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Rickly, J.M. (2017) "I'm a Red River local": rock climbing mobilities and community hospitalities. Tourist Studies . ISSN 1741-3206

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"I'm a Red River local": Rock climbing mobilities and community hospitalities

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Abstract
With individuals continually on the move, mobility fosters constellations of places at which individuals collectively moor and perform community. By focusing on one climbing destination – the Red River Gorge – this paper works across scales to highlight the spatial politics of mobilizing hospitality. In so doing, it summarizes the ways hosting/guesting thresholds dissolve with the growth of particular rock climbing associated infrastructures and moves to examine the ways climbers performances of community result in the (semi-)privatization of public space and attempts at localization. Further, the paper highlights the ways mobility is employed to maintain a political voice from afar, as well as to forge "local" identities with The Red as place with distinct subcultural (in)hospitality practices. Hospitality practices affirm power relations, they communicate who is at "home" and who has the power in a particular space to extend hospitality. The decision to extend hospitality is not simply the difference between an ethical encounter and a conditional one; it takes place in the very performance of identity. Thus, integrating a mobilities perspective into hospitality studies further illuminates the spatial politics that are at play in an ethics of hospitality.

Keywords: rock climbing, mobilities, community, hospitality, place, local

Introduction

A mobilities approach encourages us to think differently about place. It argues that increased mobility does not yield "placelessness", as was once thought (Relph, 1976), but rather spaces of "throwntogetherness" (Massey, 2005, 1991). Indeed, without the weaving together of absence and presence, emplacement and displacement, "place would simply not 'happen'"(Johannesson and Baerenholdt 2008:155; see also Baerenholdt & Granas 2008; Simonsen, 2008). While a mobilities approach does offer a means to bring together once disparate ideas about sense of place and mobility, it does not resolve the contestation that often results when differing mobilities clash in place. Indeed, notions of duration and permanence are frequently employed in conflicts concerning right to access and resource use, with the term "local" used to encapsulate many such sentiments and validate power geometries of hospitality. Bringing together mobilities studies and the ethics of hospitality literature, this paper demonstrates the ways intersecting mobilities result in contested, overlapping, and simultaneous enactments of place and belonging that are not always hospitable. As Molz and Gibson (2007: 6) have noted, tourism mobilities

> "have invoked the metaphors of hospitality – along with terms such as host, guest, welcome, refuge, invitation and home – to categorize people, to erect, police and transcend symbolic and physical boundaries, and to authorize or condemn certain terms of social interaction. Much of the current literature that applies a hospitality framework to studies of tourism or migration mobilities has tended to reproduce fairly rigid social categories that associate mobility with the guest, tourist or migrant, and immobility with the host, local population, home or nation."

By examining the politics of place from multiple scales, this paper highlights the fluidity of host/guest, local/tourist, sedentary/mobile dichotomies and attends to the ways (in)hospitality practices and the rhetoric of "localness" are put to use within and between communities.

Few things are pervasive across cultures; yet, Derrida (2002: 361) asserts, "there is no culture that is not also a culture of hospitality. All cultures compete in this regard and present themselves as more hospitable than the others." While hospitality has deep roots in social and cultural traditions in the form of welcoming practices that offer comfort to a "guest" by a "host", hospitality has transcended the domestic space towards broader commercial endeavors and socio-political contexts that challenge the steadfast traditions of obligatory hospitality (see Lashley, 2000, 2008; Barnett, 2005; Heuman, 2005; Lashley et al., 2007; Molz and Gibson, 2007). Lashley (2000) maps the different modes of hospitality and suggests that while private hospitality takes place in the home and commercial hospitality is the commodified version of this exchange, social hospitality relates to broader social codes of sociality and sociability that can be enacted across spaces. Bell (2007: 37) contends that practices of social hospitality also account for the inhospitalities that accompany social distinctions regarding class and capital (Bourdieu, 1984). This paper expands on the notion of social hospitality to consider community hospitalities (Higgins, 2007) as a frame through which the conditionality of hospitality is offered. While Derrida (1997) objected to the word "community" as it evoked a sense of isolation and therefore a hurdle to hospitality, understanding community, rather, as porous, permeable, and not cohesive (see Cohen, 1985) offers an alternative medium through which hospitality is framed and enacted. As Cohen (1985: 20) explains, "the 'commonality' which is found in community need not be uniformity. […] It is a commonality of *forms* (ways of behaving) whose content (meanings) may vary considerably among its members." A community hospitalities approach can have considerable implications for the study of tourism mobilities, which destabilize binary understandings of host/guest, tourist/local, and self/other, highlight the relationality of these concepts, and emphasize the performativity of spatial politics.

The Red River Gorge of eastern Kentucky, USA, is one of the world's premier sport climbing destinations. Attracting rock climbers from around the world, this relatively remote area of Appalachia sits at the crossroads of innumerable constellations of climbing mobility: leisure climbers visit only a few weekends a year; lifestyle climbers spend weeks to months in the region; professional climbers bring entourages who document their brief encounters and conquests; residential climbers reside in the area. As a result, many climbers develop strong, embodied, mobile senses of place in which The Red is but one location in expansive constellations of climbing places. The rock climbing community is not cohesive, however. It is divided in multiple ways by degrees of dedication to the sport, climbing style, regional preferences, and other factors. So while The Red may be a climbing place, it is also contested, as demonstrated in ways hospitality practices vary according to subcultural identity. More broadly, this area is also place for many non-climbers, including the residential population, campers, hikers, and other outdoor recreationalists, to name a few, with their own networks of mobilities. In this paper, however, it is the climbing community that is foregrounded, and in particular, its territorialization practices and the ways notions of place and perceived localness are used to validate claims of authority and practices of (in)hospitality.

Mobilities and hospitalities

The mobilities turn of the early 2000s was lead by a growing interest in a "mobilities paradigm" (Sheller and Urry, 2006) as an approach to the ways in which people's daily lives are spatially interconnected, including the politics that drive, as well as hinder, the movement of people, objects, information, and non-human things (see also Hannam et al., 2006;

Hannam, 2009; Cresswell, 2010a). This area of study is not necessarily new, but offers innovative and more holistic ways of examining what has long been observed (see Cresswell, 2010b, 2012, 2014; Salazar, 2010). Thus, Hannam (2009: 109) argues, a mobilities perspective, not only leads us "to discard our usual notions of spatiality and scale, but it also undermines existing linear assumptions about temporality and timing, which often assume that actors are able to do only one thing at a time, and that events follow each other in a linear order."

Further, as Molz and Gibson (2007: 1) point out, the mobilities turn has also inspired productive dilemmas for hospitalities research that wrestles with persistent questions, including: "Where might hospitable encounters occur, and what kinds of spaces does hospitality produce? Who is able to perform the welcoming host, and who can be admitted as a guest? And in extending hospitality to the other, how should we define our individual, communal, or national self?" In their project on "mobilizing hospitalities", Molz and Gibson (2007) examine the complex intersections of hospitality and mobility, with particular attention to the spatial politics, ethical debates, and the potential humane interactions that arise when mobilities challenge the categorical boundaries of host/guest, home/away, private/public, tourist/local, and self/other and inspire literal or metaphorical gestures of hospitality. They argue mobilizing hospitalities necessitates attention to both the "politics of mobility" (Cresswell, 2010a) and the "ethics of hospitality" (Derrida, 1999).

Commenting on the geographic limitations of the earth, Kant (1996 [1795]) observed that humans will necessarily always come into contact with one another, and so must also recognize a "cosmopolitan right" to travel as well as abide by a law of "universal hospitality" which allows for movement of individuals without hostility and obliges travelers to be

neither exploitive or oppressive (see also Derrida, 1999; Barnett, 2005; Molz and Gibson, 2007; Popke, 2007). While Kant's writings on this topic are narrow and rather prescriptive, Derrida's critique has further developed the ethical potential of hospitality. Derrida distinguishes between an ethics of hospitality, as an infinite, unconditional, and absolute hospitality, and a law or politics of hospitality, which Kant espoused. He explains that a law of hospitality establishes hospitality as an obligation or duty, which also necessitates reciprocity, and therefore delineates borders and possibilities (Derrida, 1999; see also Barnett, 2005; Molz and Gibson, 2007; Popke, 2007). In contrast, an ethics of hospitality encourages a welcoming of others that opens up borders and the potential to act beyond one's self-interest through reciprocity (Derrida, 1999). Further, Barnett (2005) argues that Derrida's (1999) ethics of hospitality, as informed by Levinas' phenomenology of care, is about more than interpretations of responsibility based on spatial distinctions of proximity and distance to others, but also about epistemic distinctions of Self and Other. An ethics of hospitality is not simply unconditional, but as Barnett (2005) explains, it is an ethics of tolerance that challenges the host's mastery of their own space. Thus, "tolerance is extended to a guest whose identity is already attributed" (Barnett, 2005: 11) through the temporalities of their arrival (Derrida, 2002) as a visitation or an invitation, a surprise or an expectation. For hospitality to be ethical, differences in the temporalities of the encounter matter, and the hospitable act must acknowledge the identity of the guest and not associate them with a generic "Other" (Barnett, 2005). The power relations that are enacted in the performance of these identities are predicated on who is able to make themselves at "home" and who has the "right" to dwell. Indeed, Molz and Gibson (2007: 10) assert, "Hospitality is about the other questioning and interrupting the self, rather than reasserting the mastery of the self" (see also Barnett, 2005).

Similar to the "power geometry" of mobility (Massey, 1994), the power geometries of hospitality are asymmetrical (Bell, 2007), which Molz and Gibson (2007: 12) articulately describe as follows:

> "Hospitality is not offered to every stranger, nor does every stranger gratefully receive the gift (or debt) of hospitality. Similarly, not everyone is able to give hospitality to the stranger, not everyone is empowered to be hospitable. It is only to those recognized, identified, familiar, welcome-able strangers who are generously given hospitality, and this gesture of hospitableness can only be made by those hosts who feel at home. Even under the guise of tolerance and generosity, hospitality frames 'home' as a domain of power where the host polices the conditions by which the front door remains open or closed. In welcoming the stranger, the host is positioned as being at home (in control of the home) in contrast to the mobility of the stranger."

A gesture of hospitality, thus, reaffirms the power of the host (Derrida, 2003; Barnett, 2005; Molz and Gibson, 2007). The host maintains control over the gesture, as residing in a position of privilege to offer hospitality and extend welcome of the guest into their borders/home/space.

While hospitality has long been a part of cultural and social traditions, it was once reserved for the domestic sphere and was a relatively private exchange, albeit an expectation that was shared among communities and across societies (see Lashley, 2000; 2008). With the rise of capitalism, and tourism more specifically, hospitality has become a commodified, economic exchange and entrenched within its own "hospitality industry" that (re)produces hospitality services through education and training. The introduction of mobilities studies into tourism studies has been a useful perspective for demonstrating that "home", like place, is mobile. It is enacted in complex networks performed where hosts, guests, objects, and information coalesce for a particular time in a specific space (Hannam et al., 2006). In a society of

mobilities, Molz and Gibson (2007: 15) suggest that hospitality becomes a "form of mooring", with hospitality produced and enacted in the negotiation of movement and mooring. "If hospitality is predicated on mobility, it is equally predicated on immobility – those places and moments of rest and repose that refresh and rejuvenate the traveller" (Molz and Gibson, 2007: 14). Yet, as Sheller and Urry (2004: 8) observe, in the realm of tourism mobilities, "many 'hosts' are increasingly also from elsewhere", destabilizing the spatial politics of "host-ness" and "guest-ness" (see also Bell, 2007). Tourism mobilities produce constellations of place, expansive networks of senses of place, through which hospitality practices are performed (or withheld) in the enactment of spatial politics.

Research design

The Red River Gorge is a relatively new rock climbing destination. Whereas places like Yosemite have been popular nodes in climbing mobilities since the beginning of the 20th century (see Taylor, 2010), route development in The Red began in the 1970s at a slow pace. It accelerated quickly in the 1990s, however. While there were only a few dozen routes by 1990, the publication of the 1993 guidebook detailed nearly 700, and just a few years later in 1998 another 300 routes were added to the updated version (Bronaugh, 1993, 1998). The most recent guidebooks include over 2000 routes (Ellington, 2009, 2012). Likewise, the number of climbers traveling to the region has grown considerably over this time, as news of The Red's reputation for quality sport climbing[1] has spread through expanding informational rock climbing mobilities. Indeed, the region is now a regular feature in all the major climbing magazines – *Climbing, Rock and Ice,* and *DPM Climbing*. What's more, it hosts an annual rock climbing festival, Rocktoberfest, which is attended by over 2000 climbers from around the world.

Investigation of online forums, principally rockclimbing.com and redriverclimbing.com, began prior to grounded research in The Red, continued throughout fieldwork, and were used to inform observations at crags and social spaces, as well as survey and interview questions. Thus, a multi-scale, qualitative analysis was employed (see Altheide, Coyle, Devriese, and Schneider, 2008; Hine, 2008). Fieldwork in The Red took place August through November of 2011 so as to witness the arrival of climbers ahead of its peak climbing season and accompanying festival and their dispersal as the season faded. Surveys of the rock climbing community most generally (148 in total) were used to identify subcultures, dedication to the sport, and travel behavior. Interviews focused on lifestyle climber subculture as a way to understand their motivations, lifestyle, travel patterns, and community dynamics. A total of 21 interviews were completed – 6 females and 15 males – along with numerous informal conversations. It is worth noting, this gender disparity is representative of the lifestyle climber population. The age of participants ranged from 22 to 56 years, with the time spent climbing and travelling full-time of six months to 17 years. They were, as reflected in the rock climbing population in general, predominantly white (Erikson 2005). All but two of the interviewees were Americans, with the exception of one Canadian and one person from France, and two respondents self-identified as gay and lesbian, respectively.

As a small subculture of the rock climbing community, lifestyle climbers are highly dedicated to the sport by maintaining minimalist, hypermobile lifestyles as they travel between climbing areas. As non-sponsored climbers they do not earn an income from the sport and therefore self-fund their mobile lifestyles. Employment takes the form of temporary jobs at local establishments and/or internet-based work. Further, lifestyle climbers give up permanent residences, and in turn fashion a vehicle into a mobile abode, a van most

commonly. The term "lifestyle climbers" is used to capture the diversity of full-time, rock

climbing livelihoods observed, while also relating to the bodies of literature regarding

lifestyle mobilities and travel. These individuals, however, use several self-identifiers;

common to all of them are the notions of lifestyle, dedication, and non-professional status.

"Dirtbags" is the most common subcultural moniker, used to connect individuals with a

historical lineage and ideology in the rock climbing community (Taylor, 2010; author 2012;

2014; 2016). However, some prefer to be identified as "lifers" or "full-timers", as a way to

express their dedication to the sport, while others use "vanner" in order to convey their

minimalism and most common travel mode/abode.

Territorialization practices and community (in)hospitalities

Although belonging is a subjective feeling, it is necessarily socially defined. Belonging is the

result of "entwined social processes of incorporation and exclusion that are partly self-

defined, partly other-defined" (Ralph and Staeheli, 2011: 523; see also Fortier, 1999; Yuval-

Davis, 2006). Community membership is not sufficiently expressed by the individual, but it

must also be validated by others in the community (Fortier, 1999; Ralph and Staeheli, 2011).

Further, it is relational to "other" communities (Cohen, 1985). It is this relationality between

the Self and Other, whether at the individual or community level, that calls forth an encounter

and the potential for hospitality. In an increasingly mobile society, encounters with "others"

are more prevalent, and perhaps more commonplace. While Kant suggested a law of

hospitality and Derrida (1999; 2000) advocates an ethics of hospitality that is unconditional,

Barnett (2005: 13) reminds us that these epistemic thresholds are points at which we enact

"responsiveness, hospitality, and responsibility." These thresholds may be intersubjective,

but they are just as likely to be spatial. Thus, The Red is a case that constructively challenges the way we think about community hospitalities in relation to mobility and place.

By way of introduction to the spatial politics of hospitalities in The Red, the following quote by climber and philosophy professor, Bill Ramsey, demonstrates the ways perceptions of hospitality and community belonging can vary with positionality in the community. In describing the sense of place he experiences at The Red, he writes:

> The collection of dedicated climbers and colorful characters who climb here offer kinship that is both welcome and welcoming. [...] The one word that best describes the people here is 'generosity' … the hospitality of Miguel's … the magnanimous efforts of route developers … the devotion to access of the RRGCC and private holdings. (2007: 11)

In what follows, the "hospitality of Miguel's" is examined, along with another example of "hosting" infrastructure so as to demonstrate the ways categories of host/guest collapse when a mobilities perspective is employed and a sense of place is forged through mobility. The perceived "devotion to access of the RRGCC [Red River Gorge Climbers' Coalition]" is also reconsidered through the lens of mobilities and hospitalities to examine the mobile spatial politics in the Coalition's territorialization practices that aim to transcend host/guest distinctions and localize the climbing community. Finally, the "kinship" and "generosity" of the climbing community is interrogated to reveal the subcultural (in)hospitality practices that divide the community and make hospitality conditional – readily extended to a few, withheld from some, and even gestures of unwelcomeness communicated to others.

Hosting/Guesting rock climbing mobilities

The Appalachian region of Kentucky has long fostered insulated and isolated sedentary communities that are not always welcoming to outsiders (Drake, 2001; Williams, 2001). Yet, with increased interest in the area's outdoor recreational resources the number of tourists visiting the region has continued to grow (Drake, 2001). With some inspired by this tourist

traffic, the prevalence of locally owned cafes, restaurants, motels and rental cabins, gas stations, convenience stores, souvenir shops, and tour operators have increased in the last decades. In the Red River Gorge, in particular, these services are concentrated around Daniel Boone National Forest and Natural Bridge State Park and cater to a wide variety of tourists. While seasonal, rock climbers are among the more dependable tourist markets and several businesses focus on this clientele.

Exemplary of the climbing community's identity in The Red is Miguel's Pizza, a pizzeria, gear shop, and campground that has grown with the popularity of climbing in the area. Opening his restaurant in the mid-1980s, Miguel Ventura was an immigrant and artist from Portugal who encountered the insulation of the local community. Few tourists or local residents patronized his establishment in its early years. But he foresaw potential economic growth, with its adjacent state park and national forest.

In the 1980s, The Red was still a relatively unknown rock climbing destination, but a small community of local, regional, and lifestyle climbers interested in exploring undeveloped climbing areas began to visit and Miguel's Pizza became a central location for camping, socializing, and dining (Figure 1). Reacting to this market, Ventura expanded his shop to sell locally made climbing gear as well (Ellington, 2007). In the early years, the pizzeria had parking for only a handful of vehicles, a dozen camping spots, and the restaurant itself could host few more. By the early 1990s, as word of the "potentially best sport climbing area in the country" spread through online forums and magazines, the pizzeria grew tremendously as a result of the massive influx of climbers. Token-based shower and laundry facilities, and most recently Wi-Fi, have been added, and the property can now accommodate about 500 campers. Just as The Red's reputation for world-class rock climbing spread, Miguel's gained a

reputation of its own. In climbing publications and on online forums, Miguel's has come to be known as "The Camp Four of the East". This is reference to the favorite campsite in Yosemite (Camp 4) and arguable birthplace of US rock climbing culture (Taylor, 2010). Further illustrating its significance to the climbing community, the current local guidebook utilizes Miguel's as the starting point for detailing directions to all crags in the region (Ellington, 2007, 2009, 2012). In the materiality of the rock climbing landscape of The Red, Miguel's Pizza sits as the epicenter of activity. It is the localized manifestation of an inherently mobile rock climbing identity.

Miguel's Pizza has been featured in all the major climbing magazines and the Venturas are now a prominent business family in the region. In fact, the area has become so popular that during its peak season (October-November) climbers spill out to other campgrounds that have opened in recent years to cater primarily to this community. During this time of year, one can easily hear dozens of different languages spoken, as climbers travel from all over the world to this remote area. Indeed, that The Red is a place of encounter, a node in these individual mobile networks, is illustrated by the fact that Miguel's Pizza and the climbing community thrive together. This also challenges any attempt to label Miguel's as simply hospitality infrastructure. The climbing community is actively involved in shaping the services provided at the pizzeria and campground. While Miguel's Pizza caters to a diversity of customers, it is primarily inspired by and supported by the climbing community, to which it belongs. There is a sense of ownership that is regularly demonstrated at the campground, as every few days one will witness a hand-written sign (on a pizza box) that reads "rock climbers only" tacked to a tree or post, which is then removed by the pizzeria staff only to reappear a few days later. Not only do climbers express a sense of place, ownership, and comfort when being "hosted" at the pizzeria, but the Ventura family are avid climbers

themselves who sponsor and organize local community events that further grow and maintain rock climbing amenities.

Like Miguel's Pizza, C&S Carryout has a close relationship with the climbing community, but this was not always the case. C&S is one example of a business that might not appear to be a tourism-driven enterprise, but its more recent success is a result of the supplemental revenue visitors bring to the area. More commonly known as "the beer trailer", C&S has taken advantage of the spatiality of prohibition laws in eastern Kentucky. So while Miguel's Pizza resides in the "dry" Powell County, which means the sale of alcohol is legally prohibited, its neighboring Wolfe County is "wet". C&S Carryout is located about a mile within this border. As a result, many climbers will purchase alcohol (beer, cider, and wine) from C&S and consume it (in concealed containers) at their camping sites within Powell County.

In fact, the local climbing guidebook includes a specific note about this – "Rather than going into which counties are dry and which are wet, just remember that the nearest place to buy beer is C&S Carryout, aka 'The Beer Trailer'" (Ellington, 2007: 21). In a region where shops and businesses are not always welcoming to outsiders, the climbing guidebook is also a guidebook of hospitality for climbers. It is a frame for understanding hospitableness in the region, and as a result fosters stronger relationships with local businesses that advertise in it. Responding to the economic downturn that began in 2008, the owner of C&S stated, "if it were not for the climbers, we would be out of business" (Personal correspondence, 2011). In August 2010 a new sign was added to the building – "Welcome Rock Climbers" (Figure 2) – clearly articulating a hospitable attitude and extending an invitation to climbers. Further, "the beer trailer" has embraced its colloquial name and turned to social networking, Facebook in

particular, to reinforce these community ties, with both climbers and locals posting to its page. Insofar as C&S Carryout is a locally owned business that does not appear to be tourism-driven, its stability very much depends upon tourist traffic, and rock climbers in particular. So while the threshold between the climbing community and Miguel's Pizza as a local business has nearly dissolved, the appearance of this threshold remains between the climbing community and C&S such that climbers are extended an invitation and welcomed.

(Semi-)privatization of public space

Rock climbers visiting The Red take advantage of the tourist amenities and their preferences for a particular few contribute to their growth and stability. Yet, climbers are not simply an exogenous economic force responding to locally generated hospitality services. They are active in the materialization of rock climbing infrastructures. Their territorialization practices include negotiating for rights to access public and private lands as well as purchasing land specifically for climbing development. In particular, the Red River Gorge Climber's Coalition (RRGCC), started by local and regional climbers in 1997, is a nonprofit corporation with goals oriented to protect, promote, and ensure responsible climbing in this area (rrgcc.com, 2010) and thus provides climbers near and far with a political voice in the region (Figure 3). Current RRGCC membership includes more than 500 climbers who either live in/near the region, frequent the area as visitors, or simply support the organization's political goals from afar.

Land ownership is a contentious aspect of climbing in The Red that inspires encounters between climbers and non-climbers, particularly private landowners. For instance, much land with cliff access is owned or leased by oil companies. In the late-1990s relations were turning sour as climbers' vehicles repeatedly blocked oil company access roads (Ellington, 2007).

According to Pegg (2007), climbers, both individually and as an organization, began purchasing land in the region thereby "employing a powerful new tactic in the struggle for access" (2007: 13). Specifically, the Coalition procured 700 acres in 2004 creating the Pendergrass-Murray Recreational Preserve (PMRP) (Pegg, 2007). Since then almost all newly developed cliff lines have been located on privately owned lands. Thus, the RRGCC motto – "If we own it, they can't close it" – demonstrates the ways mobile networks of climbers coalesce in ownership practices at a local scale and transcend the host/guest binary as they carve out a "local" identity for themselves. While some non-climbing residents pay little mind to climbers, others find their material presence in the landscape as property owners a potential source of future contention in terms of land use practices. This is not limited to extractive industries who would like to continue developing its natural resources, but also environmental groups who see rock climbing in and of itself ("cleaning" of the rock face, erosion at the base of the rock, and waste management at crags) as destructive. As a result, tensions between climbers and non-climbers build yielding differing hospitalities among and between communities, with Figure 4 evidencing vandalism of a RRGCC property sign. Moreover, Access Fund, a national rock climbing advocacy group, teams up with the Coalition in its conservation programs, acquisition goals, and fundraising efforts. This further demonstrates the far-reaching connections of the forces that drive change in The Red (see Pyke, Jodice, and Davidson, 2001), as well as the ways social media and global telecommunications result in political action and land use decisions on a local scale, even if members of the organization are at far distances.

In these efforts to territorialize The Red and localize the rock climbing community, questions arise as to who holds the responsibility of regulating use and mitigating the impacts of overuse. Pegg (2007) as a representative of the RRGCC, posits the burden of responsibility to

the land is increasingly a "community mission". Which "community" is being referred to is not clear, though. Such rhetoric suggests a more inclusive group, but practically this most often takes the form of climber initiated and executed events, such as trail building and maintenance events. Thus, the use of "community" by the RRGCC is perhaps less an extension of hospitality between climbers and non-climbing residents and more so a subtle rhetoric of exclusivity.

Trail days take place throughout the year, but are most common in the spring and autumn months. A trail day is a volunteer-based event dedicated to building or repairing trail infrastructure. Such an event usually begins early in the morning with leaders organizing individuals into groups to work on specific tasks associated with trail needs. For example, building a new trail involves clearing vegetation to form a path, followed by stump removal, then levelling of the trail and bracing slopes to reduce erosion, as well as building footbridges, and so on. This is an all-day event, which is usually concluded with a donated dinner in the evening for the volunteers. This strengthens climbing community bonds in a number of ways, as well as reifies subcultural exclusivity and belonging. Firstly, by working on the infrastructure essential to maintaining this climbing area, individuals' embodied sense of place extends beyond the rock face. Secondly, climbers are volunteering their time. The properties that organize trail days are either community-owned, through the Coalition or privately owned by individuals with an interest in preserving climbers' access. The RRGCC and private owners rarely have the funds to pay crews to maintain trails; therefore the climbers who donate their time and energy experience a sense of giving back, or reciprocity for the hospitality they have experienced. Thirdly, this work is done as a group – usually 25-50 people volunteer. Building a trail alone or in a small group takes days to weeks, whereas working collectively completes the task more efficiently while also reaffirming

in/exclusivity. Finally, trail days end with a social gathering, which includes dinner and drinks, also donated by community members. The day's hard work is appreciated and the evening spent together afterwards reinforces who is considered a "local" climber, even if they are present but a few weeks or months of the year. Participation in such territorialization practices, thus, functions as social capital within the climbing community.

Local-mobile identities

Miguel's Pizza and the RRGCC are just a couple of the avenues through which climbers territorialize The Red and attempt to transcend host/guest boundaries. While Miguel's Pizza appears a locally-generated, rock climbing-specific hospitality service, it is a materiality of this mobile community. More broadly, the Coalition working at a collective scale reaffirms a cohesive rock climbing community in the purchasing of land and negotiating access rights. Yet, deeper subcultural territorialization and (in)hospitality practices signify exclusivity that is palpable within the community. In what follows, lifestyle climbers' perspectives on "localness", community belonging, and hospitality are examined.

Despite no permanent residence, many of the rock climbers who frequent this area proclaim a "local" identity, which extends beyond the identification of The Red as a favorite climbing destination to an expression of a sense of place that is used to communicate hierarchy within the climbing community. The following climber explains that he understands as a clear distinction between the residential, non-climbing population as "locals" and himself as a "local climber" who spends a few months a year moored in The Red. Nevertheless, his ephemeral lifestyle does not diminish a sense of ownership or pride in relation to this region.

> Clearly there's going to be two locals here. There's the local climber, then there's the
> real local. Definitely at this point, I'm a local climber. I've been coming here long

enough for sure. I feel like I have a lot of sense of ownership and pride in the area. In terms of being a true local from the area, though – no. Unless you are born here you're not *local*, period. And that's it. If you weren't born in this holler, you're not from this holler. That's the way it is. I'm always going to be from outside. […] But that being said, there's a few folks I do get to interact with, so I'm moving more that direction. […] But due to the local mindset of the folks here, no, I'm definitely an outsider and I don't think there's any climber, short of the Venturas, they're the only ones born in the area code. But they're still usually going to be identified as climbers, not locals. I don't think we are ever going to get that status. (Male, late 20s, lifestyle climbing for 10 years)

The moniker "local" climber is used less to distinguish the climbing community from the non-climbing community, but more so as a subcultural distinction within the climbing community. It is used to signify a sense of propriety and hierarchy to other climbers, principally leisure climbers and those new to the area. This climber articulates a "local" identity as a matter of social "status" in the region. Further, this identity is not just rhetorical, but embodied practices and political associations also demonstrate this subcultural association. The "local" climbers are those who are most active in community organizations and events, albeit when they are present in The Red.

The significance of a "local" climber identity extends beyond one's preferred area to other destinations as well, particularly by way of associations with lifestyle climbing, to evoke certain hospitality practices. The following lifestyle climber began climbing in eastern Kentucky 15 years ago as a leisure climber and has since made climbing his lifestyle traversing the US numerous times in pursuit of the sport. He describes his feelings of localness and how that sense of identity extends across destinations via community networks.

When I travel, most people know that I'm a Red River local. They know that because they have traveled to The Red. They've seen me here; they know this is my home area. Then when I go see them, usually they're psyched to show me their home area, like we're psyched to share this area. That's how it works. (Male, late 20s, lifestyle climbing for 10 years)

Thus, this climber correlates the feeling of "home" with "local" identity. In the enactment of

rock climbing mobilities, those who feel at "home" in an area have the responsibility of

extending hospitality to fellow climbers who may not affiliate themselves with "local" status.

Moreover, this obligation of hospitality comes with an expectation of reciprocity when one is

traveling away from their "home" area. In other words, mobilizing hospitality amongst the

rock climbing community depends upon reciprocity. Further commenting on the

responsibility of hospitality, these self-identified "local" climbers advocate being

ambassadors to newly arrived climbers:

> It's nice to go to other places, meet other locals there. Most locals are always, really
> ambassadors to other people from other places. [...] When new people show up here,
> you introduce yourself, this place – be an ambassador. It's nice when people extend
> the same hand to you, to help you out. (Male, mid-20s, lifestyle climbing for 3 years)

As these climbers explain that hospitality is an obligation, it suggests a more Kantian

approach in which lifestyle climbers advocate for a "cosmopolitan right" to travel to climbing

areas without restriction and a "law of universal hospitality" that obliges mutual hospitality

by hosts and guests as they travel. While such rhetoric suggests a high degree of inclusivity

amongst the climbing community, these obligations of hospitality do not extend to all. Some

hospitality practices are reserved for particular types of rock climbers.

While many lifestyle climbers who were veterans at The Red described an obligation of

hospitality, those lifestyle climbers who were new described a sort of informal initiation

process that takes place before one is accepted into the subculture. The following climber

described how she felt like an outsider for the first couple of months of camping at Miguel's.

While she was able to meet a few other climbers through mutual friends who had connected

them via social media, the more prominent feeling was unwelcoming. Specifically, she felt as

though she was expected to prove herself as a "serious" climber to many of the other lifestyle climbers before they extended their hospitality.

> It's taken me a long time to feel comfortable at The Red because there seems to be this in-crowd. There's always this, not necessarily cliquey thing going on, but you get a stink eye from a lot of people initially when you first start coming down here, just because you're new. And just this end of the season people have seen me around so much and maybe I know enough random people who are like kind of mixed-in with the scene that I'm starting to feel like I'm not getting the stink eye so much. I hate to say it that way, but that's how I've felt here. […] Next year will be better, though, I think. (Female, mid-20s, lifestyle climbing for 2 years)

When questioned as to whether she felt there was a gender bias to her treatment, she responded, "I don't think so. I mean, maybe that had something to do with it, but …". Rather, she experienced this treatment as being "about whether people know you here, like, whether they trust you and, like, you know, you're cool. […] I've seen a lot weekenders treated pretty bad, like, pretty mean to them." This suggests that notions of belonging preclude associated hospitality practices within the climbing community and that hospitality is not a community obligation, but is conditional. In this regard, lifestyle climbers do not subscribe to an ethics of hospitality, as Derrida (1999, 2002) advocates, nor is this the Kantian law of hospitality as a universal right and obligation. Rather, this suggest a social hospitality that is conditional in that it is policed within the community by perceptions of social capital, affiliation, and dedication to the sport.

Lifestyle climbers, as self-proclaimed "local" climbers in The Red, employ a number of discursive, symbolic, and performative tactics to distinguish themselves within the larger rock climbing community. As Kiewa (2002) notes, from the outside rock climbers may seem a cohesive group, but internally the community has numerous rifts and subcultures. In other words, Cohen explains of community politics – "[i]n the public face, internal variety disappears or coalesces into a simple statement. In its private mode, differentiation, variety

and complexity proliferate" (1985: 74). With the growth of the climbing community, conformity and uniformity have further decreased and internal rifts are more pervasive and contentious. Subcultural affiliations are determined by a number of factors. The materiality of climbing practice makes first impressions as to the degree of dedication and lifestyle of fellow climbers and this is used as evidence for the extent of hospitality practices and inclusivity that is offered. The following lifestyle climber, for example, describes the multiple forms of camping accommodations one may witness at a climbing destination, which he correlates with subcultural identities within the larger rock climbing community.

> You can tell the weekenders that come down here, they have all that shiny new gear and the tent and therma-rest and the sleeping bag. Then there's the people who live in tents who have, you know, a real set up going on. They've got the bigger tents. They don't have the little backpack-size. They got a shitty Wal-Mart tent 'cause it's more comfortable to live in it. A pile of leaves is built up around there from the amount of time it's been here. It's all faded. You can see that. Then you have people like me, who've got the car, the regular SUV – take out the back seats and throw a bed in it 'cause that's better than a tent in the rain and it's warmer at night. You've got some insulation; it's a step up. Then the people who have the van, that's balling status. Living out in the woods long enough to know that they want to be able to stand up on a rainy day. Look [pointing across the parking lot] that guy over there's got solar panels on his [van] so he doesn't kill his battery, you know. People take it to all kinds of levels. It's a quality investment in the van and he's got the tarp for the rain shelter. He's got the stove in the back with the propane tank, like a full on kitchen in your house. (Male, early 20s, lifestyle climbing for 1 year)

This climber posits that one can read the seriousness of the climber in the camping equipment they use and the wear it exhibits. It is not high-end gear that draws his interest as to potential fellow lifestyle climbers, but the larger tents with extended tarps that have collected debris over time, as well as modified vans, SUVs, and RVs that function as mobile abodes rather than recreational, temporary housing. These forms of assessment, initiation processes, and (in)hospitality practices are not new to The Red, or any climbing area for that matter (see Taylor, 2010). In fact, the more veteran lifestyle climbers explained that when they began climbing at The Red the community was smaller and, as a result, one had to prove their

interest in climbing and their skill level before others would climb with them. And because

the community was smaller, new climbers were commonly mentored. With the tremendous

growth of the climbing community, this mentoring practice has dwindled, and further, many

have now started to go against their proclamations of ambassador practice, thereby further

distinguishing their subcultural identity, as the following climber illustrates.

> There's so many people here coming and going here now, I don't really make an
> effort to like meet new, weekend only people. (Male, mid-30s, lifestyle climbing
> for 12 years)

So while Ness (2011:78) observes, "the climbing community [...] defines itself primarily

through informal, regular acts of performance and exchange", lifestyle climbers' growing

contention for leisure climbers is currently resulting in fewer exchanges, albeit more

animosity and inhospitality. Many lifestyle climbers have grown weary of tensions with

leisure climbers and now employ avoidance and separation tactics – even if these tensions are

more one-sided. Lifestyle climbers are more likely to avoid the most popular cliff lines

during busier times of the year (weekends during October-November). At campgrounds, they

isolate by camping close to one another and being less social with those they deem to be

leisure, "weekend", or "visiting" climbers.

Moreover, self-proclaimed "local" climbers have begun to further rhetorically separate

themselves for the broader climbing community and associate more with the non-climbing,

residential population in terms of interests and concerns. The following climber conflates the

propriety of "locals" – in both senses of the term.

> You always default to the locals, whether you're in a surfing lineup, at a
> climbing crag, or the local gas station. It's just the way it is. You're in their home
> area. You have a right to be there, too, but it's their place, treat it as such. […] So
> many of these newbies don't understand that. […] I think that's an issue that's
> going to come to the forefront of climbing quickly. Here in The Red where you
> have a local community that presents very much in a certain way and most of the
> users that are coming in are from a much different background. And those don't

really mesh and nobody really tries to. And that's going to be an issue, because we are going to want to keep accessing more climbing areas and if they don't want us there, they're not going to let us. (Male, late-20s, lifestyle climbing for 10 years)

Thus, in conversations with lifestyle climbers, the tensions felt are placed in the hands of leisure climbers, or "newbies", as not respecting the local community (climbers or residents). And this tension is related directly to issues of access rights. He suggests that it is the increase in leisure climbers who do not respect the "local climbers" nor the local non-climbing residential population that puts future access to climbing areas at risk. Lifestyle climbers are rhetorically dismantling the threshold between themselves as "local climbers" and the non-climbing, local residential community, and in so doing constructing a threshold between themselves and "visiting" climbers. By aligning themselves with the non-climbing residential population, lifestyle climbers as "local climbers" engage in spatial politics that deflect some of their responsibility for contentious relations and validate their inhospitality practices.

Conclusion

Examining the territorialization practices and community (in)hospitalities that are performed as a result of rock climbing mobilities that course through The Red as a climbing place, this paper has worked at a number of scales. It has summarized some of the materialities that have developed towards "hosting" the rock climbing community, including Miguel's Pizza that localize it's history and C&S Carryout that extends invitations to climbers. Then, narrowing the focus to the spatial politics climbers employ in territorializing and privatizing public space, particularly through the RRGCC, illustrates that climbers are not simply an ephemeral force but they maintain a political voice in land use decisions whether near or far.

The climbing community challenges the host/guest distinction by localizing itself in the region. Yet climbers do not act as a cohesive group in The Red; their internal territorialization practices are channeled through (in)hospitality practices. In particular, lifestyle climbers differentiate themselves from leisure climbers through the use of "local" and "visiting" signifiers of subcultural identity, that translate to other symbolic actions of exclusivity and unwelcomeness. Lifestyle climbers traverse the boundaries of both identities – rock climbers and local residents – not associating solely with either. So while they express a distinction between themselves as "local climbers", from the non-climbing, residential "local" population, they also use their sense of localness as a means to distinguish themselves from leisure climbers who visit but a few days per year. This may seem an arbitrary designation from outside the climbing community, but within such subcultural distinctions are used to distinguish hierarchy and award priority at the crags, in campgrounds, and within its political organizations, such as the RRGCC.

While hospitality studies have long examined the host/guest relationship (see Lashley, 2000; 2008), mobilities studies is presenting new challenges to the way these relationships are enacted. In an increasingly mobile world, distinctions between host/guest, tourist/local, and self/other are destabilized (Bell, 2007; Molz and Gibson, 2007). Indeed, many tourism destinations include "hosts" and "guests" from all parts of the world. Nevertheless, the spatial politics of tourism destinations are used to convey a sense of identity as well as validate positionality in hospitality exchanges. It might seem a straightforward analysis to interpret Derrida's (1999; 2000) deconstruction of hospitality as an opposition of ethics and politics. Indeed, "[t]he question of whether a new arrival should be interrogated and questioned, or whether they should be offered unquestioning welcome, seems on the face of it to be analogous to the difference between the ethical relation and justice (Derrida 2000, 27-9)"

(Barnett, 2005: 11). Yet, the decision to extend hospitality is not simply the difference between an ethical encounter and a conditional one, but it takes place in the very performance of identity. Hospitality practices affirm power relations, they communicate who is at "home" and who has the power in a particular space to extend hospitality. Thus, integrating a mobilities perspective into hospitality studies further illuminates the spatial politics that are at play in an ethics of hospitality.

Notes
1. Sport climbing is a type of free climbing, thus requiring the use of ropes, harness, and other equipment as safety mechanisms only (rather than as aids in ascending the rock face). It has developed in areas with extreme overhanging cliff lines or with rock that is more prone to breaking/chipping, or both, thus necessitating the use of permanent bolts affixed in the rock. As a result, sport climbing utilizes less equipment than traditional free climbing and aid climbing and gives rise to climbing practice focused on endurance, strength, and gymnastic ability.

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