too rigid and not realistic in explaining student behavior. Researchers such as Rebekah Nathan have offered that there can be no dominant student culture 'model' because there is an amalgam between the typologies (Nathan: 2005). Durst and Schaeffer (1992) go one step further, arguing that "…the differences between 'real' student cultures and sub-cultures within them are merely matters of degree and not substantive differences" (Durst and Schaeffer: 1992, pg. 1). Today's research has refocused back on the student in efforts to accurately explain how the student's culture impacts the student's behavior because it seems that while students want to define themselves, they want that that definition to include being identified as part of a group.

*Peer Groups*

Understanding collegiate peer group formation and influence is central to understanding student behavior. These peer groups, according to Durst and Schaeffer (1992) are "…the vehicle through which the student is accepted into college culture" (Durst and Schaeffer: 1992, pg. 53). Student behavior has always been regulated to a degree by peer groups, acting similarly to that of a family (Smucker: 1947). However, after the demise of *In Loco Parentis*, peer groups have increased their role as a regulatory body on college campuses.

Within the last fifteen years, both Durst (1992) and Nathan (2005) have extensively studied both peer group structure and their influence on students. Their findings are markedly similar, despite the difference in years between studies, researcher background, and institutional size and scope studied (university vs. liberal arts college). Based on their research, collegiate peer group structures exhibit the following characteristics:

- Most have 2-10 members, but may have as many as 20
- Are strikingly similar to family kinship groups
- Formed based on shared circumstances and demographics rather than personality and academic interests
- May be comprised of all classes (freshmen through seniors)

These findings bear a strong resemblance to studies done by Cooper and Ayers-Lopez (1985), indicating that students tend to seek out peer groups with values similar to their own family values, and this seems premised in the need to be accepted.

The structure of the group and how it relates to other groups and larger networks on campus is complex. Durst and Schaeffer (1992) have identified three components to the group structure; core, inner periphery, and outer periphery. The individual is affected most directly by the core,

which is highly influential, regulating individual behavior (Durst and Schaeffer: 1992). The values of the individual are organized around the common concerns of the core group – i.e., what is important to the group is important to the individual (Smucker: 1947).

While Durst and Schaeffer's work is key in understanding student behavior, other researchers, most recently Sperber (2000) and Seaman (2005) have chosen to look at the more indirect influences wielded by campus organizations, such as fraternities. While both Sperber and Seaman concede that fraternity influence has waned in the last fifty years, each agrees that Greek organizations still play an influential role in affecting student behavior, especially with regards to social activities. Durst and Schaeffer do not disagree, noting that while a relatively small percentage of students belong to Greek organizations, these organizations act as 'hubs' for different friendship groups across campus (Durst and Schaeffer: 1992). As evidence, they cite student surveys which indicate that while the student body is generally negative toward Greek organizations, while at the same time the student body wants to be accepted by the Greeks.

Other researchers, particularly Willimon and Naylor (1995), have focused more on the student culture on campus as a whole (norms of the student body), and how this affects the individual student. All of these studies seem to dovetail nicely in agreement, providing a broad view of how a student's behavior is influenced from the macro level (student population) through the micro level (the individual student).

Overall, peer influences have been found to have strong and lasting impacts on individual students. Some researchers, such as Durst and Schaeffer (1992), believe that peer influences can have both positive and negative effects on student development. However, most research on peer influence has focused mainly on the negative aspects. One negative aspect, the pressure to drink is the most commonly cited. Oetting and Beauvais (1986), Klein (1992), and Seaman (2005)

among a host of others have indicated that drinking among college students is directly related to the need to be accepted. In addition to drinking, Wetzstein (2005) cites unhealthy sexual behavior as a primary negative aspect of peer pressure, but also blames school administrations for fostering such behaviors by turning a blind eye to them. So, all in all, we have students who come to college and whether they recognize it or not, they are pressured into drinking and identifying with peer groups. But why does the student do this?

*Student Values*

Sociologists, anthropologists, and psychologists have consistently demonstrated that adolescents will reject the notion of adult or supervisory standards and attempt to replace them with standards that are important to themselves as individuals. Current research focusing on college students has concluded that individuals are not likely to make choices which set them apart as individuals. Yamato (1968) and Nathan (2005) agree that despite the freedom to choose, most students act in a homogeneous fashion that will not set them apart from the campus norms established by the student populous. Nathan (2005) calls this action 'compulsive conformism'. Furthermore, this conformity appears to mirror the dominant cultural values of America (Durst and Schaeffer: 1992). Such conclusions appear to indicate a dichotomy of collegiate student decision making. The rejection of authority and expressing individual freedom are valued – as long as group norms are conformed to.

Recent research indicates that the actions of compulsive conformism can be found throughout the majority of the student populous. In the classroom this conformism leads students to do the minimal amount of work necessary to get by. Equality in the classroom amounts to being invisible (Nathan: 2005). Durst and Schaeffer (1992) point out that despite the importance college students place on individualism, they do not participate in even the most mundane

activities alone. Examples include going to the cafeteria, class, and social activities. Furthermore, Nathan (2005) found that when students attempted to express their individual tastes via clothing and phrases written on their dorm room doors, the same themes emerged; *freedom* and *fun* (my emphasis).

The growing importance of student leisure time has become a much studied topic in recent years. The previous discussion of institutional changes in the 1960's highlighted the shift which allowed students fewer responsibilities and greater free time. Research done by Willimon and Naylor (1995) indicate that the void of student responsibilities has been filled by leisure time. Students view leisure time as being 'earned' because they perceive themselves to work hard. Both Willimon and Naylor (1995) and Seaman (2005) have concluded that students don't work nearly as hard as previous generations and spend far more time on social activities. Not everyone shares these views. Although Nathan (2005) agrees that students today spend less time on school work – an average of 12 hours per week – much of their time is taken up by jobs. As evidence, she cites the National Survey of Student Engagement (2003), a comprehensive questionnaire filled out by students on a wide range of topics dealing with college. However, there is a good chance that the NSSE is flawed, as many students are likely to have exaggerated how much work is actually performed, both in and out of school. Nathan previously cited student surveys on class attendance, in which she indicated that the students consistently reported high personal attendance numbers despite being absent. Because of this, it is likely that Willimon and Naylor and Seaman provide a far more accurate picture of student leisure time. So what activities do students choose to participate in during their leisure hours?

*Drinking*

One primary social activity participated in by college students is drinking. According to Seaman (2005), college drinking dates back to 12th and 13th century Italy and France. While it is clear that student drinking has occurred since higher education's earliest days, it remained at moderate levels until recently. Beginning in the late 1960's, student drinking has increased dramatically (Moos: 1974; Moffat: 1987; Sperber: 2000; Seaman: 2005). Currently, students buy $6 billion worth of alcohol every year; more than is spent on books, food and other beverages combined (Sperber: 2000). This translates to each college student drinking sixty six-packs of beer apiece, annually (Wechler: 2002). In addition, college students have redefined drinking patterns. Wechler (2002) characterizes most students as binge drinkers, defined as consuming 5 or more drinks in a 4 hour period. This practice has skyrocketed among college students over the last two decades (Sperber: 2000; National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: 2002).

A number of reasons have been proposed for this dramatic increase. Taking a historical perspective, Bronner (1987) points out that many of the drinking games developed in the 1940's and 1950's have become staples of the college drinking scene today. Rather than rewarding a winner, these games have been designed to isolate a weak drinker. Seaman (2005) takes a multi-faceted perspective, arguing both the well documented effect that alcohol has as an agent of socialization and acceptance, while also including institutional changes that led to the advent of the four day weekend at many schools. Additionally, the increase in binge drinking may be tied to female students drinking more than ever before. Willimon and Naylor (1995) support this idea, citing the number of women who reported drinking to get drunk tripled between 1977-1993. Seaman believes this may actually be a gender equity issue – female students emulating male student drinking behavior as a mark of equality, despite the fact that female bodies are

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physically less equipped to deal with heavy alcohol consumption. Sperber (2000) has proposed that large scale marketing tactics have helped to popularize alcohol as a norm for college students. He cites the increased levels of marketing toward the 18-24 year old demographic by beer companies beginning the early 1980's, linking alcohol with popular college sporting events.

Regardless of the reasons for the popularity of student drinking, it has become firmly entrenched as part of student culture. Most college guidebooks have begun listing the best 'party schools' over the last twenty years. Some students in fact, choose their colleges based specifically on the notoriety of the campus party scene. And it doesn't stop there, sometimes drinking and partying overflow into the non-academic portions of the year, such as Spring Break.

*Dating and sex*

In addition to drinking, students place a high importance on relationships and sex. According to surveys done by Nathan (2005), these topics consistently appear as top priorities for students. Student relationship patterns have been studied with great frequency over the last 70 years. According to Bolton and Kammeyer (1967):

> ..There has probably been more study of dating than of any other single type of interaction on college campuses. Virtually all of these studies have looked at dating in terms of the courtship pattern which leads to the selection of a mate or in terms of the sexual implication of dating (pg. 223).

Waller (1937) was at the forefront of researchers in describing dating as a sociological phenomenon that is different from courtship. He asserted that in dating, males would seek sex while females would seek status. However, forty years later Gordon (1981) found that the dating complex as described by Waller was no longer relevant. Gordon found that the male and female sex roles had become less defined, with women often employing attitudes previously only displayed by men. Validation of this argument can be found in research done by Allgeirer

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(1981), who found that traditional dating patterns among adolescents had been replaced by pluralistic dating and group based socialization activities.

This increasing equality among men and women has found its way into the sexual arena as well. Douvan (1981) found that sexual norms have changed greatly since World War II, with the result being a greater sexual equality. He describes this pattern as 'sex with affection'; whereby sexual intimacy is viewed as acceptable if both partners have a reasonably committed relationship. More recent studies have found that formalized dating has become rare, and the attitude toward sex has become even more causal than described by Douvan (Durst and Schaeffer: 1992; Nathan: 2005; Seaman: 2005). Formalized dating has been replaced by a phenomenon known as the 'hook-up', an ambiguous activity which may or may not involve sex.

'Hook-up' is difficult to define, primarily because students themselves have difficulty in describing its parameters. According to Paul, McManus, and Hayes (2000), the hook-up can be defined as "a sexual encounter which may or may not involve sexual intercourse, usually occurring on only one occasion between two people who are strangers or brief acquaintances" (pg. 76). Hook-ups can occur nearly anywhere a group function takes place, and the individuals involved are part of larger groups in attendance. Most recently, Seaman (2005) concluded that the hook-up is the predominant relationship pattern on campuses, and is initiated by equal number of women and men. Survey research among undergraduates confirms Seaman's assertions. This practice was found to be engaged in by approximately 70% of students according to surveys done by Durst and Schaeffer. Survey research done by Paul, McManus and Hayes (2000) indicate students slightly more students reported hooking-up, at 78%. So, to hook-up during Spring Break would not be considered unusual behavior, but the norm. Overall, students bring their culture with them to destination locations. So it is important to be familiar

enough with each Spring Break site in order to recognize where Spring Break participants impact

these cities. So while this research focuses on intra-case and inter-case analysis, the methods

section will begin with a short biography of each Spring Break site before comparing case

indices.

CHAPTER 4 – METHODS AND CASE STUDIES

Methods

This research focuses on the impacts that college students have on Spring Break locations. In order to accurately determine impacts and their levels, if any, the four most popular Spring Break locations in the United States were selected for this dissertation. They include Daytona Beach, Florida, Panama City Beach, Florida, Lake Havasu City, Arizona, and South Padre Island, Texas. Using a case study methodology, each of these cities are studied over time for evidence of changes in the economy, socio-cultural processes and public governance that would be brought about by the masses of college students visiting for Spring Break.

The case study format was selected because I have chosen four distinct cases to compare within each case study and between each case study for the trends that the data will show, this research uses an embedded, multiple case study design because there are multiple units of analysis (Yin, 1994: 19). This is used because I've chosen 4 distinct cases to compare within each case study and between each case study for the trends that the data will show.  Beginning with Daytona Beach, each case will be discussed as separate cases with a cross comparison in the conclusion and recommendations section.

Case Study One – Daytona Beach, Florida

*History*

Prior to European contact, the Timucuan Indians inhabited the land in and around the Daytona Beach area. Spain claimed Florida as a colony in the early 1500's and the Timucuan Indians were eventually absorbed under Spanish rule. In the mid 1800's European settlers began to enter

the area of what is now Daytona Beach. The city's true start however, can be traced to Mathias Day, Jr., a newspaper publisher from Ohio, who purchased 2144 acres of property on the Halifax River in 1870. Day proceeded to build a small hotel called the Colony House, which ushered in the beginning of the first community. Incorporated in 1876, the residents named the new city "Daytona." By 1890, Henry Flagler, a partner in Standard Oil, began to create a railroad network extending along Florida's east coast. Because of this the area experienced considerable growth. In 1926, Daytona and two settlements - Seabreeze and Daytona Beach - decided to consolidate forming the city of Daytona Beach.

Picture 1.1. Daytona Beach 1906



Daytona Beach quickly became known to tourists for its temperate climate, natural beauty and tranquility. Additionally people had discovered that while Daytona's

beaches were beautiful, they were also ideal for racing cars due to their hard-

Source: www.solarnavigator.com

packed sand. This began the notion of Daytona as 'the world's most famous beach' as well giving birth to what eventually would be called the Daytona 500.

*Spring Break in Daytona Beach*

Daytona Beach is one of the earliest Spring Break locations, rivaling Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, by providing an equally permissive 'party atmosphere' and geographically located 350 miles

north.. Additionally, it can be considered one of the few, if only, post-Spring Break locations that

have curbed student behavior, yet still draws a measureable amount of students. It drew as many

as 350,000 students during peak years. While still drawing up to 70,000 students during Spring

Picture 1.2. Spring Break 1988



Break, Daytona Beach was also one of the first locations to diminish the permissive 'party atmosphere' by changing local ordinances and laws designed to specifically curb outrageous student behavior and illicit activity and limit the student population. While the city is heavily dependent on tourism, with as many as 8 million visitors per year, most of the city's tourist dollars have now been

Source: www.myflorida.com

redirected to promoting more family oriented events, such as NASCAR, Family Spring Break

and Bike Week. Although tourism is a major industry in the Daytona Beach area, during the past

15 years they type of tourists visiting has changed. While students on Spring Break were the

primary tourist group and revenue generator among all tourists, the city and county have moved

toward diversifying their tourist industry. Students on Spring Break now compose

only a small fraction of the overall tourists visiting the area and the city has shifted towards

attracting families instead. In addition, Daytona Beach has worked toward diversifying its entire

economy, attempting to attract non-tourist related businesses, with an emphasis on the

technology and manufacturing sectors in particular.

*Resident Population*

According to the latest available U.S. Census figures, people living in Daytona Beach tend to be very similar to the U.S. average in terms of male to female ratio and have a slightly higher median age at 37.2 years as compared to 35.3 years, but lower than Florida's overall average of 38.7 years. In addition, the population of Daytona Beach is more diverse than the U.S. average, with slightly fewer white inhabitants and nearly three times as many black inhabitants – 32% vs. 12%. The number of people per each household at 2.06 is lower than the state average of 2.5 and also the national average of 2.77. Daytona Beach residents also tend to be less family oriented, with nearly a third fewer residents reporting that they live in a 'family household' (48.4%) as opposed to the average Florida resident, of whom, 66.4% report the same. In addition, people living in Daytona Beach tend to have greater mobility, with 52.7% of all people renting as opposed to owning a home, while only 33.80% of all U.S. residents identify themselves as renters. Daytona Beach residents are also somewhat less educated than the average American. Of people age 25 and older, nearly 80% have at least a high school education, which is nearly identical to the U.S. average. However, only 18.8% of Daytona Beach residents have bachelor's degrees while nearly one quarter of everyone age 25 or older in the U.S. does.

Figure 1.1 City of Daytona Beach (FL) Population Characteristics 2000

| General Characteristics | Number | Percent | U.S. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total population | 64,112 | | |
| Male | 32,004 | 49.9 | 49.10% |
| Female | 32,108 | 50.1 | 50.90% |
| Median age (years) | 37.2 | (X) | 35.3 |
| Under 5 years | 3,189 | 5 | 6.80% |
| 18 years and over | 52,815 | 82.4 | 74.30% |
| 65 years and over | 12,659 | 19.7 | 12.40% |
| One race | 62,986 | 98.2 | 97.60% |
| White | 39,963 | 62.3 | 75.10% |
| Black or African American | 20,994 | 32.7 | 12.30% |
| American Indian or Native Alaskan | 206 | 0.3 | 0.90% |
| Asian | 1,112 | 1.7 | 3.60% |
| Pacific Islander | 41 | 0.1 | 0.10% |
| Some other race | 670 | 1 | 5.50% |
| Two or more races | 1,126 | 1.8 | 2.40% |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 2,232 | 3.5 | 12.50% |
| Household population | 59,015 | 92 | 97.20% |
| Group quarters population | 5,097 | 8 | 2.80% |
| Average household size | 2.06 | (X) | 2.59 |
| Average family size | 2.77 | (X) | 3.14 |
| Total housing units | 33,345 | | |
| Occupied housing units | 28,605 | 85.8 | 91.00% |
| Owner-occupied housing units | 13,538 | 47.3 | 66.20% |
| Renter-occupied housing units | 15,067 | 52.7 | 33.80% |
| Vacant housing units | 4,740 | 14.2 | 9.00% |
| **Social Characteristics** | **Number** | **Percent** | **U.S.** |
| Population 25 years and over | 41,995 | | |
| High School graduate or higher | 33,414 | 79.6 | 80.40% |
| Bachelor's degree or higher | 7,910 | 18.8 | 24.40% |
| Civilian Veterans | 8,536 | 16.1 | 12.70% |
| Disability status (population 5 years and over) | 14,753 | 24.8 | 19.30% |
| Foreign born | 4,925 | 7.7 | 11.10% |
| Male, Now married, except separated | 11,162 | 40.9 | 56.70% |
| Female, Now married, except separated | 10,413 | 37.7 | 52.10% |
| Speak a language other than English | 6,579 | 10.8 | 17.90% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)

Case Study Two - Panama City Beach, Florida

*History*

As with many locations in Florida, what is now Panama City Beach was originally inhabited by groups of Native Americans who found the waters of St. Andrew Bay and the Gulf of Mexico plentiful with fish and other wildlife. In the 17th and 18th centuries, pirates found the deep waters of the Bay ideal for ambushing the heavily laden gold ships en route for Mexico or Spain. By the 1920's small beach cottages and motels began to populate the coast. The area received a boost in 1932 when J.E. Churchwell began developing the Long Beach Resort, a collection of cottages, amusement rides and a casino on the beach. Panama City Beach was officially founded May 2, 1936 when other small cities known as West Panama City Beach, Long Beach and Edgewater merged to form a single chartered government. This new, larger city kept the name of Panama City

Picture 2.1 The White Beaches of PCB



Beach. Another development that played a large role in the area's history is St. Andrews Military Sound Reservation – a military training center during World War II. It is now St. Andrews State

Source: www.lodging4vacations.com

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Recreation Area. Opened in 1951, the park now covers more than 1,200 acres and is popular

with both tourists and the local population. Additionally, Panama City Beach is ranked as one of

America's top three golf towns by Golf Digest Magazine, with a combination of natural beauty,

a PGA school, and professionally designed courses that attract golf enthusiasts from all over the

country.

*Spring Break in Panama City Beach*

Panama City Beach is the current Spring Break Mecca. This tiny beach town is a small Spring

Break location, with a resident population of only 10,000 – although nearly the same number of

people live in surrounding, unincorporated areas (U.S. Census Bureau: 2007). But, during 2003

nearly 540,000 students partied here between March and April (Reynolds: 2004). This represents

a temporary, fifty fold increase in the city's population. Panama City Beach has fully embraced

the yearly onslaught of college

students over the last decade, eager for the associated economic opportunities.

Picture 2.2 Spring Break 2005



Aside from being the current Spring Break 'hot spot,' Panama City Beach is important to study because of the active changes occurring due to Spring Break. While still very much courting the student dollar, the city has witnessed a twenty-

Source: www.panamacitybeach.com

five percent increase in resident population in the last four years, and land values have sky rocketed, leading to further increases in development and pressure to change current zoning ordinances. Panama City Beach can be considered something of a 'living laboratory' – a Spring Break Mecca at its peak, struggling with the inevitable change that will occur during the tourism destination life-cycle.

*Resident Population*

Residents of Panama City Beach are markedly different from the average U.S. resident, in terms of age. The median age of people in Panama City Beach is 44.4 years – far above the U.S. average of 35.3 years. And while the State of Florida is known as a retiree haven, people living in Panama City Beach exceed the state average of 38.7 by nearly six years. The trend of being a retiree destination is further backed up because one in five people of the city are age 65 or older which is nearly double the U.S. average. In addition, this older population is much less diverse than the U.S. population with just over 96% of people identifying themselves as white. Household trends lend support to the city as destination for retirees as well. The city's average household size is 2.17 as compared to 2.59 for all of the U.S. This would be expected from a city with an older population, as they would be less likely to have other family members, specifically children, living at home. Overall, Panama City Beach residents are on par with the U.S. population in terms of education. While a greater percentage of city residents over the age of 25 have high school degrees – 87.50% vs. 80.40% of the U.S., they are marginally below the U.S. average in attaining bachelor's degrees.

Figure 1.2 City of Panama City Beach (FL) Population Characteristics 2000

| General Characteristics | Number | Percent | U.S. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total Population | 7,671 | | |
|    Male | 3,846 | 50.1 | 49.10% |
|    Female | 3,825 | 49.9 | 50.90% |
| Median Age | 44.4 | (X) | 35.3 |
| Under 5 years | 331 | 4.3 | 6.80% |
| 18 years and over | 6,408 | 83.5 | 74.30% |
| 65 years and over | 1,538 | 20 | 12.40% |
| One race | 7,574 | 98.7 | 97.60% |
|    White | 7,380 | 96.2 | 75.10% |
|    Black or African American | 67 | 0.9 | 12.30% |
|    American Indian and Alaska Native | 41 | 0.5 | 0.90% |
|    Asian | 60 | 0.8 | 3.60% |
|    Pacific Islander | 0 | 0 | 0.10% |
|    Some other race | 26 | 0.3 | 5.50% |
| Two or more races | 97 | 1.3 | 2.40% |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 169 | 2.2 | 12.50% |
| Household population | 7,671 | 100 | 97.20% |
| Group quarters population | 0 | 0 | 2.80% |
| Average household size | 2.17 | (X) | 2.59 |
| Average family size | 2.66 | (X) | 3.14 |
| Total housing units | 8,910 | | |
|    Occupied housing units | 3,529 | 39.6 | 91.00% |
|      Owner-occupied housing units | 2,605 | 73.8 | 66.20% |
|      Renter-occupied housing units | 924 | 26.2 | 33.80% |
|    Vacant housing units | 5,381 | 60.4 | 9.00% |
| **Social Characteristics** | **Number** | **Percent** | **U.S.** |
| Population 25 years and over | 6,063 | | |
|    High school graduate or higher | 5,307 | 87.5 | 80.40% |
|    Bachelor's degree or higher | 1,462 | 24.1 | 24.40% |
| Civilian Veterans | 1,393 | 21.7 | 12.70% |
| Disability status | 1,390 | 19.1 | 19.30% |
| Foreign born | 317 | 4.1 | 11.10% |
| Male, Now married, except separated | 2,038 | 62.6 | 56.70% |
| Female, Now married, except separated | 2,067 | 60.4 | 52.10% |
| Speak a language other than English | 379 | 5.2 | 17.90% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)

Case Study Three - Lake Havasu, Arizona

*History*

Settlement in the Lake Havasu area dates back hundreds of years, with tribes of Mohave

Indians as original inhabitants. Eventually, these tribes gave way to hunters and trappers,

prospectors and mining camps. Lake Havasu was created with the construction of Parker Dam in

the 1938. Until that time, what is now Lake Havasu was a remote section of the Colorado River.

During World War II, the area was used for military test flights, although the end of the war saw

the military abandon the area.

Picture 3.1 Old Settlement at Lake Havasu



Real development of the area began with Robert McCulloch, the wealthy owner of a chainsaw manufacturing company. In 1963 McCulloch purchased what was then 26 square miles of desert

Source: www.havasumagazine.com

property bordered the lake and would eventually become Lake Havasu City. In order to increase

development of the area, McCulloch opened a chainsaw manufacturing plant in the new

community. This eventually led to the creation of two other manufacturing plants. However,

McCulloch did not stop there. In order to spur his development interests, he bought the London

Bridge in 1968 and transported the granite stones to Lake Havasu City, where it was

reconstructed. This gave worldwide exposure to the area, and the bridge remains one of the city's most popular attractions.

*Spring Break in Lake Havasu*

Growing in popularity among college students over the past decade, Lake Havasu City, Arizona is the only major Spring Break location inside the U.S. that is not located on the gulf coast. Built as a planned community in 1963, Lake Havasu City sits on Lake Havasu in Mohave County, Arizona. Originally the site of an old mining town, the city's population is recorded as 41,938 in the 2000 census, and was estimated at 53,204 in July,

Picture 3.2 Lake Havasu Partiers



2004. Tourism plays a significant role in Lake Havasu City's economy, with over 2.5 million visitors annually, with possibly as many as 150,000 being students on Spring Break. The majority of tourism activities are centered on the

Source: www.destinationhero.com

waterfront area around the famous London Bridge (which many people mistakenly believe is the Tower Bridge), which was disassembled, transported from England, and reassembled at Lake Havasu between 1968 and 1971. Drawing the majority of the students from the southwest U.S. and California, Lake Havasu is a break from the norm of coastal locations. While not located oceanside, there is still a 'surf' element, with most of the Spring Break activities take place on rented boats on Lake Havasu during the day before moving to the city's bars and clubs during the night.

*Resident Population*

Lake Havasu City residents have markedly different characteristics from the average U.S. resident. The median age of people in Lake Havasu City is 47.5 years – far above the U.S. average of 35.3 years. And while the Arizona has become increasingly recognized as a retiree haven, due to factors such as climate and low taxes, the people living in Lake Havasu City exceed the state average age of 34.2 by just over 13 years. The trend of being a retiree destination is further backed up with just over one quarter of the city population recorded as age 65 or older – more than double the U.S. average. In addition, this older population is much less diverse than the U.S. population with just over 94% of people identifying themselves as white. The second largest race group is Native American at 0.7%. Household trends lend support to the city as destination for retirees as well. The city's average household size is 2.34 as compared to 2.59 for all of the U.S. This would be expected from a city with an older population, as they would be less likely to have other family members, specifically children, living at home. Overall, Lake Havasu City residents are somewhat below the attainment level of the U.S. population in terms of education. While a greater percentage of city residents over the age of 25 have high school degrees – 83.8% vs. 80.40% of the U.S., they are far below the U.S. average in attaining bachelor's degrees – with only 13.10% of residents doing so as compared to 24.40% of all U.S. residents.

Figure 1.3: City of Lake Havasu (AZ) Population Characteristics 2000

| General Characteristics | Number | Percent | U.S. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total population | 41,938 | | |
|   Male | 20,624 | 49.2 | 49.10% |
|   Female | 21,314 | 50.8 | 50.90% |
| Median age (years) | 47.5 | (X) | 35.3 |
| Under 5 years | 1,957 | 4.7 | 6.80% |
| 18 years and over | 33,787 | 80.6 | 74.30% |
| 65 years and over | 10,695 | 25.5 | 12.40% |
| One race | 41,325 | 98.5 | 97.60% |
|   White | 39,568 | 94.3 | 75.10% |
|   Black or African American | 129 | 0.3 | 12.30% |
|   American Indian and Alaska Native | 291 | 0.7 | 0.90% |
|   Asian | 245 | 0.6 | 3.60% |
|   Pacific Islander | 41 | 0.1 | 0.10% |
|   Some other race | 1,051 | 2.5 | 5.50% |
| Two or more races | 613 | 1.5 | 2.40% |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 3,298 | 7.9 | 12.50% |
| Household population | 41,617 | 99.2 | 97.20% |
| Group quarters population | 321 | 0.8 | 2.80% |
| Average household size | 2.32 | (X) | 2.59 |
| Average family size | 2.69 | (X) | 3.14 |
| Total housing units | 23,018 | | |
|   Occupied housing units | 17,911 | 77.8 | 91.00% |
|     Owner-occupied housing units | 13,903 | 77.6 | 66.20% |
|     Renter-occupied housing units | 4,008 | 22.4 | 33.80% |
|   Vacant housing units | 5,107 | 22.2 | 9.00% |
| **Social Characteristics** | **Number** | **Percent** | **U.S.** |
| Population 25 years and over | 31,347 | | |
|   High school graduate or higher | 26,260 | 83.8 | 80.40% |
|   Bachelor's degree or higher | 4,122 | 13.1 | 24.40% |
| Civilian Veterans | 7,415 | 22 | 12.70% |
| Disability status | 8,479 | 21.3 | 19.30% |
| Foreign born | 2,334 | 5.6 | 11.10% |
| Male, Now married, except separated | 11,309 | 66.2 | 56.70% |
| Female, Now married, except separated | 10,934 | 60.4 | 52.10% |
| Speak a language other than English | 3,237 | 8.1 | 17.90% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)

Case Study Four - South Padre Island, Texas

*History*

South Padre Island's history dates to the mid-16th century. Spanish conquistadores, sometimes blown off course by storms landed on the island, only to see their ships broken by the surf just before they were attacked by the local Native American population. The treasure ships also made a tempting target to pirates, notably Jean Laffite, who often preyed on the Spanish galleons around the island. During the following four hundred years, Spanish coins continue to be found by treasure hunters. The first true settlement on the island dates to 1804, when Padre Jose Nicolas Balli, a Catholic Missionary Priest

Picture 4.1 View of South Padre Island



founded Rancho Santa Cruz, where he raised cattle and horses. At the start of the Civil War, the Union Navy blockaded the Padre Island coast, attempting to stop Confederate goods from being traded to Europe.

Source: www.southpadreislandhotels.org

Fighting continued around the area throughout the war and the area near South Padre Island – Palmito Hill – maintains the distinction of having the last battle of the war, a month after Confederate forces surrendered. By the beginning of the 20th century, the area began to develop recreation facilities, attracting sport fishermen. Additionally, celebrities were attracted to the area when movies were filmed on the island in the 1940's. In 1974, the Queen Isabella Causeway was

completed, connecting South Padre Island to the mainland and this paved the way for the current development.

*Spring Break on South Padre Island*

The town of South Padre Island is located on the world's largest barrier island, which is situated along the Texas gulf coast. Beginning in the mid-1980's, South Padre Island began courting college students to visit during Spring Break. As a result, South Padre Island became the first U.S. location outside of Florida to draw a large number of Spring Breakers. This small town, with an official population of 2,422 (2000 U.S. Census), has consistently drawn between 80,000 and 120,000 (estimated) students a year over the last twenty years

Picture 4.2 South Padre Island Spring Break 2006



during Spring Break. Most attendees are from Texas and the surrounding states. According to a survey conducted by the University of Texas-Pan American Center for Valley

Source: www.coolestspringbreak.com

Markets and Tourism Research, an estimated $204 million is pumped throughout the local economy every year in March due to Spring Break (Bernard, 2003). Like many U.S. Spring Break locations over the past decade, South Padre Island has opted for a diversification of activities to attract Spring Breakers. Fashion shows, film production, musical acts, and obstacle courses, most of which are sponsored by corporations, are available on or near the beach area.

South Padre Island residents have markedly different characteristics from the average U.S. resident. The median age of people in Lake Havasu City is 46.7 years – far above the U.S. average of 35.3 years and even further above the Texas state average of 32.3 years. This trend is most directly due to the increased prominence over the past decade of South Padre Island as both a resort location and a desirable location for well to do retirees, known as 'Winter Texans.' The trend of being a retiree destination is further backed up with 18.4% of the city population recorded as age 65 or older – a third higher than the U.S. average. Additionally, the city's population has nearly the same percentage of white residents as U.S. average, at 75%. The second largest group in terms of race is Hispanic at 22.8%. Household trends lend support to the city as destination for retirees as well. The city's average household size is 2.00 as compared to 2.59 for all of the U.S. This would be expected from a city with an older population, as they would be less likely to have other family members, specifically children, living at home. Overall, South Padre Island's residents are far above the attainment level of the U.S. population in terms of education. A much greater percentage of city residents over the age of 25 have high school degrees – 92.4% vs. 80.40% of the U.S., they are also far above the U.S. average in attaining bachelor's degrees – with only 35.50% of residents doing so as compared to 24.40% of all U.S. residents.

Figure 1.4 South Padre Island (TX) Population Characteristics 2000

| General Characteristics | Number | Percent | U.S. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total population | 2,422 | | |
| Male | 1,289 | 53.2 | 49.10% |
| Female | 1,133 | 46.8 | 50.90% |
| Median age (years) | 46.7 | (X) | 35.3 |
| Under 5 years | 100 | 4.1 | 6.80% |
| 18 years and over | 2,109 | 87.1 | 74.30% |
| 65 years and over | 446 | 18.4 | 12.40% |
| One race | 2,392 | 98.8 | 97.60% |
| White | 2,291 | 94.6 | 75.10% |
| Black or African American | 17 | 0.7 | 12.30% |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 11 | 0.5 | 0.90% |
| Asian | 5 | 0.2 | 3.60% |
| Pacific Islander | 1 | 0 | 0.10% |
| Some other race | 67 | 2.8 | 5.50% |
| Two or more races | 30 | 1.2 | 2.40% |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 553 | 22.8 | 12.50% |
| Household population | 2,422 | 100 | 97.20% |
| Group quarters population | 0 | 0 | 2.80% |
| Average household size | 2 | (X) | 2.59 |
| Average family size | 2.54 | (X) | 3.14 |
| Total housing units | 4,685 | | |
| Occupied housing units | 1,211 | 25.8 | 91.00% |
| Owner-occupied housing units | 769 | 63.5 | 66.20% |
| Renter-occupied housing units | 442 | 36.5 | 33.80% |
| Vacant housing units | 3,474 | 74.2 | 9.00% |
| **Social Characteristics** | **Number** | **Percent** | **U.S.** |
| Population 25 years and over | 1,975 | | |
| High school graduate or higher | 1,825 | 92.4 | 80.40% |
| Bachelor's degree or higher | 702 | 35.5 | 24.40% |
| Civilian Veterans | 462 | 21.8 | 12.70% |
| Disability status | 389 | 16.6 | 19.30% |
| Foreign born | 333 | 13.6 | 11.10% |
| Male, Now married, except separated | 615 | 52.8 | 56.70% |
| Female, Now married, except separated | 611 | 59.6 | 52.10% |
| Speak a language other than English | 759 | 32.2 | 17.90% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)

And while each location is important in its own right, each city has germane indices which provide insights that pictures, demographic data, and general descriptions cannot communicate. As such, economic, public governance, and socio-cultural data indices and matrix format are used. An embedded, multiple case study design is being used because there are multiple units of analysis. The following 4x3 methodology chart demonstrates the research template which will be used. See Figure 5.1. An advantage of using case studies are that they are more explanatory about phenomena having operational links needing to be traced over time. Case studies do not require control over behavioral events, but do focus on contemporary events (Yin, 1994). This is appropriate for my research as my objective is to expand and generalize theories and not to enumerate frequencies. Additionally, case studies tend to have a 'close reading' on social life and its attention to the broader social contexts of society (Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg, 1991: 274). One disadvantage of a case study is its limited generalizablity. However, case studies are generalizable to theoretical proposals and not to populations or universes, which fits with this research.

In any study, the measure of validity needs to be addressed – specifically construct validity, external validity and internal validity. A measure is considered valid if it measures what it claims to, without the occurrence of logical errors as conclusions are drawn from the data (Alder and Clark: 2003). Construct validity simply refers to a study having a theoretical basis which is translated through clear operational definitions involving measurable indicators. For this research construct validity was attained during data collection by using multiple sources, establishing a handling protocol for the data, and triangulating the process.

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External validity, the potential for  bias in the process of generalizing conclusions from a sample to other populations, settings or time periods, must be addressed as well (Yin: 1994). The problem of external validity has been a major hindrance in case studies.  According to Yin (1994), "Critics typically state that single cases offer a poor basis for generalizing.  However, such critics are implicitly contrasting the situation to survey research, in which a 'sample' (if selected correctly) readily generalizes to a larger universe."  Yin (1994) notes that the analogy to samples and universes is incorrect when dealing with case studies as the investigator is generalizing toward a theory not a universe. Finally, internal validity – the agreement between a study's conclusions about causal connections and what is actually true, must be accounted for (Adler and Clark: 2003). Internal validity for this research was attained during data analysis by pattern-matching, explanation building, and time-series analysis.

Construct validity for this research was attained during data collection by using multiple sources, establishing a handling protocol for the data, and triangulating the process.  As well, internal validity for this research was attained during data analysis by pattern-matching, explanation building, and time-series analysis. The problem of external validity has been a major hindrance in case studies.  According to Yin (1994), "Critics typically state that single cases offer a poor basis for generalizing.  However, such critics are implicitly contrasting the situation to survey

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research, in which a 'sample' (if selected correctly) readily generalizes to a larger universe." Yin notes that the analogy to samples and universes is incorrect when dealing with case studies as the investigator is generalizing toward a theory not a universe.

Aside from validity, reliability, the degree to which a measure yields consistent results, must remain high (Adler and Clark: 2003). The standard for reliability is that, if a later investigator followed exactly the same procedures as an earlier investigator and conducted the same case study, the later investigator should arrive at the same findings and conclusions (Yin, 1994). Because the data used in this research comes from various levels of government (national, state and local) and such data is standardized across time, duplication would be easy to achieve and reliability would be high.

This research uses an embedded, multiple case study design because there are multiple units of analysis. While The following 4x3 methodology chart demonstrates…

Table 1.1 4x3 Methodology Chart

**Methodology Chart**

|  | **Daytona Beach** | **Panama City Beach** | **Lake Havasu City** | **South Padre Island** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Economic** |  |  |  |  |
| **Public Governance** |  |  |  |  |
| **Socio-Cultural** |  |  |  |  |

Data

This research uses quantitative evidence gathered from national, state and local government

agencies averaged monthly, over a five year period, spanning from 2001-2005. This design and

data sets were used because they provided the most accurate possible outcome given the

availability of data and constraints. An input-output analysis was considered, but cost

prohibitions, time and technical knowledge needed to perform such an analysis made this

impractical. Additionally, gathering data at the sector and sector tract levels was considered.

However, because of suppression by the U.S. Census due to privacy concerns in addition to

much of the required data not being available further than 2001 at such exacting levels, this was

not practical. Every attempt to acquire uniform data as far down as the zip code level was made,

and this is most evident in the analyses of each case study area's industry breakdown and job

growth by sector. Data available at the city level was used for income levels, housing units by

permit, crime population and church formation. County level data was used for tax revenue,

hospital visitation. In some instances, monthly data was not available, but instead calculated on a

quarterly basis. This is noted before each use. The following data is used:

*Economic Data*

- Tax Revenue

- Number of Establishments

- Job Growth by Sector

- Median Income

- Unemployment Rate

- Poverty Rate

*Public Governance Data*

- Number of New Housing Units by Permit

- Crime Type and Amount

- Hospital Visitation

*Socio-Cultural Data*

- Population Change vs. State Average

- Church Formation

Recognizing these reliability and validity constraints, a case by case analysis for this research begins with an examination of six Economic indices:

Table 1.2, Economic Indices Chart

**Economic Indices Chart**

| **Economic** | **Daytona Beach** | **Panama City Beach** | **Lake Havasu City** | **South Padre Island** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Tax Revenue** | Highest in March | Lowest in March | Lowest in March | Lowest in March |
| **Establishments** | 2.2% Annual Growth | 3.7% Annual Growth | 4.32% Annual Growth | Flat Growth |
| **Job Growth by Sector** | Tourism Sector Kept Pace | Tourism Sector Declined | Tourism Sector Kept Pace | Tourism Sector Kept Pace |
| **Median Income** | Lower than Average | Higher than Average | Lower than Average | Higher than Average |
| **Unemployment** | Higher than County/State | N/A | Lower than County/State | Lower than County/State |
| **Poverty** | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

*Tax Receipts*

Perhaps the best way to gauge the impact of students on Spring Break as well as tourist during other times of the year is to study tax receipts. In particular, I have chosen to use the average monthly sales tax receipts from 2001 to 2005 for each case study area, which indicates when taxable goods are purchased during each month. Months with the highest levels of tourist expenditures would have the highest level of taxes. Similarly, those months with the lowest number of tourist expenditures would reflect a comparatively low level of taxes. The exception is South Padre Island, which does not record monthly sales tax receipts, but does do on a quarterly basis. I have also used a more exacting measure for tourist impact – average monthly hotel tax receipts for the same time period. These tax receipts will further indicate when the highest level of tourist visitation is and provides further details as to which tourist groups – students visiting during Spring Break or visitors during other months of the year – have the greatest economic impact. Again, South Padre Island will be measured using quarterly hotel tax receipts, as it is what they record. Both of these measures provide an excellent standard, as monthly and quarterly measures are most commonly used by federal, state, and local governments in yearly studies. I would expect that Spring Break locations would show the highest levels of sales tax and hotel tax receipts during Spring Break simply because of the tremendous amounts of students that participate in the yearly ritual.

Daytona Beach

*Business sales tax revenue (monthly)*

Figure 2.1, Volusia County (FL) Average Monthly Sales Tax Receipts 2001-2005
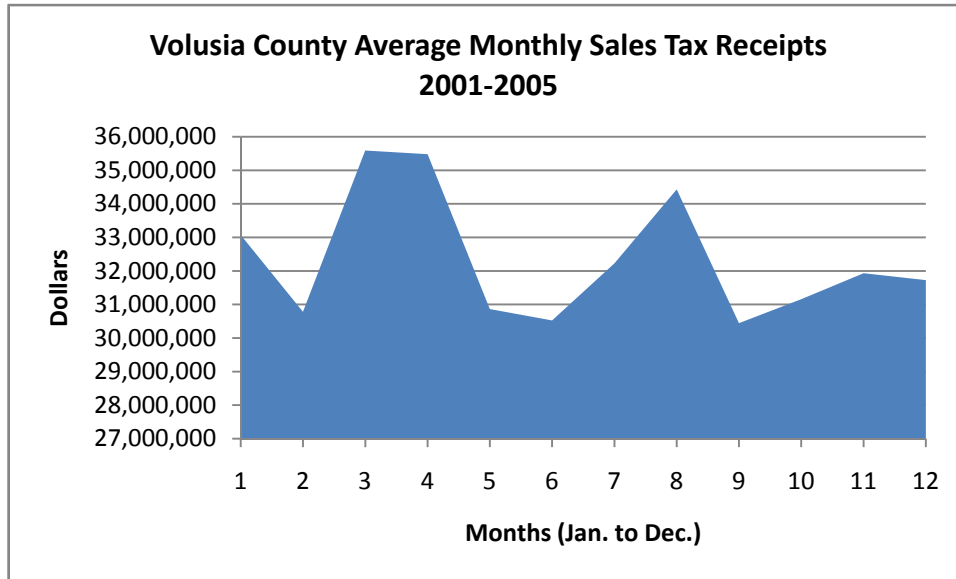


Source: Volusia County Division of Revenue

Although Daytona Beach no longer markets toward or draws the tremendous Spring Break

crowds of the 1980's, this does not appear to have harmed the county tax revenue during the

spring months. As Figure 1.3 shows, increases occur between February and April and again in

July and August. The spike during the spring months is consistent with the family oriented

events that Daytona Beach is now marketing - NASCAR events (Daytona 500), Family Spring

Break, Bike Week and the general influx of visitors that coastal northern Florida receives during

the early spring. While college students on Spring Break no doubt contribute, they are just one of

many groups driving sales tax receipts upward, not the primary group. Sales tax receipts increase

again in July, which is consistent with visitors, particularly families, coming to the area for

summer vacation and more specifically, the Fourth of July holiday.

*Tourist development tax revenue (monthly)*

Figure 2.2, Volusia County (FL) Monthly Tourist Development Tax Receipts 2001-2005



**Volusia County Average Monthly Tourist Development Tax Receipts 2001-2005**
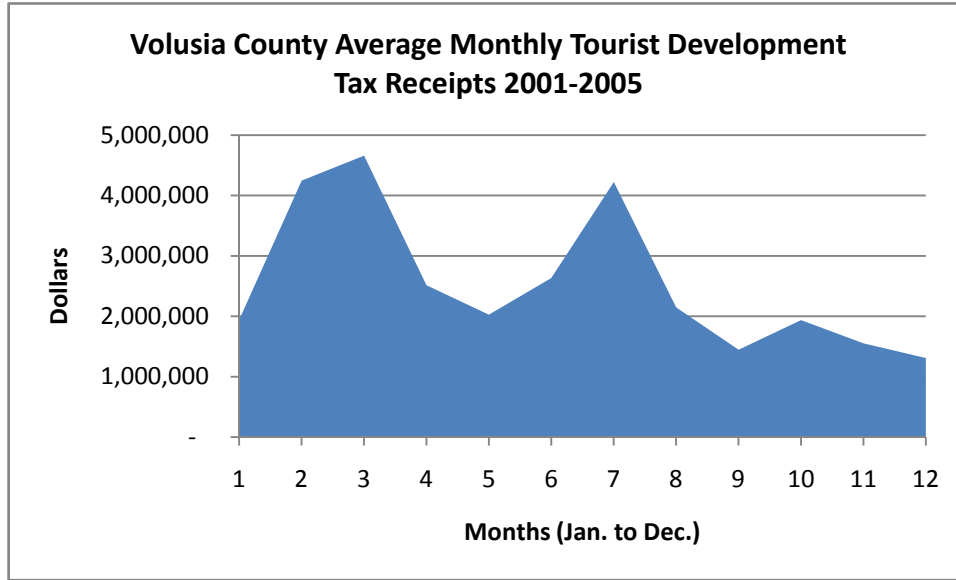
Source: Volusia County Revenue Division

All counties within the State of Florida impose a Tourist Development Tax on hotels based on occupancy. Figure 1.2 shows a longitudinal view of the average monthly tourist development taxes collected from 2001 to 2005. In terms of tourism, this would be a much more accurate indicator of visitor spending than overall sales tax, which reflects money spent by both tourists and the local population. The monthly tourist development tax receipts collected by hotels in Volusia County nearly mirror the pattern of sales taxes collected during the same time. The large number of events – primarily family oriented but including Spring Break - which occur in the area during the spring correspond with an increase in tourist development tax revenue collected. This same increase is apparent during the month of July, which corresponds with summer vacation and with the Fourth of July weekend. Overall, the shift toward family oriented tourism appears to be a beneficial one, as a diversification of events in the spring has drawn the highest number of visitors for the entire year.

Panama City Beach

*Business sales tax revenue (monthly)*

Figure 2.3, Bay County (FL) Average Monthly Sales Tax Receipts 2001-2005
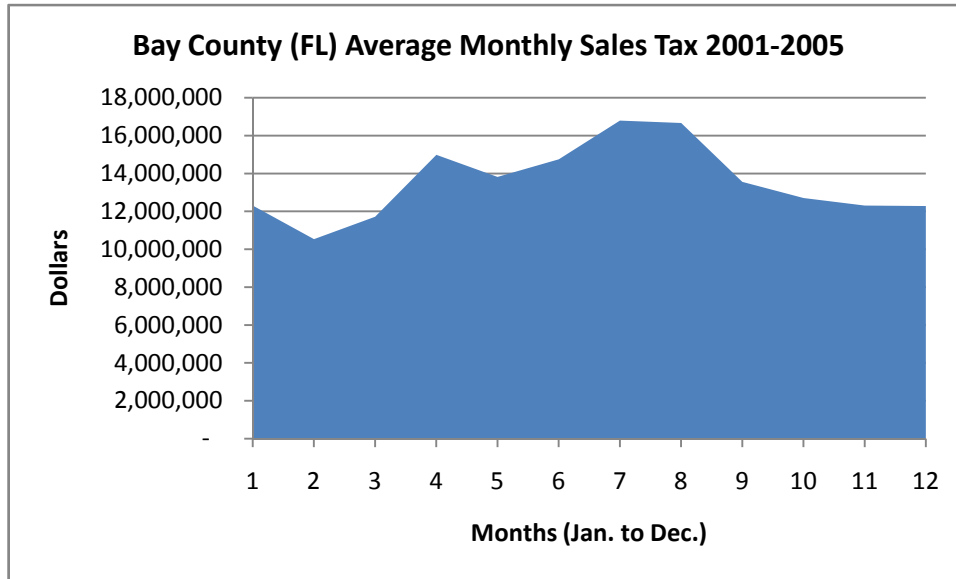


Source: Florida Department of Revenue

Because Panama City Beach is the current U.S. hot spot for attracting college students during

Spring Break, it would be expected that an increase in average monthly sales tax receipts would

occur during March. However, as Figure 2.1 shows, the sales tax collected in Bay County during

the month of March is actually the lowest of any month. April however, does show a spike in

sales tax collected. This can be explained in part because Spring Break typically extends one to

two weeks into April. This indicates that while large numbers of students visit Panama City

Beach during Spring Break, the city is not being rewarded in terms of dollars. Why? Students are

spending large parts of the day on the beach with nothing but alcohol to sustain them. Much of

their initial alcohol reserve was likely purchased before their trip even began. The highest

months for sales tax are in July and August, indicating many more families or groups come to

Panama City Beach for holidays such as the Fourth of July or for summer vacation. These

families have more disposable money than college students, likely stay longer and spend more or

their money on tourist activities that have a higher price point than alcohol, such as dinners,

sightseeing tours, and souvenirs.

*Tourist development tax revenue (monthly)*

Figure 2.4, Bay County (FL) Monthly Tourist Development Tax Receipts 2001-2005
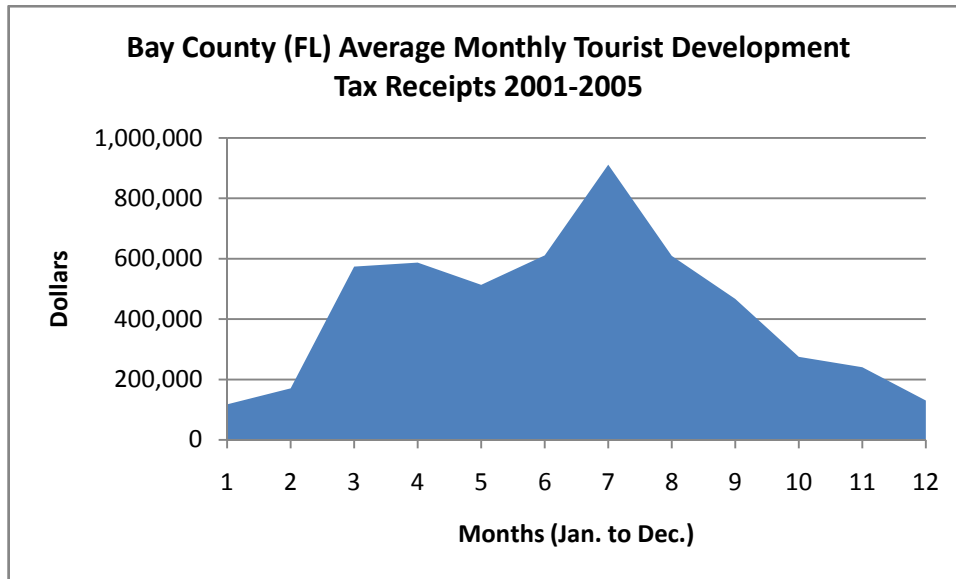


Source: Florida Department of Revenue

The average monthly tourist development tax receipts collected by hotels in Bay County

between 2001 and 2005 are similar to the pattern of sales taxes collected during the same time.

Once again, the summer months, particularly July, show the highest average amount of tax

collected. This is a result of more visitors, most likely families, visiting the area for summer

vacation and/or summer holidays such as the Fourth of July. It is well known that college

students do travel *en mass* to Panama City Beach for Spring Break. However, the tourist

development taxes collected are much lower in the spring than in the summer months. While this

would seem improbable, there are explanations. Regarding the family visitors, often families

plan the majority of their vacations to coincide with the summer months when the weather is nice

and their children (if any) are out of school. Additionally, families pay for all the members of their party staying in their hotel room(s). In order to save money, college students during Spring Break will often sleep many more people than allowed by hotel policy in a room. Instead of 3 to 5 people, it is not uncommon for up to 10 college students to stay in a hotel room. In the case of Panama City Beach, with hundreds of thousands of students visiting, accurately keeping track of hotel guests can be problematic at best. This decreases revenue for the hotels and this is reflected in the overall average monthly sales tax collected by the county. In addition, Panama City Beach is situated along Florida's gulf coast, which has many developing resort areas. Some students, unwilling to room with 10 other people or unable to find accommodations, may stay in neighboring locales.

Lake Havasu City

*Business sales tax revenue (monthly)*

Figure 2.5, Mohave County (AZ) Average Monthly Sales Tax, 2001-2005
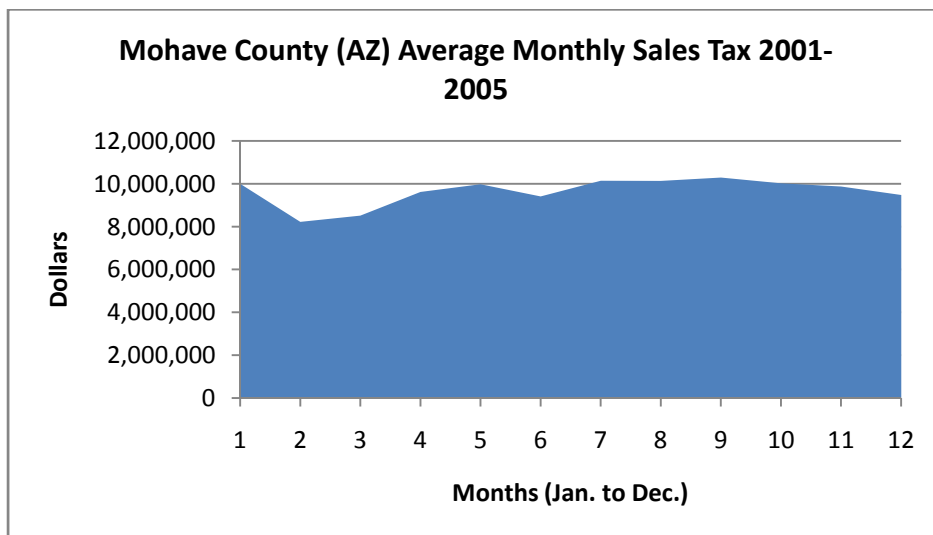


Source: Arizona Department of Revenue

As one of the four largest U.S. Spring Break locations, it would be expected that an increase in sales tax receipts would be recorded during the month of March. However, as Figure 4.1 shows, the average monthly sales tax collected from 2001 to 2005 in Mohave County during the month of March is actually the second lowest of any month. The highest months for sales tax collected are in May, July and September. Because the tourism industry is highly diversified in Lake Havasu City, Spring Break is only one of many events that tourists come to during the course of the year. Additionally, although Lake Havasu City is one of the top four U.S. Spring Break locations, it draws only one third to one quarter of the students that Panama City Beach does during any given year. Overall, the average monthly sales tax figures in Mohave County indicate that many more families or groups come to Lake Havasu City during times that coincide with major holidays - such as the Memorial Day, the Fourth of July and Labor Day - or for summer vacation. It would also indicate that such visitors stay longer and spend more money on items with higher price points than students visiting for Spring Break.

*Tourist development tax revenue (monthly)*

Figure 2.6, Mohave County (AZ) Average Monthly Hotel Tax Receipts, 2001-2005



Mohave County (AZ) Average Monthly Hotel Occupancy Tax Receipts 2001-2005
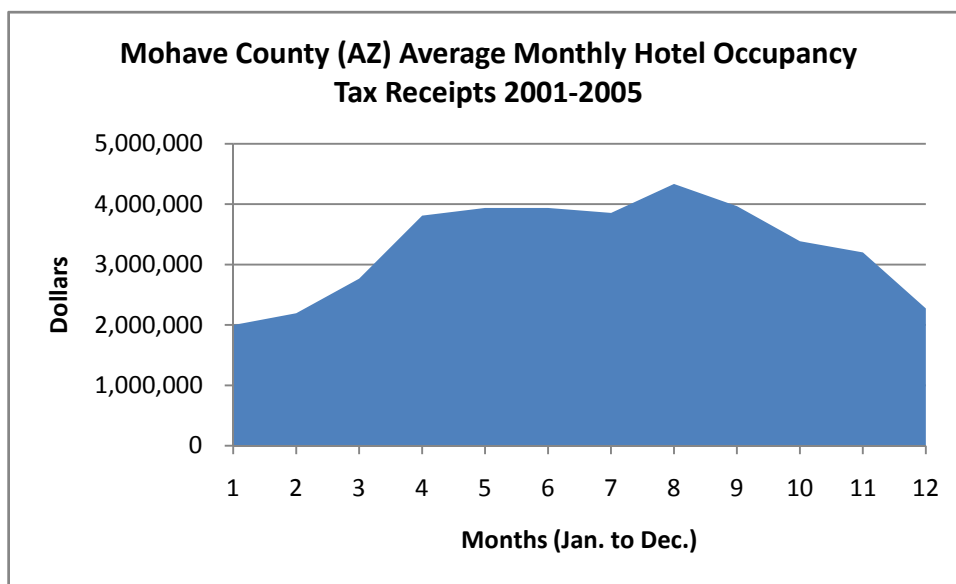
Source: Arizona Department of Revenue

The average monthly hotel occupancy tax receipts collected from hotels and motels between 2001 and 2005 in Mohave County are similar to the pattern of sales taxes collected during the same time. Hotel occupancy tax collected during the month of March would be expected to be high, considering Lake Havasu City's reputation as a Spring Break location. However, hotel occupancy tax collected is low. In fact March is one of the lowest months of hotel tax revenue collected when compared to other months. Only during December, January and February are lower average hotel tax receipts collected. Once again, the summer months, particularly July through September show the highest amount of tax collected. This is largely a result of the diversification of tourism activities available to visitors throughout the year. Lake Havasu City simply does not place a greater emphasis on Spring Break over other holidays or times of the year. This diversification in addition to accommodation habits exhibited by college students – such as sleeping more than the maximum allowable number of people in a room – lead to lower hotel tax revenue collected during March. In Lake Havasu City, it is the families visiting during the summer months and corresponding holidays that generate the most hotel tax revenue.

South Padre Island

*Business sales tax revenue (quarterly)*

Figure 2.7, Cameron County (TX) Average Quarterly State Sales Tax 2001-2005



**Cameron County (TX) Average Quarterly State Sales Tax 2002-2005**
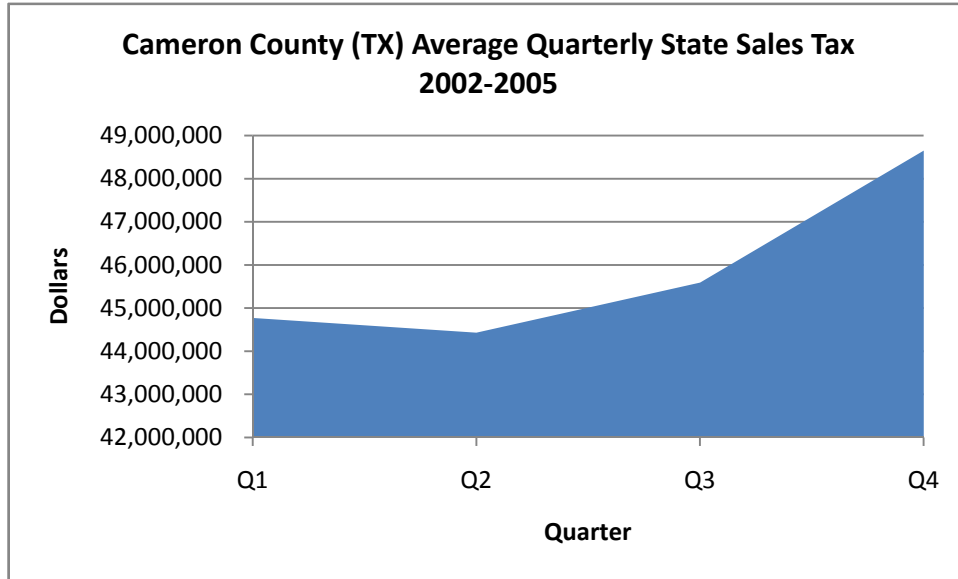
Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

Because South Padre Island is a popular location for college students on Spring Break, I would expect that an increase in average monthly sales tax receipts would occur during the first quarter (Q1). However, as Figure 3.1 shows, the average monthly sales tax collected between 2001 and 2005 in Cameron County during the first quarter is actually the second lowest of any quarter. The quarters with the highest sales tax collections are quarters three (Q3) and four (Q4). High sales tax receipts in quarter three indicate many more families or groups come to South Padre Island for holidays such as the Fourth of July or for summer vacation, likely stay longer and spend more money than the college students visiting during Spring Break. Interestingly, quarter four has the highest average amount of sales tax collected. This can largely due to the annual migration of 'Winter Texans.' Similar to the 'Snowbirds' who travel from the northeast U.S. to south Florida during the same time period, these Texans migrate to second homes on South Padre Island during the winter months, nearly doubling the local population in doing so. This influx means that nearly twice as many 'residents' are consuming goods and services during

the winter months as compared to other times of the year. The taxes collected on these goods and services far exceed those of tourists. This is especially true regarding college students, who typically spend little money on anything other than alcohol.

*Tourist development tax revenue (monthly)*

Figure 2.8, Cameron County (TX) Average Quarterly Hotel Tax, 2001-2005
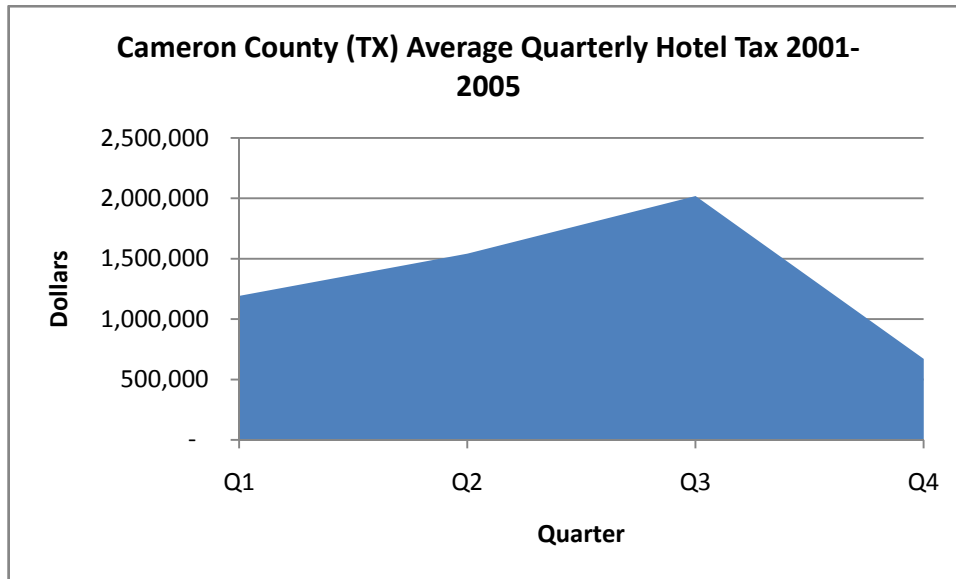


Source: Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

The average quarterly tourist development tax receipts collected by hotels in Cameron County between 2001 and 2005 are similar to the pattern of sales taxes collected during the same time period. Once again, hotel taxes collected during the month of March are some of the lowest of the year. The summer months, July through August, as demonstrated by the third quarter (Q3) records the highest average amount of tax collected, a result of more visitors coming to the area for the Fourth of July or summer vacation. Overall, indications are that while college students do come to South Padre Island for Spring Break, their numbers are not as great as those who vacation during the summer months.

Tax Revenue Inter-Case Analysis

The overall trend between cities regarding both average business sales tax and average hotel development tax is that during Spring Break, Bay (FL), Mohave (AZ) and Cameron (TX) counties show low levels of sales tax collected. In fact, the month of March is very poor for all three counties. Cameron County, which is calculated on a quarterly basis, records the first quarter (Q1) as the second lowest among the four quarters for sales tax and hotel tax collection. Only Volusia County, which represents Daytona Beach, demonstrated the highest levels of sales tax and hotel tax collected during March. However, this is not entirely due to Spring Break. Daytona Beach has greatly diversified its tourist activities since the peak years of Spring Break in the early 1990's. This diversified tourism approach targets family oriented events, most of which fall between February and April, during the same time as Spring Break. Tax revenue in Bay, Mohave and Cameron counties was highest during the summer months and was the second highest in Volusia County. Overall, this demonstrates that Spring Break is not a tremendous revenue generator for the case study areas, at least not to the extent of the families that visit during the summer months, who stay longer and spend more money.

*Entrepreneurship, Industry Growth and Industry Breakdown by Sector*

Entrepreneurship, the practice of starting new organizations, particularly businesses, is generally a response to market opportunities within an economy. Entrepreneurship opportunities are not limited to high technology industries. Entrepreneurship does not always produce innovation and is not limited to technology related fields. Most entrepreneurship occurs in low technology industries just as most job creation also comes from low technology industries (Drucker: 1985). An economy that exhibits willingness for business growth and entrepreneurship tends to have a combination of a growing population and favorable economic incentives for

businesses. For this dissertation I have chosen to use data at the zip code level for each case
study area involved, which is the lowest level the required data is available, in order to give the
most accurate depiction of entrepreneurship, industry growth, and industry sector development.

Daytona Beach

Figure 3.1, Daytona Beach (FL) Business Growth 2001-2005



**Daytona Beach Number of Establishments**

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10: Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, & Agriculture | | 2 | | | | |
| 20: Mining, Utilities. Construction | 253 | 230 | 243 | 255 | 339 | 364 |
| 30: Manufacturing | 106 | 108 | 111 | 100 | 102 | 103 |
| 40: Retail/Wholesale, Transp, Warehousing | 965 | 951 | 989 | 1001 | 991 | 999 |
| 50: IT, Finance, Real Estate, Prof Svc. | 1032 | 981 | 1056 | 1063 | 1132 | 1184 |
| 60: Education, Healthcase, & Social Assistance | 360 | 359 | 396 | 385 | 396 | 396 |
| 71: Art, Entertainment, & Recreation | 54 | 52 | 65 | 69 | 67 | 67 |
| 72: Accommodation & Food Services | 437 | 435 | 445 | 437 | 439 | 422 |
| 80: Other Serices (except public admin) | 406 | 390 | 403 | 407 | 398 | 313 |
| 90: Auxillaries / Unclassified | 43 | 23 | 20 | 15 | 6 | 6 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau NAICS ZIP Code Business Patterns

Business growth in Daytona Beach from 2001-2005 posted generally positive increases in the
total number of establishments, rising from 3,525 to 3,934 total businesses over the five year
period. Slight decreases in the total number of business from the previous year occurred in 2001,
2003 and 2005. Overall, there was an average gain net gain of 82 new businesses every year, a
2.2% increase. The largest overall sectors of Volusia County's economy are IT/finance/real
estate/professional services, retail/transportation/housing and accommodation/food services and

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arts/entertainment/recreation. Sectors that are directly related to tourism – accommodation/food services and arts/entertainment/recreation – comprised between 12.40% and 13.8% of the total number of establishments in any given year. Although this rate would seem to be low, given the 9 million tourists who visit annually, many of the business in the leading sectors are also have secondary and tertiary relationships to the tourist industry. Among these are transportation (taxi and limousine services), retail trade (gift shops) construction (new hotels, condominiums, and retail establishments) and professional services (travel agents/planning). These relationships mean that the tourism industry is likely under-represented and plays a much larger role in the local economy than is immediately obvious.

Figure 3.2, Daytona Beach (FL) Job Growth by Industry Sector 2001-2005

**Daytona Beach Sector Growth**

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20: Mining, Utilities. Construction | | -23 | 13 | 12 | 84 | 25 |
| 40: Retail/Wholesale, Transp, Warehousing | | -14 | 38 | 12 | -10 | 8 |
| 50: IT, Finance, Real Estate, Prof Svc. | | -51 | 75 | 7 | 69 | 52 |
| 72: Accommodation & Food Services | | -2 | 10 | -8 | 2 | -17 |
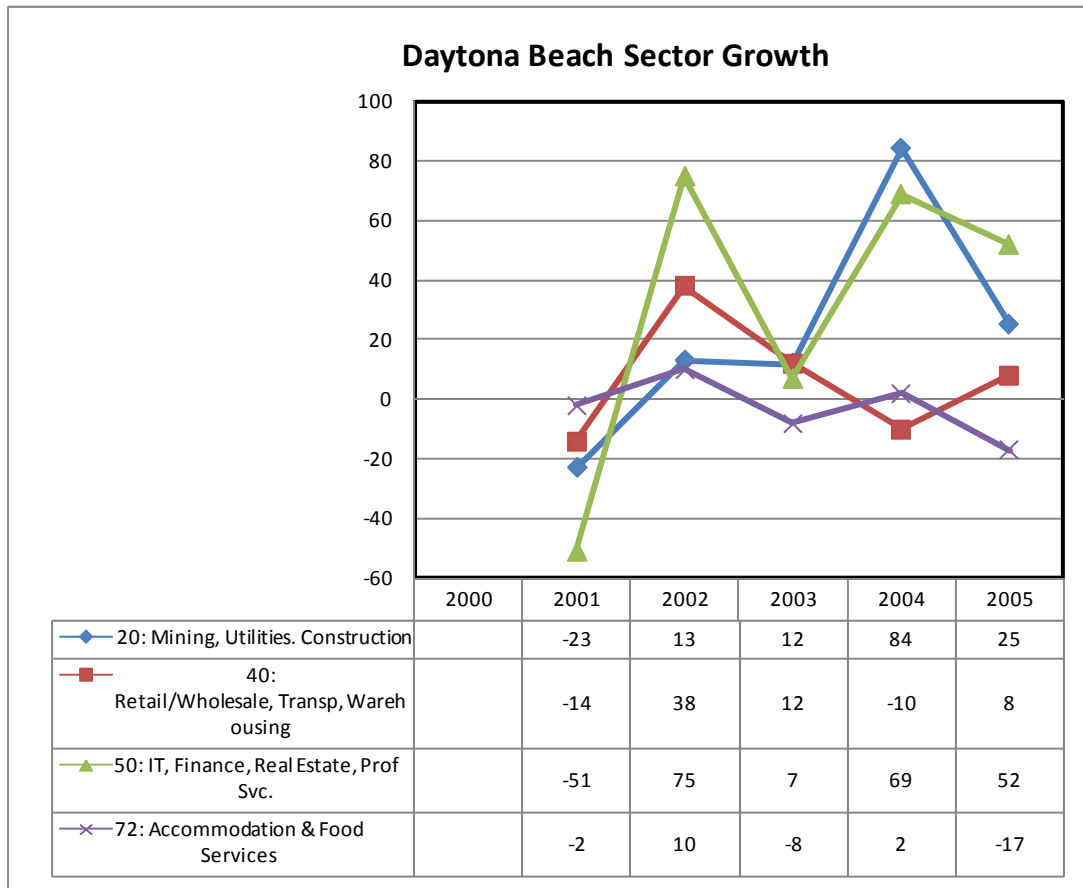
Source: U.S. Census Bureau NAICS ZIP Code Business Patterns

The sectors of Daytona Beach which experienced the highest rates of growth from 2001-2005 are information technology/finance/real estate/professional services and mining/utilities/construction. Retail/wholesale trade/transportation/warehousing also showed moderate growth. Sectors that can be considered associated with the tourism industry – accommodation/food services and arts/entertainment/recreation lagged far behind in growth for the same period. In fact, negative growth within the tourism industry actually occurred during 2001, 2003 and 2005. Because tourism plays such a large role in the local economy, the growth of non-related sectors indicates a maturing of the local economy or that the tourism industry in Daytona Beach has peaked. This is likely due to the area's recent emphasis on economic diversification, which began in the mid-1990's, with the overall goal being to attract more families and promote Daytona Beach as a great place to live as opposed to a great place to visit.

Panama City Beach

Figure 3.3, Panama City Beach (FL) Business Growth 2001-2005

**Panama City Beach Number of Establishments**

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10: Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, & Agriculture | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 20: Mining, Utilities. Construction | 86 | 56 | 70 | 76 | 100 | 105 |
| 30: Manufacturing | 10 | 10 | 14 | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| 40: Retail/Wholesale, Transp, Warehousing | 175 | 161 | 176 | 175 | 187 | 174 |
| 50: IT, Finance, Real Estate, Prof Svc. | 211 | 154 | 167 | 195 | 211 | 223 |
| 60: Education, Healthcase, & Social Assistance | 19 | 16 | 22 | 26 | 27 | 29 |
| 71: Art, Entertainment, & Recreation | 24 | 25 | 23 | 24 | 23 | 22 |
| 72: Accommodation & Food Services | 140 | 149 | 153 | 147 | 138 | 134 |
| 80: Other Serices (except public admin) | 57 | 54 | 64 | 65 | 64 | 64 |
| 90: Auxillaries / Unclassified | 4 | 6 | | 2 | 2 | 3 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau NAICS ZIP Code Business Patterns

Business growth in Panama City Beach between 2001 and 2005 posted positive gains in every year, increasing from 634 to 779 total businesses. During the five year period, there was an average gain net gain of 29 new businesses every year, a 3.7% increase. The largest sectors of Bay County's economy were IT/finance/real estate/professional services, retail/wholesale trade/transportation/housing, and accommodation/food services. Sectors that are directly related to tourism – accommodation/food services and arts/entertainment/recreation – comprised between 20% and 27.44% of the total number of establishments in any given year. This is consistent with an economy heavily dependent on tourism, given the 7.3 million tourists who visit the tiny city annually. Additionally, many of the business in the leading sectors are also have secondary and tertiary relationships to the tourist industry. Among these are transportation (taxi and limousine services), retail trade (gift shops) construction (new hotels, condominiums,

and retail establishments) and professional services (travel agents/planning). These relationships

mean that the tourism industry likely plays a much larger role in the local economy than is

obvious from a surface analysis.

Figure 3.4, Panama City Beach (FL) Job Growth by Industry Sector 2001-2005



**Panama City Beach Sector Growth**

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 20: Mining, Utilities. Construction | | -30 | 14 | 6 | 24 | 5 |
| 50: IT, Finance, Real Estate, Prof Svc. | | -57 | 13 | 28 | 16 | 12 |
| 60: Education, Healthcase, & Social Assistance | | -3 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| 72: Accommodation & Food Services | | 9 | 4 | -6 | -9 | -4 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau NAICS ZIP Code Business Patterns

The sectors of Panama City Beach which experienced the highest rates of growth from 2001-

2005 are information technology/finance/real estate/professional services and

mining/utilities/construction. Education and healthcare also showed a slight overall growth rate.

Sectors that can be considered associated with the tourism industry – accommodation/food

services and arts/entertainment/recreation posted a decline for three straight years – during 2003,

2004 and 2005. Because tourism plays such a large role in the local economy, the growth of non-

related sectors may indicate a maturing of the local economy. Additionally, the emergence of the

finance/real estate/professional services sector can be attributed to the increased popularity of

Florida's gulf coast over the past decade as not only a travel destination but also as a location for secondary vacation homes, due to the weather, low population density, and relative affordability. While tourism still is a primary economic driver for the tiny city, the economic diversification indicates that an increasing number of people have begun view Panama City Beach as a desirable place to live, with many of the necessary support services fueling sector growth.

Lake Havasu City

Figure 3.5, Mohave County (AZ) Business Growth, 2001-2005



| Lake Havasu City Number of Establishments | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10: Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, & Agriculture | | | | | 1 | |
| 20: Mining, Utilities. Construction | 218 | 239 | 314 | 347 | 396 | 383 |
| 30: Manufacturing | 85 | 88 | 85 | 86 | 78 | 83 |
| 40: Retail/Wholesale, Transp, Warehousing | 315 | 310 | 350 | 348 | 354 | 366 |
| 50: IT, Finance, Real Estate, Prof Svc. | 275 | 281 | 330 | 344 | 381 | 412 |
| 60: Education, Healthcase, & Social Assistance | 117 | 113 | 136 | 135 | 141 | 150 |
| 71: Art, Entertainment, & Recreation | 18 | 20 | 14 | 17 | 18 | 18 |
| 72: Accommodation & Food Services | 106 | 120 | 124 | 127 | 125 | 132 |
| 80: Other Serices (except public admin) | 128 | 129 | 143 | 155 | 159 | 159 |
| 90: Auxillaries / Unclassified | 30 | 28 | 10 | 2 | 9 | 6 |

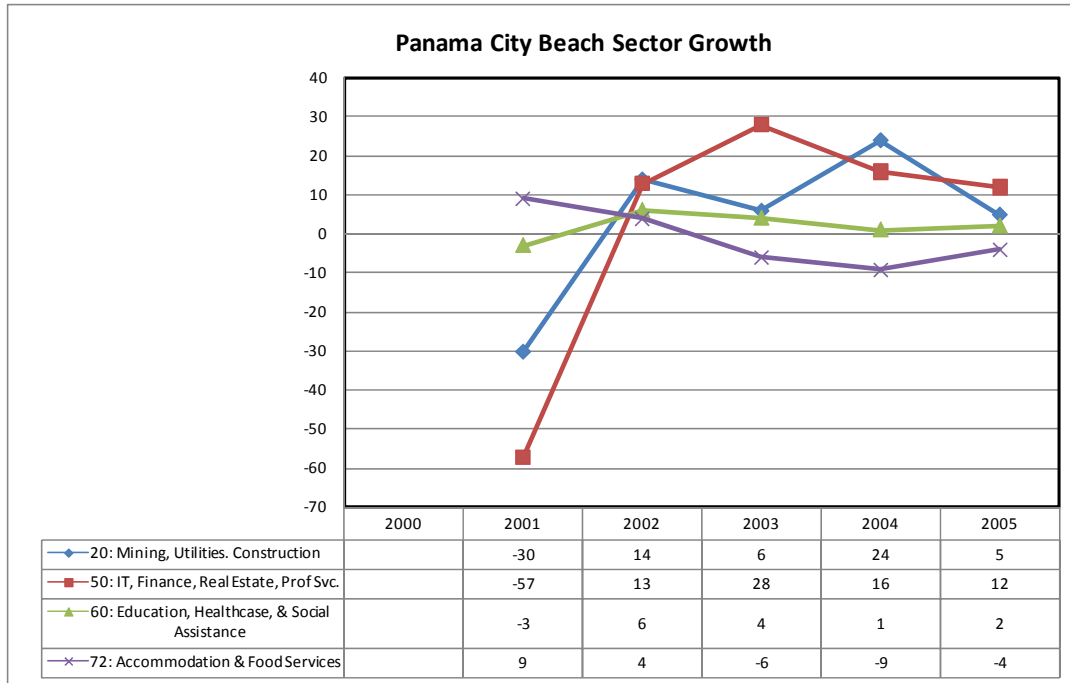Source: U.S. Census Bureau NAICS ZIP Code Business Patterns

Business growth in Lake Havasu City between 2001-2005 posted positive gains in every year, increasing from 1,340 to 1,709 total businesses. During the five year period, there was an average gain net gain of 74 new businesses every year, a 4.32% increase. The largest sectors of Lake Havasu City's economy were retail/transportation/housing, IT/finance/real estate/professional services mining/utilities/construction and retail/wholesale

trade/transportation/warehousing. Sectors that are directly related to tourism –

accommodation/food services and arts/entertainment/recreation – comprised 9% of the total

number of establishments in any given year. Although this rate would seem to be low, given the

2.5 million tourists who visit annually, many of the business in the leading sectors are also have

secondary and tertiary relationships to the tourist industry. Among these are transportation (taxi

and limousine services), retail trade (gift shops) construction (new hotels, condominiums, and

retail establishments) and professional services (travel agents/planning). These relationships

mean that the tourism industry is likely under-represented and plays a much larger role in the

local economy than is obvious from a surface analysis. However, it must also be recognized that

Lake Havasu City is a high growth area in one of the highest growth states in terms of

population, over the last decade. Lake Havasu City has become a popular place to live not only

among retirees but also families because of good weather, low taxes, and an abundance of

recreational activities. Because of this, sectors with the most growth, such as IT, real estate and

finance and construction, reflect this trend.

Figure 3.6, Lake Havasu City (AZ) Job Growth by Industry Sector 2001-2005

**Lake Havasu City Sector Growth**

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ◆ 40: Retail/Wholesale, Transp, Warehousing | | -5 | 40 | -2 | 6 | 12 |
| ■ 50: IT, Finance, Real Estate, Prof Svc. | | 6 | 49 | 14 | 37 | 31 |
| ▲ 60: Education, Healthcase, & Social Assistance | | -4 | 23 | -1 | 6 | 9 |
| ✕ 72: Accommodation & Food Services | | 14 | 4 | 3 | -2 | 7 |
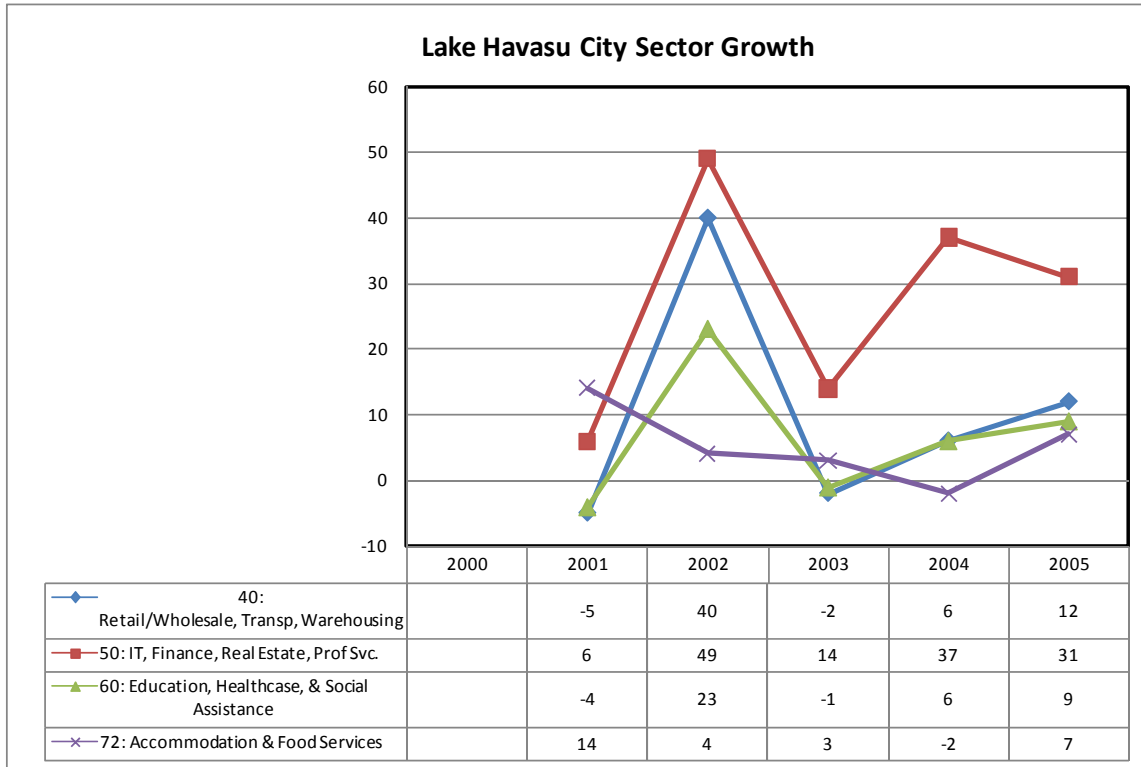
Source: U.S. Census Bureau NAICS ZIP Code Business Patterns

*Industry Growth by Sector*

The sectors of Lake Havasu City's economy which experienced the highest rates of growth

from 2001-2005 were information technology/finance/real estate/professional services, which

grew by an average of 27 new companies annually. Also, retail/wholesale

trade/transportation/warehousing showed high growth, increasing by an average of 10 new

businesses per year. Education and healthcare also showed strong growth. Sectors that can be

considered associated with the tourism industry – accommodation/food services and

arts/entertainment/recreation kept pace in growth, averaging nearly 6 new business openings per

year between 2001 and 2005. These trends indicate that while tourism continues to play a large

role in the local economy, the growth of non-related sectors would tend indicate a maturing of the local economy, to one that meets the needs of the people living there.

South Padre Island

Figure 3.7, South Padre Island (TX) Business Growth, 2001-2005

**South Padre Island Number of Establishments**

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10: Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, & Agriculture | | | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| 20: Mining, Utilities. Construction | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 13 |
| 30: Manufacturing | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 40: Retail/Wholesale, Transp, Warehousing | 70 | 67 | 70 | 71 | 66 | 62 |
| 50: IT, Finance, Real Estate, Prof Svc. | 67 | 71 | 60 | 65 | 61 | 62 |
| 60: Education, Healthcase, & Social Assistance | 8 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 10 | 10 |
| 71: Art, Entertainment, & Recreation | 13 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 9 |
| 72: Accommodation & Food Services | 66 | 66 | 70 | 67 | 71 | 76 |
| 80: Other Serices (except public admin) | 54 | 57 | 54 | 59 | 56 | 58 |
| 90: Auxillaries / Unclassified | 1 | | | 1 | 3 | |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau NAICS ZIP Code Business Patterns

Business growth in South Padre Island remained virtually flat between 2001 and 2005. There were 296 total establishments on South Padre Island in 2001. This number fell slightly to 293 by 2005. During the five year period, there was an average net loss of 0.60 businesses every year. The largest sectors of South Padre Island's economy were accommodation and food services, retail/transportation/warehousing and IT/finance/real estate/professional. Sectors that are directly related to tourism – accommodation/food services and arts/entertainment/recreation – comprised between 26.76% and 29% of the total number of establishments in any given year. This rate is consistent with an economy that relies heavily on tourism as its primary driver.

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Figure 3.8, South Padre Island (TX) Job Growth by Industry Sector 2001-2005

**South Padre Island Sector Growth**

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 50: IT, Finance, Real Estate, Prof Svc. | | 4 | -11 | 5 | -4 | 1 |
| 60: Education, Healthcase, & Social Assistance | | 0 | -2 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| 71: Art, Entertainment, & Recreation | | 1 | -5 | 0 | -1 | 1 |
| 72: Accommodation & Food Services | | 0 | 4 | -3 | 4 | 5 |
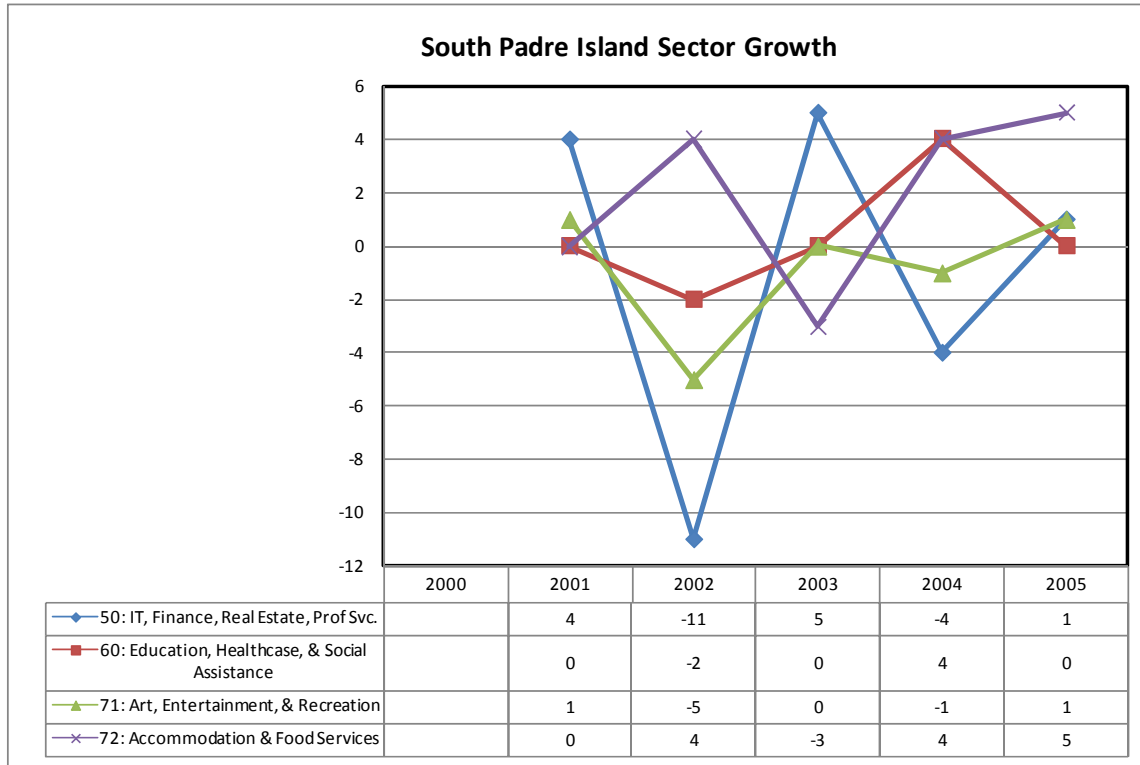
Source: U.S. Census Bureau NAICS ZIP Code Business Patterns

The sectors of South Padre Island's economy which experienced the highest rates of growth from 2001-2005 were accommodation and food services and arts/entertainment/recreation, which combined to average an increase of 1 new establishment per year over the five year period. Education/healthcare and social assistance also showed positive growth, although just slightly, with 2 total new establishments over the five year period. Sectors that can be considered associated with the tourism industry – accommodation/food services and arts/entertainment/recreation were among the few sectors that actually grew during a flat five year period. Considering the size of South Padre Island – only 2,744 people – not much can be gained from this information, other than to say that tourism remains a strong component of the local economy. The growth of the education/healthcare and social assistance sector can be attributed to the increase in older, affluent residents who have purchased second homes on the

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island, known as 'Winter Texans.' This growth, although slight, can be viewed as a necessary step towards meeting the needs of the city's changing demographics.

*Entrepreneurship, Industry Growth and Industry Sector Inter-Case Analysis*

Each of the case study area – Daytona Beach, Panama City Beach and Lake Havasu City – with only South Padre Island as the exception, showed positive yearly business establishment growth. This indicates each city has a growing population base and this is subsequently reflected by the growth in businesses. South Padre Island actually had slightly negative growth. The city lost 3 business in the five year study period, from 296 in 2001 to 293 in 2005. This negative growth is most likely due to the number of part-time residents that have moved to the island, only staying during the winter months. This part-time residency is not enough to sustain a growth in the number of businesses.

In each city tourism plays a central role in the economy. The smallest cities, Panama City Beach and South Padre Island both had tourism related sectors that comprised at least 20 percent of the total number of establishments in any given year. In terms of job sector growth, the IT/finance/real estate/professional services sector was the highest in Daytona Beach, Panama City Beach and Lake Havasu City. This indicates a probably diversification of each economy in order to meet the needs of the population. In South Padre Island the sectors related to tourism – accommodation/food services and art & entertainment had the highest growth. However, this is somewhat misleading considering the slightly negative overall growth of the city's businesses.

*Median income.*

Income is the amount of dollars earned is another key indicator of prosperity. In this instance, Median Household Income is used. Median household income is commonly used to provide data about geographic areas and divides households into two equal segments with the first half of

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households earning less than the median household income and the other half earning more. The median income is considered by many statisticians to be a better indicator than the average household income as it is not dramatically affected by unusually high or low values (U.S. Census Bureau, FAQ's). The data used for this measure is from the national, state and county levels. City level data is also used, but is not available for every year. At the city level only the data from 2001 and 2005 (estimated) was available. Years 2002-2004 are an average of 2001 and 2005.

Daytona Beach

Figure 4.1, Daytona Beach (FL) Median Household Income 2001-2005
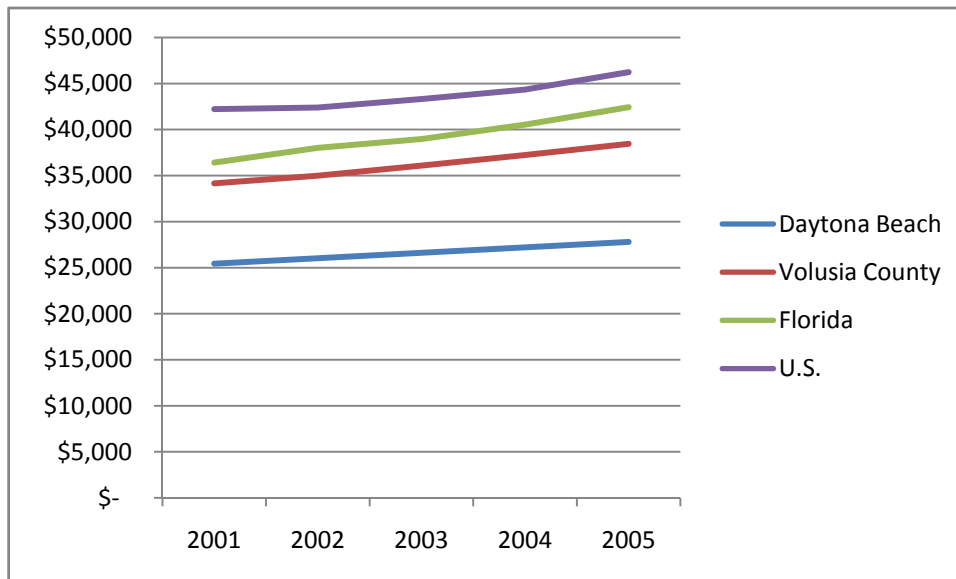


Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

The State of Florida compares favorably to the United States overall. Florida's median household income has risen at a slightly faster rate from 2001-2005, yet at $42,437, is still nearly $4,000 below the U.S. average. When comparing Volusia County with Florida and the U.S., Volusia County trails far behind both. Despite a steady increase from 2001-2005, Volusia County remains almost $4,000 behind Florida and nearly $8,000 behind the U.S. in median household income at $38,457. The city of Daytona Beach is has the lowest median income of every location on the chart at $27,800 (estimated). Because the level of unemployment in Volusia County is lower than that of the State of Florida, the disparity in median household income between Volusia County and Florida is most likely due to the role that tourism plays in the area. According to Krotz (1996) and Godfrey and Clark (2001), tourism can create a large number of jobs, but those jobs tend to be seasonal or on a part time basis. This is supported by comparing the educational attainment of Daytona Beach and Florida. While 25.3% of all Florida residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, 18.8% of those who live in Daytona Beach have managed this achievement (U.S. Census, American Factfinder). Furthermore, the Daytona Beach unemployment rate is lower than that of Florida but the median household income is also lower, this is a probable indication of *underemployment* – employees who are not fully occupied – as would be the case in an area with many seasonal or part-time employees.

Panama City Beach

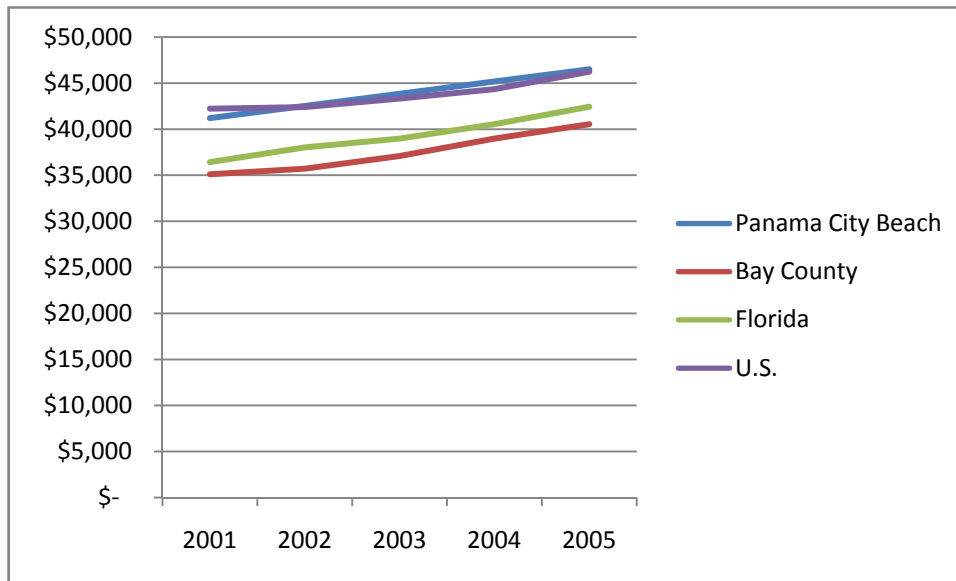Figure 4.2, Panama City Beach (FL) Median Household Income 2001- 2005



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

Overall, the State of Florida compares favorably to the United States in median household income. Following a relative flattening between 2002 to 2003, Florida's median household income has risen to near equality with the U.S. average. When comparing Bay County with Florida and the U.S., Bay County is slightly behind both. A steady increase from 2001-2005 has brought Bay County within $1,900 of Florida and within $5,700 of the U.S. in median household income at $40,540. When looking at Panama City Beach however, the city's median household income of $46,500 (estimated) exceeds not only the state and county averages, but the U.S. average as well. A closer look at the industry occupation of males and females in Panama City Beach reveals that 10% are involved in the accommodation and food service sectors. However, white collar occupations, such as management, engineering, accounting and sales account for 31% of the total number of people employed in the city (Advameg Inc.: 2007). And despite the city's reputation as a party location, when comparing the educational attainment of Panama City

Beach and Florida, the numbers of people that have a bachelor's degree or higher are nearly

equal – 24.1% to 24.4%. However, nearly one in ten residents (9.1%) hold a graduate degree,

which explains the high number of white collar job holders (U.S. Census, American Factfinder

2006 Annual Community Survey).

Lake Havasu City

Figure 4.3, U.S., Mohave County (AZ) and Arizona Median Household Income 2001-2005
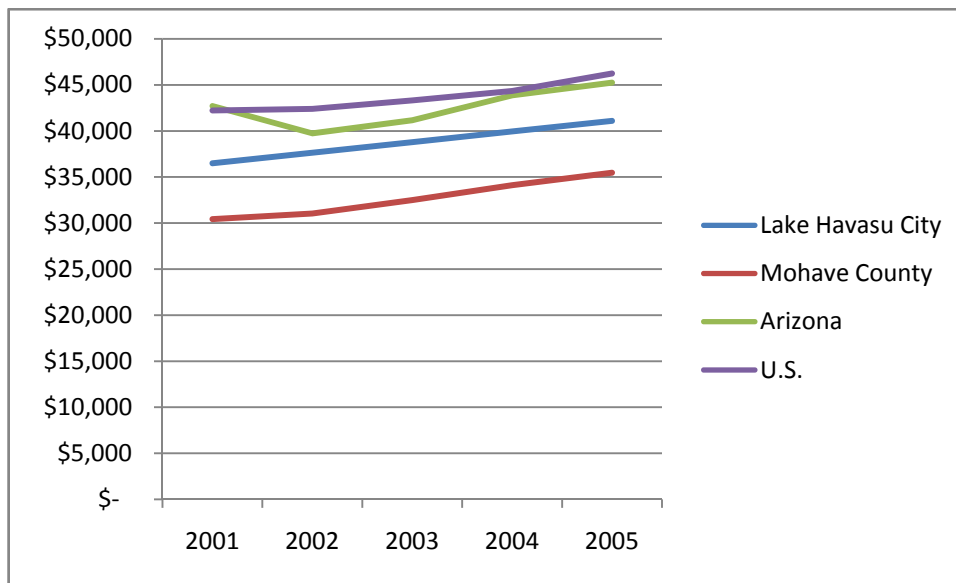


Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

The State of Arizona compares favorably to the United States overall. Following a brief

decline in 2002, Arizona's median household income has risen to near equality with the U.S.

average. When comparing Mohave County with Arizona and the U.S., Mohave County trails far

behind both. Despite a steady increase from 2001-2005, Mohave County remains almost $10,000

behind Arizona and nearly $11,000 behind the U.S. in median household income at $35,477.

Lake Havasu City fares somewhat better at $41,100 (estimated). This is due in part to the

educational attainment of Lake Havasu City residents. While 83% of the city's residents have at least a high school diploma, which is 4% higher than the national average, only 13% have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is far below the U.S. average of 24.4%.

South Padre Island

Figure 4.4, South Padre Island (TX) and Texas Median Household Income 2001-2005
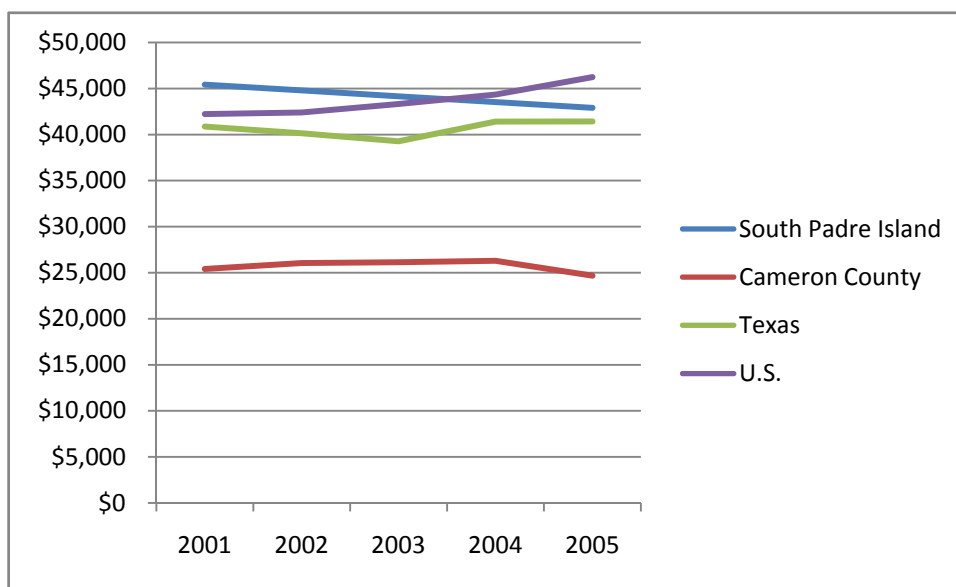


Source: U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

The State of Texas compares favorably to the United States overall. Following a brief decline in 2003, Texas's median household income has risen to near equality with the U.S. average. When comparing Cameron County with Texas and the U.S., Cameron County trails far behind both. Median household income remained almost flat from 2001-2004, before actually declining in 2005. Cameron County remains almost $17,000 behind the Texas average and a staggering $26,000 behind the U.S. in median household income at $24,684. South Padre Island by comparison far exceeds the rest of Cameron County as well as performing slightly better than the

Texas state average at $42,900 (estimated). While the percentage of businesses directly related to the tourism industry is high – 29% in 2005 – the percentage of people employed in other industries is greater. For example, although the accommodation and food services industry is the most common one for males to be employed in (14%), white collar industries that offer much higher salaries, sales and supervisory roles (11%), management occupations (9%), top executives (8%), lawyers (6%) and business operations specialists (4%) account for a far greater share (Advameg Inc.: 2007). Additionally, the percentage of males in each occupation in South Padre Island are higher than the Texas state average as well. This is further supported by the educational attainment of South Padre Island residents, of whom over 35% have a bachelor's degree and nearly one in five (16.7%) have a graduate degree (U.S. Census American Factfinder: 2007).

*Median Household Income Inter-Case Analysis*

Median income was shown to be the highest in Panama City Beach and South Padre Island. Their average median household income not only far exceeded their county and state averages, but were slightly above the U.S. national average as well. While tourism plays a significant role in the economies of these cities, their income levels are much higher than expected from locations that have reputations as tourism hot spots because of the educational attainment of their respective residents. Daytona Beach and Lake Havasu City residents had median household incomes that fell below that of their respective states. Daytona Beach residents failed to even match the county median household level. Not surprisingly, both of these locations had less educational attainment than their state averages.

*Unemployment*

The level of unemployment is used as a leading indicator of the level of financial prosperity of a given area. Unemployment is the state in which a person is without work, available to work, and is currently seeking work. The unemployment rate is commonly used in economic studies and economic indexes. The rate is determined by dividing the number of unemployed workers by the total civilian labor force. Low levels of unemployment indicate a higher number of both jobs and employment opportunities for the population area.

Daytona Beach

Figure 5.1, Daytona Beach Unemployment Rate 2001-2005
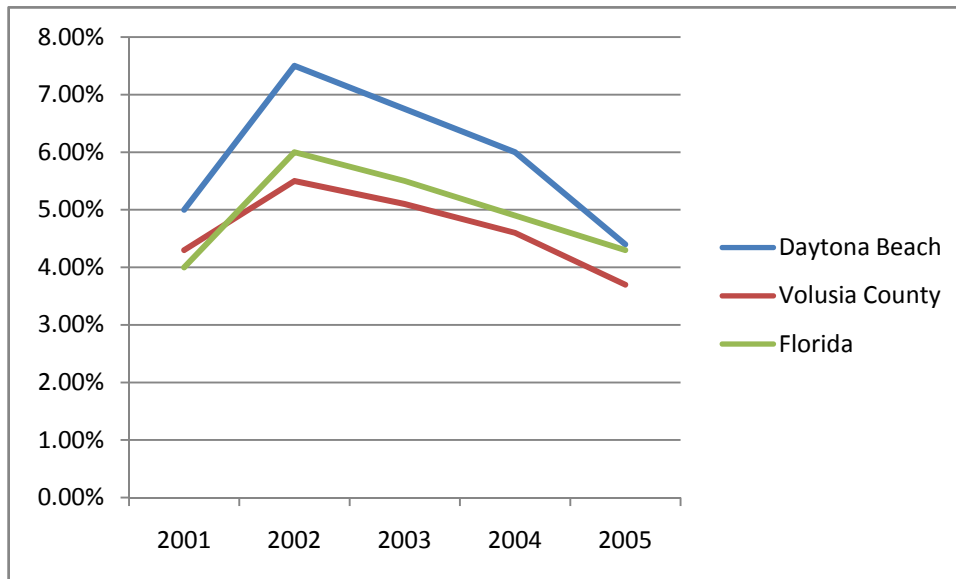


Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics,

In Figure 8.1 Daytona Beach and Volusia County are compared with the average of all Florida counties in unemployment. While the unemployment rate in Volusia County compares favorably with the other counties in Florida, Daytona Beach had unemployment rates between 1.00% and 1.20% higher than the state average between 2001-2005. The city's lowest percentage

of unemployed works occurred in 2005 at a rate of 4.40%. However, this was still marginally

higher than Florida's state average of 4.30% and Volusia County's average of 3.70%

Panama City Beach

Figure 5.2, Bay County (FL) and State of Florida Unemployment Rate 2001-2005



|  | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bay County | 5.10% | 5.70% | 5.20% | 4.40% | 3.60% |
| Florida | 4.00% | 6.00% | 5.50% | 4.90% | 4.30% |
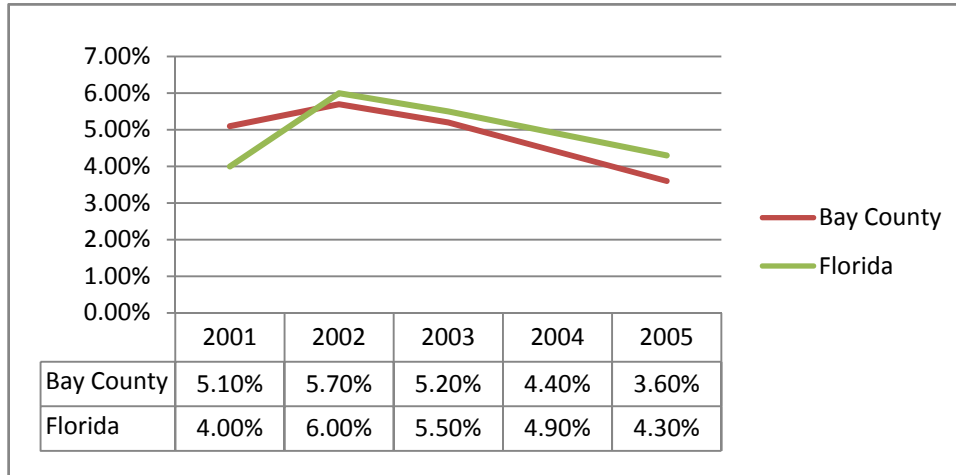
Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

In Figure 8.2  Bay County is compared with the average of all Florida counties in

unemployment. The unemployment rate in Bay County compares favorably with the other

counties in Florida. Over the five year period studied, only in 2001 was Bay County's

unemployment higher than the average of all counties in Florida, by 1.10%. For the remaining

four years (2002-2005) Bay County was between 0.30% and 0.70% lower than the state average.

Unemployment statistics for Panama City Beach were not available.

Lake Havasu City

Figure 5.3, Lake Havasu City Unemployment Rate 2001-2005
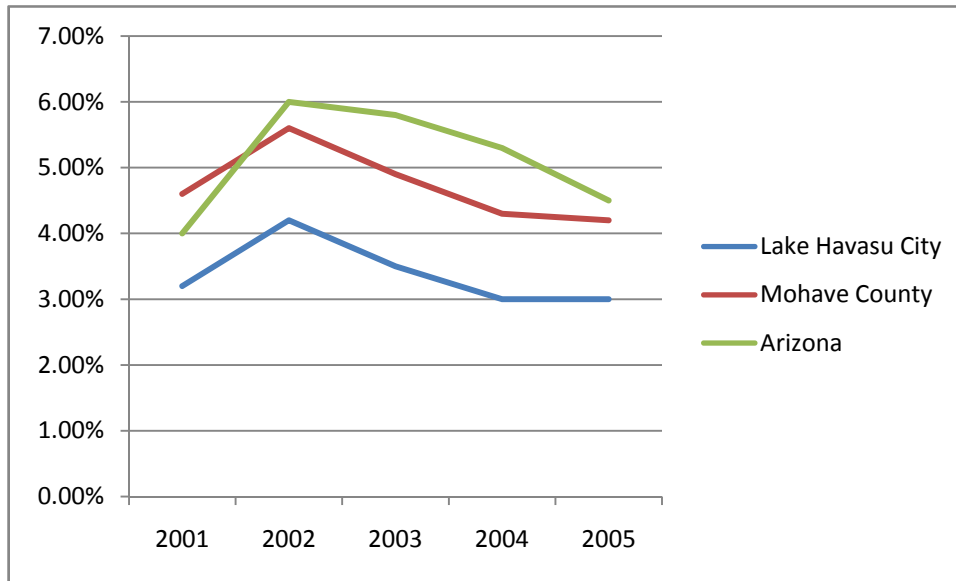


Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Advameg Inc: 2007

In Figure 8.3, Lake Havasu City and Mohave County are compared with the average of all Arizona counties in unemployment. While the unemployment rate in Mohave County compares favorably with the other counties in Arizona, the unemployment rate in Lake Havasu City is far below both. Over the five year period studied, Lake Havasu City appeared to mirror the trend of Mohave County, only at a rate of between 1.30% to 1.40%  lower. In 2004-2005, unemployment remained flat at 3.00%.

South Padre Island

Figure 5.4, South Padre Island Unemployment Rate 2001-2005
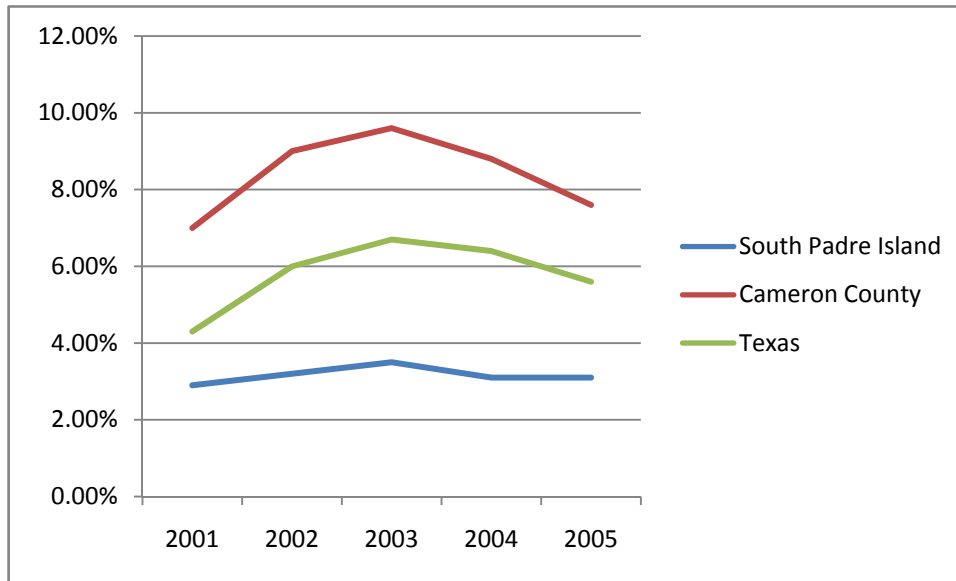


Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and The Cross Border Institute for Regional Studies

In Figure 8.4, South Padre Island and Cameron County are compared with the average of all Texas counties for unemployment. While the unemployment rate in Cameron County is markedly higher than average in Texas during each of the five years in the study period, South Padre Island was significantly lower than both, hovering consistently at or around 3%.

*Unemployment Inter-Case Analysis*

Unemployment data for Panama City Beach was unavailable. However, both South Padre Island and Lake Havasu City had unemployment levels that were well below their respective county and state averages. Daytona Beach's unemployment level was marginally higher than both its county and state averages. While Lake Havasu City's low unemployment may be explained as part of a larger trend of under-employment due to its residents attaining lower levels of post-high school education and a tourism job sector growth that was among the industry

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leaders, the same cannot be attributed to South Padre Island, which has much higher levels of education, white collar jobs and median household income. Overall, no one trend can be recognized from the unemployment data.

*Poverty rate*

The U.S. Census Bureau classifies poverty using the Orshansky Poverty Threshold, developed by Mollie Orshansky in 1963. This threshold determines the poverty 'line' which is defined as the threshold below which families or individuals are considered to be lacking the resources to meet the basic needs for healthy living; having insufficient income to provide the food, shelter and clothing needed to preserve health (U.S. Census Bureau).

Figure 6.1, Volusia County (FL) and State of Florida Poverty Rate 2001-2005



| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Volusia County | 12.10% | 12.20% | 12.20% | 11.20% | 16.20% |
| Florida | 12.60% | 12.80% | 13.00% | 11.90% | 12.80% |
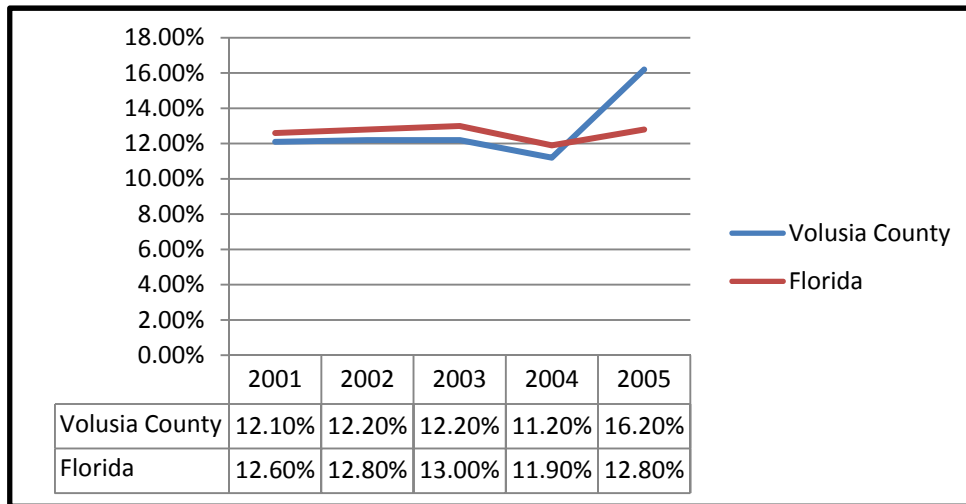
Source: U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

Volusia County recorded a poverty rate of 16.20% as of 2005, which is higher than Florida's average of 12.80%. However, the poverty rate in Volusia County decreased from 2001-2004 and was below that of Florida's during the same time period. Much of the necessary data for Daytona

Beach is unavailable. However, the 2005 poverty level in the city was estimated at 23.60% in 2000 (Advameg: 2007).

Panama City Beach

Figure 6.2, Bay County (FL) and State of Florida Poverty Rate 2001-2005



| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bay County | 12.90% | 12.40% | 12.80% | 11.90% | 13.70% |
| Florida | 12.60% | 12.80% | 13.00% | 11.90% | 12.80% |
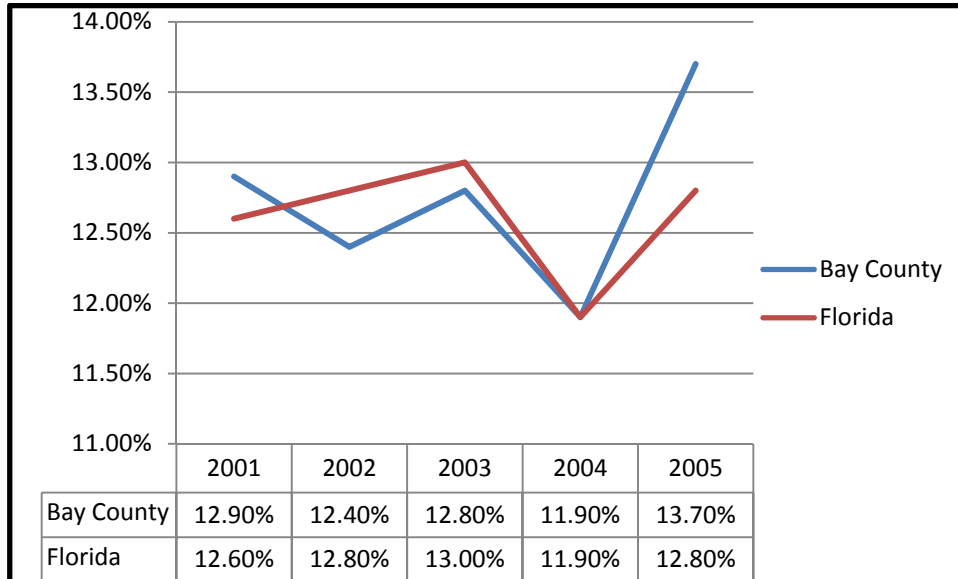
Source: U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

Bay County has a poverty rate of 13.70%, which is slightly higher than Florida's average of 12.80%. While the poverty rate in Bay County and Florida showed an overall decrease from 2001-2004, both showed an increase in 2005, although Bay County showed a higher increase. Much of the necessary data for Panama City Beach is unavailable. However, the estimated poverty level in 2005 was 5.00%.

Lake Havasu City

Figure 6.3, Mohave County (AZ) and Arizona Poverty Rate 2001- 2005



| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mohave County | 16.20% | 15.70% | 14.80% | 15.40% | 15.60% |
| Arizona | 13.20% | 13.60% | 13.90% | 14.60% | 14.40% |
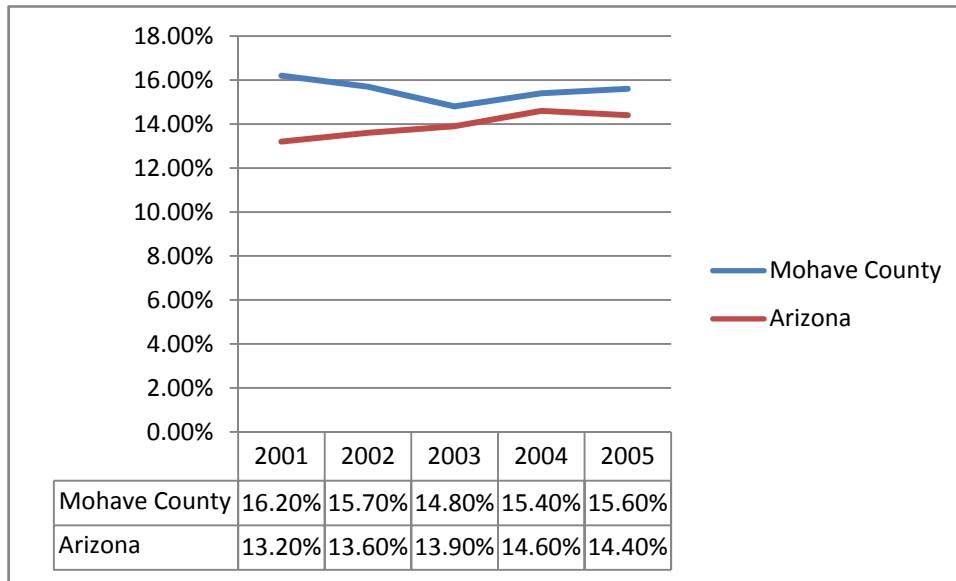
Source: U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

Mohave County has a poverty rate of 15.60%, which is slightly higher than Arizona's average of 14.40%. While the poverty rate in Mohave County decreased from 2001-2003 and Arizona's rose during the same time period, Arizona began to decline during 2004-2005 while Mohave County began to see its poverty level increase. Much of the data necessary for Lake Havasu City is unavailable. However, the estimated poverty level in 2000 was 9.50%.

South Padre Island

Figure 6.4, Cameron County (AZ) and State of Texas Poverty Rate 2001-2005



| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cameron County | 30.40% | 30.60% | 29.60% | 29.40% | 40.00% |
| Texas | 15.00% | 15.40% | 16.20% | 16.20% | 17.50% |
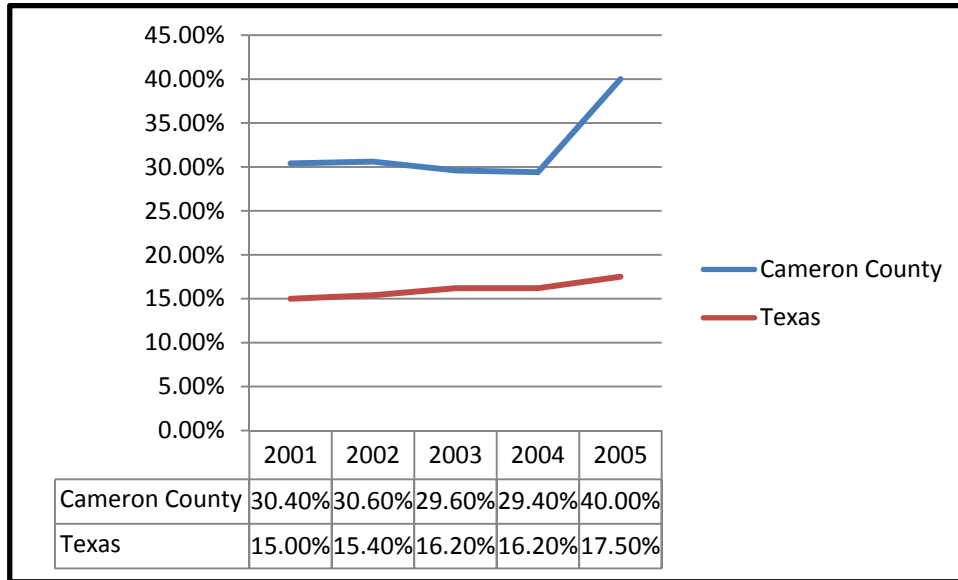
Source: U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

Cameron County has a poverty rate of 40.00%, which is drastically higher than Texas's average of 17.50%. While the poverty rate in Cameron County remained flat at 30.00% from 2001-2004 it spiked to 40.00% between 2004 and 2005. Texas's poverty level remained relatively flat during the same time period. Much of the data necessary for South Padre Island was unavailable. However the estimated poverty level in 2000 was 12.00% (Advameg Inc: 2007).

*Poverty Inter-Case Analysis*

The necessary data for a between cities comparison was not available. However, the estimated poverty levels for each city in 2000 were far below that of their respective counties and states, with the exception of Daytona Beach, which had a much higher estimated poverty level.

Table 1.3 Public Governance Index Chart

| PUBLIC GOVERNANCE | Daytona Beach | Panama City Beach | Lake Havasu City | South Padre Island |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Urbanization | Average | Well Above Average | Average | N/A |
| Crime | N/A | Highest in March | Average | Highest in March |
| Hospitalization | Low During March | Low During March | Low During March | N/A |

*Urbanization*

Urbanization is the increase in the number of people living in towns, cities and suburbs as opposed to rural areas. In order for urbanization to occur, urban growth – the amount of land devoted to urban places must also occur. While urbanization in the United States is now considered normal – more than 80% of the U.S. population lives in urban areas – rapid urbanization in areas driven by tourism may not be beneficial. According to Hammes (1994) increases in tourism and subsequent development effectively cause the bidding up of land prices in response to resort development. Because land is less expensive away from the core, subsequent development is likely to radiate outward, often haphazardly, to locations where land is most affordable. Additionally, rapid tourism growth can place certain pressures on planners and local governments, especially when the gain of wealth occurs and short term planning goals, especially those linked to economic development become dominant (Mathieson and Wall: 1982).

Urban growth in the form of residential housing can be generally attributed to several different factors. While reasons such as a vibrant local economy and favorable interest rates have a great deal of merit, one of the most compelling factors in residential housing growth in the United States over the past half century is second home development. Second home development

is not unusual in affluent, western society, especially in resort areas. This is in large part due to the high level of mobility enjoyed in western societies, which have been termed 'flow and network' societies (Castells: 1996; Urry: 2000). Such mobility, it is asserted, has been built into many people's lifestyles. Additionally, second home ownership has become more widespread in the U.S. because recreational housing has become more affordable to more of the country's residents, as their affluence has increased since World War II. And in many locales, these recreational second home owners account for a large share of the area's tourism related income (Brown: 1970).

Recreational second homes, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, are seasonal, occasional use housing units that are owned in addition to the occupants' primary place of residence and built for the purpose of leisure activities (U.S. Census: 2000). Although previously the domains of the wealthy, recreational second homes have become more commonplace within the mainstream (Ward: 1999). As demonstrated in Figure XX, since 1965, the number of seasonal homes in the U.S. has nearly doubled, from 1,860,000 to 3,554,000 in 2001 (U.S. Census Bureau: 2002). This trend has become especially prevalent in places such as Florida and Arizona, where 6.6 percent and 6.5 percent of all houses are for recreational use (U.S. Census Bureau of Historical Census of Housing: 2008). The U.S. average of seasonal homes for all states is 3.3 percent.

Table 1.5. Seasonal Housing in the United States by Year (in thousands)

| 1965 | 1970 | 1975 | 1980 | 1985 | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2001 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1,860 | 1,746 | 1,694 | 2,106 | 2,046 | 2,931 | 3,099 | 3,469 | 3,554 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Historical Census of Housing

The urban growth of an area is best measured by the amount of development that occurs. Observing the number of new housing units applied for by permit and the percentage change in permit application from year to year from 2001 to 2005 are excellent indicators of the rate of urbanization. While the percentage change (CHANGE %) in permits applied for from year to year is important I have also included the total number of units applied for by permit (UNITS) in each location for a more thorough look at the process of urbanization. The permit application process provides construction statistics by permit-issuing locale on *new privately-owned residential housing units* authorized by building permits. Included in the permitting process are single family homes, two family homes, three and four family homes and five or more family homes. For the purpose of this dissertation, no distinction is made between the different types of family housing (single, two, three and four and five or more). All units requested by permit are cumulative and listed by year.

The selected Spring Break locations are seated in states that have experienced some of the highest population growth as well as some of the highest number of authorized units by permit over the last decade (U.S. Census Bureau Building Permit Index: 2008). Because of this I have also compared the case study locations to other locales within their respective states that have similar populations, geographic location and that rely in part, on tourism as part of their local economy, but do not attract students during Spring Break. Rapid urbanization, above the level of the state average and similar areas used for comparison, is likely an indicator that the public governance systems of the area are being affected by Spring Break.

Daytona Beach

Figure 7.1 Daytona Beach (FL) Yearly Housing Unit Change, 2001-2005

| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Daytona Beach | 2001 | 368 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 97 | -271 | -73.64% |
| | 2003 | 193 | 96 | 98.97% |
| | 2004 | 242 | 49 | 25.39% |
| | 2005 | 396 | 154 | 63.64% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| Bradenton | 2001 | 941 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 874 | -67 | -7.12% |
| | 2003 | 49 | -825 | -933.90% |
| | 2004 | 662 | 613 | 1251.02% |
| | 2005 | 173 | -489 | -73.88% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| Melbourne | 2001 | 396 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 653 | 257 | 64.90% |
| | 2003 | 320 | -333 | -50.99% |
| | 2004 | 877 | 557 | 174.06% |
| | 2005 | 1,218 | 341 | 38.88% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| Florida (All) | 2001 | 336,570 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 370,862 | 34,292 | 10.19% |
| | 2003 | 429,755 | 58,893 | 15.88% |
| | 2004 | 514,933 | 85,178 | 19.82% |
| | 2005 | 578,161 | 63,228 | 12.28% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Building Permit Index

From 2001 to 2005 the percentage of units applied for by permit (Change %) in Daytona

Beach increased in each year but the first – between 2001 and 2002 - and these increases were

well above the state average from 2002 to 2005. While the state Change % ranged from between

10 to 20 percent, the Change % in Daytona Beach ranged from 25 percent to 99 percent. And

while the first comparison city, Bradenton, recorded a declining Change % in every year except

2004, that year Bradenton's Change % was nearly twelve times as great as Daytona Beach's

highest year. The second comparison city, Melbourne, recorded Change % numbers similar to

Daytona Beach, although somewhat higher during the 2001 to 2005 study period. While one year – 2003 – showed a Change % decline the other years had an increase between 38 percent and 174 percent, which exceeded the increases in Daytona Beach.

Looking at the total number of units applied for via permits (UNITS) is a useful measure because Change % alone can be manipulated by a relatively small number of units increasing rapidly within location during the study period. In Daytona Beach (pop. 65,421) the number of UNITS per year between 2001 and 2005 ranged from 97 to 396. However, during the same time period, the cities of Bradenton (pop. 75,772) and Melbourne (pop. 53,917), recorded much higher numbers. Bradenton logged between 49 and 941 UNITS, while Melbourne recorded between 396 and 1,218 during the same time period. While all three cities are considered high growth areas in a high growth state, the two comparison cities recorded higher levels of permitting and hence, higher levels of urbanization between 2001 and 2005. It would appear that despite the growth, Daytona Beach is not suffering from public governance stress – at least not due to Spring Break – at a level any greater than the comparison cities.

Panama City Beach

Figure 7.2 Panama City Beach (FL) Yearly Housing Unit Change, 2001-2005

| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Panama City Beach | 2001 | 164 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 453 | 289 | 63.80% |
| | 2003 | 2,341 | 1,888 | 80.65% |
| | 2004 | 1,694 | -647 | -27.64% |
| | 2005 | 3,047 | 1353 | 40.44% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| St. Augustine | 2001 | 3 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 4 | 1 | 25.00% |
| | 2003 | 5 | 1 | 20.00% |
| | 2004 | 9 | 4 | 44.44% |
| | 2005 | 7 | -2 | -22.22% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| Destin | 2001 | 147 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 296 | 149 | 50.34% |
| | 2003 | 244 | -52 | -17.57% |
| | 2004 | 523 | 279 | 53.35% |
| | 2005 | 931 | 408 | 43.83% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| Florida (All) | 2001 | 336,570 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 370,862 | 34,292 | 10.19% |
| | 2003 | 429,755 | 58,893 | 15.88% |
| | 2004 | 514,933 | 85,178 | 19.82% |
| | 2005 | 578,161 | 63,228 | 12.28% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Building Permit Index

Panama City Beach showed exceptional growth in terms of Change % from 2001 to 2005, with yearly increases between 40 percent and 81 percent. Only one year (2004) had a decline in the five year study period. Even so, these numbers were far above the state average during the same time period, which ranged from a 10 to 20 percent increase in Change %. The first comparison area, St. Augustine, seemed to fare well in terms of Change %, with increases between 20 and 45 percent, although this was somewhat behind Panama City Beach. However, it should be noted that St. Augustine's numbers are misleading because the very low number of

permits actually applied for, which skews the Change % decidedly upward. Destin, the second comparison area, has a Change % rate that is far above the state average yet is below that of Panama City Beach. While only one year (2003) show a decline in Change % from the previous year, the other years averaged between 43 and 54 percent increases.

In term of the total number of housing units applied for via permit (UNITS), Panama City Beach recorded dramatic growth, increasing from between 164 in 2001 to 3,047 in 2005. These numbers are backed up by the tiny city's population, which more than doubled from 5,113 to 11, 477 during the same time period. St. Augustine by comparison, recorded only 3 to 9 UNITS between 2001 and 2005. While similar to Panama City beach in population (12,263), the city's growth is severely restricted by both its geographic boundaries and it historic nature, which is very conservative with regards increased development. However, Destin (pop. 12, 423) makes for an excellent comparison because it is located an hour from Panama City Beach, has experienced rapid growth, yet does not attract students for Spring Break. From 2001 to 2005 Destin increased its number of UNITS from 147 to 931, which signifies dramatic urban growth. However, this growth was less than a third of that of Panama City Beach during the same time period. The data indicates that Panama City Beach, the only one of the study areas to attract students during Spring Break is being stressed by urban growth. Destin, which is similar to Panama City Beach in nearly every respect with the exception of Spring Break, is likely facing some stress via urban growth, although not nearly to the same extent. St. Augustine, due to its restrictive nature appears not to be suffering any ill effects from urban growth. Because of this, it appears that Spring Break is a determining factor in the dramatic urban growth of Panama City Beach, which in turn is place stress on the public governance of the city.

Lake Havasu City

Figure 7.3 Lake Havasu City (AZ) Yearly Housing Unit Change, 2001-2005

| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lake Havasu City | 2001 | 1,217 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 1,502 | 285 | 23.42% |
| | 2003 | 1,737 | 235 | 15.65% |
| | 2004 | 1,317 | -420 | -24.18% |
| | 2005 | 938 | -379 | -28.78% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| Flagstaff | 2001 | 511 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 485 | -26 | -5.09% |
| | 2003 | 755 | 270 | 55.67% |
| | 2004 | 326 | -429 | -56.82% |
| | 2005 | 630 | 304 | 93.25% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| Avondale | 2001 | 2,310 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 2,044 | -266 | -11.52% |
| | 2003 | 1,461 | -583 | -28.52% |
| | 2004 | 2,443 | 982 | 67.21% |
| | 2005 | 1,805 | -638 | -26.12% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| Arizona (All) | 2001 | 125,683 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 132,671 | 6,988 | 5.56% |
| | 2003 | 150,494 | 17,823 | 12.43% |
| | 2004 | 181,288 | 30,794 | 20.46% |
| | 2005 | 182,278 | 990 | 0.55% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Building Permit Index

Lake Havasu City was a volatile market in terms of Change % from 2001 to 2005, with two years recording 15 to 24 percent increases and two years with decreases from 24 to 28 percent. The volatility of Change % is not unusual with regards to the comparison areas. Flagstaff recorded two years of rapid Change % increase – from 5 to 94 percent, while it also recorded two years of declines ranging from 5 to 57 percent. The city of Avondale did not have the same volatility but did show declines from 11 to 29 percent in three of the four years between 2001 and 2005. The one year that an increase occurred (2004), it was exceptional at just over 67

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percent. The state of Arizona, which had some of the highest growth in the entire country from 2001 to 2005, in terms of both population and construction, was much less volatile. Change % increased every year, from just less than 1 percent to just over 20 percent.

In looking at the number of housing units applied for by permit (UNITS), Lake Havasu City (pop. 56,355) appears to have very consistent growth, with between 938 and 1,737 per year between 2001 and 2005. The first comparison area, Flagstaff (pop. 58,213) was also steady, recording between 485 and 755 UNITS during the same time frame. However, this is approximately half of the UNITS recorded in Lake Havasu City. Alternatively, the city of Avondale (pop, 75,403) had a much higher number of UNITS recorded from 2001 to 2005 – between 1,461 and 2,443. Considering the slightly higher overall population of Avondale, the recorded UNITS are not unusually high. This does signify that there is no real difference between Lake Havasu City in terms of urban growth and stress, even though students on Spring Break only visit Lake Havasu City. This is likely due to the relative size of Spring Break to other tourism opportunities, such as the Fourth of July and Labor Day, which are far more family oriented. Overall, Lake Havasu city appears to be within the norm of growth and stress when compared to similar cities, while suffering no direct negative effects from Spring Break in terms of urban growth.

South Padre Island

Figure 7.4 South Padre Island (TX) Yearly Housing Unit Change, 2001-2005

| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| South Padre Island | 2001 | 120 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 118 | -2 | -1.66% |
| | 2003 | 112 | -6 | -5.08% |
| | 2004 | 64 | -48 | -42.86% |
| | 2005 | 241 | 177 | 77.44% |
| PLACE | YEAR | UNITS | CHANGE | CHANGE % |
| Texas (All) | 2001 | 150,342 | N/A | N/A |
| | 2002 | 165,027 | 14,685 | 8.90% |
| | 2003 | 177,194 | 12,167 | 6.87% |
| | 2004 | 188,842 | 11,648 | 6.17% |
| | 2005 | 210,611 | 21,769 | 10.34% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Building Permit Index

South Padre Island, the smallest of the Spring Break case study areas, saw its population increase an astounding 54.69 percent between 1995 and 2005. However, this figure is misleading. The population, which was tiny to begin with, increased from 1,673 to 2,588. Because the city of South Padre Island is located in a small, finite geographic area – a barrier island – it makes comparing population growth to Change % and UNITS problematic. Furthermore, finding cities within Texas that have comparable size but yet count tourism as a major component of their industry is problematic as well. As such, no definitive answer can be given on the level of stress placed on the public governance process from increased urbanization at South Padre Island with regards to the yearly influx of students visiting during Spring Break.

*Urbanization Inter-Case Analysis*

The effect of urbanization on the public governance of the Spring Break cities was measured in two ways – percent change in housing permits by year (Change %) and change in total number of units by year (Units). In comparing percentage change between units, both Daytona Beach and Lake Havasu City are very similar to their respective in-state comparison cities. Panama City

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Beach registered a slightly higher percentage change than its comparison cities during the same time period. Additionally, when comparing the increase in the total number of units by permit, both Daytona Beach and Lake Havasu City remained very consistent with their comparison cities. Panama City Beach however, greatly exceeded its comparison cities – even the nearby city of Destin – which itself experienced a phenomenal amount of growth. South Padre Island was not compared in these indices due to a lack of similar comparison cities.

These comparisons indicate that urbanization in areas which attract Spring Breakers only as a component of their tourism sector are not suffering public governance stress any more than their in-state comparison cities. Additionally, Daytona Beach has been in the process of diversifying its entire economy and attempting to attract more families and businesses, which undoubtedly plays a role in the findings. Panama City Beach on the other hand, draws the greatest number of students during Spring Break and the total unit change is far above its in-state comparison cities. This indicates that Spring Break does indeed impact the amount of urbanization and hence, stress on the city's public governance system because of the emphasis placed on Spring Break as well as the sheer volume of students who attend yearly.

*Law Enforcement*

The ability of a city to serve and protect its citizens via law enforcement is crucial to the well being of the residents and the city. This ability may be impacted by tourism, especially Spring Break, which consists of large numbers of college students, who, most often are consistently fueled by alcohol, the desire for sex and a hedonistic attitude may not have regard for the law as their primary objective while visiting host locations. The increase in petty criminal behavior, such as theft and fraud has been well documented (Mathieson and Wall: 1982; Cohen: 1983; Brunt and Courtney: 1999; Tosun: 2002). Activities such as pick pocketing, car theft, and

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personal assault accompany increased tourism. Such crime is not caused by visitors, but by those singling out visitors because they are easy targets, typically unfamiliar with the area and with disposable income (Smith: 1977; Godfrey, Kerry, and Clark: 2000). Prostitution is another concern for host areas. While prostitution has been documented to increase at tourism locations (Cohen: 1988; Lankford: 1994; Lindberg and Johnson: 1997), there is debate as to how much prostitution is actually be attributed to tourism (Mathieson and Wall: 1982). While much of the criminal activity is directed toward tourists, less serious breaches of behavior, which may or may not be against the law, is undertaken by tourists.

By observing the level of criminal activity from 2001-2005, these statistics can provide an accurate indication of the level of stress Spring Break places on the host locations Police Departments as opposed to other times of the year. For the purposes of this dissertation, Spring Break is defined as occurring during the month of March. Therefore, any increase in criminal activity during the month of March above other months would be an indication of a significant stress on the Police Departments of the case study areas and subsequently the public governance system of each host city. The following tables represent three distinct types of criminal activity – Part I Crimes, Part II Crimes, and Citations, which are broken down into vehicle and non-vehicle related categories. The data from 2001-2005 was added for each month and divided by the number of years (five) in order to determine monthly averages, unless otherwise calculated quarterly, which will be noted.

*Part I crimes*

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Part I Crimes are the most serious type of criminal offense. Considered 'major' crimes, they consist of; *homicides, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, vehicle theft, and arson.*

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*Part II crimes*

Part II Crimes are considered all other crimes which do not fall in to the Part I Crimes category, but that are not citations. Examples include; *assaults, forgery and counterfeiting, fraud, embezzlement, possession of stolen property, vandalism, weapons violations, gambling, prostitution, vagrancy and disorderly conduct.*

*Vehicle citations*

Vehicle citations are all citations related to vehicles, including motorcycles, whether the violations occurred while the vehicle was moving or parked. Violations which comprise the vehicle citation category are; *impeding traffic, racing/drag racing/acceleration for contest, unsafe lane change, stop sign violation, stop light violation, unsafe start, improper u-turn, driving the wrong way, following too closely, illegal pass on the right, improper passing, failure to stop for school bus, parking on roadway, no seat belt, child not secured by seat belt, open bed-under 18 years of age, failure to control speed, failure to maintain financial responsibility, disregard for official traffic control device, failure to drive in a single lane, failure to signal turn/lane change, no driver's license, violation of driver's license restriction, no motorcycle endorsement, altered driver's license, overloaded motorcycle, driving without lights, expired motor vehicle inspection, operating motorcycle without headgear, defective equipment, illegal parking, failure to display driver's license, driving on sidewalk, parking in prohibited area, parking/stopping on sidewalk, parked facing traffic, parked in fire lane, speeding above 10% limit, use of non-approved equipment, expired registration, display of fictitious license plate, no license plates, failure to yield right of way, driving on improved shoulder, driving on wrong side of road, motor vehicle inspection violation, boarding a moving vehicle, riding a portion of the vehicle unintended, taxi passenger limit violation, and defective brakes.*

*Non-vehicle citations*

Non-vehicle citations are all non-vehicle related citations, with the exception of Driving Under the Influence (D.U.I.). These include; *D.U.I., public intoxication, underage drinking/alcohol possession, underage possession/consumption of tobacco, open container, possession of drug paraphernalia, obscene language/gesture, public urination, indecent exposure, fighting/making threats, unreasonable noise, window peeping, failure to render aid, misrepresentation of age by minor and littering*. For the purposes of this dissertation I have included D.U.I. as a Non-Vehicle Citation in order to keep all citations involving alcohol in the same category.

Daytona Beach

The Daytona Beach Police Department declined to offer public record statistics regarding crime in Volusia County.

Panama City Beach

*Panama city beach part I crimes*

The month of March showed the greatest number of Part I Crimes from 2001 to 2005 in Panama City Beach. This represents a 30.43 percent increase over the next most violent month, July, which corresponds to the Fourth of July weekend festivities. The month of April, which typically has some students for Spring Break, is the third most violent month, just behind July. In Panama City Beach, the rise in Part I Crimes appear directly related to Spring Break.

Figure 8.1, Panama City Beach (FL) Average Monthly Part I Crimes, 2001-2005



**Panama City Beach Average Monthly Part I Crimes, 2001-2005**
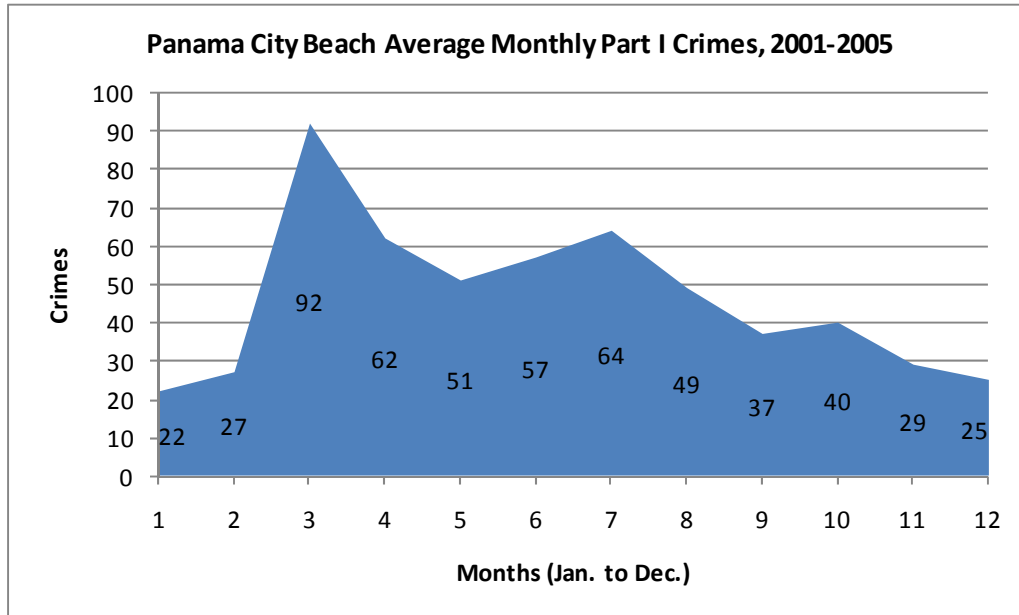
Source: Panama City Beach Police Department

*Panama city beach part II crimes*

Panama City Beach experienced nearly a 35.52 percent higher amount of Part II Crimes during the month of March from 2001 to 2005 than in any other month. The next highest monthly total is April, which typically hosts some college students during the end of Spring Break. Following March and April, July has the next highest rate of Part II Crime, although it is 47.59 percent lower than that of March. Additionally, this brief increase during the summer corresponds with the Fourth of July weekend. Because the March average is significantly higher than all of the other months, it can be conclusively stated that Spring Break creates a significant stress to the Panama City Beach Police Department in this area.

Figure 8.2, Panama City Beach (FL) Average Monthly Part II Crimes, 2001-2005

**Panama City Beach Average Monthly Part II Crimes, 2001-2005**
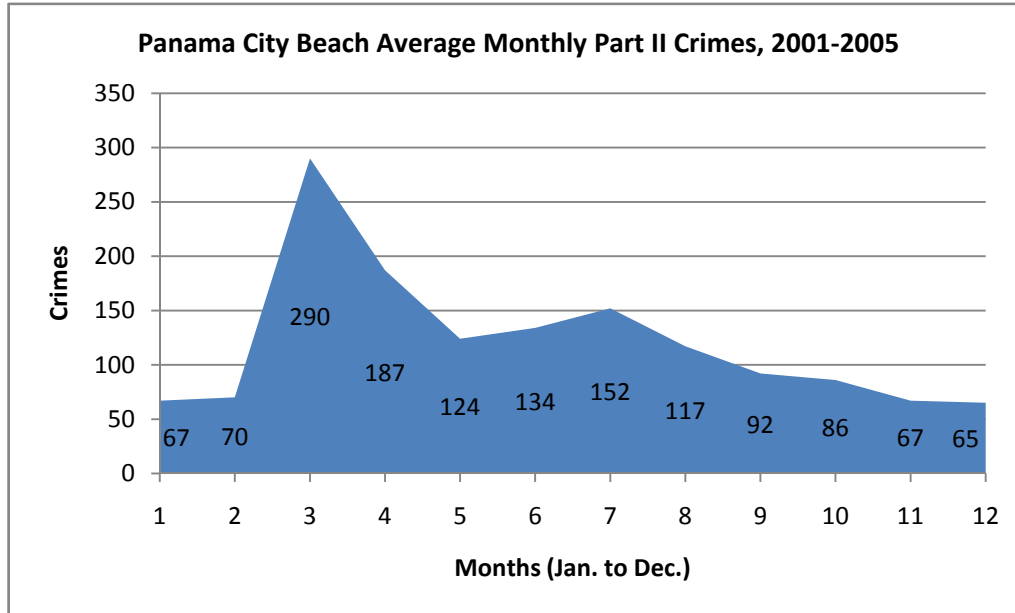


Source: Panama City Beach Police Department

*Panama city beach vehicle citations*

Vehicle citations during Spring Break (March) were over three times the amount of any other month. Overall, Spring Break can be considered an atypical time for vehicle citations. On average, 1,980 vehicle citations were issued during Spring Break from 2001-2005. This represents, by far, the highest average of the twelve month period. April was the second highest month, with 1,164 vehicle citations on average, a 38.41 decrease from March. There was again a brief increase during July, but this was still 63.12 percent below the number of average vehicle citations that occurred in March. Because Part I and Part II crimes showed similarly high levels during the same time period, it would be expected that vehicle citations would show at least a similar increase.

Figure 8.3, Panama City Beach (FL) Average Monthly Vehicle Citations, 2001-2005

**Panama City Beach Average Monthly Vehicle Citations, 2001-2005**

Citations (y-axis) vs. Months (Jan. to Dec.) (x-axis)

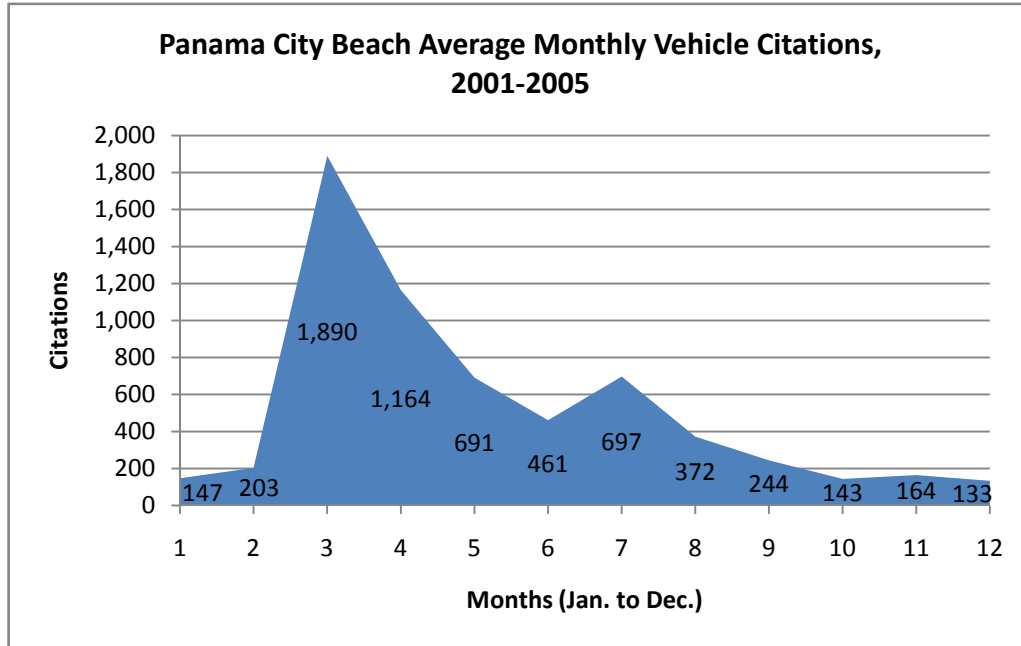Values by month: 1: 147, 2: 203, 3: 1,890, 4: 1,164, 5: 691, 6: 461, 7: 697, 8: 372, 9: 244, 10: 143, 11: 164, 12: 133

Source: Panama City Beach Police Department

*Pamama city beach non-vehicle citations*

Non-vehicle citations during Spring Break (March) did show an increase consistent with Part I and Part II crimes, as well as vehicle citations. Non-vehicle citations during March were the highest average for any of the months, over 60.61 percent higher than the next highest month, which is April. July showed an increase as well compared to the other months of the year although it was comparatively low, 77.42 percent below March. The increase during March would be expected during Spring Break because many of the non-vehicle citations are alcohol related and inappropriate behavior related to alcohol consumption, which is one of the primary activities college students engage in during Spring Break. This confirms the research of King, Pizam and Milman (1991) regarding the connection between alcohol, warm climates, and sexual openness at tourist destinations.

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Figure 8.4, Panama City Beach (FL) Average Monthly Non-Vehicle Citations, 2001-2005

**Panama City Beach Average Monthly Non-Vehicle Citations, 2001-2005**
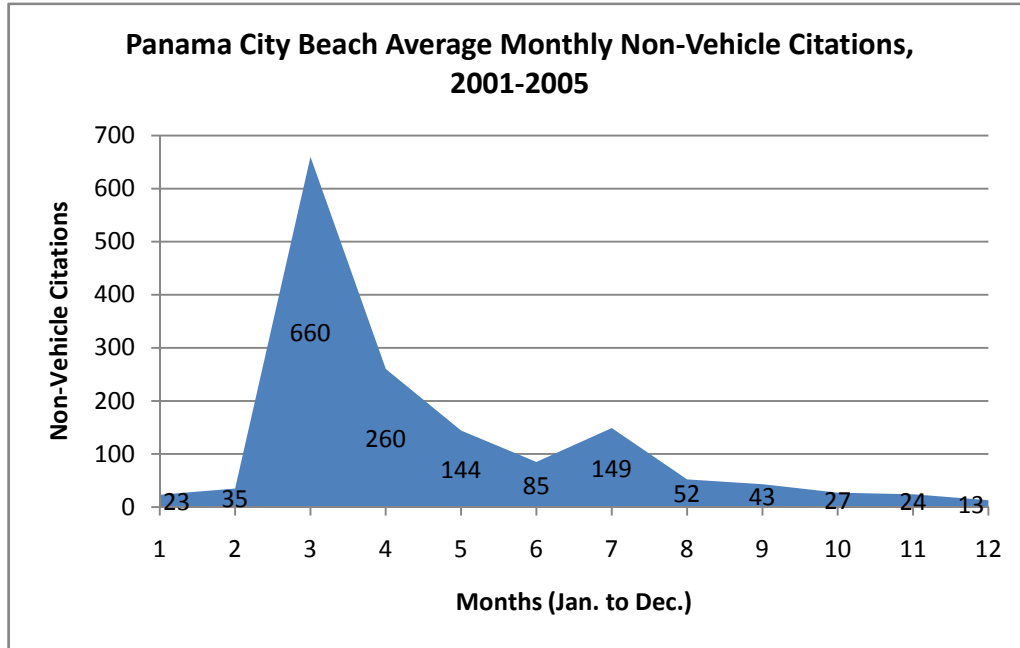


Source: Panama City Beach Police Department

Lake Havasu City

*Lake havasu city part I crimes*

From 2001-2005 Lake Havasu City experienced only a nominal increase in Part I Crimes during

March as opposed to the other months of the year. This nominal increase is only 3.49 percent

greater than the next highest month, which is May. Additionally, the number of Part I Crimes in

the month of March is comparable to May (Memorial Day), July (4th of July), August (Labor

Day) and December (Christmas). Overall, this would indicate that Spring Break does not place

significant stress on the Panama City Beach Police Department in terms of Part I Crimes.

Figure 8.5, Lake Havasu City (AZ) Average Monthly Part I Crimes, 2001-2005

**Lake Havasu City (AZ) Average Monthly Part I Crimes 2001-2005**
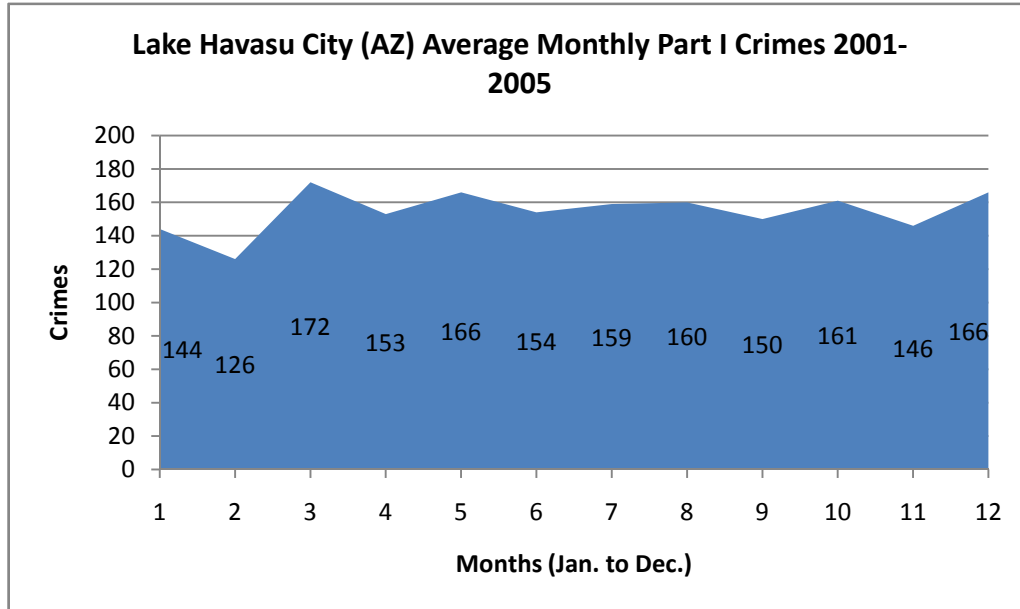


Source: Lake Havasu City Police Department

*Lake havasu city part II crimes*

Lake Havasu City experienced a slightly higher level of Part II Crimes in March than most other months from 2001 to 2005, but this level actually fell below the number of Part II Crimes recorded in May during the same time period. Although the March average is somewhat higher than the other months, with the exception of May, it cannot be conclusively determined that Spring Break is the cause. Additionally, because March does not have the highest average number of Part II crimes recorded it can be concluded that Spring Break does not cause an increase in Part II crimes that are out of line with the other months, and this would not place additional stress on the Lake Havasu City Police Department.

Figure 8.6, Lake Havasu City (AZ) Average Monthly Part II Crimes, 2001-2005

**Lake Havasu City (AZ) Average Monthly Part II Crimes 2001-2005**

Crimes

273  257  377  339  394  286  307  327  344  319  277  273

Months (Jan. to Dec.)
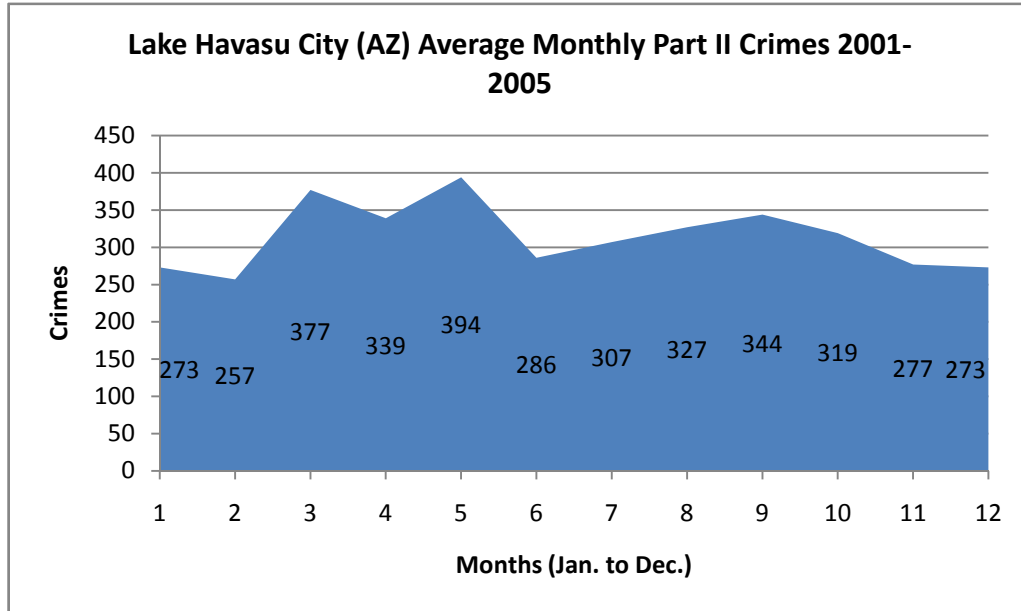
Source: Lake Havasu City Police Department

*Lake Havasu City Vehicle Citations*

Vehicle citations during March did not show an increase compared to other months. Overall, Spring Break can be considered a typical month for vehicle citations. On average, 558 vehicle citations were issued during March from 2001 to 2005. This represents only the fifth highest average of the twelve month period. The month with the highest number of average vehicle citations was May, which logged an average of 758 vehicle citations – 26.39% higher than in March. Because Part I and Part II crimes showed marginal increases during the same time period, it would be expected that vehicle citations would show at least a similar, marginal increases. However, this is most likely explained by the type of activities that occur during Spring Break in Lake Havasu City. Lake Havasu City is not located near the ocean/beach as are the other Spring Break locations. The vast majority of the activities during the daytime hours of Spring Break occur on Lake Havasu. College students attending Spring Break at Lake Havasu City typically rent boats and spend the entire day on Lake Havasu, only to return to the city at

night to go to the city's bars and clubs. Therefore it is logical that because the students spend most of their time on the water as opposed to land, vehicle citations would remain constant during Spring Break rather than show an increase.

Figure 8.7, Lake Havasu City (AZ) Average Monthly Vehicle Citations, 2001-2005



**Lake Havasu City (AZ) Average Monthly Vehicle Citations 2001-2005**
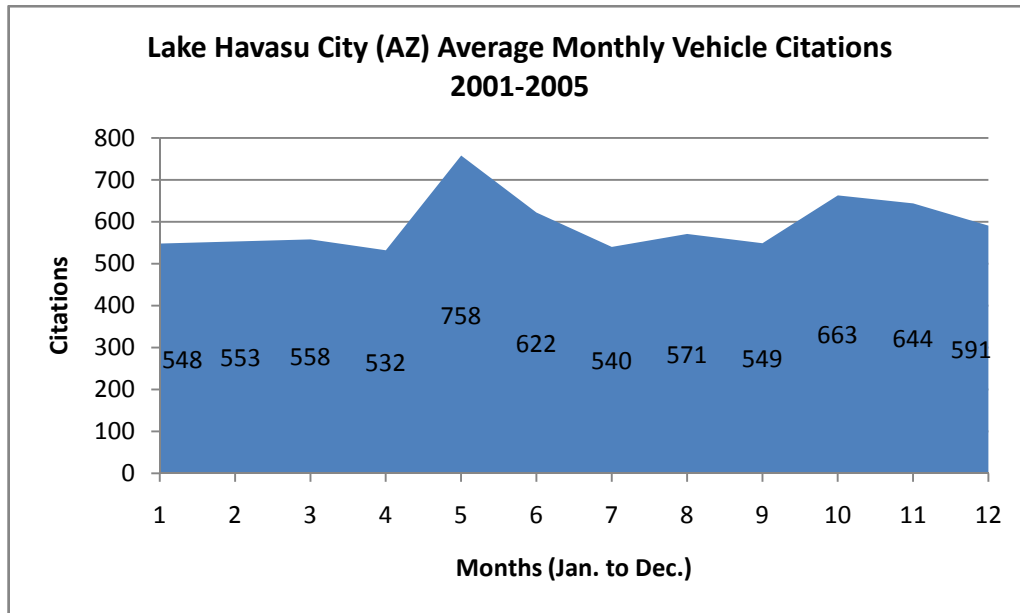
Source: Lake Havasu City Police Department

*Lake havasu city non-vehicle citations*

Non-vehicle citations during Spring Break (March) did show an increase. In fact, non-vehicle citations during March were the highest average for any of the months, with an average of 224 citations. This is over 10 percent greater than the next highest month, which is May. This would be expected during Spring Break because many of the non-vehicle citations are alcohol related and inappropriate behavior related to alcohol consumption and one of the primary activities college students engage in during Spring Break is alcohol consumption. Additionally, unlike vehicle citations, which would be curbed because of the time students spend on Lake Havasu, alcohol consumption is not a geographically restricted activity. This confirms the research of

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King, Pizam and Milman (1991) regarding the connection between alcohol, warm climates, and sexual openness at tourist destinations.

Figure 8.8, Lake Havasu City Average Monthly Non-Vehicle Citations, 2001-2005

**Lake Havasu City (AZ) Average Monthly Non-Vehicle Citations 2001-2005**

Citations / Months (Jan. to Dec.)

38, 31, 224, 118, 191, 61, 165, 117, 140, 43, 33, 30
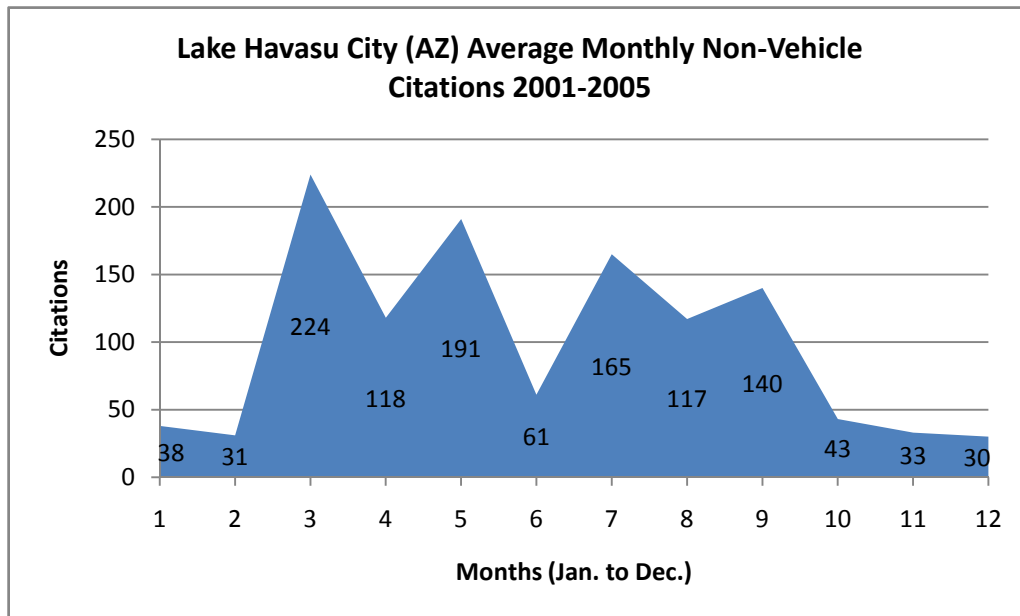
Source: Lake Havasu City Police Department

South Padre Island

*South padre island part I and part II crimes*

South Padre Island does not make a distinction between Part I and Part II crimes in the data that it provided for this study. South Padre Island experienced a dramatic increase in Part I and Part II Crimes during the month of March from 2002-2005.  An average of 598 combined Part I and Part II crimes were recorded during March of the study period, a rate that is over five times greater than the next highest month – July. July's annual increase in crimes corresponds with the increase of visitors for the Fourth of July holiday. From these statistics it can be conclusively

determined that Spring Break is the catalyst for the increase in Part I and Part II crimes on South

Padres Island.

Figure 8.9, South Padre Island Average Monthly Part I and Part II Crimes, 2002-2005



South Padre Island Average Monthly Part I and Part II Crimes 2002-2005
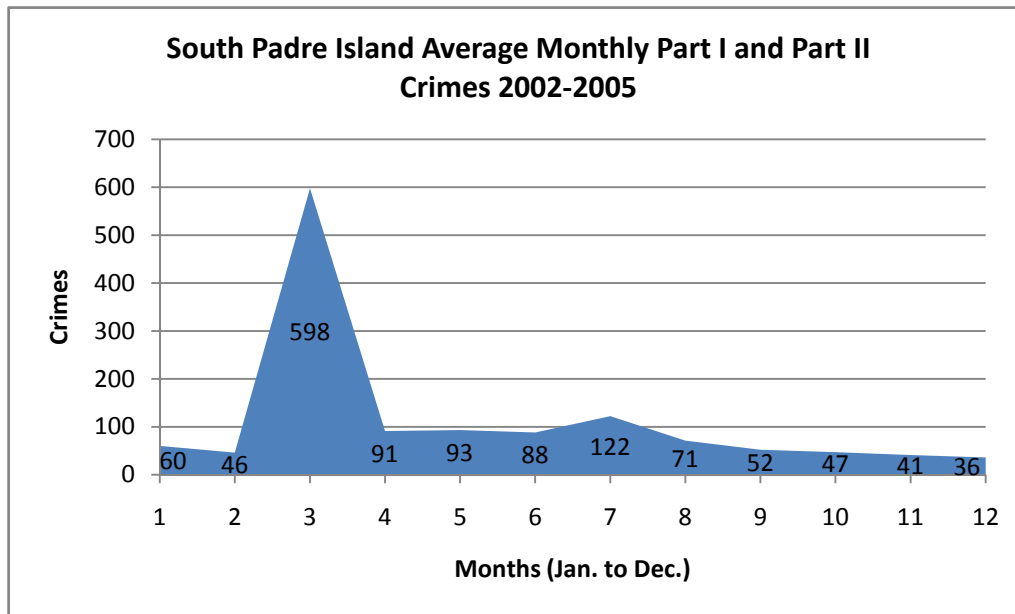
Source: South Padre Island Police Department

*South padre island vehicle citations*

Vehicle citations during March showed a significant increase compared to other months.

Overall, March can be considered an atypical month for vehicle citations. On average, 610

vehicle citations were issued during Spring Break from 2002 to 2005. This is by far the highest

average of the twelve month period. The month with the next highest number of vehicle citations

was July, which logged an average of 324 between 2002 and 2005 – a 46.89 percent decrease

from March.

Figure 8.10, South Padre Island (TX) Average Monthly Vehicle Citations, 2002-2005

**South Padre Island Average Monthly Vehicle Citations, 2002-2005**

Citations (y-axis): 0 to 700

| Month | Value |
|-------|-------|
| 1 | 97 |
| 2 | 123 |
| 3 | 610 |
| 4 | 180 |
| 5 | 254 |
| 6 | 215 |
| 7 | 324 |
| 8 | 185 |
| 9 | 119 |
| 10 | 157 |
| 11 | 111 |
| 12 | 65 |

Months (Jan. to Dec.)
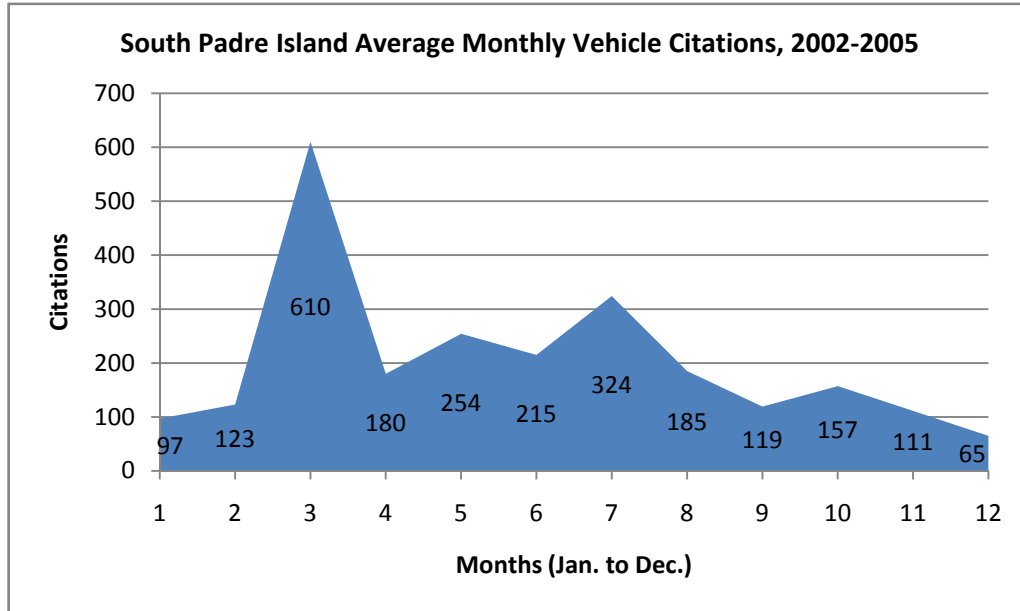
Source: South Padre Island Poliec Department

*South padre island non-vehicle citations*

As with the previous crime measures, non-vehicle citations during Spring Break (March) did show a marked increase. In fact, non-vehicle citations during March were a staggering 1054% higher than the next highest month, which is July. This would be expected during Spring Break because many of the non-vehicle citations are alcohol related and inappropriate behavior related to alcohol consumption. Research has shown that of the primary activities college students engage in during Spring Break is alcohol consumption. This confirms the research of King, Pizam and Milman (1991) regarding the connection between alcohol, warm climates, and sexual openness at tourist destinations.

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Figure 8.11, South Padre Island (TX) Average Monthly Non-Vehicle Citations, 2002-2005



**South Padre Island Average Monthly Non-Vehicle Citations, 2002-2005**
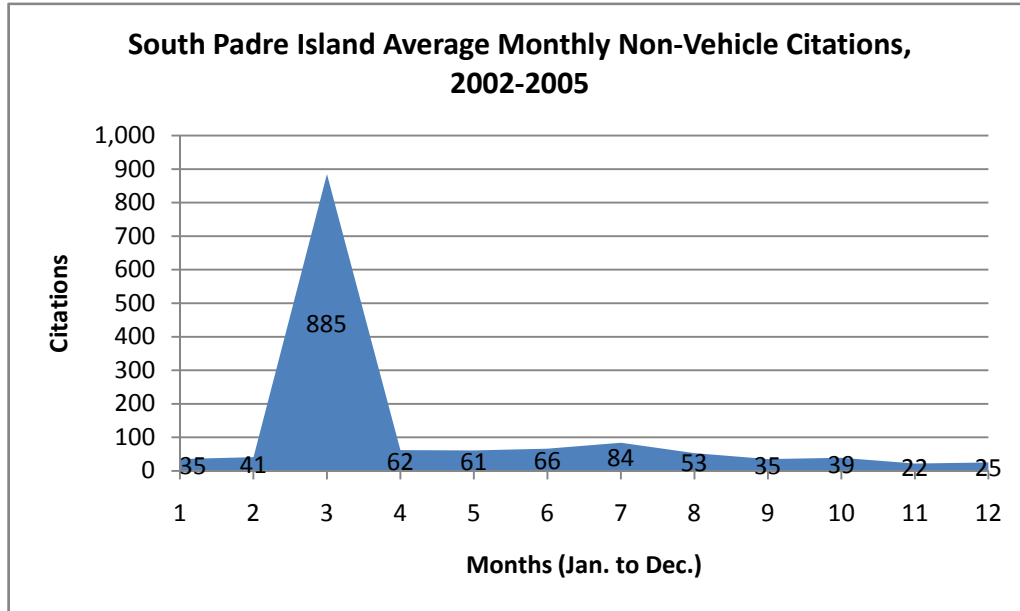
Source: South Padre Island Police Department

*Law Enforcement Inter-Case Analysis*

The law enforcement analysis considered average monthly Part I Crimes, Part II Crimes, Vehicle Citations and Non-Vehicle Citations in an attempt to determine whether or not students visiting for Spring Break lead to an increase in criminal activity, placing above normal stress on the respective city police departments and on the public governance of the selected Spring Break cities. The Daytona Beach Police Department declined to provide statistics for the study. Of the three cities where crime statistics were available, there are striking similarities between Panama City Beach and South Padre Island. The smallest of the study areas, crime in each of the four criminal activity categories (Part I, Part II, Vehicle Citations, and Non-Vehicle Citations) was by far the highest during the month of March. The month in which the second highest number of citations was recorded for the two cities was July, which corresponds with the Fourth of July Holiday as well as the general increase in people visiting for summer vacation. Conversely, Lake

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Havasu City's analysis showed that crime during March was in line with the other months of the year. Only non-vehicle citations had the highest levels during Spring Break.

The between cities comparison indicates that the level of crime is directly related to the level of police enforcement in each city. Lake Havasu City strictly enforces its regulations – as restrictive as they can be while still attracting a large number of students during Spring Break. Panama City Beach and South Padre Island either choose not to strictly enforce their respective regulations or are unable to properly enforce such regulations due to the disparity between the number of police offers in relation to the number of students visiting during Spring Break. In either instance, this indicates that Spring Breakers place an increased amount of stress on the Panama City Beach and South Padre Island Police Departments while no such increase exists in Lake Havasu City. It should be noted that although Daytona Beach declined to provide crime data, the inability of the police department to regulate Spring Breakers in the late 1980's and early 1990's led to tougher local and state laws, which succeeded in greatly diminish the yearly Spring Break crowds.

*Hospital Visitation*

By measuring the number of admissions to the hospitals in Spring Break host locations, the amount of stress placed on the local healthcare system, if any, by visiting students can be determined. Additionally, this leads to a greater understanding of how public governance as a whole is affected by Spring Break. Because I have questioned whether or not students visiting for Spring Break impact the public governance process of the locale, it would be expected that the number of hospital visits during the first quarter of every year would be the highest because Spring Break falls within that quarter. Additionally, when comparing the age groups that visit local hospitals by quarter, I would expect that the 18-24 year old age group is would show a

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higher incidence of visitation as well, accounting for the increased number of first quarter visits

due to the influx of Spring Breakers. The data was collected on a quarterly basis from all of the

hospitals in each county between 2001 and 2005. This is due to a variety of factors –

specialization or role of each hospital, proximity of the hospitals to the overall urban area and the

lack of individual hospital data as they relate specifically to each Spring Break city. Because of

these factors, the county level statistics provide the greatest level of accuracy.

Daytona Beach

Figure 9.1, Volusia County Average Quarterly Hospital Visits 2001-2005
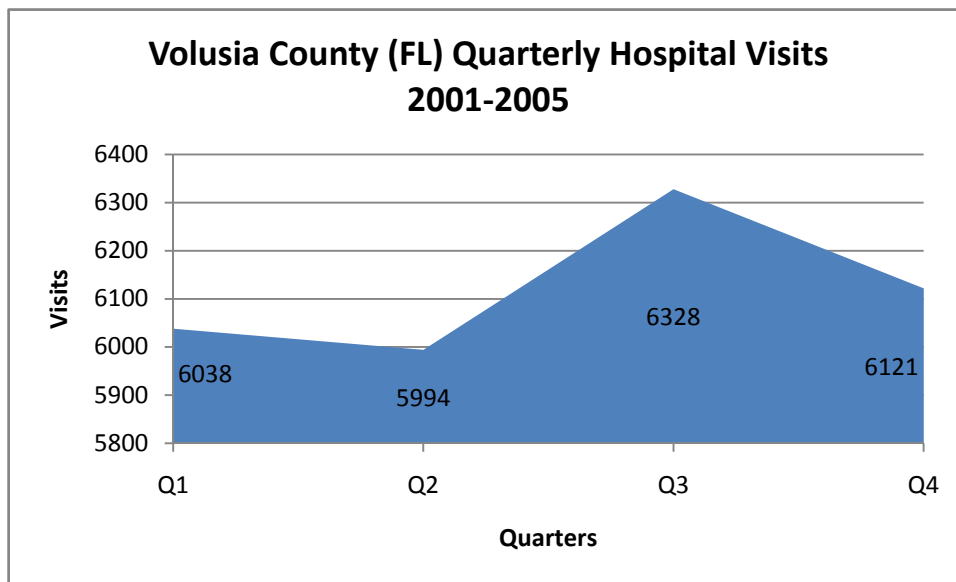


Source: The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration

While it would be expected that students visiting for Spring Break would have increased the

number of hospital visits in the first quarter of the selected years, thereby stressing the healthcare

system, this does not appear to be the case. Figure 1.11 indicates that the number of admissions

during the first quarter were the second lowest average recorded from 2001 to 2005, with an

average of 6038. And this number was on .73 percent above the second quarter, which had the

lowest average, with 5,994. The highest hospital visitation rate came during the third quarter, which averaged 6,328 admissions from 2001 to 2005. Because Daytona Beach still depends heavily on tourism, but has placed a greater emphasis on family oriented events, these numbers make sense. More families visit during the summer months – which corresponds to the third quarter – when schools are on break.

Figure 9.2, Volusia County 18-24 Yr. Old Average Quarterly Hospital Visits 2001-2005
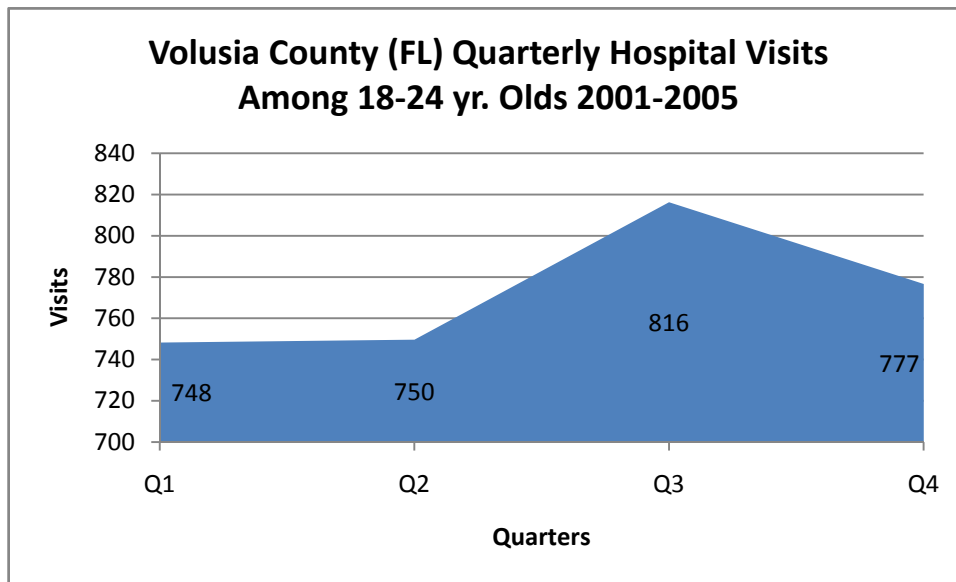


Source: The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration

A more exact measure of Spring Break's impact on health care in Daytona Beach can be gained by measuring the number of hospital visits by 18-24 year olds – the typical age of a college student on Spring Break – over the four quarters. If students visiting during Spring Break were placing stress on the health care system, it would be expected that the average number of visits by the 18-24 year old age group would be greatest. Interestingly, the number of visits by the 18-24 year old age group is the lowest during the first quarter, averaging 748 visits from 2001 to 2005. This is nearly identical to the second quarter, which averaged 750 hospital visits

during the same time period. The quarter in which the 18-25 year old age group made the highest number of visits was the third, with an average of 816. This is 8.33 percent higher than the first quarter, indicating that college students on Spring Break are not impacting the healthcare of Volusia County during Spring Break, but rather, during the summer months.

Panama City Beach

Figure 9.3, Bay County Average Quarterly Hospital Visits 2001-2005
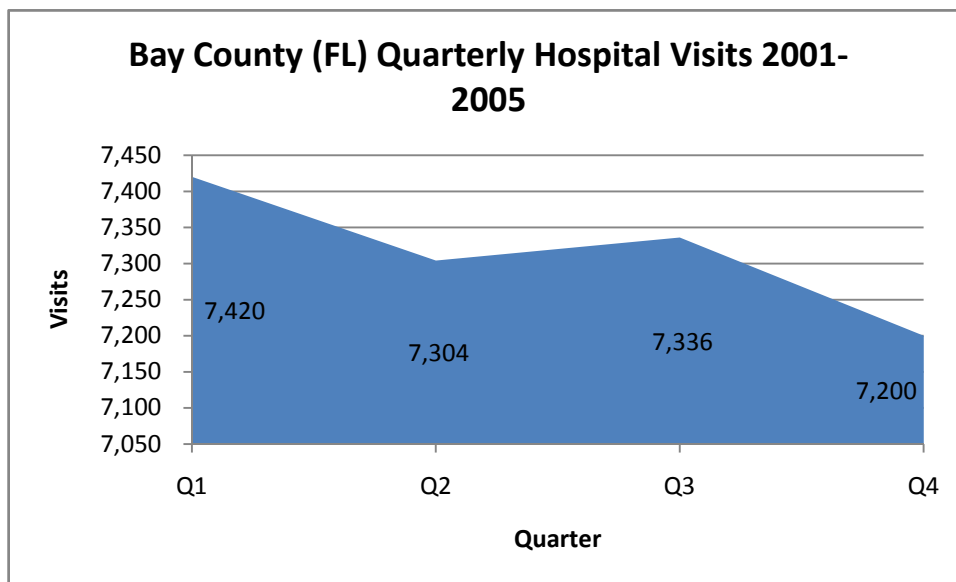


Source: The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration

It would be expected that students visiting Panama City Beach for Spring Break would have increased the number of hospital visits in the first quarter from 2001 to 2005, especially considering that it is the largest of the current U.S. Spring Break locations and the second smallest in terms of population. This in turn would place greater stress on Bay County's healthcare system during the first quarter. At first glance, this does appear to be the case. From 2001 to 2005 the first quarter had the highest number of hospital visits, with an average of 7,420. However, this number is only marginally higher than the average number of visits during the

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third quarter of the same time frame, which averaged 7,336. Overall, the number of average first quarter visits from 2001 to 2005 was on 1.13 percent higher than the third quarter and only 1.56 percent higher on average than the second quarter. This would indicate that there is no significant additional stress being placed on the Bay County health care system by Spring Breakers.

Figure 9.4, Bay County 18-24 Yr. Old Average Quarterly Hospital Visits 2001-2005
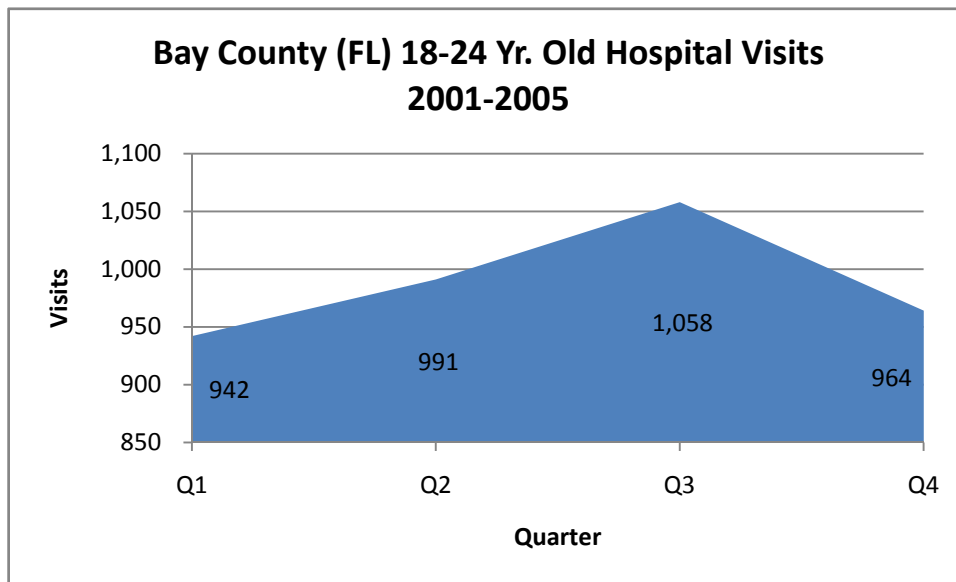


Source: The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration

Because the average number of hospital visits in Bay County occurs in the first quarter – although marginal, a more exact measure of Spring Break's impact on health care in Panama City Beach can be gained by measuring the number of hospital visits by 18-24 year olds – the typical age of a college student on Spring Break. If students visiting during Spring Break were placing stress on the health care system, it would be expected that the average number of visits by the 18-24 year old age group would be greatest. However, according to the data, the exact opposite is true. Among 18-24 year olds, the first quarter showed the lowest number of quarterly visits from 2001 to 2005, with an average of 942. This is 10.96 percent lower than that of the

third quarter, which has the highest number of average visits by 18-24 year olds, with 1,058 and

2.82 percent lower than the fourth quarter, in which the second fewest visits by the same age

group occurred on average. From this, it can be determined that students visiting Panama City

Beach on Spring Break are not affecting the local health care system in terms of causing injuries

or illnesses – even the expected acute variety, such as alcohol poisoning, severe sunburn, and

injuries occurring due to poor judgment - brought on by their behavior. Hence, from the health

care perspective, students visiting during Spring Break are not negatively affecting the public

governance of the area.

Lake Havasu City

Figure 9.5, Mohave County (AZ) Average Quarterly Hospital Visits 2001-2005
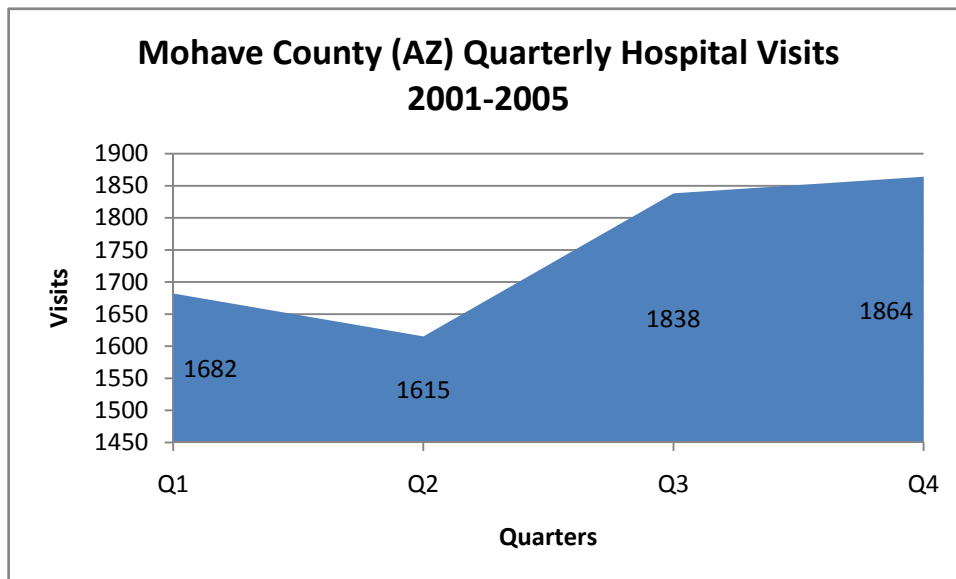


Source: The Health Care Utilization Project

While it would be expected that students visiting for Spring Break would have increased the

number of hospital visits in the first quarter of the selected years, thereby stressing the healthcare

system, this does not appear to be the case. Figure 4.8 indicates that the first quarter in the

selected years is the second lowest, and not significantly greater than the lowest quarter, which is second. The fourth quarter carries the highest average number of hospital visits, averaging nearly two hundred more visits than the first quarter. This equates to a 9.76 percent higher visitation rate than the first quarter, when students are visiting during Spring Break. This indicates that the first quarter, when students arrive during Spring Break, is not a burden on the Mohave County health care system.

Figure 9.6, Mohave County 18-24 Yr. Old Average Quarterly Hospital Visits 2001-2005
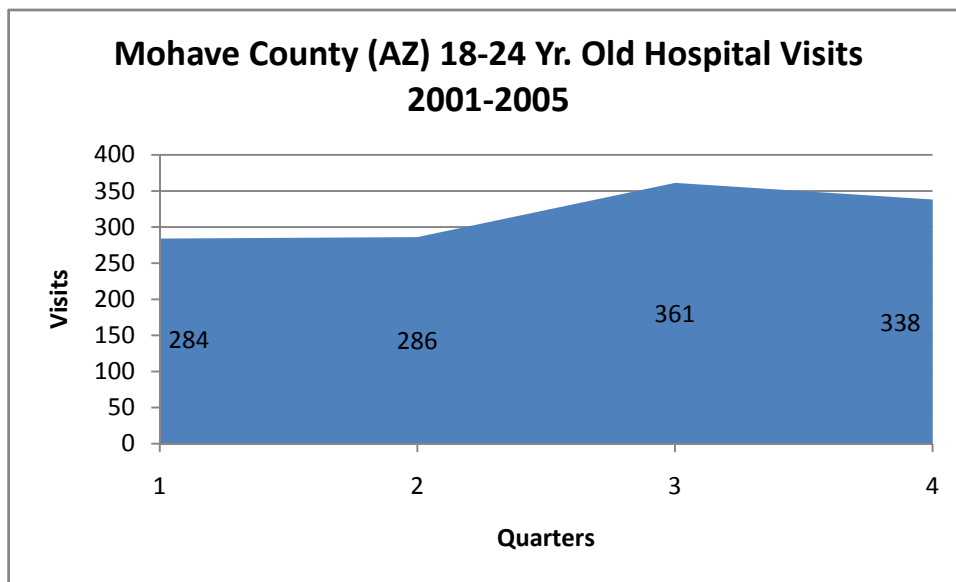


Source: The Health Care Utilization Project

As more exact measure of Spring Break's impact on health care in Lake Havasu City can be gained by measuring the number of hospital visits by 18-24 year olds – the typical age of a college student on Spring Break. If students visiting during Spring Break were placing stress on the health care system, it would be expected that the average number of visits by the 18-24 year old age group would be greatest. However, according to the data, the exact opposite is true. Among 18-24 year olds, the first quarter showed the lowest number of quarterly visits from 2001

to 2005, with an average of 284. This is 21.33 percent less than that of the third quarter, which

has the greatest number of average visits by 18-24 year olds, with 361 and 15.98 percent lower

than the fourth quarter, in which the second fewest visits by the same age group occurred on

average. From this, it can be determined that students visiting Lake Havasu on Spring Break are

not affecting the local health care system in terms of causing injuries or illnesses – even the

expected acute variety, such as alcohol poisoning, severe sunburn, and injuries occurring due to

poor judgment - brought on by their behavior. Hence, from the health care perspective, students

visiting during Spring Break are not negatively affecting the public governance of the area.


South Padre Island

   Health care data from the State of Texas is not available.

*Hospital Visitation Inter-Case Analysis*

   Two measures were used in determining if hospital visitation increased placed increased

stressed on the public governance of each Spring Break location – average total admissions by

quarter and average admissions of 18-24 year olds by quarter. Hospital visitation data for

Cameron County, Texas (South Padre Island) was not available. In looking at overall hospital

visitation, Volusia County, Florida (Daytona Beach) and Mohave County, Arizona (Lake Havasu

City) each experienced their second lowest number of admissions during the first quarter of the

five year study period. In contrast, Bay County, Florida (Panama City Beach) had the highest

number of admissions during the first quarter. However, the first quarter totals in this instance

were just over 1 percent higher than the other months. This indicates that for the three counties

where data was available, those overall admissions are at or below average during the first

quarter when compared with quarters 2 through 4. In analyzing the quarterly hospital admissions

of 18 to 24 year olds, in each location this age group had the lowest number of admissions. The highest number of admissions recorded was for people age 65 and older. Overall, Spring Break does not affect the health care system of any of the Spring Break locations and therefore does not increase the stress on the respective cities public governance process.

Socio-Cultural Impact

Table 1.4, Socio-Cultural Index Chart

| SOCIO-CULTURAL | Daytona Beach | Panama City Beach | Lake Havasu City | South Padre Island |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Church Formation | Average | Above Average | Average | N/A |
| Population Growth | Average | Average | Average | Average |

*Church Formation*

Research done by Bjorkland and Philbrick (1972) and Doxey (1976) indicate resident attitudes towards tourism change over time as they come into contact with tourists and tourist activities. Research by Ap (1990) has established that resident attitudes, particularly the level of irritation or dissatisfaction that residents express towards tourism and tourists is directly related to the number of tourists that the resident population is forced to interact with. It is also important to note that tourism tends to encourage deviant behavior, ranging from various forms of theft and prostitution to alcohol consumption and open sexual behavior (King, Pizam, and Milman: 1991).

While it would be expected that Spring Break locations would suffer from certain level of resident dissatisfaction based only on the sheer volume of tourists who visit during Spring Break, such a measure would not in any way be able to determine the level of dissatisfaction of

residents towards college students on Spring Break from families who visit the locales during the

summer months. In order to measure change in resident satisfaction or dissatisfaction with

Spring Break, I have used the formation of new churches over time as a social indicator. The use

of social indicators as a systematic reporting of social conditions has roots as far back as the

1920's but became firmly established as practice in 1966 under Lyndon Johnson's Presidency

(Miringoff, Miringoff, and Opdycke, 2007). As previously noted by King, Pizam and Milman

(1991), tourism leads to the increase of deviant behavior. Spring Break, which as its basis are the

activities of sunbathing, sex and alcohol, can be considered the most deviant form of tourism and

the opposition to such behavior can be used as a social indicator of resident dissatisfaction.

According to value structure theory, people who attend church regularly in present day

America have a preference for traditional sex roles and family values, non-involvement with

drugs and *definite moral codes* (Roof and Hoge: 1980). In addition, Carroll and Roozen (1975)

found a high correlation between church participation and attitudes against pre-marital sex,

homosexuality and abortion. The practice of organized religion, which is based on the concept of

moral codes or moral conduct, runs counter to the aforementioned central activities of Spring

Break. Examples of such religious moral codes include the ten commandments of Christianity,

Judaism and Islam; the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism; the Yamas and Niyama of Hindu

Scriptures; the Ten Indian Commandments and the ancient Egyptian Code of Ma'at.

By measuring the increase of new churches against the increase of the local population over

time, the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the resident population in regards to Spring Break can

be measured. Such a measure is possible because unlike homes or strip malls, churches are not

built on speculation. There must be a significant demand within the population for a particular

denomination to fund the construction of a church. By all accounts, people attending church in

the U.S. has continued to decline over the last forty years. The percentage of people attending a Christian church in the U.S. on any given weekend fell most dramatically between 1990 and 2004, with a decline from 20.4% to 17.7% (Barnes and Lowry: 2006). This decline has occurred between all denominations. Only one state, Hawaii, has a rate of church attendance that has outpaced the level of population growth from 2000 to 2004 (Barnes and Lowry: 2006). Even the Southeastern U.S., considered the 'Bible Belt' of the country, witnessed declines in the percentage of their populations that attended church. And within this 'Bible Belt' the State of Florida had the lowest percentage of their population that attended church – 14.1% (Barnes and Lowry: 2006).

In order to accurately gauge the level of resident satisfaction or dissatisfaction in the selected Spring Break location, I have compared each incorporated location's church growth to that of its population growth from 1995 to 2005. The measure of this comparison, Church Growth over Population, is the final column of each city's associated chart and it titled CG over POP. Because the Spring Break locations are seated in states that have experienced some of the highest population growth over the last decade, I have also compared the case study locations to other locales within their respective states that have similar populations, geographic location and that rely in part, on tourism as part of their local economy, but do not attract students on Spring Break. In recognizing that the volatility of such population increases does not generally allow for a predictably even pace of development, for the purposes of this study I consider a normal CG over Pop rate to be +/- 5.00%.

Daytona Beach

Figure 10.1 Daytona Beach (FL) Church Formation, 1995-2005

**DAYTONA BEACH**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|------------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 109 | N/A | 1995 | 64,438 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 104 | -4.5% | 2005 | 64,421 | -0.026% | -4.24% |

**MELBOURNE**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|------------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 110 | N/A | 1995 | 67,328 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 120 | 9.09% | 2005 | 75,772 | 12.54% | -3.45% |

**BRADENTON**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|------------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 128 | N/A | 1995 | 47,064 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 139 | 7.03% | 2005 | 53,917 | 14.56% | -7.53% |

Source: The Phone Disc 1995, 2005

The city of Daytona Beach has actually declined marginally in population from 1995 to 2005, while the outlying areas of Volusia County have experienced rapid growth. However, as the county seat, Daytona Beach remains the economic and social focal point within Volusia County. Over the 2001 to 2005 time period, the number of churches in Daytona Beach declined by 4.5 percent and the rate of church growth over population (COG over Pop) declined 4.24 percent, which would be considered normal with regards to national rates of decline in church participation over the past decade. The two comparison areas, Melbourne and Bradenton, located on Florida's east and west coasts respectively, showed higher rates of population growth than Daytona Beach but similar rates of decline in church growth over the same time period. Given that of the three cities all rely to tourism as a part of their local economy, it would appear that because of their population growth and church decline over the study period, that the residents seem quite satisfied with the number and behavior of the tourists that visit. In the case of Daytona Beach, the only city of the three that hosts students on Spring Break, it would appear that the higher levels of police regulation of student behavior, the lower number of student

visitors and the emphasis on tourism diversification have led to a general acceptance of the

students who visit. This is a complete turnaround from the late 1980's and early 1990's when

extreme resident dissatisfaction led to changes in local laws designed to discourage and even

prohibit Spring Break activities.

Panama City Beach

Figure 10.2 Panama City Beach (FL) Church Formation, 1995-2005

**PANAMA CITY BEACH**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|------------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 6 | N/A | 1995 | 5,113 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 17 | 142.86% | 2005 | 11,477 | 124.47% | 18.39% |

**ST. AUGUSTINE**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|------------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 40 | N/A | 1995 | 12,332 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 37 | -7.50% | 2005 | 12,263 | -0.055% | -7.45% |

**DESTIN**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|------------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 16 | N/A | 1995 | 9,755 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 21 | 31.25% | 2005 | 12,423 | 27.35% | 3.90% |

Source: The Phone Disc 1995, 2005

Panama City Beach, although still the smallest of the case study areas, more than doubled its

population between 1995 and 2005. In one of the highest population growth states in the country,

Panama City Beach had a staggering 124.47 percent increase in its population. Over the same

time period the number of churches increased at an ever faster rate, nearly tripling. Overall, the

number of churches increased at an 18.39 percent greater rate than the population did. The CG

over Pop rate is exceptional when compared to the national trend of church growth, even

considering the phenomenal explosion in population. The two comparison cities, St. Augustine,

located on the Northeast coast of Florida and Destin, which is located only one hour west of

Panama City Beach, did not grow nearly as quickly. In fact, St. Augustine, which has been a

tourist destination for over 120 years, had slightly negative population growth within its incorporated limits, at .055 percent. The number of churches declined more quickly, giving the city a CG over Pop rate of -7.45 percent, which would be slightly out of the normal range. Destin, an increasingly desirable location for tourists from around the gulf coast states, had a 27.35 percent increase in population and a slightly higher increase in the number of churches. The city's CG over Pop rate from 1995 to 2005 was 3.90 percent. Panama City Beach is the only one of the three cities to experience what can be considered and extreme CG over Pop rate. This indicates a likely growing dissatisfaction by the resident population over Spring Break, which would not be surprising, considering that over 500,000 students have been visiting the tiny town during Spring Break since 1993. At this time Panama City Beach appears headed toward the same path as the Spring Break Mecca's before it – Ft. Lauderdale and Daytona Beach, where growing resident dissatisfaction eventually led to greater regulation and eventually the end of Spring Break. Based on the population and church growth rates of St. Augustine and Destin, it is likely that their residents are fairly satisfied with the role that tourism plays within their respective economies.

Lake Havasu City

Figure 10.3 Lake Havasu City (AZ) Church Formation 1995-2005

**LAKE HAVASU**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 28 | N/A | 1995 | 49,124 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 31 | 9.68% | 2005 | 56,355 | 12.83% | -3.15% |

**FLAGSTAFF**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 52 | N/A | 1995 | 53,355 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 57 | 9.62% | 2005 | 58,213 | 8.35% | -1.27% |

**AVONDALE**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 13 | N/A | 1995 | 54,710 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 16 | 23.08% | 2005 | 75,403 | 27.44% | 4.36% |

Source: The Phone Disc 1995, 2005

The population of Lake Havasu City showed a robust increase of 12.83 percent increase from 1995 to 2005. Although the number of new churches also increased – at a rate of 9.68 percent – this growth did not maintain the pace of the population. The CG over Pop rate for Lake Havasu City for the time period studied was -3.15 percent. Flagstaff showed a comparable population growth rate during the same time – at 8.35 percent, although Avondale grew much more rapidly at 27.44 percent. Both comparison cities showed similar rates of church growth in relation to their population growth during the same time period. While Flagstaff's CG over Pop rate was -1.27 percent, Avondale's rate was 4.36 percent. Neither cities CG over Pop rates should be considered unusual. Overall, Lake Havasu City appears to be perfectly in line with the two comparison cities. This indicates that all three cities have a resident population that appears to be content with the role that tourism plays in their economies and the number and type of tourist who visit. Lake Havasu City is the only city of the three that is visited by students during Spring Break. It is likely that the combination of relatively strict police regulation of student behavior – despite the large crowds - and that the students spend much of the day on Lake Havasu, away from the resident population are the driving factors behind the resident satisfaction. Additionally, Spring Break is merely a component of the tourism industry in Lake Havasu City as opposed to the focal point.

South Padre Island

Figure 10.4 South Padre Island (TX) Church Formation 1995-2005

**SOUTH PADRE ISLAND**

| Year | Churches | % Change | Year | Population | % Change | CG over POP |
|------|----------|----------|------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| 1995 | 2 | N/A | 1995 | 1,673 | N/A | N/A |
| 2005 | 2 | 0.00% | 2005 | 2,588 | 54.69% | 54.69% |

Source: The Phone Disc 1995, 2005

South Padre Island, the smallest of the Spring Break case study areas, saw its population increase an astounding 54.69 percent between 1995 and 2005. However, this figure is misleading. The population, which was tiny to begin with, increased from 1,673 to 2,588. During the same time period the number of churches remained the same. Because the city of South Padre Island is located in a small, finite geographic area – a barrier island – it makes comparing population growth to church growth problematic. Many of the residents are part-time residents who are from North Texas. These people, known as 'Winter Texans,' have built homes on South Padre Island but only inhabit them a few months out of the year. For this reason, there would be no demand for an increase in churches, which could not be supported by a fluctuating population. Additionally, the winter residents could easily be served by both the two existing churches on the island or nearby Port Isabel. Furthermore, finding cities within Texas that have comparable size but yet count tourism as a major component of their industry is problematic as well. As such, no definitive answer can be given on the state of resident satisfaction at South Padre Island with regards to the yearly influx of students visiting during Spring Break.

*Church Formation Inter-Case Analysis*

The study of church formation as a social indicator of resident satisfaction or dissatisfaction with Spring Break is dependent on the increase in population versus the increase in the number of churches over the same time period. From this, the CG over POP percentage is determined. Using this measure, both Daytona Beach and Lake Havasu City showed rates that were similar to those of the in-state comparison cities that they were matched up against. This indicates the resident population of these cities appears to be quite satisfied with the roles that tourism in general and Spring Break play in the local economy and how they are perceived in terms of invoking deviant behavior, by the local population. Conversely, Panama City Beach had a much

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higher GG over POP rate than its in-state comparison cities. This indicates a probable growing anxiety or resentment by the local population with regards to tourism and Spring Break. This should not be surprising considering the tremendous number of students who visit the city, in relation to the number of people who reside there.

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSION

Conclusions

*Revisiting the Research Questions*

*1. How do U.S. college students on Spring Break impact the host location's economy?*

U.S. college students on Spring Break do impact the host location's economy. Each of the four case study areas is dependent, to varying degrees, on tourism. With the exception of Daytona Beach, which no longer hosts large numbers of college students for Spring Break, it would be expected that the economic impact during Spring Break (March) would be the greatest of the twelve calendar months. This is based on both the size of the remaining case study cities – Panama City Beach, South Padre Island, and Lake Havasu City all have resident populations of 55,000 or less – and the number of students who attend annually, which is between 70,000 and 540,000 depending on the location. However, hotel tax collected by each county indicates that each case study area has a higher number of visitors in July as opposed to March. Additionally, while each of the case study areas, including Daytona Beach, showed a high level of visitor expenditures via sales tax, during March; it was the month of July that had the greatest economic impact for each city. In fact, expenditures by visitors in July were nearly twice as high as in March.

The conclusion is that while college students are highly coveted for their (or their parents) disposable income, they do not spend as much money as visitors that travel to these same locations during July. Although speculative, it is likely that the visitors in July are families, either on vacation or who are celebrating the Fourth of July, who come in greater numbers and spend more money per person than college students. However, it is important to note that college

students on Spring Break do, in fact, impact a host location's economy as March's expenditures are second only to July.

Trends for median household income, job growth by sector and unemployment levels in relation to Spring Break are less clear. While there is some city by city variation in each of these areas, much of the economic success or lack thereof does not appear to be directly tied to Spring Break. Surprisingly, Panama City Beach and South Padre Island had above average levels of median household income, lower levels of unemployment and higher levels of secondary factors such as educational attainment and white collar job opportunities. These factors appear to have more to do with these particular cities being attractive as resort locations or retiree destinations, for older, wealthier residents. However, the notoriety of Spring Break may play a role in alerting such population groups to their existence.

2. *How do U.S. college students on Spring Break impact the host location socio-culturally?*

Socio-cultural impact can be difficult to measure, unless there is direct evidence in the form of complaints, protests, or changes in the law. In the mid-to-late 1980's Daytona Beach business owners and residents finally decided that the financial gain of Spring Break was not worth the effects of student behavior that accompanied it. The students had simply become too rowdy, their behavior too outrageous, and as a result it led to not only a backlash from the local residents and business owners, but it also prompted changes in the law – both local and state – that attempted to directly curb such behavior. In the case of Daytona Beach, like Ft. Lauderdale before it, citizen outrage and the subsequent changes in law can be considered a direct measure of socio-cultural change.

An influx of new residents into an area can drastically alter the customs, beliefs and the way of life of that area. Additionally, this influx of new residents can cause conflicts with long time

local residents, who may not want to see their way of life change in any measureable way, especially due to 'outsiders' who may be the cause of this. Tourist destinations have been shown to attract residents, increasing the area's population, and potentially causing socio-cultural change. Therefore, studying the population change, particularly a population influx, of each case study area can signal potential socio-cultural change. Because each of the case study areas are located in states that have some of the highest population growth rates in the country – Florida, Arizona, and Texas – the local population growth rate was compared against the state average as well as in-state cities with similar population and geographic characteristics that were dependent to a degree on tourism but did not attract students on Spring Break. Overall, these differences were not exceptional and the likelihood of socio-cultural change directly from population influx could be considered relatively low and would not be greater than in any other location in each state.

The second measure used to determine whether or not Spring Break is responsible for socio-cultural change is through the use of a social indicator. The use of social indicators as a systematic reporting of social conditions has roots as far back as the 1920's but became firmly established as practice in 1966 under Lyndon Johnson's Presidency (Miringoff, Miringoff, and Opdycke, 2007). In order to measure resident satisfaction or dissatisfaction with tourism, particularly Spring Break, I have used the formation of new churches over time. Because behavior during Spring Break centers on alcohol consumption and sex, it can be considered much more decadent than that of other types of tourism. As a result, church formation over time can be viewed as a negative reaction of residents to such behavior. Using this measure, if the percentage of new church formation significantly exceeds the percentage of population increase

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over time, it would indicate a growing dissatisfaction with Spring Break and would be an indicator of socio-cultural change.

Overall, church growth did not increase at a greater rate in the Spring Break locations than that of the in-state cities that I compared to each Spring Break locale. Bay County, the home of Panama City Beach, the current Spring Break Mecca, was the only Spring Break city to show a significant increase in church growth in comparison. Because church growth exceeded both Panama City Beach's population growth rate and the church growth rate of its in-state comparison cities, it is a likely sign that the local residents are growing tired of Spring Break. Because of this, Spring Break in Panama City Beach is probably nearing the end of its life cycle. Daytona Beach, Lake Havasu City and South Padre Island all showed what can be considered normal church growth in relation to their in-state comparison cities. This indicates that their respective city residents are at least comfortable with Spring Break and the city has learned how to balance all tourist groups throughout the year without relying on Spring Break in particular.

3. *How do U.S. college students on Spring Break impact the public governance of the host location?*

Three measures were used in determining public governance impact – healthcare, crime and the rate of urbanization. Although healthcare is not a direct function or responsibility of the local or county government, the measure of quarterly hospital visitation is an indication of secondary stressors on public governance, such as police, ambulance, and the availability of healthcare workers who might serve the host area.

College students on Spring Break do impact the public governance of the host location, although the level of impact varies depending on the individual measures of public governance used in this study. The measure public governance impact through healthcare via quarterly

hospital visitation was surprisingly, not indicative of stress. In each of the case study areas, not including South Padre Island (which was not willing to produce the data), the first quarter showed the fewest amount of hospital visits of any quarter. Additionally, when visitation was broken down by age group, 18-24 year olds comprised the fewest or second fewest number of first quarterly visits.

The amount of crime that occurs at each case study area, which is measured through Part I and Part II crimes and vehicle and non-vehicle citations all spiked during the month of March, although the degree to which this occurred varied by area. The increases in crime were most significant in Panama City Beach and South Padre Island, the two areas with the smallest local resident population, and presumably the lowest capacity to deal with a massive influx of students. Lake Havasu City showed just a small increase over the other months as did Daytona Beach but for different reasons. Lake Havasu City has many more visitors during the summer months, so the sheer volume of people would account for a nearly equal number of crimes between Spring Break and September. However, this does indicate that Spring Break Visitors cause more crime, as the college students, who visit in far lower numbers than summer visitors cause a slightly higher crime rate. Daytona Beach has a similar crime pattern to Lake Havasu City. While Daytona Beach has few Spring Break visitors compared to the late 1980's, many of the area's events occur during the spring of every year. These include NASCAR events, Family Spring Break and Bike Week as well as some students on Spring Break.

Urbanization is also an indicator of whether or not the public governance of an area is being stressed. Urbanization is the increase in the number of people living in towns, cities and suburbs as opposed to rural areas. In order for urbanization to occur, urban growth – the amount of land devoted to urban places is also likely to occur. According to Hammes (1994) increases in tourism

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and subsequent development effectively cause the bidding up of land prices in response to resort development. Because land is less expensive away from the core, subsequent development is likely to radiate outward, often haphazardly, to locations where land is most affordable. This type of pattern is also likely an indicator that the public governance systems of the area are being stressed by tourism – in this case, Spring Break.

Observing the number of new housing units over time is an excellent determinant of the rate of urbanization. By comparing the number of building permits of a host location versus the same in-state cities used for studying church growth, it can be determined whether or not the rate of urbanization is a public governance stressor. The data shows that the rate of urbanization in the case study areas is on par with the state average, with the exception of Panama City Beach.

*Policy Recommendations*

While gathering research, one of the first resources I consulted in each of the four case study areas was the official city websites. These cities use their websites to give the virtual visitor a snapshot of what to expect upon arrival, resources for relocation, and contact numbers for various city services. Prominently displayed on each website is Spring Break, and it is clear that each of these cities takes a high level of pride in being a Spring Break destination for college students. Each of these cities believes that attracting Spring Break visitors is an important part of the local economy. The questions asked in this dissertation are, at their core, attempting to answer a larger question – 'Is Spring Break worth it?' Or, more precisely, is dealing with the tens of thousands of college students and the potential problems the cause worth the money that they spend while they are in town?

The first prominent Spring Break locations – Ft. Lauderdale and Daytona Beach – eventually decided that the problems caused by students were not worth the money generated by Spring

Break. Subsequently, laws were passed that all but insured that college students would have to travel elsewhere to enjoy the same types of behavior and activities. The latest generation of Spring Break hotspots in the U.S. – Panama City Beach, South Padre Island, Lake Havasu City, and Daytona Beach (although largely diminished) – have taken over from their predecessors in courting the student dollars. But they are left to cope with the same overall issue, *is it worth it?*

According to the data gathered, it can be stated that Spring Break is a generally neutral factor in terms of economics, socio-cultural change and public governance. While Spring Break does not generate the highest amount of revenue as compared to other months, particularly the summer months, it also does not appear to be overtly detrimental in terms of affecting the public governance or socio-cultural change. However, for the true effects of Spring Break to be understood, each case study area must be looked at on an individual basis. The area which generated the lowest amount of revenue as compared to the other months surprisingly was Panama City Beach, the largest and most popular U.S. destination. Additionally, although all case study areas showed increased crime during Spring Break, Panama City Beach suffered from the greatest increase in crime during this time period. It also appears that Panama City Beach has the highest level of local resident discontent with Spring Break. Judging from the histories of Ft. Lauderdale and Daytona Beach, Panama City Beach may soon reach a tipping point of resident dissatisfaction and the inevitable change that occurs with it. South Padre Island generally mirrored the trends of Panama City Beach but to a lesser degree. The city that generates the most revenue from Spring Break while coping best with student behavior is Lake Havasu City. While crime in Lake Havasu City increased during March, the level was only slightly higher than the summer months, which also produced the greatest revenue for the city. Daytona Beach, which served as a control group also generated high revenues and higher crime during March, but many

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of their family oriented tourist activities occur during this time period. Coupled with fewer college students on Spring Break, this would be expected.

One of the primary conclusions is that it may not be best to be 'the best' in terms of Spring Break. Panama City Beach has the highest level of stressors to public governance and the highest likelihood of socio-cultural change, but the revenue during Spring Break is some of the lowest of the year. Like Ft. Lauderdale and Daytona Beach before it, being the biggest, most popular location appears to be ultimately detrimental. The locations where Spring Break appears to be most beneficial are those that are positively perceived by college students but also count Spring Break as a component of their overall tourism strategy, rather than as the primary focal point. To this end, Lake Havasu City has done the best job, although the city may have a geographic advantage in that the college student largely confine themselves to Lake Havasu during the day and only move into the city in great numbers at night, when most local residents have returned to their homes. However, this balance also appears to be a function of the regulation of detrimental behavior. So, reigning in student behavior is key but as history has shown, students will seek out alternate locales with the same attributes and lower levels of law enforcement if regulation of behavior becomes too strict. But, how much regulation is enough or too much? Determining this level, in order to strike the appropriate balance is of key importance but is unlikely to have a defined answer as it depends on a number of factors within each individual location. The best course of action regarding Spring Break would be to incorporate it as part of an overall tourism strategy as opposed to placing an emphasis on it. A greater emphasis appears to correlate with relaxed enforcement and increased problems as opposed to increased revenue.

*Future Research*

This research has focused primarily on the effects of college students on Spring Break locations once they arrive. However, their perception of what makes a location a desirable place to spend Spring Break at is important as well. It is known that the role of media, particularly MTV does impact the decision making processes of college students with regards to Spring Break. When MTV spends March at a Spring Break location, it creates interest among students. The emergence of Lake Havasu City as a Spring Break hotspot a decade ago is in large part due to MTV. How much of an influence will major media outlets continue to have? This is especially relevant given the emergence of social utility networks dominated by college students, such as Facebook and Myspace, which provide students instantaneous access to each other's opinions.

Additionally, it will be important to find out how many students are actually travelling to the Spring Break locations. The figures listed in this dissertation, 540,000 students at Panama City Beach and 70,000 students at Daytona Beach for example, are merely estimations. No city knows the true number because Spring Break is not a 'turnstile' event such as the Olympics or a convention where accurate numbers can be recorded. Accurate numbers could possibly lead to more firm conclusions about Spring Break. For example, if there are actually fewer students attending Spring Break at a locale than is estimated that would indicate that college students are responsible for even greater levels of crime per person than is already recorded. Such investigations would be important for any city considering Spring Break as a viable tourism option.

*Difficulties and Limitations*

Nearly all of the research presented here uses a quantitative approach – one that is statistically based. This is not surprising considering two of the three categories studied; economics and

public governance practically demand the use of statistics. Even the third category, socio-cultural change, is studied from a quantitative perspective. Of course, a quantitative approach could not have been used unless the supporting statistical data existed, and is, at least theoretically, available to the public. Beginning this research, I was aware that much of the statistical data had been compiled by various U.S. federal agencies. In these instances I relied a great deal on the U.S. Census Bureau, which records and tabulates not only our population but information regarding housing, wages, and a variety of other categories. Additionally, agencies such as the U.S. Department of Commerce (Bureau of Economic Analysis) and the U.S. Department of Labor (Bureau of Labor Statistics) were used. The great difficulty in these instances was not the lack of information or whether or not the information existed, but *where* it is located. Different agencies tabulate and store different types of information. Determining which agency was responsible for which information was difficult and cumbersome. Often, it seemed as if there was no particular rationale in the categorization process among agencies.

Another prominent problem I encountered while researching federal data is the lack of standardized or uniform time-series and data levels categories across agencies. While federal information has long been used for reports, analyses, reviews, and dissertations because it is considered 'standardized' the various agencies themselves use no standard format in categorizing information, archiving information, or displaying information for the user. For example, some agencies will archive information until 1997, other until 2001. Additionally, information is not necessarily available for the specific area the user may need. While some agencies detail data down to the micropolitan level, others (depending on the data) stop at the county level. This makes it extremely difficult to use federal data to perform a longitudinal study lower than the county level.

The other, equally great difficulty I encountered, was attempting to extract information from public entities at the state and local level. While all of the information I was seeking was public, and each agency was required to provide me with it upon request, it was a much more complicated process. Hospital visitation and discharge data, a key component to my research, was the greatest challenge. First, there was great difficulty in finding the person(s) actually responsible for the visitation data. It was not uncommon for me to be routed and re-routed to 6-8 different people, and ultimately ending in an un-named voice mailbox. Of course, the voicemails were never returned, forcing me to begin the process again. After finally gaining access to the people with the data, they were typically not forthcoming with the information. Acting as a gatekeeper, the individual(s) often asked why I wanted the information and then refused to give it to me or promised to call me back after receiving permission from someone with more authority. It was only after resorting to calling the direct line to each states' governor's offices or using Freedom of Information Act requests that real progress in hospital data collection was achieved. Some states, such as Texas, charge exorbitant fees in order to gain access to the data, making the possibility of viewing the data cost prohibitive.

Surprisingly, police stations were the most forthcoming with local area crime statistics. The Lake Havasu City Police Department in particular was extremely helpful not only in granting me access but in categorizing the data as well, saving me weeks of work. Police departments in the other case study areas were generally forthcoming as well, but with much less data categorization, which created additional work for me. Overall, data collection was a slow and tedious process – one which should not have been because the data in question falls into the category of public domain. However, the bureaucratic process of U.S., state and local

government entities and associated individuals continually retarded the process through hostility,

indifference, and their own byzantine organizational structure.

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Vita


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