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**THE STRUGGLES OF LIVING IN A POSTCARD:  
TOURISMS SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON A MOUNTAIN  
COMMUNITY**

A Dissertation presented

by

ELIZABETH A. CARTIER

Submitted to the Graduate School of the  
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2017

Management

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**THE STRUGGLES OF LIVING IN A POSTCARD:  
TOURISMS SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON A MOUNTAIN  
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**ELIZABETH A. CARTIER**

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**George R. Milne, Program Director**  
**Isenberg School of Management, PhD Program**

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother and father, Carol and Marcel Cartier. Thank you for believing in me and loving me unconditionally.

Until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My UMass experience has been filled with joy, challenge, strength, contemplation, hurdles, laughter, and countless smiles. To begin, I would like to thank Linda Lowry for being my friend and a constant inspiration to me. I would not be in the final stages of this journey without her guidance and support. Our heartfelt discussions regarding my “rainbow” will be forever engraved in my memory. The words “thank you” are not even close to enough. I would like to thank Rod Warnick for helping me identify and solidify my research interests. He was the first person to welcome me into my academic career by inspiring me to research what I love, skiing. Thank you for letting me be unique. I would like to thank Linda Smircich for helping me explain my lens through which I view this world. Thank you for giving me the confidence to develop and strengthen my research abilities. I would like to thank Meg Gebhard for helping me identify with skiing from a different viewpoint. Thank you for sharing your unique vision of research. I would also like to thank the entire Isenberg and HTM family, especially Linda Shea, Albert Assaf, and Linda Enghagen. I feel extremely blessed to have had the opportunity to be a part of this inspiring community.

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ABSTRACT  
THE STRUGGLES OF LIVING IN A POSTCARD:  
TOURISMS SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON A MOUNTAIN  
COMMUNITY

MAY 2017

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Tourism scholarship is continuously advancing the understanding of tourism development as it positively relates economically and environmentally to tourism-based societies. In recent years, the tourism discipline as a whole has made little progress in identifying the social and cultural impacts of tourism, including questions of why and how local communities' traditional foundations and defining characteristics are changed, influenced, and challenged by tourists and tourism business development. This dissertation restores the conversation that focuses on how tourism development and consumerism can change the socio-cultural profiles of local communities by addressing the understudied area of the ways in which tourism may affect the social systems and collective dynamics of a tourism-based community. Drawing on Nash's (1977) view of tourism as a form of imperialism and expanding on Doxey's (1975) original attempt to identify tourism's influence on local residents, this dissertation contributes to social theories of the tourism discipline by bringing a different frame of reference and set of questions to exploration of the social impact of tourism growth through a qualitative ethnographic method and a constructivist grounded theory analysis of primary



(participant observation and interviews) and secondary (written documents and pictures) data sources from eighteen months of immersion in one mountain community in the advanced industrial society of the United States. The findings suggest that tourism impacts four dimensions of this mountain community: structuring the local social world, intensifying acceptance issues between members of different social groups, shaping conflict and disagreement, and establishing the centrality of the environment. This research contributes to previous research by arguing that a holistic, complex account of interconnected relationships in a local community, such as this, can illuminate the nature of social conflict and disagreement around tourism, as well as suggest that tourism business decision-makers have the ability to influence the relationships of the major players in a recreation-based community.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

*Liz... seriously... just stop for a minute. Look outside. I live in a postcard. I live in a place that you want to send home to your family. Sure... people come see it once and then never look back. But to me and everyone else living here, this postcard is our home and we are never throwing it away.*

Five years ago on a trip back to my previous home in Colorado, I visited the renovated lodge at the local ski resort I used to frequent. The lodge I remembered was one of the last historic ski lodges in Colorado, well known for its warm atmosphere. I was curious about the changes that had been made so I decided to visit with a good friend who had lived in this community for more than 20 years. He is a well-known ski enthusiast, one of the best skiers on the mountain, and worked for the resort before becoming a private business owner.

As we inspected the new lodge, we noticed that, beyond the expansion and upgraded fixtures, the changes included a new private area built onto the main lodge but separated from it by a door without a handle. We learned that this area is for a subset of tourists, the visiting elite of the mountain, so to speak, to have their own, private space including a bar, pool, and locker room. Upon seeing this door and realizing his inability to access what is essentially a private club, my friend's demeanor and expression changed. He expressed to me his anger, sadness, and disappointment at being excluded from part of the mountain. To him, the absent door handle represented the resort management's intent to separate people, to reduce opportunities for socializing, and to

change the culture and energy of this laid-back mountain society and its defining sport. It was as if he had become a second class citizen in his home. He said, “This is my mountain. I know it as well as anyone. Why would they keep me out?” When I tried to cheer him up by saying it was “just progress,” he responded, “Progress for who?”

Later in my trip, we were both invited into the private area by a mutual acquaintance who owned a condo at the resort. He invited us to a wine tasting for guests of the new club. My experience inside the club was very different from previous experiences at the old lodge, as it was the first time I had ever seen separations between groups of people. The locals at the event were bartenders, servers, and entertainers. Many did not speak to the event guests beyond the requirements of their job; they did only what they were asked to do. They did, however, speak to us and wanted to know why we would even think of attending such an event. The locals present knew the importance of the event and the economic contributions associated with these people but they did not seem very happy to be there, that we were there, or that they had to share what they thought of as their mountain with the people in attendance at the event.

That evening, I observed that the tourists all mingled with one another, talked about their businesses back home and how great the resort was doing. They had no interest in talking to the local servers or in talking to my friend and me when they learned of our connection to the area. This captured my attention as it seemed that social interactions and relationships between the local residents and tourists had changed with the resort managers’ physical changes to the base lodge. Before the creation of the private club, locals served tourists and other locals together in the same setting; the space accommodated everyone and any separation between the different groups was not very

pronounced. It was one community that encompassed servers (locals) and served (locals and tourists), where everyone shared the mountain. This change in the lodge signified a change in this mountain community, in what was important for resort management, and in the sport as my friend and other locals had known it. The absence of intermingling helped me to see that my friend's feelings about the resort changes were a cogent response to real phenomena.

These two experiences at the renovated lodge impacted me a great deal as I suddenly saw this well-known community through a new lens. I had always known this area to be tourist-based area but it was surprising to see how management decisions could impact people on a social level, how management actions could target social categories and determine hierarchies. This realization conflicted with what I was learning in my tourism studies, where concerns about negative impacts of tourism were confined to cultures in what earlier scholars thought of as underdeveloped societies, while tourism was taken to be generally beneficial in highly industrialized societies such as the U.S. and Europe.<sup>1</sup> My lived experience, however, suggested that tourism isn't necessarily beneficial in all its aspects and it might even be that tourism negatively affects the social worlds of local residents in a U.S. community. These experiences prompted me to ask the following questions: How are the tourism businesses changing this community? What are we missing about the impact of tourism growth? What is tourism really doing to these local people?

---

<sup>1</sup> Much of the seminal literature of tourism studies comes from the 1970s and 1980s, when the simplistic juxtaposition of developed and underdeveloped or developing societies was still commonplace.

Once I posed these initial questions, I began thinking more broadly about changes tourism businesses have brought to recreation-based communities, some of which I had witnessed in my own life in this region. At one time, the ski industry focused on the recreational pursuit rather than resort development and economic advancement. Today, some groups in the ski/snowboard world are less interested in the sport than on developing relationships rooted in consumption and consumerism. As the character, T.J. Burke, in the popular Colorado skiing movie, *Aspen Extreme* (1993), explains, locals live a reality in the same place tourists like to experience a fantasy (Gallo & Goldberg, 1993), and the resort provides it all.

This community is growing at a slower pace than many other major recreation-based towns in Colorado, but it is growing nonetheless. The population of the community has increased significantly over the last ten years and both summer and winter tourist influxes have grown. Other changes, such as the rising popularity of snowboarding, the diversification of recreation interests, the legalization of marijuana, and the ability to work remotely, have also contributed to the increase in tourism. Consequently, the resort had expanded terrain, skiable acres, skier days, and skier counts, and the town has added hotel rooms and recreation and travel package offerings. Until my experiences with the renovated lodge, I assumed that all these changes were unproblematic for local residents because they brought more money into the community. However, the more I thought about these and similar experiences, and other changes happening in this community, I realized that within the space of increasing tourism, shifting relationships between tourists and locals have led to struggles around acceptance of the other, ownership of the mountain and its related environment, and how to live one's life. Different ideas and

ideals connected to and exposed by the focus of tourism business decision-makers appear to be sources of tension in the locals' identities and their social relationships with tourists.

### **Purpose of the Study**

My personal experience and the questions it raised are consistent with tourism scholarship that points out our limited understanding of how tourism practices influence social and cultural aspects of communities (Deery, Jago, & Fredline, 2012; Mason, 2008; Nash, 1977; Pernecky, 2012). My inquiries and research stream thus move outside the more popular topics of tourism studies --tourism's economic and environmental impacts-- to address the understudied area of the ways in which tourism may affect social systems and collective dynamics of tourism-based communities. The purpose of this dissertation is to identify the complex issues of a specific tourism-based community that stem from tourism development and consumerism that I have observed over ten years of immersion in this society. My goal is to contribute to the social theories of the tourism discipline by bringing a different set of questions and a different frame of reference to exploring the social impact of tourism growth in a community dependent upon mountain-based recreational tourism within the larger milieu of the advanced industrial society of the United States. In other words, I explore tourism in its social dimensions, rather than adopting the more prevalent perspectives of either economic consequences or environmental impact. As will be identified, both economics and environment figure in this study but their significance is in their social positioning and meanings. The social environment provides the dominant perspective for understanding this community and the influence tourism has on the local people. The purpose, goal, and framework of my inquiry led to my overarching research question, which positions this project as an

inquiry into tourism-based communities, and the locals who inhabit them, from a social and cultural standpoint:

*What is tourism doing to this mountain community, specifically to local residents and their relationships?*

My understanding of the term “socio-cultural impacts of tourism” has been shaped by Mason’s (2008) identification of this impact as related to the change in a group’s attitudes and behaviors based on social interactions and relations. Underpinning much of the research on socio-cultural impacts of tourism is the assumption that the community of locals and the local environment benefit financially and socially from the increase in tourism and tourism industry control. Very little research examines the influence of tourism from a local perspective within a community in the highly developed society of the United States. The logic of most studies is that tourism and travel industries make positive contributions to the economic stability of related communities, and thus contribute to the economic stability of locals.

Another tendency in tourism scholarship has been to view the field from a tourist perspective. Some scholars view tourism as a rejuvenation of the self (Graburn, 1977) or as a way to have an experience outside the daily norm (Binkhorst, den Dekker, & Melkert, 2010). Both of these descriptions, and many similar descriptions in the tourism discipline, view tourism through the tourist’s lens. In contrast, I draw on Nash’s (1977) argument that tourism is a form of imperialism in which the locals work and the tourists play. This lens does not discount views that tourism is rejuvenation or an experience for the tourist, but it takes tourism beyond the tourist experience and beyond financial and

environmental impacts to include the workers or local residents who provide the travel experience. In contrast to previous literature, I explore this tourism-based society with a social lens, emphasizing the relationships the local population have with the community itself, with tourists, and with tourism businesses to help clarify the processes and practices that sustain this mountain environment. Therefore, the framework for this study has thus included theoretical contributions from anthropology, sociology, and philosophy, in addition to tourism scholarship.

### **Contribution to the Literature**

As touched upon above, a substantial body of research has examined the chief ways tourism positively or negatively impacts the economy and environment of a particular community. Clear research tactics are commonly used to assess such economic and environmental influences, such as economic and environmental impact studies and scales. There is much less knowledge about sociocultural impacts because of the difficulty in measuring the phenomena (Mason, 2008, p. 62). One researcher, Doxey (1975), developed a measure for the social impacts of tourism, which he called the “irritation irridex,” an attempt to understand changes in the relationship between tourists and locals as tourism increases. Despite this promising contribution, few studies have added to Doxey’s (1975) original findings; one study applied his theory to specific places (Milman, 2004) and another contradicted his findings altogether (Huimin & Ryan, 2012). The practical implications of the research gap relevant to the ski/snowboard industry and tourism is visible in resorts’ efforts to increase economic gain through marketing initiatives and to mitigate environmental damage through the use of wind and solar power without any understanding of how increasing tourism changes the social system of the

local community. Certainly recreation industries have contributed to economic success through amplified recreation tourism in many areas of the United States. Little is known, however, about how such success has changed local communities' traditional foundations and defining characteristics.

Within the literature focusing on one, specific local community, few studies have assessed a change in tourism from the viewpoint or opinion of the local residents, as access to local communities is limited. Some scholars suggest that the field will benefit from (1) ethnographic research in societies such as the U.S. focusing on how tourism businesses direct tourism and travel decisions (Nash, 2004); (2) theoretical contributions developed through exploring “within” tourism phenomena, instead of simply identifying the idea of tourism or the tourist experience (Pernecky, 2012); (3) and research that looks beyond tourist experience to locals' experiences of tourism in their lives (Picken, 2006). I have responded to these identified needs and contributed to the literature by (1) completing my research in the United States; (2) paying particular attention to the potential of tourism businesses to control and direct both tourist and local resident experiences, in line with the work of Ponting and McDonald (2013); and (3) taking an ethnological approach by viewing the community from an embedded, emic perspective that enabled me to co-create processes and practices of the local community and host environment. In addition, my work aims to support some scholars' (e.g., Bianchi, 2009) proposed need for further research on power and the institutions of tourism. My work is an exploration of power that highlights the relationships between locals and tourists, as well as on how tourism businesses may catalyze change in these interactions.



Finally, in joining in and adding to the conversation regarding how tourism development can change a local community, I have approached tourism theoretically and methodologically as a changing social phenomenon in which diverse relationships are co-constructed between existing groups. Such co-constructed relationships represent the reflexive nature of tourism communities. Although I have concentrated this research on one recreation community in a single, particular context in the Western United States, I hope that my research process and findings encourage similar studies in tourist-based economies in other regions focused on recreations of various kinds.

### **Document Overview**

In Chapter 2, I review in more detail related literature in the tourism field, focusing on concepts of community as well as the tourism development and recreation tourism literatures. Chapter 3 explains the critical constructivist viewpoint that frames this study and clarifies my ethnographic approach. Chapter 4 explicates my research design, covering my integrated data collection and analysis methodology, including for clarity an example analysis process. Chapter 5 summarizes a broad view of this community and the central theoretical construction of my entire research process. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 depict, in order, the findings from each of my constellation of methods-- engaging in participant observation, conducting semi-structured interviews, and collecting related documents, respectively-- in each case pulling apart the simultaneous data collection and analysis process. Chapter 9 is a summation of my contribution to the related literature and a reflection on my entire research process that also draws out some implications for scholarship and for the community I studied.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tourism, and the process of traveling, can be defined as purposeful action meant to recreate the self to rejuvenate for the return to the work place (Graburn, 1977), and/or to be involved in what may be called an experience environment different from the home (Binkhorst, den Dekker, & Melkert, 2010). These descriptions, like others in tourism scholarship, view tourism from the viewpoint of the person choosing to leave their home environment. However, another definition of tourism focuses on the host environment or those who live in tourism-based communities, suggesting that tourism can be viewed as a form of imperialism in which one (the local) works and the other (the tourist) plays (Nash, 2001). This view of tourism accepts the idea that “[t]ourists are separated from their hosts by the facts of stranger-hood, the work-leisure distinction, and whatever cultural differences obtained in a particular situation” (Nash, 1977, p. 41). This separation structures the relationship between locals and tourists and contributes to struggles connected to an imperialistic framework where “locals” are part of the host environment who work to serve the tourists, and “tourists” are those visiting the locals’ place for a leisure experience and a break from their daily life (Nash, 1977; 1989; 2001). This view is connected to the idea that tourism is a form of power that works through “the ways people choose to represent themselves” (Chambers, 2000, p. 31). When viewing these definitions of tourism together, it can be assumed that the local and tourist connect to form the tourist-based society, although their connections may create problematic relationships.

Understanding and accepting these particular terms has guided my interest in this dissertation subject. Below, I take a thorough look at the tourism literature, specifically the literature that accepts Nash's (1977, 1989, 2001) terminology of tourism, locals, and tourists. Methodologically this dissertation has been influenced by the approach of Ponting and McDonald (2013), whose grounded theory guided their exploration of the idea of "Nirvana" in surfing tourism. I was particularly inspired by this research as I could imagine adopting their (Ponting, McDonald, 2013) methodology to the ski/snowboard world. Beyond their methodological decisions and the adaptability of their concepts, however, Ponting and McDonald (2013) influenced my inquiry in many ways. Not only has their analytical framework explicitly and implicitly informed my account of this tourism community, it has also impacted how I see this dissertation contributing to tourism literature, recreation literature, and host/guest interaction literature.

First, Ponting and McDonald (2013) addressed surfing from three perspectives: local, tourist, and tourism development, this last being the perspective of those directly involved in the local development of tourism as a business. This has influenced my understanding of this mountain community as one developed conjointly by locals, tourists, and tourism business managers. Second, Ponting and McDonald (2013) addressed how the surf tourism industry attempts to control tourism in that community, suggesting that in locations reliant on tourism for economic stability, tourists' decisions regarding consumption are being sold to them by the industry. This has influenced my critical understanding of how control and power can be held by the recreation tourism businesses. Finally, Ponting and McDonald's (2013) study helped me to see more clearly that, despite the power of recreation tourism businesses over interactions and decision-

making, researchers often assume that a local community unproblematically accepts tourism development. Using Ponting and McDonald (2013) as a base, my aim in this literature review is to answer the following questions:

- What do we know about tourism development and how development has influenced tourist-based communities?
- What do we know about the connection between tourism and power?
- What do we know about the connection between recreation and tourism, specifically in the ski/snowboard world?

I begin the literature review with an explanation of my understanding of the concept of community I formed by exploring different disciplines. Next, I identify the tourism literature on impacts of tourism development, focusing separately on social and cultural impacts. Third, I discuss the literature concentrating on tourism theory related to power. Lastly, I discuss the recreation literature that explores the particular context of this study, ski/snowboard tourism. (Table 1 summarizes the related literature.)

### **Concept of Community**

As made clear by Clarke's (1973) seminal review article, the concept of community has long been a popular topic for discussion and debate among researchers in a plethora of disciplines. My understanding and use of the concept of community has been driven by the literature classified as "community studies," which has roots in cultural geography, anthropology, psychology, and sociology. However, I focus heavily on the community studies conducted within the tourism discipline.

Most community research falls into three major categories in terms of how the concept of community is defined: (1) community determined by common interests; (2) community determined by social structure; and (3) community determined by location. The first approach defines community as a group of people connected because of common interests and often bases groupings on a commonality such as a hobby (e.g., the snowmobiler community referenced by Gilden, 2004) or employment (e.g., the work community referenced by Pretty & McCarthy, 1991). The second research approach tends to define community as a group of people connected within a common social system. Bessant (2014) has recently built on this idea by suggesting that self-other interactions, and the interpretation of and reflection on such interactions, play a role in understanding the nature of community. Lastly, residence in a common location is offered as defining community. This concept of community is privileged in tourism scholarship, as seen in literature that depicts the host or local community as the people living in a place that tourists visit (Mason, 2008). Tourism research in this category generally differentiates the host community from visitors and suggests the latter can influence the specific aspects of the location and the hosts to some degree through such means as their contribution to social interactions and relationships (Oystein, 2010) or their impact on the environment and economy (Gezon, 2014).

For the purposes of this dissertation, thinking through the above three approaches to the concept of community, but favoring that used within the tourism discipline, I take local community to signify an entity made up of different groups of people who permanently live in a locale and participate in its multiple social structures and recreations. My use of the phrase local community thus references the entire group of

people who are primary residents living in and closely around the town and ski area, those who have chosen a life associated with this area. I use the word community throughout this dissertation, often simply to indicate in general the ‘mountain community’ where my study was situated. I adopt the phrase ‘local society’ to mean all the groups and subgroups present in this area of which the local, mountain community is one. Knowing that some tourism scholars may disagree, I privilege the idea that, while people visiting --including second home owners-- can contribute to the social structure and economic stability of an area, they are not local community members because they do not choose to primarily live or work in the area. My concept of community is structured around the locals, those who decide to live full-time and make a living in this geographical location, contribute to the multiple social realities and recreations that exist here, and choose to maintain this area as their home residence.

### **Tourism Development**

The sociocultural, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism have attracted researchers seeking to understand the effects of travel on the local environment. Research suggests that the development of tourism areas is generally viewed as a driver for economic growth (Binkhorst, den Dekker, & Melkert, 2010) and much of the research in the tourism field is concerned with the economic drivers, stability, and marketing associated with development (Pearce, 1989) as scholars conducting economic impact studies have interpreted tourism’s effects on local financial environments by describing job creation, tax advancements, real estate changes, and other monetary flows within local communities. It is not surprising that the economic effects of tourism has been one of the most popular fields of study in the tourism discipline (Pearce, 1989).

Environmental impact studies have recently allowed a more thorough understanding of how tourism impacts the physical environment through pollution, waste, and sustainable initiatives. The popularity of this type of research can be seen in the abundance of new research and measurement tools that can be used to examine and increase sustainability and sustainable development practices (for a good review, see Schianetz, Kavanagh, & Lockington, 2007).

In contrast to what is known about the financial and environmental effects of tourism development, very little is known about sociocultural impacts because of the operational issues surrounding the question of how to measure social and cultural changes in tourism contexts (Mason, 2008, p. 62). In addition, the abundance of quantitative inquiries into social impacts has not led to the kind of holistic understanding of local cultures that ethnographic or phenomenological methods would afford (Deery, Jago, & Fredline, 2012). This is further supported by Nash's (1977) observation that the tourist is "the agent of contact between cultures and directly or indirectly, the cause of change" (p. 33). This is not to say that sociocultural impacts have been completely ignored in scholarly research. One of the first theorists to consider the host environment, tourist-driven change, and its possible negative impacts on the host community was Doxey (1975), known for his pivotal work on the "Irritation Irridex," an attempt to gauge the change in irritation in a host community as the number of tourists increases. He (Doxey, 1975) developed this index as a way to interpret tourism as a phenomenon that is not always positive for the host community (Mason, 2008) and used it to propose that host communities go through phases of euphoria, apathy, annoyance, and antagonism, depending on duration and numbers of tourists (Doxey, 1975, p. 195-196). Although

development of Doxey's (1975) original contribution has been limited, research focused on the connection between the local and tourist groups in tourist-based communities has been an area of interest in tourism scholarship and is addressed in detail below.

### **Social Impacts**

Social relationships between hosts/locals and guests/tourists, two groups impacting tourism development, play a pivotal role in how tourism is shaped as well as how or if tourism is successful in a locality. Most literature that discusses host/guest interactions is centered in the service environment. Insofar as my fieldwork confirms that the service encounter is a major site of interaction, my review here focuses on the literature pertaining to service encounters. There are three main views of the interactions between hosts and guests within service encounters. The first suggests that host and guest are able to share power in the service encounter, with the guest becoming an equal participant in the service (Ford & Heaton, 2001) and playing a role in the service process (Mills & Morris, 1986). The second view argues that the host has the ability to dominate the guest in the service encounter, especially through unwanted gazes (Cheong & Miller, 2000), service recovery control (Spreng, Harrell, & Mackoy, 1995), and what Weatherly and Tansik, (1993) call tricks of the trade, referring to an act of "playing dumb" or pretending to be unaware of customer demands, for example (p. 14). The third approach proposes that the guest can dominate the host in the service encounter through role expectations (Canziani & Francioni, 2013) and psychological contracts (Eddleston, Kidder & Litzky, 2002).

This host/guest literature of either power-sharing or power imbalance in favor of the guest is supplemented by another that sees the tourism business playing a role in their



interactions through proximity, timing, and ease of connection. Supporting this view, Trauer and Ryan (2005) identify the relationship between tourists and locals as an intimate one existing within a particular location. This indicates that the type and location of a tourism business have the ability to construct the social relationships of hosts and guests. Similarly, Cohen and Cohen (2012) suggest use of mobilities theory in tourism studies to increase understanding of the likelihood and proximity of interactions between locals and tourists, pointing to the connections between being social (tourists and locals interacting) and being mobile (having the ability to travel). With ease of travel and marketing initiatives, the tourism business may impact boundaries between tourists and locals, leading to greater ease of social intermingling between otherwise distant groups. This suggests that with the ability to be mobile (i.e., people have the ability to travel more than ever), both host community and travelers cede to the tourism business some of their control over interactions.

### **Cultural Impacts**

Some research identifies culture as an attraction for tourists and, in fact, “is the framework within which tourism takes place, as all people have a cultural background and much of tourism involves traveling into a different cultural environment” (MacLeod & Carrier, 2010, p. 3). From this viewpoint, tourists travel to see a culture and aspects of the host community become what Hall (1994, p. 176) called cultural products. Another school of thought takes the view that travel influxes, although often viewed through the eyes of the tourist as traveling to see another culture, can themselves influence and change the culture of the host area (Litka, 2013), most specifically influence how locals identify themselves and how they evolve and develop as individuals (van Rekom & Go,

2006). One of Doxey's (1975) Irritation Irridex findings is that a main concern of host communities is identity loss (p. 198). This connects with the idea that there is a link between tourism and cultural dependency as "the main stimuli for cultural development are coming from outside," (Hall, 1994, p. 176) which suggests that tourism and travelers have the power to construct and develop the host culture and can "challenge the life style of the destination" (Doxey, 1975, p. 195).

The ethnographically informed framework for this study follows Geertz (1973), who wrote, "believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (p. 5). Culture is thus seen as symbolic action (Geertz, 1973, p. 10), in which behaviors and discourse developed in interactions between people construct and reconstruct culture.

### **Development and Power**

My understanding of the concept of power is informed by tourism scholars Hall (1994, 2010a, 2010b), Hollinshead (1999), and Urry (1990). These scholars recognize that power can influence the development of a tourism-based community on many levels. For the purpose of this dissertation, I group the tourism and power literature into two major categories: (1) the relationship between political power and development, and (2) the relationship between social power and development. Concerning political power, Reiter (1977) states "because the populations who live in the areas of tourist development usually stand in asymmetrical relation to the outside forces that are responsible for such development, there is a political aspect to the process as well. Political power may

dominate in the redefinition and reallocation of local resources to be used in tourist development, and may also be important as local folk attempt to control aspects of planning and financing tourism” (p. 139). Hall (1994) agrees that political power is central to understanding tourism development but also marks it as an understudied area. He (Hall, 1994) suggests that the political power associated with tourism affords the ability to control the actions and decisions of tourists, which rests power in the hands of political entities influencing tourism decisions.

The concepts related to the development and social power literature are directly related to the literature cited above focusing on social and cultural change as a result of tourism influxes. Tourism influxes can influence social change in the host environment (Hall, 1994) such that social power is embedded within change and groups of people that control change. Some tourism scholars have attempted to explore social power and travel influxes by adopting Foucault’s (1972, 1977) idea of the unwanted gaze --the unwelcome viewing of one person by another person or entity-- to understand power in tourism relationships, whether it is institutional power (Cheong & Miller, 2000; Hollinshead, 1999; Hollinshead & Kuon, 2013) or power invested in the “other” social group (Jordan & Aitchison, 2008; Urry, 1990). Hall (2010) suggests that “the exercise of power is witnessed not just in the production and reproduction of elements of culture, but also in the very direct exercise of power by individuals and in the shaping of institutions and the rules of the game” (p. 199-200). This literature suggests that social power, power created within relationships and interactions, can be exercised by individuals or by institutions that control tourism.

## **Tourism Recreation Literature**

Another aspect of the tourism development literature this dissertation intersects emerges from my focus on a specific local society defined by many recreational pursuits. The recreation and leisure literature indicates that physical activity and environment play a large role in understanding tourists' decision-making, as can be identified in the extensive literature on sport tourism, recreation tourism, and leisure research. To begin to explore dimensions of the local society I study, I review below literature concentrated on the importance of place and literature that describes the present nature of the ski/snowboard industry.

### **Place**

Researchers have tried to describe how and why we are connected to particular places and not connected to others, from the viewpoint of the local and the tourist. Hutson, Montgomery and Caneday (2010) suggest that the way people make meaning in a place is subjective, based on a relational, natural or spiritual understanding of the space. Similarly, Bryan (1977) suggests that as people participate more frequently in their recreational activity, the attachment they feel to the related space becomes more important. These scholars (Bryan, 1977; Hutson, Montgomery, & Caneday, 2010) maintain the importance of place on a subjective level as tourists and locals participate in a particular recreation setting and its related activities. Understanding such specifics yields a more nuanced view of the relationship that locals and tourists have with the recreation itself, the place where it is pursued, and the businesses that control it.

Moving beyond the broad exploration of placeness above to a more focused concentration on the mountain community, Sheldrake (2007) addresses the importance of the specific environment of a ski mountain by arguing that the physical land is critical to the ski/snowboard enthusiast because it is crucial to doing the sport, and this placeness and the physicality of the environment (mountains, snow) can be a change catalyst for the individual. Sheldrake (2007) intimates that the mountain shapes and changes individuals - not just their ability as athletes, but their identity as well (p. 2). Coleman (2004) agrees, maintaining “cultural meanings become inscribed on the landscape and how landscapes in turn influence culture” (p. 3). Thus the total environment, including the actual land and weather, becomes a crucial aspect of achieving a life in the ski/snowboard world. Place is active in making connections to an environment, specifically a mountain environment.

### **Ski/Snowboard Specifics**

Skiing has been a significant part of daily life in mountain areas dating back 5000 years to when it was a way to efficiently hunt and gather (Lund & Masia, 2014). As a recreation, it was originally adopted by the Scandinavian *Idreat* culture (Allen, 2007, p. 216), with Norwegian and French influences dating back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Lund & Masia, 2014). Skiing in the United States grew in popularity after 1945 (Allen, 2007), as many resorts were developed by returning World War II veterans of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. Identifying an opportunity for entertainment, athleticism, and expression of love for the outdoors, these individuals opened many Colorado ski resorts (Colorado Ski & Snowboard Museum, 2014). Snowboarding developed as another way to enjoy the snow on one board/plank instead of two. One account of the birth of snowboarding suggests that it came about as a way to surf in the

winter (Bulgariaski.com, 2015). Although snowboarding is extremely popular today, the single plank concept was not experienced actively on mountains until the 1960s and did not become widely popular until the 1990s (Colorado Ski and Snowboard Museum, 2014). With resort development, particularly in the West, skiing locales became winter vacation destinations for people with disposable wealth, parallel to beach or surfing vacations of the summer (Allen, 2007, p. 228). The sport became associated with rich, white men and came to be considered “the least integrated popular sport in America” (Clifford, 2002, p. 20).

The latest relevant statistics from the National Ski Area Association (2014) identify 477 ski resorts open in the U.S. in the 2012-2013 ski season. Twenty (approximately 4.34% of the total resorts) were located in Colorado. In the 2012-2013 season there were approximately 56.9 million snow sport visits in the U.S., with 19.8 million (approximately 34.8%) of these visits to the Rocky Mountains (National Ski Area Association, 2014). In 2013, the majority of alpine skiers were aged 35 to 44, whereas the majority of snowboarders were 25 to 34 years old. There are also gender differences: 57.3% male and 42.7% female in alpine skiing; 61.2% male and 38.8% female in snowboarding. The majority of participants in both alpine skiing and snowboarding have a household income of over \$75,000 (Sports Business Research Network, 2015).

In more recent years, the ski/snowboard industry has developed a tactic for enticing visitors and increasing tourism that revolves around the idea of providing a complete experience. One of the bigger mountains in Colorado, Vail Mountain, claims the following: 46% of income is from lift tickets, 23% is from retail and rental, 11% from ski/snowboard school, 11% from other sources, and 9% from dining (Thompson, 2012).

These statistics suggest that although ticket sales generate the largest single share of income at this resort, more than half comes from activities beyond skiing and snowboarding, activities that provide an experience broader than the sport. Similarly, skiing has become coupled with fashion; clothes, accessories, and gear have become important to participants (Allen, 2007). In the 2012-2013 season, approximately \$1.8 billion was spent on products in specialty stores and \$750 million on purchasing products online (Snowsports.org, 2013).

Regardless of industry changes, there are conflicting opinions about the efforts of resorts and the leisure industry to lure tourists to the mountains through the selling of experiences, retail, and dining. With increasing real estate development and the corporate hold on the wealth surrounding the industry, resorts today “are losing what it was that made them special in the first place, and so becoming more like the rest of America” (Clifford, 2002, p.8). The ski/snowboard industry and the resorts themselves try to sell a lifestyle (Clifford, 2002, p. 88) by concentrating on providing resources for those able to contribute to economic advancement of ski/snowboard areas-- tourists and second-home owners. Resorts attempt to provide an alternative life in the hope of encouraging tourism to counteract decreasing participation in the sport, as suggested in the following quote:

“The conceit is that money can get for you what you gave up. The implicit message in the marketing of the modern ski lifestyle, and especially of the real estate associated with it, is that although the buyer chooses at a young age not to drop out and live an alternative life on the edge, but instead to stay on track with his or her nose to the grindstone- that despite this fact, with enough money, the buyer supposedly can go and purchase the alternative life he or she did not choose” (Clifford, 2002, p. 99).

For the people living in mountain communities, skiing and snowboarding are considered recreational pursuits that have become defining characteristics of local populations that identify with the culture of these sports; that is to say the practice of these sports, along with other mountain recreations, have become a way that people identify themselves. Coleman's (2004) description of people living in the ski/snowboard world, specifically those associated with the original ski towns of the United States is as follows:

“In Colorado's big ski resorts, the people who held the lowest jobs managed to become icons of ski culture rather than its drudges. The name ski bum conjured romantic images of mobility, independence, and a life (or at least a season) dedicated to the pursuit of skiing. The term- coined in the late 1940's- referred to college-aged people who put their regular lives on hold, moved to resort towns, and took whatever jobs they could in order to ski (Coleman, 2004, p. 173).

This description of ski town residents, conjures up images of youth, independence, lack of responsibility, and carefree leisure. Other terms that have been used to describe this culture and the people connected to it are “liberating”, “grounded”, and “how I fit in” (Coleman, 2004, p.3).



Table 1: Themes, assumptions, and supporting research in the extant literature.

Related Literature Groups	Themes	Assumptions	Supporting Research
Concept of Community	Common Interest	Common interest (such as hobbies or employment) is the deciding connection of the community	For example: Gilden, 2004; Pretty & McCarthy, 1991
	Common Social System	Interactions with others play a role in our connection to community	Bessant, 2014
	Common Location	Host community is impacted by tourists visiting the location	Gezon, 2014; Mason, 2008; Oystein, 2010
Tourism Development (Social Impacts)	Local Acceptance of Tourism	Decreased acceptance of tourism as visitation increases and locals are marginalized	Doxey, 1975; Nash, 1977, 1989, 2001
	Host & Guests Interactions	Hosts & guests form complex relationships with different understandings of who is in control	Canziani & Francioni, 2013; Cheong & Miller, 2000; Eddleston, Kidder, & Litzky, 2002; Ford & Heaton, 2001; Mills & Morris, 1986; Spreng, Harrell, & Mackoy, 1995; Weatherly & Tansik, 1993
	Host, Guest, & Tourism Business Interactions	Tourism businesses play a role in the interactions between hosts and guests	Ponting & McDonald, 2013
Tourism Development (Cultural Impacts)	Culture as a Tourist Attraction	Tourists are attracted to particular places to see/experience the unique cultural aspects of that place	Hall, 1994; MacLeod & Carrier, 2010
	Tourism as a Change Agent	Tourists can change local culture through visitation	Litka, 2013; van Rekom & Go, 2006

Tourism Development (Power)	Political Power and Development	Power is held by gatekeepers and is released through politics	Hall, 1994; Reiter, 1977
	Social Power and Development	Social power, or power connected to relationships and interactions, can be exercised by individuals or the institutions that control the tourism	Cheong & Miller, 2000; Hall, 2010; Hollinshead, 1999; Hollinshead & Kuon, 2013; Jordan & Aitchinson, 2008; Urry, 1990
Recreation and Tourism	Placeness and Recreation	Connection to place is important for recreation participants and can control desire to travel to places	Bryan, 1977; Coleman, 2004; Hutson, Montgomery, & Caneday, 2010; Sheldrake, 2007
	Ski/Snowboard Tourism	The original sport is different than today's understanding of it as the industry has become the prominent player	Allen, 2007; Clifford, 2002; Coleman, 2004; Lund & Masia, 2014; NSAA, 2014; Thompson, 2012

## CHAPTER 3

### METATHEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE AND FRAMING

The sociocultural impacts of tourism, the relationship between power and tourism, and the specifics of recreation and tourism discussed in the literature review in Chapter II form a stepping stone to my analysis of emerging phenomena related to this mountain community. With this literature in mind, and further specifying the intentions of this dissertation, this chapter focuses on my metatheoretical perspective or paradigmatic standpoint and framing of the study. Using the research of Charmaz (2006, 2014), Denzin and Lincoln (2011), Guba and Lincoln (1994), Hollinshead (2004), Holstein and Gubrium (2011), Pernecky (2012), Philmore and Goodson (2004), and Schwandt (1994) as a guide, this chapter depicts the lens through which I explored this community by identifying my unique relationship with the data collection and analysis process within the field. The chapter ends with a brief introduction of the framing of the research highlighting the ethnographic approach through which my metatheoretical lens was utilized.

#### **Critical Constructivist Paradigm**

I have approached tourism theoretically and methodologically as a changing social phenomenon in which diverse relationships are co-constructed between existing groups, where the groups are not equal in terms of power (i.e., the utilization and allocation of resources). I interpret the reality of my informants and view the social phenomenon of tourism in this mountain community from a critical constructivist perspective. This is a combination of the constructivist viewpoint and the critical

viewpoint. Concerning the constructivist aspect of this paradigm, many scholars (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011; Pernecky, 2012; Schwandt 1994) have suggested there are different ways of interpreting, explaining, and acknowledging constructivism. My understanding and thought process are grounded in Holstein and Gubrium's (2011) description of the constructivist paradigm as centered on "the world we live in and our place in it are not simply and evidently 'there,' but rather variably brought into being. Everyday realities are actively constructed in and through forms of social action" (p. 341). Schwandt (1994) states that "constructivism means that human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as construct or make it" (p. 125) and what is constructed through social exchange is reality (p. 127). Thus, within the constructivist paradigm, I have been an active participant in the construction of reality through social interactions and relationships developed in the course of my research. I construct reality through this lens as I identify constructivism as a naturalistic approach in which I ask how social order is developed and redeveloped as I describe processes and practices related to this community.

A critical constructivist viewpoint supports a relativist ontology, subjectivist epistemology, and hermeneutic methodology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). My ontological, epistemological, and methodological viewpoints are a result of intense examination of the research of Charmaz (2006, 2014), Denzin and Lincoln (2011), Guba and Lincoln (1994), Holstein and Gubrium (2011), and Schwandt (1994), along with the work of tourism scholars Hollinshead (2004), Pernecky (2012), and Philmore and Goodson (2004). My ontological viewpoint, my orientation to the nature of being, is one of co-construction. I believe that what we know as reality is developed interactively through the ongoing

construction of our social system. I understand the people in this setting to be representative of the interpretive realities that I co-constructed. I believe tourism is a changing social phenomena where the multiple realities that exist entwine to depict the social structure associated with the major groups in this community. This means that reality exists in the form of multiple mental constructs of social system interactions. My epistemological viewpoint, my view of the nature of knowledge, is related, as it emphasizes the creation of knowledge through interactions. This means that interpretive findings are also the result of the processes of interaction. Finally, my methodological viewpoint focuses on the examination of these constructions through a hermeneutic, or interpretive, approach that favors active discourse construction.

Similar to Ponting and McDonald (2013), who privileged a lens that meshed a social constructivist epistemology with a post-structuralist ontology, I have privileged a constructivist lens with a strong critical component. For Ponting and McDonald (2013), the meshing of these two lenses allowed a “revision of the positivist roots” of the grounded theory methodology, while also visibly identifying the assumptions of their research (p. 419). My critical constructivist lens that entwines the social construction framework with a strong critical component supports my use of constructivist grounded theory methodology and recognizes my underlying assumptions. Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggest that “advocacy and activism are key concepts in both constructivism as well as critical theory” (p. 113). Pernecky (2012) suggests that constructivism has “both a critical and a hopeful aspect because of its ability to expose and challenge prevailing understandings” (p. 1132). My goal was to understand existing social reality in an effort to envision a reconstructed view of the present social situation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Therefore, I have encompassed both critical and hopeful aspects in my co-construction of the multiple realities in this community.

To acknowledge my positionality in co-constructing reality with my informants, as suggested by Swain (2004), and to acknowledge the social structure from which I come, as suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1994, p. 115), I characterize my position as follows:

My lens is developed by a white, middle-class female, who grew up skiing on the east coast. My close relationship with and deeply embedded position in the community of the western ski/snowboard population identifies my proximity to the issue, as well as to the informants. I am an avid skier who has lived and worked within this community on and off for ten years. My numerous years skiing in this context and working on the mountain and in town has helped me to gain access to this environment and build trust with the community. I am considered a member of the local community as I have defined it, as I am known on the ski/snowboard hill to be a daily skier when I am in the area and am known to have an extreme passion for the sport. I have also had the opportunity to work in local businesses on the mountain and in the town and have vested interests in the economy of the area. For this research, I privilege an emic view of the situation because I am a part of the local community and can give an insider's view of the co-constructed reality. I am aware that I am a researcher interpreting the views of the participants and that I am representing (through discourse) the co-construction of reality that I am forming with the participants to explore the

behaviors and relationships that are developed and re-developed in this community.

### **Assumptions**

Multiple assumptions are associated with my approach to this investigation. Foregrounding and acknowledging my assumptions are both vital and obligatory as these assumptions clearly identify my holistic understanding of this research endeavor (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

First, I assume that the researcher and the research are not value neutral and that reality is co-constructed, not given (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Holstein & Gubrium, 2011; Schwandt, 1994). Privileging a social constructivist lens with a strong critical component, I believe that I co-create and interpret the social realities of the members of this community through my interactions and presence within the social system. My goal as a researcher is to interpret the interactions and relationships of my informants to the best of my ability while also being aware of my social impact on the construction of the interactions.

Second, I assume that power is embedded in the social systems that structure communities (Hall, 2010). As outlined in Chapter II, my concept of power has been framed by the research of tourism scholars Hall (1994, 2010a, 2010b), Hollinshead (1999), and Urry (1990). Hall (2010a) says that power is exercised in all interactions connected to a task. Due to the nature of tourism communities and the previously established relationships between locals and tourists where the local works and the tourist

plays (Nash, 1977), I believe this community's social structure is embedded in power relations where the power is not equal and is constantly shifting.

Third, I assume tourism is a catalyst for change, consistent with the research that highlights how tourism can change a culture through impacting the values and beliefs connected to the local lifestyle (Godde, Price, & Zimmerman, 2000; Ponting and McDonald's, 2013) and the product development and means of survival (Ryan, 2002). I believe tourism is a social phenomenon where interactions and relations between locals and tourists have the ability to impact the local community's current social structure by allowing multiple complex realities to intertwine and connect.

Lastly, I assume that no community is homogeneous but always includes many groups and subgroups (Mason, 2008). I privilege the school of thought that suggests communities are created by multiple sub-groups that connect through a common identification, whether interest, social system, or location.

### **Ethnographic Approach**

Through the identification of my meta-theoretical perspective and development of my research question, it became clear that exploring this community with an ethnographic approach was the most appropriate way to identify the socio-cultural impacts of tourism on this community. The connection between my metatheoretical lens and the use of an ethnographic approach was developed through intense exploration of Charmaz (2014), Denzin and Lincoln (1994), and Guba and Lincoln (1994). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) propose that while culture-based studies do not necessarily follow a single framework, each does maintain a particular focus (p. 103), as does this study. This focus



consists of “cultural texts, lived experiences, and the articulated relationship between texts and everyday life” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 103). This emphasis is integrated throughout my research activities of engaging in participant observation, conducting semi-structured interviews, and collecting secondary documents. My critical constructivist lens allows the opportunity to interpret my co-construction of reality as a critique aimed at redeveloping the interactions and relationships constructed in this specific community. Coming from the critical constructivist paradigmatic viewpoint, I have followed the goodness/quality criteria for the constructivist paradigm suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1994). The criteria are trustworthiness, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 114), all of which I address in more detail in Chapter 9.

For this inquiry, I followed a methodological approach similar to Ponting and McDonald (2013) who studied surf tourism to understand the idea of “Nirvana.” Their (Ponting & McDonald, 2013) study encompassed 10 years of lived experience (with 8 months’ total time in the field) and used qualitative data from interviews, participant observation, and log books. They used a grounded theory methodology and had experience with surfing recreation prior to developing their research. Following a similar structure, I took an ethnographic approach to my inquiry. Charmaz (2006) usefully describes the methodological purview of ethnography: “It means more than participant observation alone because an ethnographic study covers the round of life occurring within the given milieu (x) and often includes supplementary data from documents, diagrams, maps, photographs, and occasionally, formal interviews and questionnaires” (p. 21). Using Charmaz’s (2006) suggestion, I engaged in participant observation, semi-

structured interviews, and document collection as an integrated approach to understanding this community. These forms of data collection will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 4.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

My critical constructivist lens in conjunction with an ethnographic approach informed my specific methodological decisions and the resulting research plan. This chapter further specifies my intentions by concentrating on the method and analytical process used to identify the interconnected relationships of one mountain community.

#### Scope of the Study

I developed my understanding of this local society by participating in and interpreting the practices and processes that inherently shape the related social structure. I identified how the relationships among tourists, locals, and tourism business decision-makers function to organize this ski/snowboard society. In an effort to investigate the relevant phenomena, I was deeply embedded in the community and needed to pay attention to the following four areas when participating in and interpreting multiple discourses. (These areas are depicted in Figure 1.)

1) Group Presence. I first needed to develop an understanding of the groups present in this ski/snowboard community and how they are co-constructed. Investigating the discourse/symbols/actions of each group individually enabled me to create a picture of how each group contributes to the social construction of the community, how one can belong to each group, and what the defining characteristics of the groups are.

Understanding these groups helped me to identify the existing tensions inherent in this local society.

2) Relationships between Locals and Tourists. The second area that warranted attention was the relationships between the locals and the tourists; specifically, how the diverse relationships between these groups, personal beliefs within the groups, and the discourses associated with these groups function to organize this local community. Understanding these interactions helped me to clarify how social relationships are constructed and maintained through local/tourist connections.

3) Relationships of Locals/Tourists with Tourism Business Management. This area of concentration centralized the relationships between tourism business managers/decision-makers and locals and tourists respectively. Understanding how each group connects with tourism business management helped me to identify ways in which this social world is being constructed by recreations and the tourism businesses associated with them.

4) The Interconnected Relationships. The fourth area of concentration combined the above three areas. This focus was on the whole mountain experience in which all three groups interact. Understanding the interactions between the locals, the tourists, and the tourism business decision-makers afforded me the opportunity to identify the holistic account of the interconnected relationships present in this community.

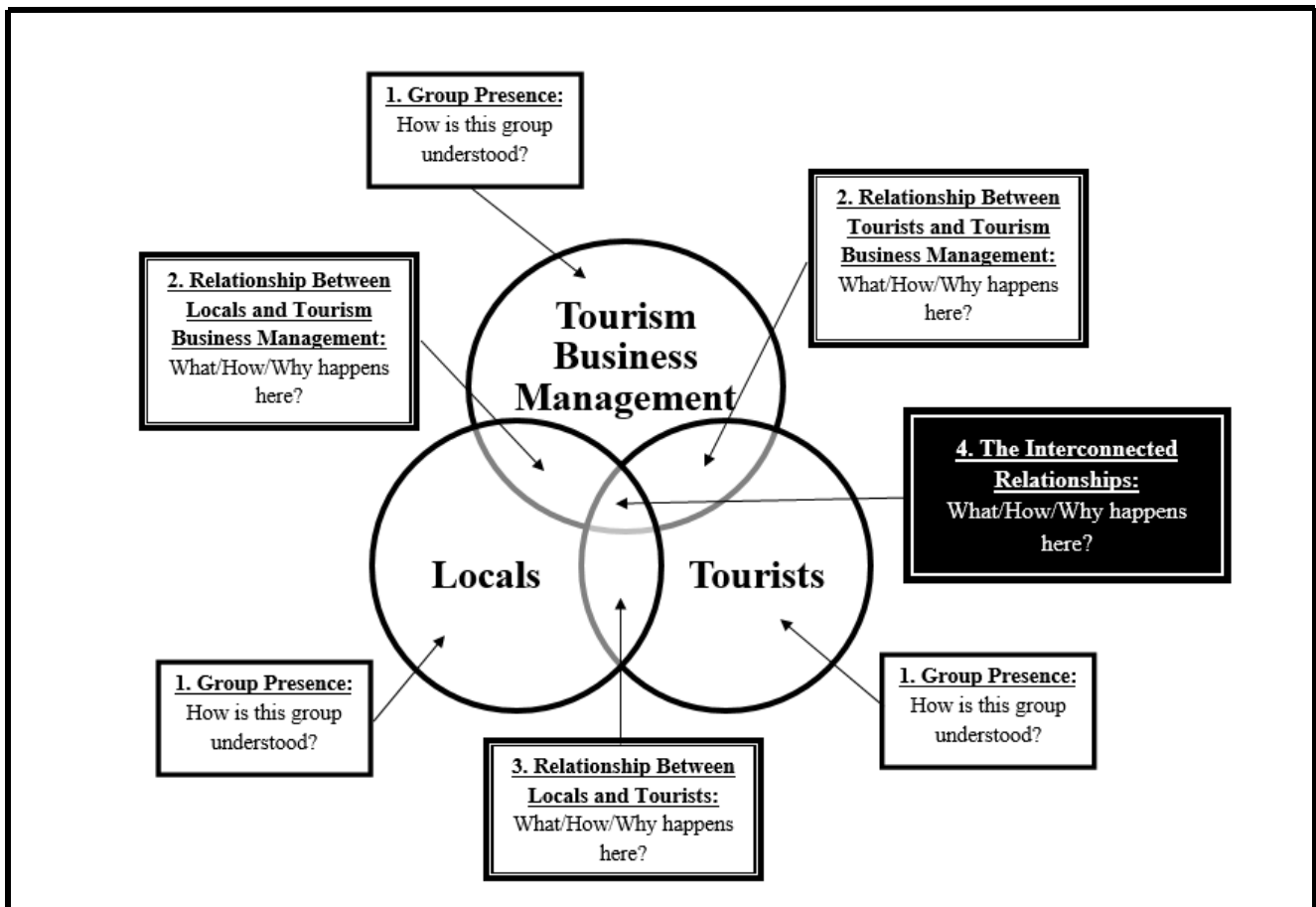


Figure 1: Model for understanding this community and the interconnected relationships of the three members: Locals, tourists, and tourism business management.

### Research Plan

I identified the above groups and their interactions by immersing myself in the mountain community, recognizing socio-cultural phenomena as co-created by my informants and me. My lived experience was enhanced by participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and historical, political, government, and economic documents that provided a broader context for and understanding of this mountain community. While in the field, I participated in local life by observing and contributing to what was happening, interviewing informants, and collecting secondary sources data from libraries, museums, and city institutions. I used my lived experience as a deeply embedded participant in the

community as a framework for my data collection. Along with this, my past experience in the community as a service worker and participant in many recreations was part of the framework for my interpretation of qualitative data.

### **Major Groups**

Each group --locals, tourists, and tourism business managers-- are represented in the data I collected. I have field notes of participant observation, written accounts of interviews, and secondary source discourse that include members of each major group. During my time in the field, I was able to identify subgroups within each of the major groups that make up this society. In the local group I generally refer to as the local community, four subgroups emerged: early 20s recreation enthusiasts, local business owners, families, and non-skiers/snowboarders. Within these subgroups, some people fall into more than one category. I have noted this in my field notes and written accounts. The tourist group is composed of three subgroups: first time visitors, repeat visitors, and second home owners.<sup>2</sup> The tourism-based businesses consist of both town and resort businesses. The resort and town business decision-makers/managers along with city or town tourism officials make up the tourism businesses group. Each subgroup is represented in my data collection. In a broad sense, it is true that all businesses attached to this town and resort are tourism-based, as all are either directly or indirectly connected and responsive to tourism flows. This results in an overlap between members of the local group and the tourism business group. Therefore, I classify people in the tourism business

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<sup>2</sup> A fourth group emerged within the tourist group-- tourists who live in other ski communities. I have chosen to not include them in this research as I encountered few of them. However, it is important to note that people coming from other ski towns could not be included in tourist sub-groups as their interpretations and explanations of this environment were very similar to those of the local population.

group if they hold a direct position in tourism. This includes anyone working in a management position for the resort or working for the local tourism board, the tourism council, the travel industry or any business structured as a tourism attraction. The local business owners I classify as members of the local community include local small business owners who have started their business in this location to advance economically with the intention of living here.<sup>3</sup>

### **Setting**

In an effort to portray this local society accurately while keeping actual location and people anonymous, I identify context specifics in this section from my personal experience. This research context is American-- a rural, mountainous Colorado town located near the Rocky Mountains, which has been in existence for more than 100 years. As with most Colorado towns, the area has historical roots in the ski industry, other recreational pursuits, and mining. The town's population is slightly under 20,000 people. Currently, this area has a high concentration of many types of recreation: skiing, snowboarding, biking, hiking, rafting, climbing and jeeping. Many of these are connected to tourism businesses providing amenities, although almost all can also be connected to natural resources, as they can be pursued outside the boundaries of tourism business-- for example, off-road jeeping or off-mountain skiing. Each of these recreations contribute to the locals' interest in living in the area and the tourists' interest in visiting the area.

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<sup>3</sup> When there was any confusion as to the category in which I ought to include someone, I asked the informant which group they thought they belonged to.

Tourism is one of the top three industries in this area employing the largest number of individuals. The summer tourist season is from Memorial Day to around Labor Day. The winter tourist season is from the resort opening, usually around Thanksgiving (although snow at the resort often starts in September) to its closing, usually around mid-April. In the summer months, there is a large tourism draw to both town and the resort with music, outdoor activities, and seasonal recreational pursuits. In the winter, the resort with its associated recreations is the major draw to the area. The time between the summer and winter tourism season is considered the off-season, when tourism and travel to this area decreases. Both the town and the resort offer a multitude of spas, museums, gear shops, restaurants and lounges/bars. It is the town, however, that provides schools, hospitals, and a business center. The infrastructure for tourism is generally dominated by recreation-based businesses, with the town area tourism office and Chamber of Commerce also contributing to the structure of the tourism system. The airport is located on the opposite side of town from the resort and is accessible by car or hotel shuttle.

The major ski resort associated with this town is located approximately 15 miles away. This is not an uncommon set-up for ski communities in Colorado. Most resorts have some type of on-site mountain village that provides some amenities, while being a short drive away from a town or city that has its own residential and business environment. The resort is considered medium-sized because it has two mountain faces, front and back, that offer groomed terrain. It has been in existence for more than 50 years and is located at an altitude above 8000 feet. It receives over 250 inches of snow per year and provides high speed chairs or lifts that reach both sides of the mountain. It is known as a family resort because it offers terrain for all levels of skiers/snowboarders; the



majority of runs, however, are suggested for intermediate or advanced-intermediate skiers/snowboarders. Tourists visit this resort from both international and national locations and range from first-timers to seasoned visitors to the area and second home owners. The resort offers a range of snow sport activities, including alpine skiing, snowboarding, ski biking, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, sleigh rides, and tubing, as well as dining and shopping at a multitude of locally-owned and resort-owned restaurants and shops.

For many decades, one family was the resort's majority shareholder. During my fieldwork period, however, there was a change of ownership to a person who lives full-time in the local community. While he owns the resort itself, the previous owners still hold a great deal of real estate and manage real estate for the resort. This change has been much discussed in local newspapers and between local business owners. During my fieldwork, I experienced one winter with the former owner and one winter with the new owner.

### **Access and Participants**

My deep embeddedness in this community occurred prior to the beginning of this structured research as I lived and worked both in town and near the resort before starting my doctoral work. As ethnographic research historically developed through the exploration of cultures that differ from the researcher's own (Wolcott, 2008), some scholars believe that it is more beneficial to have no or limited access to a locus of study before beginning an ethnographic endeavor.

I have chosen to privilege another school of thought. By focusing on a community with which I have strong connection, I had at my disposal a series of resources that a detached researcher would not understand or benefit from. First, access to and inclusion in this environment prior to this research allowed me to engage in a truly emic perspective of the community because of my experience, relationships, and knowledge of recreations and environment. Second, I did not have to engage in the time-consuming work of making my way into the community (Wolcott, 2008), allowing more time in the field as an active community member from the beginning. Third, my embeddedness and previous lived experience has allowed me a more distinctive view and sensitive interpretation of social interactions.

Along with the access I obtained through my previous lived experience, I had one main informant whom I observed, participated with, interviewed, and relied upon as a means to access different spaces and people. He is referred to in the remainder of this dissertation as R. R has lived in this mountain community for more than 20 years. I gained access to and acceptance by him through a detailed discussion about the content of my dissertation. For participant observation, both my own previous experience in the mountain community and R enabled me to gain access to and acceptance by locals. I had access to additional participants through discussions at areas where the owner/manager approved my work after discussion of my dissertation.

### **Constellation of Methods**

I use the phrase constellation of methods to indicate a data collection process combining three methodological approaches: engaging in participant observation, conducting semi-structured interviews, and collecting and examining related secondary

documents. Through this constellation, I was able to connect with individuals from each sub-group identified above. These data collection processes are most appropriate for ethnographic approaches as they address “how” questions. Many scholars (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Philmore & Goodson, 2004) suggest that ethnographic approaches are the most appropriate approaches for constructivist researchers examining social structures insofar as the main goal of this type of research is to understand and reconstruct social structure. I was not trying to explain, predict, or control but instead to understand how multiple realities are co-constructed in this local society.

### **Engaging in Participant Observation**

Overt participant observation is a means to understand behaviors and interactions. In my research, this consisted of visual observation and unrecorded conversations with tourists, locals, and tourism business representatives that were reflected in detailed interpretive field notes used for analysis. This participant observation was my lived experience as a member of the community. I concentrated on understanding the behaviors, interactions, and discussions that I was co-creating to describe related events. Most of my participant observation took place at a local restaurant/bar that appeals to both locals and tourists or while participating in events such as the local snow festival. My participant observation allowed me the opportunity to be a member of this community by being active and engaged with the members of many groups.

## **Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews**

In using semi-structured interviews, I followed Wolcott's (2008) distinction between participant observation and interviews. While participant observation included informal discussions that I co-constructed, my interviews consisted of formal, scheduled meetings with discourse guided by a semi-structured format. I chose a semi-structured format to reduce the possibility that I would dominate the interactions but instead allow informants to more freely introduce and discuss relevant topics that they chose to share. My guiding interview questions were descriptive in nature, rather than structural or contrast questions (Marshall & Rossman, 2011), to afford informants freedom to contribute as they wished. I also asked some informants for follow-up interviews after I saw categories emerging in my analytical work or when additional insight or information seemed to be necessary (i.e., theoretical sampling).

## **Collecting Related Documents**

Ethnographic researchers often have some type of archival strategy that includes sifting through related documents or other objects associated with the area under investigation, which were developed in the past (Wolcott, 2008, p. 62). This allows for a more in-depth look at the local society. I collected relevant historical, political, government, and economic documents from the city and resort, which I identified as relevant to this inquiry. I sifted through documents at the local library, city hall, town museum, and on websites. I specifically sought documents that shed light on the relationship between tourism businesses and the local community -- such as reported changes in real estate sales or the inflows of tourism in the area-- the history of the area, and accounts of conflict between locals, tourists, and tourism business management.

## **Related Challenges**

Two main challenges emerged through my data collection methods: my changing positionality and my interpretation of interactions. I recognized that my positionality in participant observation and interviews as a white, middle-class, female researcher unavoidably influenced my co-creation and interpretations of reality, as well as the progress of my interactions. My journal and field notes contain extensive notes about my positionality and my participants' actions in response (i.e., memo writing).

As to the challenges of interpreting interactions, I chose not to use a tape recorder for participant observation and interviews. However, if the participant felt comfortable, I asked to use a note pad. I understand that this is a limitation but I have stayed as close as possible to my participants' voice by validating some field notes and written accounts through theoretical sampling that occurred at the stages of my analysis when categories emerged. Where possible, this entailed checking for accuracy by providing my interpretation of informants' responses to semi-structured interview questions to the individual informants.

### **Data Analysis: Constructivist Grounded Theory Methodology**

I used a constructivist grounded theory technique for data analysis. The practice of grounded theory, per Strauss and Corbin (1994), is described thus: "Theory evolves during actual research, and it does this through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection" (p. 273). Strauss and Corbin (1994) assert that this type of qualitative, interpretive research is "a way of thinking about and conceptualizing data" (p. 275) in which researchers are able to interpret theories as they adopt them (p. 279). Specifically,

“constructivist grounded theory is positioned at the latter end of this methodological spiral, actively repositioning the researcher as the author of a reconstruction of experience and meaning” (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006, p. 26). Grounded theory, as viewed through my paradigmatic lens, acknowledges that I am part of the construction and interpretation of the social structure and thus my subjectivity is apparent (Charmaz, 2014). The constructivist grounded theory method “encourages researchers to become active, engaged analysts. Abductive reasoning keeps researchers involved. As grounded theorists, we engage in abductive reasoning when we come across a surprising finding during inductive data collection” (Charmaz, 2011, p. 361).

### **Key Aspects**

The process I used in my grounded theory analysis involved data collection capturing processes and actions; coding the data through the use of gerunds for initial and then focused coding; memo writing; and theory construction.

### **Capturing Processes and Actions**

A main component of the grounded theory I employed entails capturing and interpreting processes and actions constructed in the social world. I sought to achieve this by collecting and analyzing data concurrently. Charmaz (2014) suggests that the grounded theory method “of simultaneous data collection and analysis helps us to keep pursuing these emphases as we shape our data collection to inform our emerging analysis” (p. 34). By concentrating on both the collection and the analysis, tacking back and forth between them at all times, I was able to further develop my research process and also re-evaluate the social processes that I focused on.

## Gerund Coding

To identify the complex relationships in this community, I used gerund coding as described by Charmaz (2006, 2014), which allows researchers to focus more clearly on “what is happening in the data” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 116). Gerunds provide the preferred coding lexicon because “[w]e gain a strong sense of action and sequence with gerunds. The nouns turn these actions into topics. Staying close to the data and, when possible, *starting from the words and actions of your respondents*, preserves the fluidity of their experience and gives you new ways of looking at it.” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 49; emphasis added). Charmaz (2006, 2014, p.121) argues that this type of coding is useful in thinking about raw data because it allows researchers to interpret participants’ meanings from “an insider’s view” (p. 121). Constructivist grounded theory, line-by-line coding using gerunds, helps to identify and focus on what is happening in the data through a “heuristic device to bring the researcher into the data, interact with them, and study each fragment of them” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 121). In other words, gerund coding is a method for capturing and foregrounding process and, further, “helps to define implicit meanings and actions, gives researchers directions to explore, spurs making comparisons between data, and suggests emergent links between processes in the data to pursue and check” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 121). Charmaz further proposes that “adopting gerunds fosters theoretical sensitivity because these words nudge us out of static topics and into enacted processes. Gerunds prompt thinking about topics - large and small” (p. 245).

I selected grounded theory coding with gerunds as the best analytic practice for this research as the goal was to reveal the complex issues of this local society by interpreting participants’ meanings and actions as accurately as possible, while also

realizing my co-construction of existing reality. Gerund coding allowed me to start close to the ground, so to speak, to identify and explore participants' actions and meanings, and then make comparisons, and find linkages toward identifying complex, holistic happenings of this society.

At the first level category, gerund coding involves staying as close to the real words informants used, as reflected in field notes, so as “to begin analysis from their perspective” (Charmaz, 2014, pg. 221). This process supported and developed an insider view that came from co-constructing reality with “an emphasis on actions and processes” in my field notes (Charmaz, 2006, p. 136). This is a strategic method that permitted me to critically interpret relationships in this local society while also being aware of my co-construction of reality. I used initial coding and focused coding, the 2nd-order coding, throughout the analysis process. Both will be described in more detail in my example coding process below.

### **Memos and Their Purpose**

Memos are used in grounded theory as a bridge between data collection and analysis that enables evaluating data and codes at the initial stages. As Charmaz (2014) writes, “Memo-writing creates an interactive space for conversing with yourself about your data, codes, ideas, and hunches. Questions arise. New ideas occur to you during the act of writing. Your standpoints and assumptions can become visible. You will make discoveries about your data, emerging categories, the developing frame of your analysis- and perhaps about yourself” (p. 162). I used and greatly valued memo-writing as a means for me to keep immersed in the data, aware of changes of focus, and involved with



difficulties encountered. I organized my memo-writing as a personal journal that captured all methodological concerns.

### **Analysis Example**

To clarify and make more accessible the above discussion, this section provides an example of the processes I went through in analyzing the empirical data-- field notes from participant observation, written accounts of interviews with willing participants, and secondary sources. Below is a detailed description of how I worked with my data in the grounded theory process, and how I used gerund coding as described by Charmaz (2006, 2014), showing my analysis steps, providing a base for future final analysis, and offering a guide for final analysis and discussion. It will make clear that the grounded theory methodology is an ongoing, cyclical process through which one develops, redevelops, and revises coding as data collection continues until saturation is reached. The process I depict in this section is a linear example of how my analysis progressed.

### **Field Notes**

The beginning step in my process was to go back to each one of my field notes after they were written. For the example analysis, I use one paragraph of a single set of participant observation field notes made in April 2015, after skiing and then engaging in conversation with an informant. The specific field note selected gives a thorough description of my participation. The full set of field notes from this day resulted in four written pages and were recorded in about one hour.

### Field Note Example:

One of the main things that I noticed today- that really bothered me and bothered X- is that there was way more trash on the ground today than any other day this year. After we took a few runs we sat at the base and had a beer, walked to the car, and went to the restaurant. There were a bunch of bottles and cups on the ground- in the parking lot and at the restaurant... trash. X and I commented that we have never seen it like this. X said it is a sense of privilege- the people traveling here expect people to pick up after them- it is part of what they buy into when they travel here- or what they expect when spending the money to come here. I said it bothers me because many people that live here care about this environment and they should too. X said he is not surprised, all he said was that they were tourists and that is what they do. He said he bets they wouldn't do that when they are at home. It is just because they are traveling and expect others to pick up after them. (OC- We proceeded to pick up as much trash as we could near the car and at the restaurant.)

### **Step 1: Initial Coding**

The analytical process began with a line-by-line gerund coding of my field notes. As Charmaz (2014) observes, this initial gerund coding affords an opportunity to continue “the interaction that you shared with your participants while collecting data but brings you into an interactive analytic space” (p. 109). This step is what she (Charmaz, 2014) calls the “pivotal link” (p. 113) between examining data and developing theory. It was indeed crucial in my process because it allowed me to stay close to the data through the use of action codes, make a first interpretation of the data, and identify and describe relevant and connected processes.

From my full participant observation field notes from this particular day, 64 gerund codes emerged. For example, my initial field notes read “the people traveling here expect people to pick up after them.” I gerund-coded this as “expecting people to pick up after them.” This gerund choice enabled me to stay close to original field note discourse

to discern what actions were happening. Table 2 lays out the gerund codes that emerged from the participant observation field note offered above.<sup>4</sup>

Table 2: Constructivist grounded theory initial gerund coding example

Field Notes	Gerund Codes
One of the main things that I noticed today- that really bothered me and bothered X- is that there was way more trash on the ground today than any other day this year.	Having more trash than any other day
After we took a few runs we sat at the base and had a beer, walked to the car, and went to the restaurant. There were a bunch of bottles and cups on the ground- in the parking lot and at the restaurant... trash.	Seeing a lot of trash around
X and I commented that we have never seen it like this. X said it is a sense of privilege	Having a sense of privilege
- the people traveling here expect people to pick up after them-	Expecting people to pick up after them
it is part of what they buy into when they travel here- or what they expect when spending the money to come here.	Expecting service that they can do in their home environment
I said it bothers me because many people that live here care about this environment and they should too.	Caring about the environment (locals)
X said he is not surprised, all he said was that they were tourists and that is what they do	Expecting tourists to want service
He said he bets they wouldn't do that when they are at home.	Expecting service that they can do in their home environment
It is just because they are traveling and expect others to pick up after them.	Expecting others to pick up after them
(OC- We proceeded to pick up as much trash as we could near the car and at the restaurant.)	Choosing to pick up the trash to keep this place clean

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<sup>4</sup> This example is from well into my immersion in the field. My beginning notes resulted in more gerund codes per paragraph.

## **Step 2: Focused Coding- 1<sup>st</sup> Order Categories**

After gerund-coding the original field notes, I looked at these codes and began to interpret emergent categories into which they might be grouped. Studying my initial gerund codes, I determined what they were implying and revealing about the connected society and the local community and the practices associated with it, as suggested by Charmaz (2014). This first order category coding was an exercise in comparing initial codes, deciding which codes were necessary going forward, viewing at the same time my strong connection in the process and checking and confronting my own “preconceptions about the topic” (Charmaz, m2014, p. 143). This emergent process was very valuable, as I was able to work with the data in fluid form as I moved codes in and out of categories in a process of comparing and contrasting to determine where they best fit.

For my field note example, I was able to place the initial gerund codes in three existing and emerging categories. I determined their placement in the first-order categories through a constant comparison process where I worked with the codes to determine the best fit. Figure 2 sets forth the categories. I note that these three categories were already emerging from data I had collected previous to these field notes, so this example does not include all the gerund codes that ultimately make up these categories.

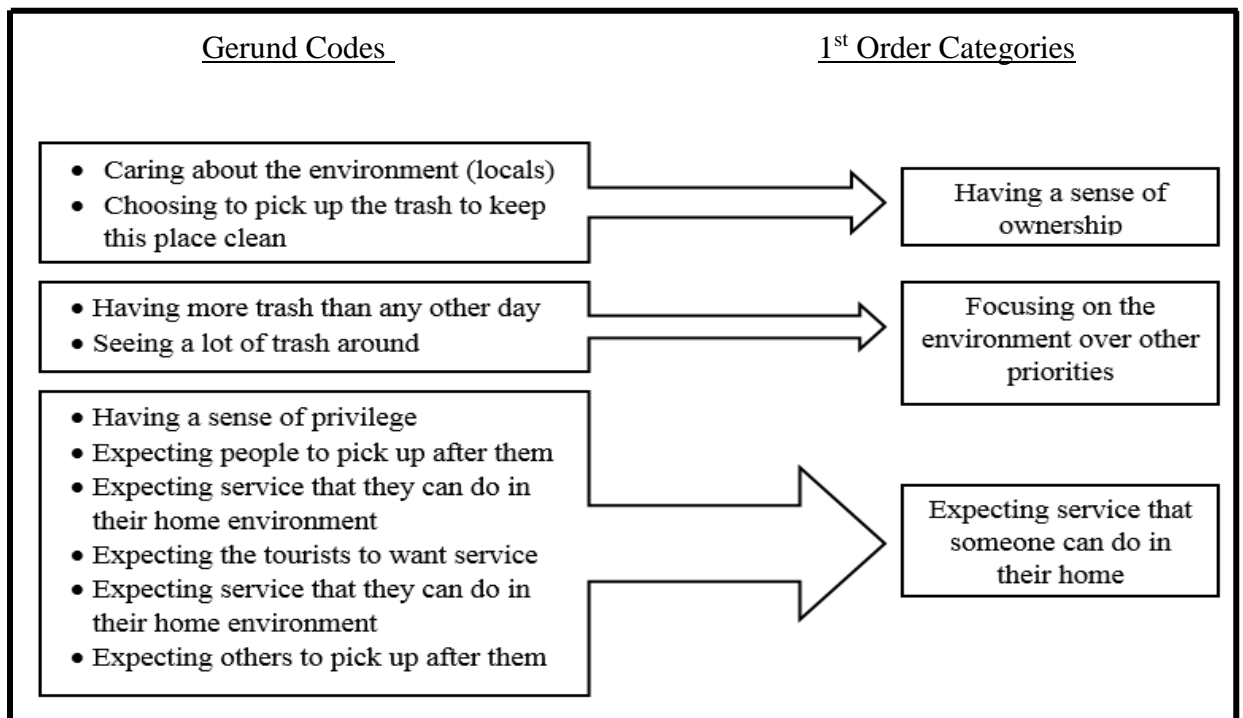


Figure 2: Constructivist grounded theory focused coding- 1<sup>st</sup> order categories example

### **Step 3: Focused Coding- Aggregate Categories**

This step involved interpreting how the first order categories can be placed into more general categories to guide thematic development. Focused coding into aggregate categories forced me to reexamine the data and reassemble the gerund coded categories in a way that promoted theoretical development. The main question that guided this step is “What kinds of theoretical categories do these codes indicate?” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 144). Depicted in Figure 3 are the first order focused codes as they revealed two major (previously determined) aggregate categories that they were placed in. This is depicted in Figure 3.

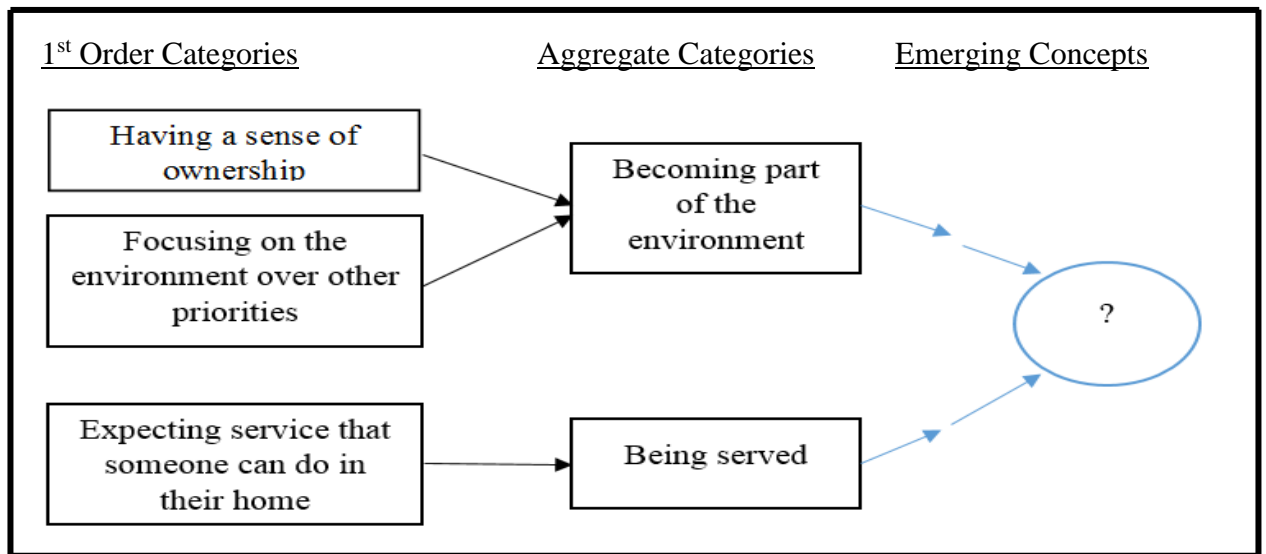


Figure 3: Constructivist grounded theory focused coding – Aggregate categories example

**Step 4: Emerging Concepts**

Once I had thought through aggregate categories, I was able to consider what contributions the research appeared to offer tourism scholarship. This final step, taking the final coded categories and revealing how they interact and develop together clarifies the emerging theoretical contribution of the entire grounded theory process. (This is abstractly represented by the question mark circle in Figure 3.)

Simultaneous data collection and data analysis allowed me to work with and through the data on an intimate level. This simultaneous process helped me to identify emerging concepts in my data, and revealed gaps in my empirical materials. This ongoing, processual interplay of collection and analysis allowed theory to evolve and coalesce into a significant contribution (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Privileging a constructivist approach to the original grounded theory process, I strengthened my research and analytical capacity by capturing social processes and actions that constitute

the existing realities of this community (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). This aspect of my approach is outlined in Chapter 5, where I describe my broad findings of my research.

### **Data Reduction Decisions**

The constructivist grounded theory analysis process is a systematic and cyclical process aimed to achieve the emergence of abstract analytical concepts. On the ground, my interpretation process progressed as follows: When I first entered the field, I was observing everything and discussing everything pertaining to the area. Once I began analyzing data, I started to notice emerging codes and then categories emerging from the codes. I compared data with data, data with codes, codes with codes, codes with elevating/emerging categories, elevating/emerging categories with categories, categories with categories, categories with concepts, and concepts with concepts. This constant comparison process, along with theoretical sampling, guided my interpretation process in the field, my reduction of categories and concepts, and my identification of data saturation. As a result of this process, saturation and my reduction of concepts is not dependent on sample size but is instead reliant on accuracy. Charmaz (2014) suggests “you saturate your categories with data and subsequently sort and/or diagram them to integrate your emerging theory” (p. 193). She (Charmaz, 2014) also states that “theoretical sampling pertains only to *conceptual and theoretical development of your analysis*; it is not about representing a population or increasing the statistical generalizability of your results” (p. 198, emphasis added). I have chosen to remain consistent with what Charmaz (2006, 2014) recommends for constructivist grounded theory data reduction and saturation by relying on theoretical sampling and by grappling with the constant comparison process described above to aid the construction of theory.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE BROAD PICTURE: TOURISM CAN CHANGE THE SOCIAL SYSTEM

#### Introduction: Understanding Tourism's Social Impact on this Mountain

##### Community

In this chapter, I discuss the broad findings of my research and provide a nuanced account of my immersion in this community by concentrating on the actions of locals, tourists, and tourism business decision-makers. Building on the literature reviewed in Chapter II, and especially on Nash's (1977, 1989) view of tourism and Doxey's (1975) research on tourism irritation, this chapter offers a broad view of my findings from an emic perspective, exploring in broad strokes the outcome of the entire data structure and analysis process to clarify my co-constructed experience in this community. It addresses the major question in my initial diagram (See Figure 4): *what/how/why is happening between locals, tourists and the tourism businesses?*



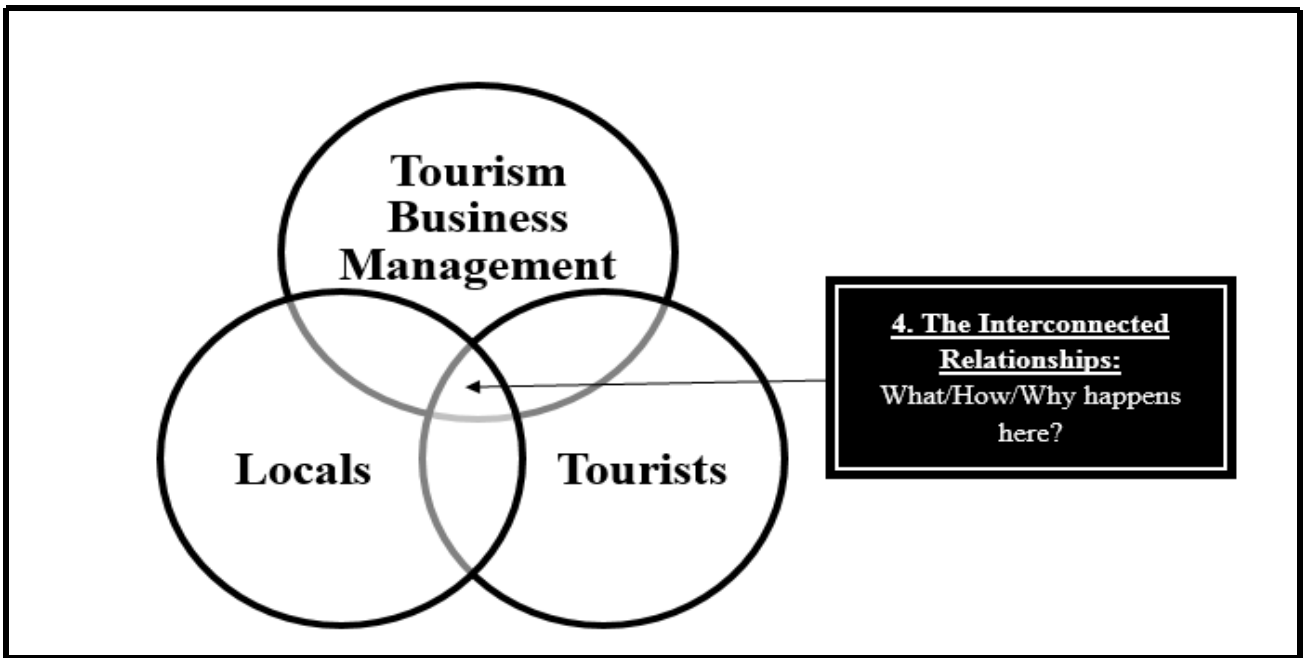


Figure 4: Understanding this community and the holistic view of the interconnected relationships of its members

The main analytical concepts and categories that emerged through my research and analysis have intertwined to provide this chapter’s holistic, nuanced account of my conclusions about the interconnected relationships of this local society. I also briefly explore the complex underpinnings of the connections as a way to present specific aspects of my broad theoretical contribution. The final data structures and specifics of data collection for my constellation of methods are detailed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

**My Findings: Construction of a Grounded Theory Model**

My findings were developed from 18 months in the field (from November 2015 to April 2016), producing data that resulted in more than 3000 usable gerund codes, 75 first order categories, 27 aggregate categories, and 10 emergent concepts, which led to the construction of my theoretical model. The data can be subdivided as follows: engagement in participant observation resulted in 30 first-order categories, 11 aggregate categories,

and four emerging concepts; semi-structured interviews resulted in 28 first-order categories, 10 aggregate categories, and three emerging concepts; collection of secondary sources resulted in 15 first-order categories, six aggregate categories, and three emerging concepts. Representative examples of the 3000 usable gerund codes can be found in Appendix B. Table 3 summarizes the sources from which my grounded theory model has been developed.

Table 3: Data sources

	LOCALS				TOURISTS			TOURISM BUSINESSES	
	20's Ski Bums	Bus. Owners	Families	Non-skiers	First Time	Repeat	2nd Home	Town	Resort
Participant Observation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
In-depth Interviews	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Secondary Sources	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

My comprehensive findings suggest that tourism has the ability to change this society's social structure by impacting how groups identify themselves, how each group accepts the others, and whether and how disagreement about development can cause conflict between the groups. The prior and present growth of tourism in this community has changed interactions between locals and tourists, tourism business decision-making, and the entire social structure. This growing community is at a pivotal point in which decisions focused on tourism have the potential to change the interactions and relationships of the local community. I found that the more tourism increased and the

more tourism businesses increased their efforts to attract new tourists, the more the social structure of the local community was altered. Since this community is in a growth stage surrounded by conflict and disagreement as to where tourism will be positioned in the economic and social structure, future tourism changes may impact the longevity of the present local community social structure, as well as future interactions and relationships between locals and tourists, thus supporting and extending Doxey's (1975) theory.

My interpretive findings contribute to the prevailing literature as I identify four aspects of tourism's ability to impact this mountain community: structuring the local social world, intensifying acceptance issues, shaping conflict and disagreement, and securing reliance on the environment. These findings emerged from the data gained by all three research methods, which I have analyzed separately as each sheds light from a different angle on how tourism can change the social structure of the local community. Figure 5 abstractly depicts the contributions of my research with an emphasis on how tourism can change the social system of this community.

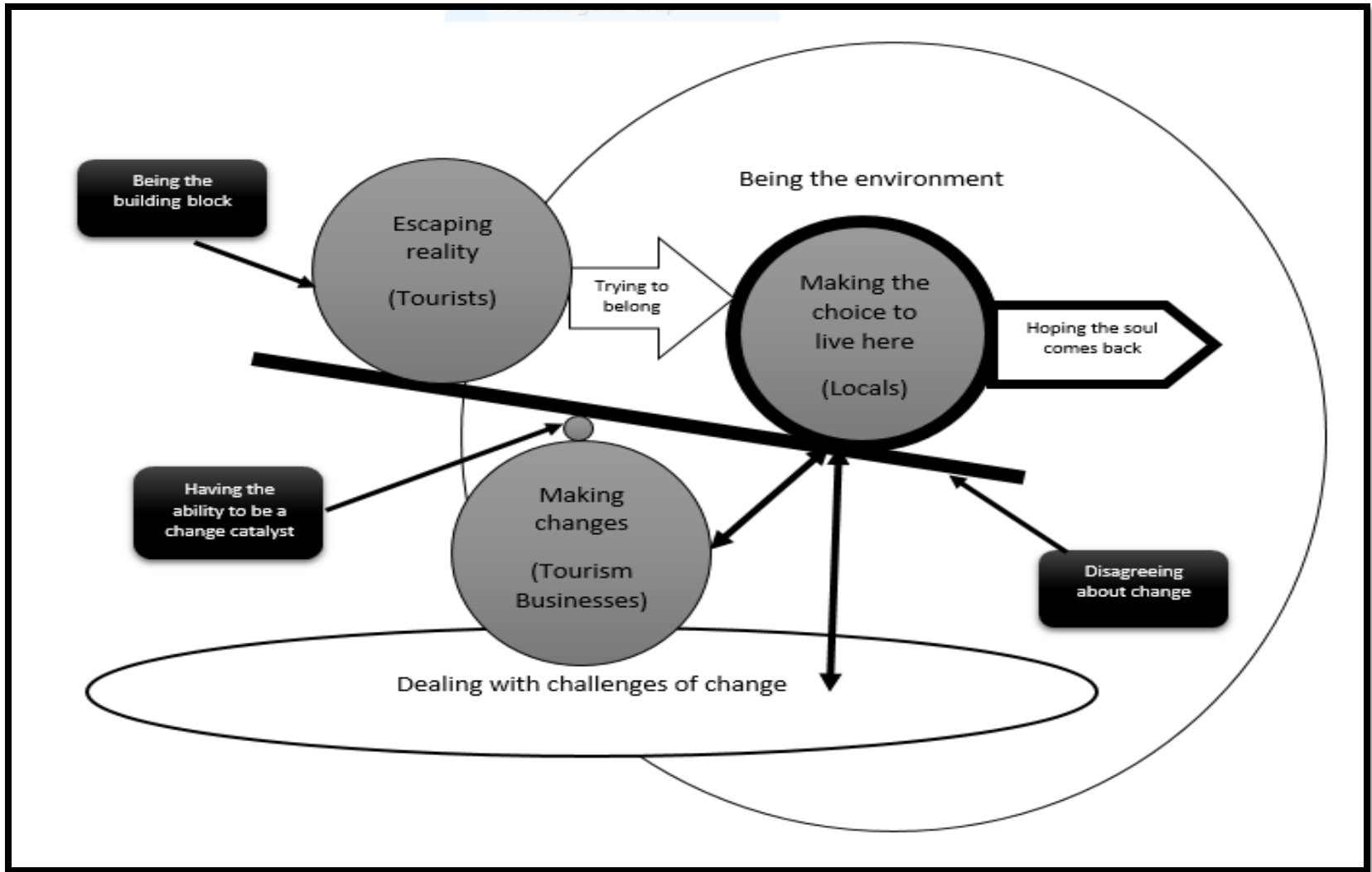


Figure 5: Theoretical model interpreting the relationships of the three key groups in this community

The very small, center circle in the diagram represents the answer to the main research question... *what is tourism doing in this mountain community, specifically to local residents and their relationships?* My research finding is that tourism is changing the social structure of this community by being the pivotal point on which tourism business managers and locals make their decisions. Tourism business decision-makers have the ability to influence the relationship between locals and tourists, between tourists and tourism businesses, between locals and the tourism businesses, and thereby the entire social structure of this mountain community. The pivotal point in this changing local society is the point at which tourism business decision-makers decide and act upon their perceived responsibilities to the tourist population, the local population, and either their personal economic gain or that of tourist-dependent businesses.

As will be specifically explored below, this local society is reliant upon the connection between the local population and tourism business decision-makers. The two groups have the ability to increase or decrease tourism, with each holding some power that the other does not. The pivotal point of this diagram represents the idea that tourism can change the social structure, as well as increase its economic impact on the local community. However, the pivotal point also suggests that the local community is not necessarily supportive of tourism growth and related social changes. Therefore, because tourism is in a current growth pattern, it is the responsibility of tourism business decision-makers to support, manage, and develop sensitive and challenging tourism changes. In other words, tourism business decision-makers have a responsibility for the outcome of what tourism does to the community by balancing their own needs along with those of tourists and locals.

## **Unpacking the Processes and Practices**

Figure 5 graphically depicts the ability of tourism to 1) structure the local social world, as represented by the three large circles; 2) intensify the issues of acceptance of the other, as represented by the large white arrows; and 3) reinforce conflict around community purpose, as represented by the black boxes and arrows, as well as the seesaw. Each of these aspects of the diagram represents one form of methodology that I employed— thus, mapping participant observation onto element 1) above, interviews onto element 2) above, and secondary sources onto element 3) above. Each methodology resulted in separate findings, as represented in the figure. However, although I conducted separate analyses, each determined by one methodology, in some instances where I describe my findings I include data and analysis from the other methodologies to support and build on specific emergent concepts and categories. This is described in the following brief examples and in more detail in the subsequent three chapters.

### **Structuring the Social World**

By engaging in participant observation, I was able to fully understand group presence in this community, locating the differences and similarities among the three major groups to identify their existing tensions. The findings from my analysis of participant observation field notes lead me to conclude that tourism structures the local social world by identifying groups that individuals have the ability to be a part of, as the characteristics of each of the three major groups defines them and their connection to this society. As my experience revealed, tourist-based societies are made up of differing populations of individuals with different connections to the local society and different vested interests in its and their own wellbeing. Tourism and the social systems apparent in tourism-based communities have the ability to define groups, such that with the growth of tourism different groups are born, developed, and structured.

Supporting and expanding on the relevant culture literature (Hall, 1994; Litka, 2013; MacLeod & Carrier, 2010; van Rekom & Go, 2006), my findings argue that tourists travel to this community not only to experience the unique cultural aspects associated with it, but also to truly live the beliefs and values of the community for a short period of time. Through this experience, tourists coming to this community do not necessarily have the ability to change the local culture, but they do have the ability to contribute to strengthening local culture by indirectly encouraging the local population to more concretely define and accept their specific characteristics. This is represented in Figure 5 by the three large, grey circles, as the locals are identified as the people who have made the choice to live there, tourists as the people who have made the choice to visit, and tourism business managers as the people making changes to increase or manage tourism.

### **Intensifying Issues of Acceptance**

Semi-structured interviews have enabled me to understand the relationship between locals and tourists in order to identify the maintenance of social relationships within this community. Collection and analysis of this data provided an opportunity to identify tourism as a means of intensifying issues of acceptance between locals and tourists. As my experience revealed, three major acceptance issues between locals and tourists were apparent in their interactions and relationships. 1) The more tourism grew in this area the more locals were unwilling to accept the tourists as a part of their community. The locals focused on hoping to or working towards bringing the “soul” back to the area and helping the area revert back to how it used to be before tourists were a main social group. 2) Tourists felt a need to be accepted by the locals, hoping that they could belong to the social structure, if only for a short period of time. 3) Tourism business decision-makers dealt with the challenges of this changing environment by trying to strategize how to encourage local acceptance of tourism. My findings support and build on relevant social

literature (Doxey, 1975; Nash, 1977, 1989, 2001; Ponting & McDonald, 2013) demonstrating that tourism growth contributes tensions around acceptance, as not only does local acceptance of tourist's decrease, but local acceptance of a changing lifestyle declines, accompanied by an increasing push toward reverting to a previous lifestyle.

These findings further suggest that there are more acceptance issues than outlined in the literature, specifically the acceptance concerns of tourists, insofar as they want to belong to the local culture. The acceptance issues of both tourists and locals are influenced by tourism business management practices which, on one hand, attempt to convince locals of the need for increased tourism and, on the other hand, work to sell a 'local' experience (however brief) to tourists. The large white arrows in Figure 5 and the grounding oval labeled "dealing with the challenges of change" conceptually connect the orientations of all three groups-- the local resistance to a changing lifestyle and concurrently, in the words of an informant, "hop[ing] the soul comes back," the tourist desire to be accepted, and tourism business decision makers' potential to reduce or intensify acceptance issues by the locals.

### **Shaping Conflict and Disagreement**

From simultaneous collection and analysis of secondary sources related to this community, I have been able to fully understand the relationship between locals/tourists and tourism business decision-makers to interpret how the major players connect in this mountain community. This aspect of my work afforded me insight into tourism as a means of structuring conflict and disagreement surrounding community purpose and development of tourism infrastructure. As my experience of sifting multiple times through documents revealed, the more tourism increased, the greater conflict of community purpose became apparent. It became clear that tourism business decision-makers have multiple responsibilities: providing for the tourists, respecting the wishes



of the locals, and economically advancing their personal businesses or tourism in general as a positive contributor to economic wellbeing and/or seeking ways to grow tourism and developing support of tourism while reducing negative consequences. The findings suggest not only that tourists and the increase in tourism were key to tourism business decision-making but also that locals and tourism business managers often disagreed about change. In line with the relevant power literature (Hall, 1994; Reiter, 1977), these findings suggest that tourism can structure disagreements on infrastructure and community development, most particularly as it is directly connected to social system changes. This is represented in Figure 4 by the black boxes and related arrows. The findings also support the idea that social power can impact successful development and decision-making about development.

Furthermore, as I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 9, my findings support Hall (2010a) as they contend that the gatekeepers within the local community are not inevitably tourism business decision-makers who hold political power, but instead could be members of the other major groups in the society, specifically members of the local community. Figure 5 graphically represents this situation –essentially a power struggle-- through the moving seesaw and related arrows, where locals as a united force pull down the seesaw.

### **Being Dependent on the Physical Environment**

Finally, my findings lead me to conclude that the environment is an important element of the social structure of this community. As the next three chapters identify, the environment is a part of every data structure and subsequent data mapping. It was apparent in all of my research processes that the environment can impact tourism business decision-making as well as local support for tourism. The changing weather in this area is embedded, indirectly or directly, in every decision made regarding tourism. Since tourism and the related recreations are dependent

on the physical environment, weather changes influence social interactions and relationships within the local community, between locals and tourists, and within tourism business decision-making processes. My development of emerging concepts made it quite apparent that dependence on the changing environment has the ability to completely transform the social structure of this local society and the impact tourism has on this community.

Figure 5 abstractly represents the environment with a circle behind the entire relationship diagram, identifying the encompassing importance of the changing environment in decision-making, relationships, and the social structure. The more tourism grows, the more the natural environment will influence the social structure. Without snow, for instance, the local population will have no interaction with winter tourists, or, if there are wildfires, tourism business managers will have little reason to focus on new summer tourist markets. The environment is the major uncontrolled element with the ability to impact tourism and all groups in this local society.

### **Contributing to the Existing Literature**

As Figure 5 graphically represents my key findings, it also enables me to identify five main contributions these findings make to the literature, which are further explored in Chapter 9.

- 1) The tourist does not just travel to this community to experience the culture, as suggested by Hall (1994) and MacLeod and Carrier (2010). Instead, tourists here want to truly live the lifestyle while they are visiting, a finding that supports the belonging literature, especially that which focuses on the relationship between experience and travel (Argenton, 2015; Binkhorst, & Den Dekker, 2009; Mehmetoglu, & Engen, 2011; Urry 1990; Wearing & Wearing, 2001), and the cultural and heritage tourism literature (Liu, 2014; Urry, 1990).

- 2) In this instance, tourists don't necessarily change the local culture when visiting, as suggested by Litka (2013) and van Rekom and Go (2006). Instead, the more tourism increases, the greater the local community's commitment to retaining and preserving the perceived local lifestyle and culture. These findings provide empirical evidence of Doxey's (1975) irritation index, which indicates that the local populations become increasingly irritated with tourists and more strongly committed to a local lifestyle as travel interest in an area increases.
- 3) There are major acceptance issues throughout the entire society of this area. Confirming Doxey (1975), Nash (1977, 1989, 2001), and Ponting and McDonald (2013), as tourism grows, so does locals' resistance to a changing lifestyle. In addition, tourists want to be accepted by locals and tourism business decision-makers come to play a role in the resulting acceptance and interaction issues.
- 4) The power to act as gatekeepers in this local society does not necessarily come through formal political power. Instead, the local community as a whole can act as gatekeepers whose power arises through social interactions and decision-making, a finding that supports and expands the work of Hall (1994, 2010a) and Reiter (1977).
- 5) The dependence on a changing environment has the potential to transform the local social structure and the impact tourism has on this mountain community. This finding supports the work of Godde, Price, and Zimmerman (2000), who suggest that mountain communities represent important environmental resources which contribute to an increase in global awareness in part due to the fact that tourists come from all over the world to experience this environment.

### **Closing Thoughts**

This chapter has offered a broad picture of the findings of this study and examined the theoretical model that emerged from my data collection and analysis. In my research location,

tourism can impact the society on four levels. First, tourism structures the local social world by identifying the differing groups to provide an understanding of the defining characteristics of being a local, tourist, or tourism business. Second, tourism intensifies locals' acceptance of the other and of change as they are affected by tourism growth. Third, tourism shapes the conflicts and disagreements surrounding tourism development and the community purpose where the power struggle is intertwined in multiple gatekeepers. Lastly, tourism can impact the social structure through its dependence upon the changing environment and seasons. Viewing all four of these emerging categories together helps to draw the broad picture of the underlying holistic interconnected relationships present in this mountain community necessary to developing the theoretical contribution of this research.

## CHAPTER 6

### GROUP PRESENCE: TOURISM STRUCTURES THE LOCAL SOCIAL SYSTEM

#### Introduction: Understanding Group Differences

In this chapter, I begin to deconstruct the holistic view of the interconnected relationships of the three major groups in this local society I presented in Chapter 5. The emphasis is on how tourism and association with a tourism-based community can provide structure to the local social world, its relationships and its dynamics in particular ways. The findings in this chapter suggest that tourism is central to the identities of distinct groups, providing an identification of the characteristics of the major groups in this social system and allowing individuals to interpret how each group is understood. Identifying defining characteristics associated with the local, tourist, and tourism business management groups and sub-groups enables individuals to join a group and connect with its values and beliefs. Thus, recognition of what it means to be a local offers one a choice to be part of that group (specifically, as I will show, deciding to live full-time in circumstances characterized by struggle, group connection, and the environment). Similarly, understanding what it means to be a tourist offers the ability to identify with that group (i.e., choosing to visit rather than live in this mountain community). Furthermore, interpreting the defining characteristics of a tourism business allows tourism business decision-makers the ability to understand these entities and their specific characteristics as related to this society (i.e., choosing to work in a business reliant on tourism or an organization that deals with tourism).

The findings in this chapter suggest that tourists visiting this community are attracted by the possibility of experiencing a different way of life for a short time. This affirms the literature that takes tourists to be attracted to particular places to experience their unique cultural aspects

(Hall, 1994; MacLeod & Carrier, 2010). My analysis proposes that not only do tourists visit this mountain community to experience its unique cultural aspects but also to live the beliefs and values of the local community for a brief time. To some degree, my findings support and extend the tourism culture literature that identifies tourists' ability in changing a culture through their presence and participation (Litka, 2013; van Rekom & Go, 2006) as I have found that tourists coming to this mountain do not necessarily uphold an ability to change the local culture but they are able to contribute to enrichment of the characteristics of the local group by indirectly making it possible for locals to more concretely define tourists' specific qualities.

Defining characteristics of the groups in this local society begins the effort to understand tensions apparent in the social structure. To understand constructing identity as a member of a group, it was necessary to "unpack" the categories and concepts that emerged in my data collection and parallel analysis. Thus, my objective in this chapter is to answer the first set of questions in Figure 6: *how are the groups in this community understood?* (See Figure 5).

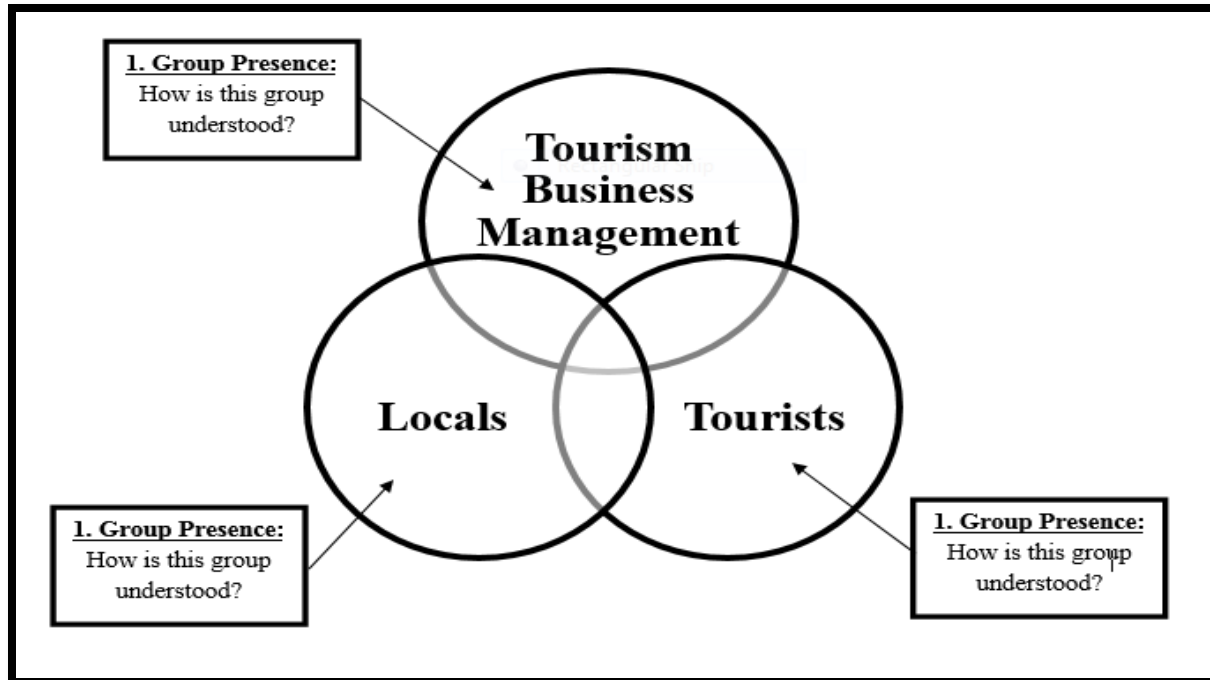


Figure 6: Understanding group presence within this community

First, I clarify group presence by distinguishing the main analytical concepts and categories that presented themselves through participant observation, which lasted 16 months (from November 2015 to February 2016) and produced data resulting in 30 first order categories, 11 aggregate categories, and 4 emergent concepts. Figure 6 summarizes these categories and concepts, on which the group characteristics that structure the local social system were built. I discuss each of these categories and concepts, then examine connections between the categories as a way to present the first part of my theoretical model.

### **Major Analytical Categories and Emerging Concepts**

During my immersion in the field, I actively observed locals and tourists from all sub-groups, as well as tourism business managers and decision-makers. My involvement allowed me to experience group differences related to actions, movements, voice, appearance, expenditure,

and decision-making practices. Through the process of simultaneous data collection and analysis, I identified first order and aggregate categories that enabled me to discern emerging concepts, interpretive findings that came out of processes and practices that I co-created through participant observation involvement in the local society. This process yielded three emerging concepts: (1) “making the choice to live here,” (2) “escaping reality,” and (3) “making changes,” concepts associated with locals, tourists, and tourism businesses, respectively.

The concepts “making the choice to live here” and “escaping reality” developed into another emerging concept titled “being separate,” which indicates a finding that locals choosing to live in this community were separate and different from the tourists who escaped their own home reality to participate in this community. This emerging concept is supported and represented in the analytical categories explained under the “making the choice to live here” and “escaping reality” concepts.<sup>5</sup> Each emerging concept and its related categories, shown in Figure 7, is discussed in greater detail in the rest of this chapter.

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<sup>5</sup> My data collection and analysis suggested slight differences between sub-groups of the three major groups-- locals, tourists, and tourism businesses. For example, local families were slightly different from local 20-year-old ski bums in appearance, voice, and expenditures; second home owners and first-time visitors differed on spending habits; and tourism business managers in town were slightly less active in recreations in comparison to tourism business managers at the resort. However, the differences were slight and did not warrant more separation within my data collection groups. Therefore, this chapter explains and supports how participant observation suggested that each major group in this society was relatively unified.



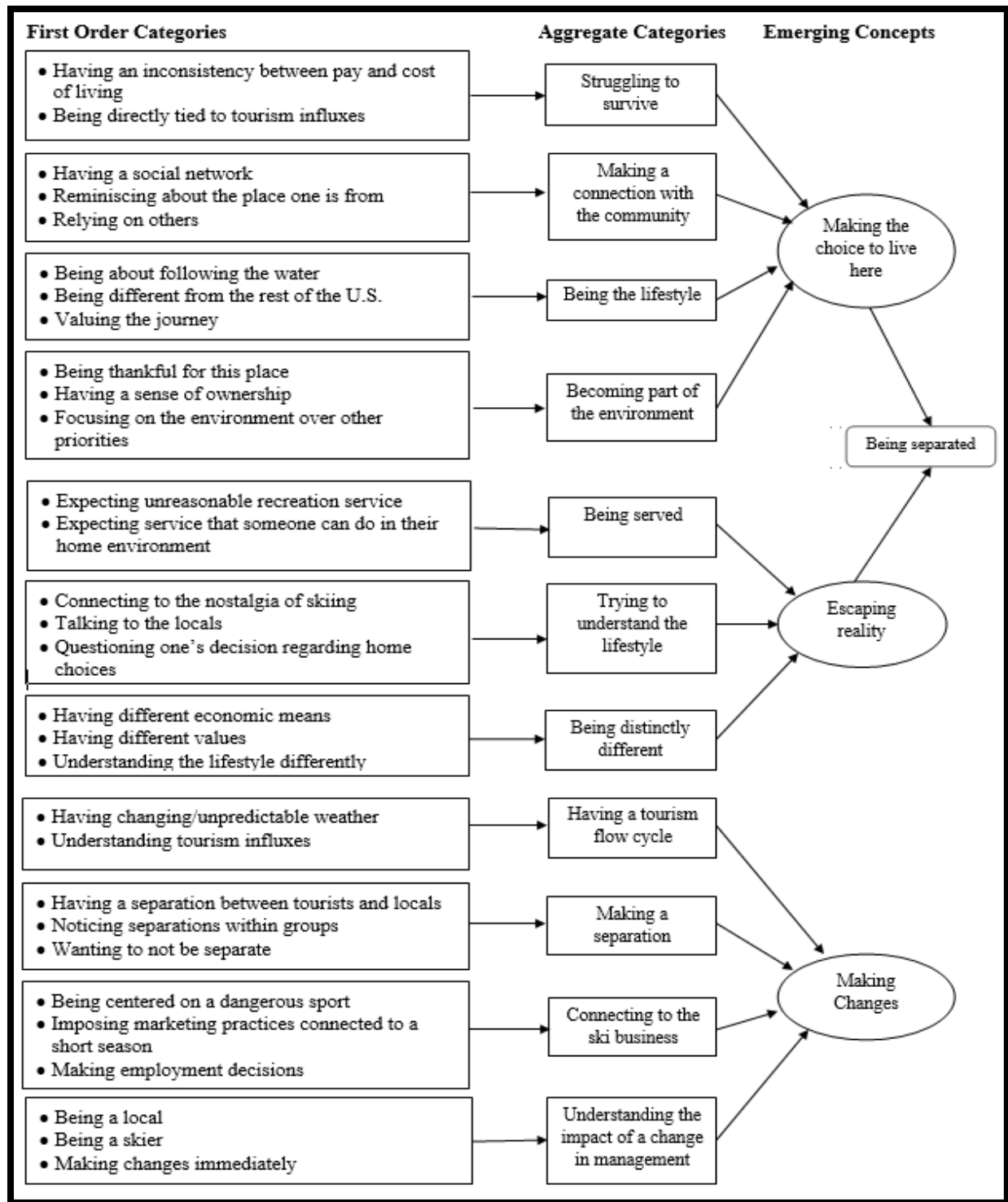


Figure 7: Participant observation data structure

### **Being a Local: “Making the Choice to Live Here”**

“Making the choice to live here” was the first major concept to emerge from participant observation. It was quite apparent a signal difference between locals and all other groups was their conscious decision to live and work in this mountain community. Whether the local individuals I participated or talked with were new to the community, individuals or families or business owners, there was a mutual understanding, acceptance, and connection between all members based upon the unity bred by a conscious decision to live and work here. The major concept of “making the choice to live here” was developed from four emergent categories, each of which identifies a dimension of what the decision to live in this community entails.

#### **“Struggling to Survive”**

Making the choice to live in this community is to participate in a struggle. All individuals in all local sub-groups that I observed, talked and participated with expressed that living in this community can be challenging. Although individuals in sub-groups may have offered different challenges involved in living here, each reflected the idea that the local economic situation can pose problems for those choosing to make this their home. The two main reasons surviving in this community is a struggle are that many people rely on low-paying positions that do not map onto the cost of living and that the area economy is directly tied to changes in tourism influxes.

I had many opportunities to discuss people’s low wages in relation to living expenses, as well as their struggles to maintain, or acquire, positions that brought pay more in line with cost of living. Many locals in this community work in the service industry, as the tourism-industry directly employs over 6,000 individuals slightly less than half the local population (Interview with T). It is common knowledge that the service industries pay less than many other industries,

especially in tourism-based communities. Consequently, I witnessed many people discussing low wages and a high cost of living, expressing in various ways concerns regarding survival, decreased future economic stability, and amplified questioning of the decision to live here. Below are two prime examples of such conflicts taken from my field notes. The first is a conversation between myself, my main informant (R), and another local (O), during which we discussed the challenges of living in this mountain community. The second is a conversation I had with a local service worker (Y), where we discussed how some longtime locals are lucky to have been capable of surviving in this area for such a long time.

- (1) R asked how he was doing and asked how long he had worked at that specific bar. O said that he was doing the Local “Tango” going between four jobs to make it here. He said it was really hard to survive and it is really tough when you have to work four jobs in one day, but he said it was worth it if you want to live there. He said you have to think of the future- he would like to have kids and they are getting ready for it, but he needs to think how he is going to make money in this place. R said that he thought O was a teacher. The guy responded that he was but it didn’t pay enough to live here, so he had to get a few jobs instead of just one. However, he said he is looking to go back to school so he can do more. He said it is tough, but there is nothing to complain about if you just look around at the beautiful place that he lives.
- (2) We began talking about the restaurant where Y works that is now up for sale. I asked what he was going to do if the restaurant sold and he lost his job. He said he wanted to stay in town- to continue living here, but he is not sure what he wants to do or what he can find. He mentioned how lucky a particular person was and he asked if I realized how lucky that person was. He said he thought the person was lucky not just because the person has the ability to economically survive in the area but because they have established themselves so that they never have to leave. He said most people are not as lucky.

The second aspect of perceived struggle is the reliance on tourism. A major economic struggle was associated with the ebb and flow of tourism. During fieldwork, I was able to witness the flows of tourism as they related to the economy of the area. It was quite apparent that during Fall and Spring, tourism-related businesses had a limited number of patrons. This impacted the pay of many locals (especially those in service jobs), spending by locals, and the

housing market. Granted, many locals said they enjoyed the off-season when the area was less congested with visitors, but it also seemed that they struggled more to pay bills, limit spending, and make a reasonable income during these months. I readily noticed the lack of spending in local businesses and discussed with locals their desire to reduce spending during times of limited tourism. The economic realities based on tourism became obvious to me during a talk with a group of locals about buying ski passes for the next season. The sale of passes usually begins in late April as the resort is closing, which is also usually when the off-season begins. The time frame for availability of discounted passes is often mid-April to mid-May. This means that locals can only buy discounted passes during the time when tourists, tourist dollars, and local incomes decline. An excerpt from my field notes highlights this challenge.

We discussed that the resort is asking everyone to spend money now, an obvious low time in the economy, and are technically punishing them if they don't. This time of year is very hard for everyone financially because there are no tourists in town, and the streets are very quiet. The resort and surrounding businesses are closed, so it is a challenge for people to come up with that amount of money. Basically, the only people that can afford them are the ones with disposable income. N says she always has to budget for this time to buy the pass- and she will always have to. She also said that if she actually waited to the fall when the prices were in the \$900's she would think twice about buying one. We also discussed that this would be hard on a family of four to buy for everyone because there is no family discount, or couple discount, or any other group discount. The only option they have is 'one child and one parent' rates. Basically, the parent buys a pass, and the child/teen gets a discount because of that.

These examples are typical of conversations I had with local informants during participant observation. For many local residents, the challenges of living in this community are related to the abundance of low paying jobs in a community with a high cost of living, as well as to economic fluctuations associated with tourist spending and seasonal changes in tourist visits. Thus, struggling to survive is a defining characteristic of those who choose to live in this community.

## **“Making a Connection with the Community”**

Making the choice to live in this community entails connecting with other community members. The initial codes that informed my first-order and aggregate analytical categories gradually moved toward the emerging concept that being part of a group is important for those who have chosen to live in this area. Individuals in all local sub-group categories non-verbally showed and verbally expressed the importance of connecting to the community on multiple levels, including socializing with similar people and being accepted into community groups. The three key reasons connecting appears to be important for locals are (1) to have a social network outside the work environment, (2) to reminisce about where they lived prior to moving to this community, and (3) to be able to rely on others in a small community atmosphere.

The first reason, having a social system outside of work, is important for many informants whose work is centered on tourism and service positions. Expanding their work-based social systems matters in forming bonds with people who have similar values. The field note excerpt below is from an occasion when I discussed with an informant (G) the purpose of social pursuit outside of the workplace.

Today after we went skiing we stopped at a local bar. I noticed that the bar was packed with locals. It was a beautiful day and mid-week in mid-January- not peak tourist season. I asked G if she thought it was weird that these locals were all drinking at the bar mid-day instead of skiing on this gorgeous day. G said that skiing is more than the sport. Being on the mountain is a social outlet outside of work. She thinks a lot of the locals we encountered work near the mountain, but they want the chance to socialize when they aren't at work. When the tourists are there these people are usually waiting on them. When the tourists leave, it is their time to socialize and be a part of a community that enjoys skiing. Socializing and talking about the place they live is extremely important to many locals.

The second important aspect of connection for locals is reminiscing about the places they are from. Throughout my immersion in this community, I observed that people enthusiastically embrace the lifestyle here but most also enjoy talking about and reconnecting with the place they

are from, in its positive and negative aspects. Individuals almost form their own small sub-groups based on origin, as was evident in strong connections to home sports teams, which I witnessed during the football, baseball, and hockey seasons, as people flocked to bars in groups to cheer on their teams. Being from the east coast, as was my main informant, R, my experience was that many locals from the east coast made this place-of-origin connection with me every time I saw them. In this example from my field notes, R and I talked with a new local (A) about the place we are all originally from.

R and I sat at a local bar and started talking to a woman (A) from Boston. She was about mid-twenties, white. She said she has been in the area since the summer and was excited to come to this bar because she heard someone from New England owned it. We talked with her about how different it is to live here. She said the main reason she left Boston is because she thought it was so expensive- she just couldn't afford it. She also talked about how she really liked it here. Everyone moved on "island time plus 5 minutes." She said it is a different way of life and she told us about all the things she will be doing this summer and places she will go. She still held a strong connection with Massachusetts though and said she was looking forward to visiting in the summer. She said she was extremely happy to have this bar because of all the people from the east coast. She called it her 'home away from home.'

Lastly, locals connect in order to be able to rely on others, not surprising in any small community, where there may often be a stronger reliance on neighbors than in larger cities. Many local community members, even those with strong ties to their birth families, referred to their social system here as their "family." When someone chooses to live here, to join the struggle, they join a group that becomes a family. Below is an excerpt from my field notes highlighting a conversation I had with an informant (P) about the importance of her social system.

I mentioned to P that I have noticed that living here is almost joining a very close-knit group. That everyone gets together for Christmas, everyone has the same plow person (a neighbor), and everyone even has the same hair stylist. P agreed sharing that this place is a small family of people that want to live in nature and near the snow. She said we all connect because we have similar interests here, but we become family because we need each other to survive.

Residents choose to make connections with groups and sub-groups within the local community to expand their social system outside their work environment, to maintain connection to the places they came from, and to rely on others in a familial sense. Making connections to a local group is part of being a local and a defining characteristic of those who choose to live in this environment.

### **“Being the Lifestyle”**

Making the choice to live in this community entails making a commitment to “be” the lifestyle, that is, to embody or exemplify the lifestyle that is associated with this small town based on recreations in the mountains of Colorado. Those who consider themselves locals have committed to a lifestyle emphasizing the values of this mountain community, which are grounded in recreation, healthy living, and the social and natural environments.

Two of the best ways locals expressed the commitment to being the lifestyle I found posted on the resort billboard and whiteboard. The first stated, “I always thought I wanted a career and then I realized all I wanted to do was ski.” The second read, “Mama don’t let your babies grow up to be ski bums.” Both of these sentiments exemplify an understanding that skiing and recreational pursuit are central to embracing this lifestyle. As I examined these quotes as the basis for this aggregate category, I noticed that the initial gerund codes could be separated into three areas: the lifestyle is about following water; the lifestyle is about being different from the rest of the US; and the lifestyle is about valuing the life journey.

I had always assumed that skiing/snowboarding was the most important aspect of living in this area but through my immersion in the community, I realized that this is only one part of this lifestyle. Water, and attraction to the flow of water, is a major aspect of local lifestyle. This

was evident to me as I participated in both a summer water festival and a winter snow festival where locals came together to celebrate the changing of the seasons and the movement to recreational activities related to these seasons. The connection with water became even more evident to me when R and I talked about the value of water to local people.

On our way back to the truck, R and I started talking about why people live here. R said that he thinks skiing really isn't the only reason to live here. (OC- I was shocked he said this!) I told him he just discredited my whole dissertation. As we kept talking I realized he didn't discredit it at all, but just helped me to see a different side of things. We discussed that skiing and snowboarding are the backbone of this culture and the economy here. But the actual recreation is not the only recreation nor is it the only motivation for being here. It is more a lifestyle and a way to live one's life that is reflected in the values of skiing and snowboarding. He said that if you think about it, most locals follow the water- meaning they ski in the winter and then raft or fish in the summer. They want to be around water and nature. And with that comes a different way of life- different priorities- and a different way of understanding what is important and what isn't.

The second emerging lifestyle-related codes are about being different from the rest of the U.S., specifically because the way of life valued by the local community differed from that of other groups they identify. This point of view emerged in many aspects of the research process as follows: (1) many people expressed interest in what I was doing but questioned its importance; (2) many questioned their struggle to stay here but expressed no desire to be part of what appeared to them as mainstream America; and (3) many people had been fond of travel and different cultures but found the values and priorities of other societies obscure. People also reflected on the importance of focusing on fun rather than on work, intimating this as a notable difference in local lifestyle compared to others. In this field note excerpt, my informant (M) and I compared and contrasted East Coast lifestyle with the lifestyle of the local community.

Recently people have been telling me that they live here because they want a quieter and slower way of life. They have chosen to live here because of that- no one moves here to advance economically or to better their career- they move here for the lifestyle. Everyone here wants this lifestyle. M told me yesterday that the people where he is from (the east coast) move much quicker than people out here- how they walk, how they talk, how they work- everything. They just move quicker. We discussed how it is always interesting to hear



people that visit talk about going into a coffee shop or into a store- they always mention how slow the worker is, but often comment on how nice they are. M also mentioned that people are very nice here, they take a minute to say hello and ask how your day is. People here also wear brighter colors and are generally very happy. M said this makes it seem like it is fantastic here- but he is not saying it is. He said how one views this place and how one views the east coast depends on what one wants in life. The people on the east coast work much harder- they advance quicker- are more intelligent- and have conversations about important issues and concerns. They are very proud of who they are and are generally pretty humble. People here choose this lifestyle because they want it. It isn't for everyone.

Lastly, being the lifestyle is about valuing the life journey. Participant observation suggested that each lifestyle decision should reflect an appreciation of the journey and a desire to enjoy one's life instead of making decisions based on financial considerations or societal expectations. One can see it by observing signs on local businesses that read "Gone fishing. Be back at 3," or "Closed for powder day." These messages signify the value of recreational pursuit over economic advancement. Below is an excerpt from a conversation R and I had with T, a local choosing to ski instead of work, a decision marking his desire to make life decisions based on enjoying the journey.

This guy (T) that I had seen before, but really didn't know, started talking to R and me. R knew him from last winter. We started talking about how he was going to be a ski bum this winter. He rented a house in the next town over with a few other people (about \$150 a month) and he was just going to work at the resort for about 2 months and then ski the rest of the time. He said he was really excited about it. He said that it is cool that he will be an out of work ski bum. Both R and I thought it was cool too, and we told him. He shared that it is important for him to take advantage of living here, to enjoy his time being here. And, he wanted to do that by just skiing and enjoying the snow.

People who make the choice to live in this area exemplify a distinctive local lifestyle by appreciating and celebrating the value of water, perceiving this community's difference from many other areas in the U.S., and accepting and valuing the life journey for its own sake. All the field notes above suggest that being and exemplifying the values of this lifestyle is a defining characteristic of members of the local community.

## **“Becoming Part of the Environment”**

Making the choice to live in this community entails understanding one’s place in the environment. All individuals in all local groups that I observed, talked and participated with made it clear that living in this community is directly related to making a connection with the environment. Many tied their choice to live here to the natural environment and the recreation they would be able to engage by living here. Others pointed to the natural environment as important for their careers, their priorities in life or their mental health. This sense of connection to the natural environment appears to entail the idea that the environment is critical in distinguishing this place, critical to one’s decision to live here, and critical to enjoying the place where one lives. The main categories emerging from this concept show that people who have chosen to be locals are thankful to be in this environment, feel a sense of ownership regarding the environment, and choose to prioritize the environment over other values.

My field notes document an overwhelming agreement that this mountain community is special and that the lives people choose here are unique. Many informants expressed being thankful for the opportunity to live in this place and experience this environment, as shown by these field note excerpts:

- (1) As we skied to the top of one run, I really noticed how amazing the views were. The view was of the rugged mountains that lie across the valley. They are perfectly white with a cobalt blue sky sitting behind them. I said to D... ‘Look at those mountains aren’t they the most beautiful mountains you have ever seen.’ D said... ‘I live in the most beautiful place in the United States. I am one of the luckiest people because I can call this place my own.’
- (2) Today I went to a bar in town... A woman (E) who works at the resort was sitting next to me. She asked how my day was- I said there was no way it could get any better. The women smiled at me and said she hopes she never has a day where she is not thankful for living here. I agreed and said we are extremely lucky.

The sense of ownership is another first-order category that informs the aggregate category of “being part of the environment.” Data analysis revealed not only a connection to the natural environment but also a sense of ownership of the river and the mountains –which locals often familiarly call “the hills.” Local group initiatives for picking up litter on local trails and roadways, protecting wild animal habitats with bear-resistant trash cans, and protecting hiking, biking, and boating boundaries from overuse or misuse were clear expressions of this sense of ownership. This was especially apparent during the winter months, when many locals observed that tourists were not adhering to local group initiatives to protect the environment toward which they felt ownership. The field note excerpt and related observer comments included below are good examples of many conversations in which locals claim ownership of the mountain<sup>6</sup> and insinuate that they are not pleased about sharing the land.

After skiing today, we went to the restaurant and sat with friends that had been at the resort with us. As R was explaining that he had not been up skiing because of his wrist hurting and that it had been really crowded, E said ‘yeah we finally have our hill back.’ Someone else agreed, saying ‘yeah finally. It is nice that they all left and it is ours again.’ (OC- Two things are interesting about this conversation. First the word ‘hill’- it is most definitely a mountain, and it is definitely huge. I think that the term ‘hill’ may be a more comfortable word, or a word that equates friendliness or a relationship. Second, the word ‘back’- meaning the place has been returned to the rightful owners. The place had been returned from people that have borrowed it. The people that borrowed it were the tourists, the people that did not live there.)

Lastly, the locals’ natural environment connection includes the idea that when they are in the environment, doing a recreation, the associated time frame, the moment and its actions, become paramount. The best way I can describe this is through a long conversation with R after skiing, regarding leaving his phone in the car or at home. He made it very clear that when he is enjoying

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<sup>6</sup> This is despite the fact that the area locals are referring to is known to be Bureau of Land Management land.

the environment, he chooses to be in that moment only. This conversation enabled me to notice many locals making the same decision.

Today, when we finished skiing and were heading back to town, I mentioned to R that I thought K was supposed to meet us to ski together. R said he may have called but he doesn't keep his phone on him when he skis. I said I actually forgot mine today too. We were both quiet for a minute and then R said that when he carries his phone he is reachable. When he skis it is about him and the mountain, not about work or anyone else. He said he is not concerned with pictures, or texts, or apps, or Facebook. He is concerned with being in the moment. He said today he was just in the moment enjoying our time together with the mountain. Then he mentioned that K would not be upset- he never skis with a phone.

Local community members see themselves as part of the natural environment on many levels. People who choose to live in this environment are thankful to be here, feel a sense of ownership of the surrounding mountains and rivers, and make it a priority to connect with the environment through recreation, truly engaging in and enjoying the process. Valuing connection to the natural environment is a defining characteristic of those who choose to live in this community.

### **Being a Tourist: “Escaping Reality”**

The second emerging concept involves being a tourist and escaping reality. It was quite apparent from my observations that a main difference between tourists and both other groups was tourists' conscious decision to escape their personal reality by visiting this location. Directly opposite from the local concept of choosing to live here, this emergent concept relates to tourists' choice to visit for a time. Whether the individuals I was participating with or talking to were first time visitors, repeat visitors or second home owners, there was a common understanding among all individuals in this group that they made a conscious decision to leave their home location to travel here but not to make this their primary home. The idea of leaving one's home to travel to another emerged into the word “escaping” as the analysis progressed because this word became

connected to every tourist group. The major concept of “escaping reality” was developed from the three emergent categories below, each of which helps to clarify what the decision to escape one’s personal reality entails for the tourist group.

### **“Being Served”**

For all individuals in the tourist group I observed and participated with, choosing a travel vacation to this community involved the process of being served. While tourists indicated a variety of ways that they wanted to be served, each service contained an expectation of a local worker as provider. I discussed and/or experienced service interactions between locals and tourists in a number of settings -- restaurants and bars, lodging establishments, recreation-based businesses, and local events-- in both private and public spaces.

In order to more fully understand the implications of the “being served” category I focus on service expectations that could be considered unreasonable. While not all tourists have unreasonable expectations, this emerged as an axis distinguishing divergence between local and tourist expectations about service. The major way I observed this was through service expectations that bespeak a sense of privilege and entitlement beyond the experience tourists have paid for.

I regularly witnessed local service workers helping tourists with different recreation activities, such as river guiding, climbing instruction, or explaining how to ski, snowboard, fish, raft, bike, and so forth. In every season and situation this type of service is a normal expectation of those who travel to this community and those who do service work. In some interactions between locals and tourists, however, tourists’ expectations were unrealistic in comparison to the

service the locals intended to provide. Below is one drama-filled example of a tourist with unreasonable expectations providing indication of entitlement.

Today I witnessed an interesting scene while I was putting my skis away at my car. There was a woman, about 20-21 years old, white, laying on the front seat of her car. (OC- They were tourists. Their license plate was not a Colorado license plate.) An older woman- I think her mother- late 40's, white- was trying to take off her boot. The woman lying on the seat was moaning like it was hurting her. As I passed she said to the woman trying to get her boot off 'Just find someone who works here to take it off.' She was implying that her mother should find someone that works there to do it for her. (OC- the resort does not provide that service.) When I got to town later I discussed this scene with R and a few other people. He said it is not uncommon that people feel entitled when visiting this place. She felt entitled to have someone remove her boot. She felt she deserved this service. I said I was shocked that she couldn't even get her boot off and wanted someone to help her. She reminded me of a spoiled child. He said he was shocked too, but people just expect things like this when they are on vacation. They want to be served and they don't care much about the person that is serving them.

The second category that emerged in data analysis was visitors expecting to be served when they could have provided for themselves, also a feature of the boot incident above. The field note excerpt below identifies such an instance.

One of the main things that I noticed today- that really bothered me and bothered X- is that there was way more trash on the ground today than any other day this year. After we took a few runs we sat at the base and had a beer, walked to the car, and went to the restaurant. There were a bunch of bottles and cups on the ground- in the parking lot and at the restaurant... trash. X and I commented that we have never seen it like this. X said it is a sense of privilege- the people traveling here expect people to pick up after them- it is part of what they buy into when they travel here- or what they expect when spending the money to come here. I said it bothers me because many people that live here care about this environment and they should too. X said he is not surprised, all he said was that they were tourists and that is what they do. He said he bets they wouldn't do that when they are at home. It is just because they are traveling and expect others to pick up after them. (OC- We proceeded to pick up as much trash as we could near the car and at the restaurant parking lot.)

The desire to be served is a natural and defining expectation of tourists in this mountain community. This expectation is connected to tensions that may arise in what might be the shared local-tourist expectation that visitors rightly expect services. Service becomes an axis of difference and discord between the groups, however, when tourist expectations show disregard

for the local service providers' dignity, i.e., treat them like unpaid servants. This may be, for some in the tourist population, part of the enactment of 'escaping one's personal reality' by literally acting like someone else—a queen, a prince, etc.

### **“Trying to Understand the Lifestyle”**

Ironically, another aspect of escaping one's personal reality entails trying to understand and be a part of the lifestyle of the local community. The identifiable characteristics of the tourist population are based on treating the locals with disregard while, at the same time, desiring to understand the local community lifestyle explaining the potential internal conflicts and inconsistencies of being a tourist in this society.

It was readily apparent that most tourists were interested in this lifestyle once they recognized it as different from their own. In particular, second home owners and repeat visitors showed interest in trying to grasp and fit into the lifestyle. In my observation, tourists did this in three ways: (1) connecting to the nostalgia of the skiing and mountain lifestyles; (2) trying to talk to locals; (3) and questioning decisions regarding their own choice of home.

Throughout 16 months of participant observation, I witnessed many tourists invoking the nostalgia or romance of skiing by purchasing ski decorations, old skis, old snowboards, and vintage clothing. The romance of skiing and all the imagery people get from movies is associated with commodification. 'Acting the part' entails buying the clothing, boots, and old gear as if it actually gives access to a way of life. It was so salient that I started calling it the “Aspen effect” in my field notes.

(OC- I have been noticing that people are very into ski culture- the tourists are trying very hard to look the part. There was a lot of talk this month about vintage ski stuff, posters, ornaments, even clothes. It is almost a lot about the past as much as about the future. It is more about the nostalgia of it. About the way that people “are” with the mountains. It

seems like the tourists want to pretend to be the ski culture while they are here. I walked down the main street the other day and I could not believe the number of people in fur boots, with fur jackets, and fur hats... and it was 40 degrees and sunny! I was in a vest and sneakers, so were the other locals I stopped to talk to. It was like the tourists were pretending they were in Aspen- like they were living like in the movies and trying to connect to their understanding of “ski culture.” I think I will call this the “Aspen effect” – when I see tourists trying to look the part of ski culture.)

A second way tourists escaping their home reality try to understand the mountain lifestyle is by engaging with locals. While doing recreations, sitting at a bar or participating in a town event, numerous tourists tried to join in or start conversations. In most cases I observed, the encounters were between a tourist and a non-working local. In no case did I witness a local start a conversation with a tourist. The following are two examples of instances when I observed tourists starting conversations with locals.

- (1) I was sitting at a restaurant tonight with several locals. One person came up to B and said he remembered him when he worked at the resort. He said he and his girlfriend live in Boulder and came to ski down here. They talked for a bit (OC- I am not sure about what.) Then B invited them to come join our group.
- (2) I was walking down the main street the other day with D, when an older male stopped us to ask where he could buy marijuana. He said he was just visiting for a few days from Texas and thought he and his friend might partake a bit since they are here. We said we didn't know which shop was better because we didn't do that. He proceeded to walk with us 3 blocks asking when we moved here, if we liked it, what we did for a living, and if we had any suggestions on what he should do while he was here. We left him when he reached his group.

Lastly, tourists escaping their home reality showed engagement in understanding the mountain lifestyle when they questioned their own decisions about where they live, re-examining the lifestyle of their own place of residence. I had discussions with a number of tourists who suggested in various ways that they would live in this environment if they could. Second home owners talked about how closely they are connected to this lifestyle and how they have mused about living in this community full-time and becoming a local. For tourists, in general, it seems that understanding the lifestyle of this community is understanding it as juxtaposed to their home



community lifestyle. Among the multiple talks I had with people who had considered making this lifestyle their own is this one:

I talked to a couple people this week that are second homeowners- older white men that are semi- or fully retired that spend a lot of time at their second homes here. They have discussed that they like it here more than their original homes (mainly in Florida) but that they could not commit to coming often until now. Their careers did not allow them to move here full time. But they love it here and wish they could have spent more time here earlier in life.

Attempting to understand the lifestyle of this Colorado mountain community is a defining component of being a tourist here. My field notes reflect their desires or efforts to connect with the nostalgia of ski culture, to engage with locals, and to set this lifestyle against their decision to live another way in another place.

### **“Being Distinctly Different”**

Another concept that emerged as I analyzed the local and tourist groups was that when someone chooses to escape their personal reality and briefly visit a different social reality, their unique differences become observable. Many tourists, although they may not be aware of it, are distinctly different from the local population. Although the majority of individuals I talked and participated with in the tourist group shared a common interest in understanding the local lifestyle as a way to escape their personal reality, they nonetheless remained distinctly different in terms of their economic means allowing travel, different values in their lives, and a different perception of what is involved in the mountain lifestyle. In my field notes, the clothing and appearance choices of tourists and locals make a visual record of such differences.

First, my analysis made it apparent that economic stability uniquely distinguished the tourist group. In the following conversation from my field notes, it became obvious that clothing symbolized this difference in economic means.

When I was skiing with A at the resort I made a comment that I liked a lot of different clothes that people had on. (OC- I am always interested in fashion, even ski fashion. I am always looking to improve my outfit- with no luck.) I said that I wanted to look like that and asked why I couldn't. She said because they were tourists and had the money to dress like that. A said there was no way I had money like they did and I would never be able to buy those clothes. A laughed and said 'obviously you didn't think you would be able to afford those clothes? Did you?'

The second difference I observed about tourists escaping their home reality is in the matter of values. Analysis of my field experience demonstrated that each sub-group of tourists has made different decisions than locals about what they value and that these values are differently manifested. In the observations and conversations I recorded, tourists' values appear to be completely opposite the locals' values described above. In contrast to the local preference for spending on the necessities of life and going out with friends, the majority of tourists spend on high-end clothing, suggesting that appearance is valued. The best example of the contrast came in a conversation I had with a small group of locals about what a group of tourists wore for skiing.

I sat with some friends at the bar for a while. A lot of them commented on peoples' clothes. Specifically, there was a group of 4 females, early twenties, all white, with big blonde hair and white ski outfits. They all looked the same and they all looked like they were happy with their outfits. Y said it seemed like they thought it was important for them to look like this. Someone said it was definitely a type of fashion show out there. (OC- I noticed everyone I was with had older clothes on. And no one was wearing the same thing.)

Above I discussed tourists' interest in connecting to and understanding the mountain community lifestyle, but the basic understanding of what that might be appears to be different from that of locals, such that the lifestyle they seek to accept and connect to is something other than what local groups experience. This is exemplified in a discussion I had R about a tourist couple we both noticed where the male skied and the female sat at the base.

R and I talked on the way downtown about a couple we both saw. She was sitting at the bar dressed in a lot of fur and was having a drink. A guy- I am assuming her partner- came up after he was done skiing. He was dressed in very expensive ski attire. We discussed that the

couple was trying to do their best to fit into the mountain culture- the fur, the expensive ski gear, etc. But they really stuck out. They didn't look like the locals at all. He joked that they must think they are in a ski movie.

Further, the tourists' definition of the "ski culture" and the lifestyle associated with this mountain community encompasses partying, relaxation, and a laid-back persona. In a way, the tourist group believes this entire society is "on vacation" at all times. The imaginary idea of the constant *Après Ski* (i.e. after ski party) lifestyle was observed when an informant (I) was discussing his experience working in the service industry.

I said that it has always been difficult working in the service industry here because the people that come here really like to party- like REALLY like to party... and party with him or other locals. Specifically, 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowners, people that he sees a few times. They go at it hardcore and they want I and others to be a part of it. The tourists think the Colorado lifestyle is a party all the time. But I says it beats you up - on a powder day they want to stay out and party but he wants to go to bed because he wants to get up early to ski. I continued... the movies and magazines portray it like a glamorous lifestyle- but for him it's still work. And, on his days off he wants to ski or sleep- recover- not party.

All my field notes identify difference from the local population in economic means, values, and understanding of the lifestyle as defining characteristics of the tourist population. These differences are more concretely defined by spending habits, clothing and appearance, and the underlying meanings of choices.

### **Being the Tourism Business: "Making Changes"**

Participant observation yielded the emergent concept, "making changes," which characterized most of the tourism businesses I encountered. Not only did managers agree that changes needed to be made but it appeared that business decision-maker actions were focused on changes that would impact locals and tourists, the economy, and the environment.

Certainly many tourism-based businesses make changes as a matter of course. In this mountain community, the changes focused more specifically on increasing tourism by providing

more or different services for tourists, improving understanding of cycles in tourist interest, adhering to the dimensions of the ski and recreation business, and adapting to unique and different business practices that some newer decision-makers were integrating into their businesses.

The major concept of “making changes” was developed from four emergent categories, each of which helps to explicate why the main defining characteristic of being a tourism business in this community is focused on making changes within the business.

### **“Having a Tourism Flow Cycle”**

This mountain area experiences changes in tourism influxes at different times of year, which are connected to recreation pursuits. Weather and travel flows are the two emergent categories that make up the travel cycle concept.

Throughout 16 months of participant observation, I witnessed many locals, tourists, tourism business managers and decision-makers comment on and discuss the changing weather. Data collection and analysis made it clear that the weather, especially recent changes in weather in this area of the world, impact travel decisions, recreational pursuit decisions, and business decisions. My fieldwork covered two full winters in this area, one very dry and one very wet, each posing its own challenges to businesses and contributing to the understanding that tourism business success depends on the ability to adapt to changing weather by offering tourist amenities as well as recreations related to varying weather conditions. Weather impact on business was a topic of the following discussion from my first winter where it was quite dry.

On the way downtown we started discussing what happens if the weather does not get better. Today, it was very unpredictable with the cloud movement, which we both noticed is quite odd here- and with the dry winter we are having. We discussed what will happen to locals- both locals that live on the mountain and locals that live in town if the weather continues to

change. (i.e., not as much snow). C commented that most people that live here actually have a 2<sup>nd</sup> hobby- whether it is fishing, golfing, hunting, or biking – everyone has something else. I asked him if he thought that this something else will be enough to keep all these locals here. Will skiing/snowboarding become nothing or 2<sup>nd</sup> to them? He said people will always live here- because it is so beautiful and they love it. And, he said tourists will always come because they are more interested in the culture here- not the recreation of skiing. But he said it is up to the tourism businesses to change- to make sure the tourists come- and to make sure the locals can still survive to live here.

The second aspect of “having a tourism flow cycle” is related to the distinct seasonal ebb and flow of travel. During the winter months, tourism is constant near the ski resort; during the summer months, tourism is constant in town. During the Spring and Fall off-seasons tourism slows drastically on the mountain and substantially in town. These flows impact tourism-based business changes in marketing, operations, and employment. The field note excerpt below is from a conversation I had with R about the differences between local-based businesses and tourism-based businesses.

R shared the following about his business in comparison to others in town: When we are in the off-season, everything mellows. There is always a break because a lot of locals go on vacation and some businesses close altogether. If the business needs tourists to survive, there is no need for them to stay open in the off-season. Even if locals go to these businesses during this time frame, there isn't enough locals to keep them going. For me, I can stay open because we are locally-based all the time. If you are tourist-based, you are hit harder by the change than we would be. We are hit a little, but not as much. For instance, the Main St. employees don't go out as much – so we feel it a little. But, we can still survive.

Understanding a tourism cycle dependent upon weather and seasonal travel flow cycles in this community is extremely important to decision-makers as they contemplate making business changes

### **“Making a Separation”**

As tourism business managers make changes to increase tourism, they also separate the groups that make up this local society. The process of coding and developing first-order categories yielded the idea that making a separation between locals and tourists was a main

feature of many tourism business managers' decisions related to increasing business success. Making a distinction between locals and tourists was often a key move, one aimed at providing unique services to tourists as an important way to increase business. Among the tactics that reflected the separation of tourists from locals were providing expensive amenities that excluded locals, offering discounts exclusively to locals during certain time frames (i.e., local discount cards), marketing events for specific time frames (i.e., events during regular work day hours), and supporting membership to private clubs and service providers for certain elite populations.

Although tourism businesses were effecting these separations, the tourists and the locals did not necessarily want to be separated. This is best shown by two excerpts from my notes about a local charity's fundraising event, which was mainly marketed to and attended by second home owners, tourists, and wealthy locals. The fundraiser was held in two different areas of the resort-- the private club and a public bar --that R, D, and myself were able to attend.

- (1) We generally sat at the outside public bar, except when we went in to participate in the auction and then to pay for our auction items. D kept saying it was weird. He didn't like the set up. It was not conducive to people talking or mingling- the auction items- which were very expensive were in a completely other room than the bar. D said that most of the people that stayed in the bar area were locals or were service workers who work at the resort or other local businesses. The area where the auction items were was full of second home owners, tourists, or random wealthy locals. He didn't feel like he could talk to any of them because he couldn't afford the auction items. D said he didn't feel like we were really invited or that we should be there.
- (2) R also mentioned that he enjoyed talking to the staff more than anyone else. He said that he always talks to the staff. He also talked about the manager of the club, who he knows well and how the tourists seem to really like him... but no matter how much people that serve try to be on the same level as those that they serve, they never will be. They are never friends, but servant and served, server and consumer, or guest and host. There is always a relationship that is connected to a hierarchy. He thinks the tourists pretend to like him but there is always a separation based on their position within the place or based on their connection to the event.

Another example of a tourism business manager's attempt to keep locals and tourists apart without regard to their preferences is this conversation with a few locals.

We talked about how the resort attempts to keep locals and tourists apart. The resort offers a weekday pass to locals which many purchase because of the lower price. A pass that can only be used Monday-Friday, but there are blackout dates- this means that the locals with this pass cannot ski during certain days. We all discussed that we knew this was a strategy to sell more passes at cheaper prices, but it just seems like it provides more of a separation saying they want the locals there on certain days and tourists there on other days. (OC- I went skiing on one of these blackout days and I realized that I did not know anyone- just tourists there.)

Tourism businesses making changes to increase tourism separated locals and tourists through such devices as strategic location of services, amenities pricing, and structured time frames of recreation use. Despite the fact that these actions may not be supported by either tourists or locals, this separation between the groups is a defining characteristic of tourism businesses making changes to increase tourism.

### **“Connecting to the Ski Business”**

The ski business, including changing trends in the larger ski world, is a foundational aspect associated with this area. Although this may seem obvious, the reality is that many towns and businesses connected to ski resorts, as well as the resorts themselves, are attempting to become less connected to the ski industry as weather changes are forcing a reconstruction of business positioning to be focused on summer activities, music, or other options that are not reliant on snow, as was addressed in Chapter 2. However, although this seems to be the trend in some towns dependent or semi-dependent on ski recreation, the society connected to this study is still very much invested as a member of “Ski Country USA.” Supporting this observation are findings exploring tourism businesses ability to make changes as awareness of this connection

manifests itself and plays out in field notes as being a large part of this society and local community.

Changes I witnessed in tourism businesses, whether indirectly or directly, were necessarily connected to the changing trends of the ski world. The three first-order categories related to this connectivity are as follows: (1) ski businesses rely on a dangerous sport; (2) ski businesses pursue certain marketing practices due to a short season; and (3) ski businesses must make employment decisions that impact the local population.

The ski business relies on a dangerous sport pursued in unpredictable environments.<sup>7</sup> One way the resort is adapting to the dangers of this sport is by placing safety patrols on different areas of the mountain. The following excerpt from my field notes interprets the changing nature of the sport and related tourism business and its effects on an informant (C).

As I am skiing today I noticed that there are yellow jackets everywhere. (OC- This is the term used to describe and name the people that watch the skiers to make sure they are skiing/snowboarding in control, not fast, and following the rules.) After I finished and was headed back to town I mentioned to C that there were a lot of them on the hill today. C talked about how it is ridiculous that there are so many of them here today because no one is here. She reflected on how we went down one slope - that it was just the two of us - and there was a yellow jacket there. She said it was ridiculous and that there is no need. I said I think they volunteer for their passes, so maybe this is just a good day to volunteer. C says they should concentrate on the tourists that can't ski- all of a sudden the resort is having them come on days where it is just locals- there is no need. We begin to talk about how this is a dangerous sport, but people choose to do it. And, not even to just do it, but really revolve their lives around it. C said people make the choice, they know before they start skiing how dangerous it really is. I disagreed and suggested that people don't know and that is why the resort is beefing up their safety measures.

The next first-order category is the imposition of particular marketing practices due to the short ski season. The data analysis findings suggest that the resort and other tourism businesses

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<sup>7</sup> I personally experienced this as I was injured while skiing during my immersion in the field, witnessed other skiers' injuries, and discussed previous falls with many informants.



change their marketing practices to reach the most promising market in time frames defined by tourism flow. Below are two marketing practices of the resort.

- (1) The ski resort has been updating Facebook with the amount of snow they have been getting. They are showing pictures of people skiing/snowboarding in the powder. J and I talked about whether the resort would groom trails or if they would keep the natural powder. J thinks they will keep it as much powder as they can, but they will have to groom a good portion of it because they will want to keep the resort open as long as they can. (OC- the more the snow is groomed or packed down, the longer the snow will stay before melting away. This will help the resort stay open.) Whatever they decide to do we both think they will update Facebook regarding their practices- it seems that they are using Facebook more this year than ever.
- (2) When I was on the east coast I knew that 3 feet of snow was coming down back in Colorado. I was happy to hear that there was moisture and I would be able to ski when I got back. I received emails within this time frame (during the storm) that there was a new owner of the resort. I first heard of this in November when there was an article in the paper about the sale of the resort. But it wasn't really mentioned since then, although R and I had often talked about it. Today we discussed that the owner finally told everyone, and was in the paper multiple times now. It said that he had just finalized the paperwork. It was interesting to R, myself, and other locals that the owner decided to announce the full take over during the biggest storm of the year.

The last category is making employment decisions that impact the local community. I had been long aware that jobs at ski resorts are considered unstable as I had heard many complaints about the lack of permanency and the changing workforce in the ski business. The implication, however, was that changing tourism business managers were making employment decisions focused on making the most money during the shortest time, decisions reflecting the immediate needs of the resort during the brief ski season. These field notes reflect on a number of conversations I had about this sensitive subject.

There has been a lot of discussion about how the resort is reducing the payroll of certain people. I heard of one woman who has been with the resort for 15 years and was offered another position, so she spoke to the resort about it and asked for more money to stay. They offered her basically nothing so she left. Also, I heard of a man that had been there for 4 years running a small shop for the resort, they moved him to another part of the mountain and he took a pay cut and they took away his benefits. (OC- I felt bad for him because I know he lives close to the resort and I think that was the only place for him to work. I heard he was happy about it though- and he liked the reduction in responsibility.) Both people I heard about said they had no idea why they weren't given a raise or why

they were moved. It seemed to me that the resort decision-makers had their specific motives in mind but maybe did not explain their reasoning completely. These changes in employment seem to be moving throughout the entire resort structure.

Decision-makers of tourism businesses seeking to make changes that increase tourism are always primarily aware of their connection to the ski business and to its salient features of being a dangerous sport and closely related to the tourism flow cycle which, in turn implies employment decisions that impact the local community.

### **“Understanding the Impact of a Change in Ownership”**

The last category that constructs the changing nature of being a tourism business addresses a changed ownership of the resort, largely because of striking differences between the new owner and the old. The ownership change was announced during the beginning of my first season of research but was finalized near the end of that season, such that my second winter season happened with the new owner in place. My data collection and simultaneous analysis shows significant influence from the change in resort ownership. The new owner put in place a new resort business plan that had implications for the local community and all tourism businesses. Three first-order categories out of which the change in resort ownership category emerged are: the new owner being a local, being a skier, and making two immediate changes.

During my constant comparison process, the fact of the new owner being a local grew in importance. Newspapers, Facebook, and discussions I had with informants all indicated that being a local himself suggested the new owner would take care of the local community, a distinctly different perception, certainly by locals who felt that the previous owner did not act in the best interest of the local community. These two excerpts from my field notes support the idea that the new owner would make the resort more local-friendly.

- (1) I had a long discussion with S the other day where we discussed that the change in ownership changes a number of things for the local community and the tourist community. Prior to this owner, locals often complained that the resort did not do

much for them, instead they would focus on selling discount tickets in other areas- Utah, Wyoming, or Texas. The tourists were catered to at the resort, with private clubs, and special dining options- but the catering and the experiences still did not equal the experiences that could be found at some of the nearby, bigger resorts. S is hopeful that the new owner will reverse or change these tourist offerings to include locals.

- (2) Some locals have high hopes that the owner will realize that the locals need a few more perks or need to be supported in the community. N said that she thinks a lot of locals would like this mountain to turn more into a 'locals' mountain' instead of a 'tourist mountain'- which a lot of ski resorts in Colorado are. She thinks this would make us unique and would attract a lot of people to move here- and it would make the current locals happy.

Second, the new owner was portrayed as being able to relate to and grasp the locals' point of view, resulting in the impression that he could socialize with the locals because he is able to do the primary recreation.<sup>8</sup> The new owner is being portrayed as a very good skier who values the lifestyle here and the ski community in general. This conversation was about the owner being a "skier's skier:"

R said that the local papers and websites are saying that the new owner is a 'skier's skier.' He is considered a good skier, so much so that one article depicted that he skied moguls last spring with a local coach. He lives in the area and his children go to local schools. The papers are also interviewing the marketing manager of the resort- who has a fairly good reputation. R says he really likes the marketing manager and trusts his opinion that the new owner can ski. The marketing manager is the one who says he is a "skier's skier"- the articles portray that they have a good relationship and that they have known each other for a good number of years. R said if he really is a skier's skier than he should know what the local population wants at the resort- lower prices and less development. He said we will have to wait and see what happens- but he is hopeful. R also has high hopes that it will become a local's mountain again.

Lastly, the owner made two major changes immediately upon confirming his ownership: changing the name of the resort and installing a new lift. Both changes made a significant impact on the local community and how tourism businesses would adapt in response to the new owner. The following two field note excerpts discuss these impactful changes.

- (1) Within days of receiving the email and the newspaper articles about the ownership change, the name of the resort reverted back to the name that it used to be. The owner

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<sup>8</sup> The original owners of the resort could ski but, as they did not live in the area, they did not ski often.

said his main concern was to bring the resort back to what it used to be- he did not like the name that had been used the last few years. So, within days the website, Facebook page, and emails reflected the change. X likes it. He remembers when it was the original name. He thinks locals will like it because it represents who the people are here- it is getting back to the roots of the skiing/snowboarding in this area. It reflects that the owner cares about the local people and wants to bring it back to its roots.

- (2) W, a local informant who works in the service industry, thinks that if the owner expands the skiable acres the locals will be happy with him. W is very curious as to who this person is, if he has ever met him, and if he really is a local. W also said he cannot believe the new owner is changing terrain and putting in a new lift. W thinks this change is really for the locals because the change is in a more difficult skiing area where he doesn't think the tourists will go. W is shocked the new owner made this drastic decision so quickly.

The above examples provide clarity as to the local populations regard toward the new owner, however the impact of the new owner also spread to the tourism business decision-makers as the change in business structure had implications on town and tourism businesses. One conversation I had with a local tourism business manager (Q) provides an example of how town and tourism businesses were impacted by the changing management of the resort suggesting the new owner had to secure relationships with town and other tourism-based businesses to ensure success.

Q said the difference between the new owner and the old owner was a different business model. The old owner really focused on development- he really didn't put anything into the mountain but instead put everything into real estate. He would move things around the mountain to make it seem like he was doing stuff- but he really wasn't- basically trying to connect the town and resort for potential 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowners and tourists. Q said the new owner changed the name to connect with the locals, but it is still a for profit business. The locals don't realize that if he doesn't make a profit than the ski area can't stay open- Q said the owners- present and past- had/have two different business models. Q thinks the new owner is going to have to adopt and adapt to the town and work with the other tourism businesses as part of what he is doing unless he is going to get restaurants, bars, and hotels up there. Q said the new owner is going for the locals, but he should also be concerned for the tourist.

Another defining characteristic of tourism businesses making changes in this community was feeling the impact of a change in resort ownership related to the owner being a local, being a

skier, and making two immediate changes. This change in ownership and business decisions is making a large impact on the local community, which in turn is affecting the decision-making of other tourism businesses connected to town and other tourism entities.

### **Closing Thoughts**

This chapter has been dedicated to the first step of analysis, developing the broad picture of this community by clarifying the defining characteristics of each group that I observed and participated with. As discussed above, being a local involves making a decision to live in this area, which involves accepting a role in service, connecting with the community and environment, and exemplifying the lifestyle. These findings contribute to the literature studying tourism increases and quality of life (Butler, 1980; Goode, Price, & Zimmerman, 2000) insofar as I find that the local population's quality of life is felt to be in jeopardy as tourism increases. In addition, the findings support the literature that focuses on how tourists can change a traveled-to culture (Litka, 2013; van Rekom & Go, 2006) by contending that tourists and the increase in tourism in this society may indirectly contribute to the identification of what it means to be a member of the local group.

The findings also suggest that being a tourist involves escaping one's personal reality by traveling to this specific locale, where a tourist expects to be served and tries to connect with the local lifestyle, even while being distinctly different from the locals. These findings suggest that tourists travel to this community not only to experience its unique cultural aspects, as Hall (1994) and MacLeod and Carrier (2010) conclude, but also to attempt to live the beliefs and values of the community for a brief time.

Finally, being a tourism-based business in this community involves making changes and doing so with the understanding that there is a tourism flow cycle, that making decisions involves the possibility of separating locals and tourists, that they are primarily connected to the ski business, and that a change in resort ownership will impact their decisions. These findings contribute to the literature concerning the environment in mountain recreations (Coleman, 2004; Sheldrake, 2007) by contending that tourism businesses are reliant on a tourism flow that is affected by a changing ski business and a changing environment.

Each of the defining characteristics of being a local, tourist, or tourism business can be used to help draw the broad picture of the interests and dynamics of this local society as it can help identify tourism's impact on the distinctive features of the three groups to establish the significant points of difference and tensions between the groups, which will be discussed further in the next chapters.

## CHAPTER 7

### LOCAL AND TOURIST RELATIONSHIP: TOURISM CAN INTENSIFY ACCEPTANCE ISSUES

#### **Introduction: Understanding the Tourist and Local Relationship**

In this chapter, I continue to pull apart the broad view of this community discussed in chapter 5, in this case by depicting the relationship between the local community and the tourist group, focusing on how tourism and association with a tourism-based community can intensify issues of acceptance between the groups. The findings discussed in this chapter confirm that in tourism-based communities increasing tourism can create and intensify the acceptance issues for each group. Acceptance issues for locals are most closely connected to negative responses to the changing lifestyle attributed to increased tourism. Acceptance challenges for tourists are connected to their interest in becoming part of the local community and are thus issues of being accepted or, in other words, of belonging. For tourism business decision-makers, the salient challenge is convincing locals of the need for acceptance of tourists.

These findings suggest that acceptance issues are more complex than generally identified in the literature, as they are entangled in local/tourist interactions and relationships. The findings that follow support and extend the literature relating decreased acceptance of tourism and tourists to visitation increases and locals' consequent sense of marginalization (Doxey, 1975; Nash, 1977, 2001) by empirically depicting declining acceptance of tourism by the local community, as well as a good deal of uneasiness about the changing lifestyle occurring in this local society. My findings suggest that it is not necessarily the tourists *per se* that locals find difficult to accept, but instead that what declines is their ability to accept the changing lifestyle associated with

increased travel to this area. The finding that tourism business decision-makers face the challenge of convincing the local population of the need to accept the tourist population into their growing community supports the literature (Ponting & McDonald, 2013) that portrays business decision-makers playing a role in interactions between hosts and guests.

This chapter clearly identifies acceptance issues that emerged from my semi-structured interview process. In order to understand the relationship between the integral local and tourist groups, it was necessary to unpack the categories and concepts that emerged through data collection and parallel analysis. Thus, my objective was to understand how my informants perceived and expressed changing relationships between the locals and tourists, as well as the viewpoints of related tourism business decision-makers, in order to answer the second question in my initial diagram: *what/how/why is happening between the locals and tourists?* (This is depicted more abstractly in Figure 8.)



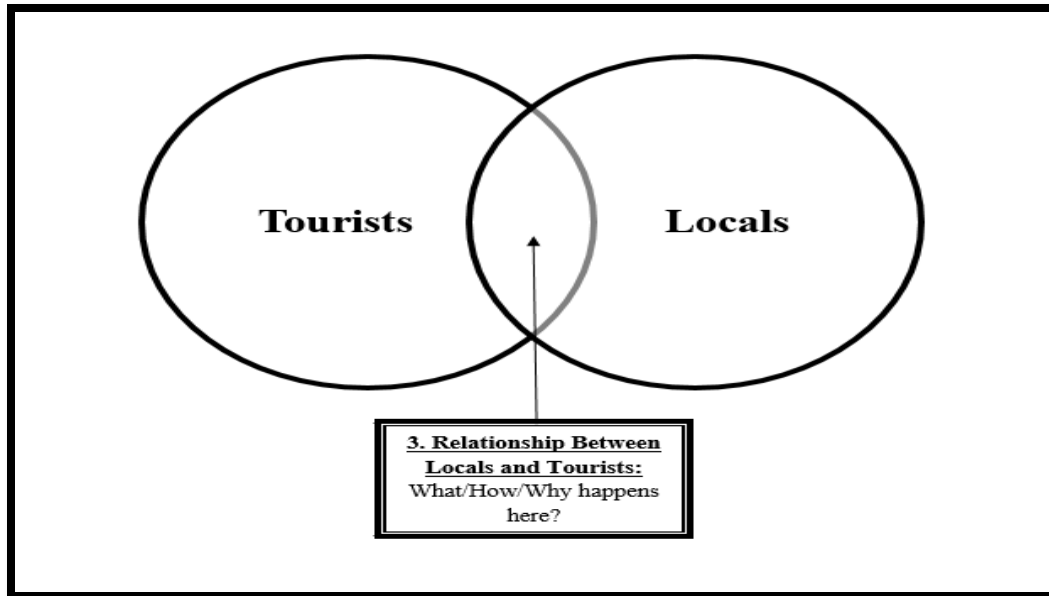


Figure 8: Understanding the tourist and local relationship

I clarify the local/tourist relationship by showing the main analytical concepts and categories that presented themselves through conducting semi-structured interviews. The discussion is organized around three interviews I participated in because the stories that materialized in them most fully represent the majority of categories and concepts yielded by my data collection and analysis. In addition to this discussion, I identify the connection of the categories as a way to present the second part of my theoretical model.

The semi-structured interviews included planned conversations with participants in the local group (“ski bums,” families, business owners, and non-skiers), the tourist group (first-time and repeat), and tourism business decision-makers group (city tourism officials, tourism business managers, and town representatives). There were twenty-five main interviews with numerous theoretical samplings of participants in the local and tourist groups. I conducted each interview in a place of the informant’s choice (office, home, restaurant, coffee shop, by phone) and they ranged from twenty minutes to two hours in length. The interpretive findings resulted in 28 first

order categories, ten aggregate categories, and three emergent concepts. Figure 9 presents a data structure of these interpretations identifying the first order categories, aggregate categories, and emergent concepts upon which I built the conceptual account of the local/tourist relationship as one characterized by challenges of acceptance and belonging.

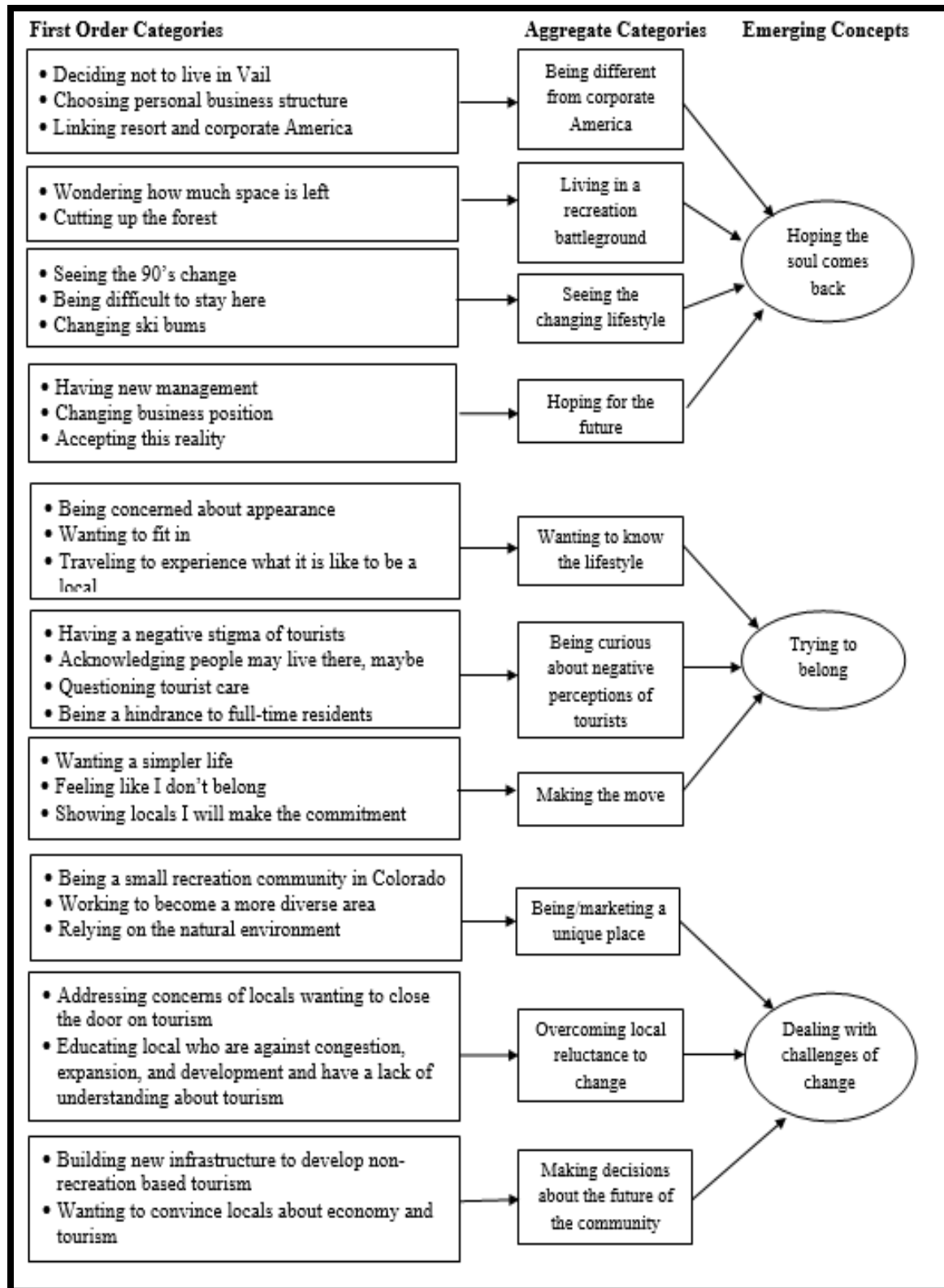


Figure 9: Interview data structure

## **Major Analytical Categories and Emerging Concepts**

During my immersion in the field, I was able to conduct planned interviews with locals and tourists from most sub-groups, as well as tourism business managers and decision-makers. These interviews, as well as the related theoretical sampling, focused on understanding the interactions between locals and tourists and thus the relationships between tourism growth and the local community. Through the process of simultaneous data collection and analysis, a number of abstract analytical concepts and categories emerged to identify and illuminate the local/tourist relationship. These interpretive findings resulted from processes and practices I co-created through engagement with semi-structured interviews. This process led to three major concepts: (1) “hoping the soul comes back,” related to locals; (2) “trying to belong,” related to tourists; and (3) “dealing with the challenges of change,” related to tourism business decision-makers.

### **Being a Local’s Story: “Hoping the Soul Comes Back”**

The representative local story I have selected is from my main informant, R, a member of this community for more than twenty years who has worked in many service-based settings and currently owns a restaurant/lounge frequented mainly by locals. He is a white, mid-40’s male. I had many interviews with R during my time in the field and was thus able to theoretically sample during multiple time frames. Interviews and interactions with R lasted from thirty minutes to two hours and took place in multiple locations (his home, his business, pursuing a recreation).

I highlight R’s story in this chapter because he came here in his 20s from the east coast dedicated to skiing and other recreational pursuits, became a business owner, and is moving into

the local family category. Thus, he has progressed through a number of sub-groups in this mountain community.<sup>9</sup>

R's main previous and present interactions and relationships with tourists are based on his role in the service environment. He is passionate about this area and the life he has established here. He believes a large increase in tourism will drastically change that life, as he has already witnessed the progression of tourism and the resulting expansion that has encompassed this area for many years. R expressed multiple times that he has seen the growth of this area and that the soul he was originally drawn to has changed with that growth. He believes he and other locals have difficulty accepting a changing lifestyle, a changing soul, because 1) this area is notable for its difference from corporate America, 2) this is a recreation battleground, 3) the changing lifestyle can be seen daily, and 4) locals can hope for a better future. Each of these categories contributes to a pattern in which R identifies why he hopes the soul of the community returns (i.e., the original characteristics of the community focused on a love of recreations, respect for the environment, and a display of kindness to all).

### **“Being Different from Corporate America”**

Increased tourism challenges R because he believes this area is different from corporate America and should remain that way. In my interviews with R, it was unmistakable that he had specifically chosen to live in a place that was not identifiable with corporate America, that he chose a personal, non-corporate business style intended to be completely different from that in other areas of the U.S., and that he sees the resort as the main entity affiliated with corporate America.

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<sup>9</sup> R has never been a member of the local sub-group comprised by non-skiers.

R has chosen to live in this location because, being distinctly different from corporate America, it could enable him to live a slower existence concentrated on recreation, the environment, and the pleasures of everyday life. In contrast, R views Vail as a ski/snowboard area inhabited by the values and beliefs of corporate America; that is why he chose not to move there. He chose this place, he said, because it was a “real town,” whereas Vail is about what people imagine skiing is, not what it really is. He does not want this place to turn into Vail or any other business-centered location because that is not where he wants to live. In one of our first conversations, he connected the resort and resort manager decisions with Vail values, suggesting the possibility that the more this area grows, the more the values of corporate America will impinge upon the lifestyle here.

I want the resort to make enough money to survive, but do I want it to be like Vail? If I wanted to live in Vail I would. I don't want tourists to overpower the locals at this mountain. It is like skiing on the east versus here. The east is like a battleground. Here, we will never get like that. It is hard to get here and it is expensive. We will never be a Vail. People who live in Vail don't have a voice- it is about money. I don't want that here.

R also observed that he can contribute to keeping this area different from the Vail area by running his business in a way different from businesses he identifies as connected to the corporate world. He believes that his values and the relationships he has with both the staff and guests enact his priority of giving back to the community. His personal business approach is focused on providing guests and staff with good food and substantial pay, which he believes is not the case with businesses dedicated to profit. R is serious about this philosophy and attributes to it his continued success.

I am a local. I am a business owner. I am a member of the community. I donate to local causes. I take care of people who live here. I don't charge tourists prices at my business. This is a tough place to live. To live here I give (back). (OC- He owns a business that

mainly has a local clientele. I would say 75%-80% local, 15-20% tourists within 2 hours, and 5% tourists beyond 2-3 hours away.)

R reflected further that his personal business structure and the decisions he has made in his life may be similar to those of the new owner of the resort. He stated the following:

Now- the new owner seems to be going back to the ski area mentality. He's a skier. A skier can understand skiing. A business man can't understand skiing. The new owner makes enough to be able to ski.... The same as me, but different in some ways. It's cool. You see him drinking beers on opening day, talking to people, skiing. He followed a different path to get the same thing... same as me- skiing and business owner.

In contrast to this connection between his business philosophy and that of the resort's new owner, R reflected on the idea that the previous owners were his complete antithesis. R worked for the resort for a number of years in a number of different positions. He spoke quite a bit about how he saw the resort change over the years to become a place he didn't want to work. The life full of recreation and the outdoors is one he equates with small town America, whereas the resort, he realized when working there, was moving ever more closely toward a business projecting his understanding of large-scale corporate America. In R's opinion, the focus of the resort had been the bottom-line, not skiing, pride in the self, or quality of life. This led to his decision to leave his position at the resort after five years.

The resort pretty much is corporate America in this town. It provides the recreation. I use to work there. I was on the edge of corporate and the "lifestyle," dealing with a lot of 'adulty' stuff. I left the resort because I realized what it was. I couldn't figure out how to be (or why one should be) a ski bum and work in corporate America. Working there I was a concierge between the resort and the tourist.

In one interview, however, R likened the resort to corporate America but was also able to see similarities between the resort and his own business.

The resort provides the recreation. It is similar to my own business- my business allows me to live here and to ski. In a far-fetched way, similar to corporate America, but providing me the freedom to ski. (OC- This was R's "ahh haa" moment- all of a sudden, he realized his business was a business, like the resort... but the resort provides the recreation and his business provides him the opportunity to ski. Very similar.)

In R's mind, the more the resort and the lifestyle here move toward what he sees in other areas of the U.S., the more likely it is that the soul of the area, the lifestyle he identifies with it, will diminish further. A significant increase in tourism will speed the pace of change away from the foundational characteristics of the community that originally attracted him.

### **“Living in a Recreation Battleground”**

R's story highlights the movement of this local society toward being a “recreation battleground,” a place where participants of recreational pursuits are competing for space. As noted, R is an avid skier, as well as an avid fisherman, boater, and biker. His deep enjoyment of recreational pursuits is a principal reason he moved here. He believes the soul of the area is in the endless space to pursue numerous recreations. But he worries that there is not much space left in the place he calls home and sees the forest and environment being damaged by increasing numbers of second homes, by resort expansion, and by continuously growing interest in travel to the area.

When R moved here he lived in town for a few years, then moved closer to the resort for two years, and then returned to live in town for a decade. When he started to believe town was getting too busy, he moved half way to the resort, where he stayed for eight years, until he felt that was too busy. He now lives on ten acres in the middle of the woods near the resort. He is afraid the building and development will never stop. He is afraid that relatively soon there may not be any space left.

R: I want to get away. I am always trying to go higher.

Me: Can you ever get away from tourism?

R: There is always going to be something. That is why I started bass fishing. There aren't the masses there. It is like the movie “A River Runs through It” and how fly fishing blew up. Now it is like a battleground on the water- a battleground of recreation. When I first got here, there was plenty of space- now it blew up. I think it is because people are



getting fed up with their lives. They don't want to live in suburbia anymore. They want their own space. But really, how much space is left?

Sharing his experience with the rise in population, both tourist, local, and second home ownership, R related these changes to the loss of space and ability to pursue recreations. R's personal story expressed below was reiterated in our interviews many times. It seems to have had a large impact on R's understanding of this changing community.

I didn't notice tourists when I originally moved here. I told someone once that I had been here 10 years- they said they remembered when the roads were dirt. They were here much longer than me. Now I know what it means to live here. It used to be different here- there were less people. Now it is packed all the time. That is why I moved into the woods.

R believes that one of the features of a recreation battleground is the destruction of the forest. R, as an avid skier, well understands that skiing itself and adding to skiable acres exerts pressure on natural habitats. He also believes that the increasing number of recreation options and the related tourist influxes step up the pace of destruction. R sees the resort as a primary contributor to the problem. Over his extended time living in the area, he witnessed the previous resort owners changing the landscape of the ski area and he believed that to be a sign that the goal of the resort was to bring in the greatest number of tourists without concern of caring for the land.

When the ownership of the resort changed about 15 years ago, the whole mentality of the resort shifted. Everything changed to be about development not about skiing. It became focused on 'cutting up the forest' instead of about the soul of the sport. It wasn't just here- it felt like this happened at a lot of resorts across the country. They became focused on development and expansion without caring for the environment.

Furthermore, R experienced a personal struggle with the changing environment, one he described in the following:

When I first moved here I took a beautiful picture from the base of the resort across the street to the mountains. I thought I was being like Ansel Adams- I was inspired by how he captured nature and I thought I was doing the same thing. I couldn't wait to show my

parents back east how amazing it was here. Now if I stood in that same spot and took that same picture it would be of a mountain behind a housing development... condos and second homes. It is no longer an Ansel Adams spot.

R's reflections on the changing physical environment seemed to invoke an internal, emotion-tinged reflection, where he would think of the past and relate it to present or future developments he knows or has heard of. It became quite apparent that his original desire did not encompass an understanding of living in a recreation battleground where negative impact on the environment and reduction of individual space are realities. R's acceptance issues arise because he sees the new lifestyle connected to congestion and destruction. R's interpreted interviews reveal that he grapples with the challenges of growth.

### **"Seeing the Changing Lifestyle"**

R's story tracks the changing lifestyle of this mountain community through his own experience, as we often touched upon the different time periods of his residence in this mountain community. Within the first week of this research, it became clear that R believes the lifestyles of today and of the early 1990s when he moved to the area are significantly different. He saw three pertinent issues: a major shift at the ski resort in the 90s; increasing challenges of living in this area; and, the progression of the "ski bum."

In discussing the major change at the ski resort R said:

In the late 90's-2000's skiing lost its soul. It became concentrated on the area not skiing. Big businesses came in and saw the opportunity to make money. Not really directly related to tourism, but the businesses changed the area. They tried to push the resort to feel like a big-time resort. They made the private club, made the door with no handle that you couldn't get in, they were selling \$600,000-\$700,000 condos across from the ski area. They were trying to make money with real estate- they decided the resort was a good place to do this.

R marked this as the start of a changing lifestyle in this area. He said that once the resort business focused on real estate development and competing with the larger Colorado resorts, the

town and other businesses started to grow and change, too, which changed the lifestyle. For longtime residents, such as R, this shift gradually introduced elements of a lifestyle they had attempted to get away from. For R, the resort business position supports and represents the lifestyle fluctuation that has paved the way for the current growth prospects.

A key lifestyle shift R discussed was the increasing difficulty of simply maintaining a life in this area. To succeed financially is more difficult than it ever has been, in his view. R had always been in the restaurant business and has worked in many positions-- server, bartender, cook, and owner. He understands how difficult it is to make this place home as he has lived in rented rooms, small cabins, and now a comfortable house. He has struggled to maintain this area as his home because he values the life he can live here, enjoys the recreations, being in the woods, and living in the environment. But he also notes that it is becoming harder and harder for people in lower paying positions to financially survive.

We live a lifestyle that others want. But, others cannot give up the money and lifestyle of the place that they came from. I guess it is all about quality of life. What really is the value of money to someone? We make a decision to live here. We may all be hurting financially, but we are doing what we love. I am lucky that I am made it. The local people are changing. I am one of ten people that are still here. The local's always change- it is difficult to make it here- more difficult than when I originally came

The third lifestyle issue R identifies is the progression of the ski bum toward invisibility. R moved to and has remained in this area to ski. When he first came, that was the focus of most people here. Now, he notes, people move here for many recreations (boating, biking, running, for instance.). R notes the disappearance of "ski bums for life." Today, young people interested in being skiers/snowboarders come for a year or two, then move to a big city or return to their original homes. The ski bum lifestyle is now temporary, not permanent, as R has always felt it to be for him. In his world, work still comes second:

I think there has been a change in the mentality of the youth. Seasonal changes are more important now than they use to be. It used to be that we skied every day of the season. We were there opening day and we closed it down on the last day. It didn't matter what the snow was like or what the weather was like... we were skiing everyday- it was the most important thing for us. Now, the youth bounce between recreations. They go at the beginning of the season and get their fix- and then they are on to the next thing before the season is even over. They only want the powder days. They don't have the purity of the sport like people use to. It is no longer a ski lifestyle- it has only become cool to ski when there is powder- we use to ski on anything. It is more of a transient lifestyle now than permanent. Like college kids- they use to stay during the breaks now they leave. The youth aren't committed like they use to be.

R's observed lifestyle changes related to the focus on development starting in the 90s, the challenge of making it here, and the demise of ski bum culture. It is also apparent that lifestyles in this area are in constant flux. It is a challenge for R to accept this situation, as his decision to make this home remains rooted in the lifestyle he chose before these ongoing changes. Even his local social relationships have been affected, since people moving to this area are different from the residents he originally knew. R's interviews suggest that as tourism increases, more people want to move to this location and thus may continue to affect such undesired changes in lifestyle

### **“Hoping for the Future”**

The last category emerging from R's story is the future. Most interviews discussing the environment, business, and lifestyle ended with R speaking hopefully about the future, because (1) he sees changing management in local-based and tourism-based businesses more attentive to the continuity of the local community and environment; (2) he believes the soul of this area can return through this change in the posture of tourism businesses; and (3) he understands the necessity of accepting lifestyle change as a reality of this society and the local community.

R saw a recent change in local and tourism businesses' taking care of the local community and the environment. He identified business contributions to community events, the increase in average entry-level pay, and community action on which businesses are working

together. A business owner himself, he finds many other owners and managers of local businesses connecting on many levels to encourage community involvement, sustainability, and congenial relationships.

People in this town have been really trying to come together. It seems like the business owners are trying to help others. Look what happened to that guy that got hurt kayaking- the town is coming together to raise money to pay his health bills. Or look what happened when [restaurant] burnt down, the town came together to raise money to help the wait staff financially. In times of crisis we are strong- and getting stronger. We are still a small town no matter how much we grow- we still need to take care of our own. We are still trying to be a 'real' town- not a town that is focused on tourism. Look how all the stuff is developing on the outskirts of town. We are working to help the locals.

Although R believes that the soul of this area may never be exactly what it once was, he thinks some soul can be restored if businesses successfully reposition themselves to care for locals and the environment along with tourists. R specifically spoke about this in relation to changes made by the ski resort's new owner.

Think about all the new guy has done- he has changed the name, increased snowmaking, increased grooming, and added a new chair. Maybe this guy will lead the resort to getting its soul back. It needs to be about skiing- about having fun and being with your family. I really think the new owner is bringing the soul back. The soul used to be there with the old lodge and the old feel of the place. There are still some businesses around that represent the Colorado heyday of "ski bumming." Back when you could make it in a mountain community. I really think we could be moving in that direction soon- at least I hope so.

Lastly, R explicitly recognized reality: as much as he may try to move away from growth or find a new, less popular recreation, he also needs to accept that the area is growing and that a changing lifestyle is becoming permanent. Below, R reflects on personally adapting while remaining hopeful that a bit of the old lifestyle will come back. In this specific interview, R became very reflective. I could tell that he was internally realizing how this area has changed, where it is headed, and how he can make an impact on the future.

Tourism is continuously increasing in the whole place ... at the resort and in town. We are not just dependent on tourism, but it is a huge part of the area. It seems like there is always a push of people that want to come here... it is never stopping. People visit as tourists, then decide to live here. Like a Maui theory kind of thing... people like it so much that they move here. The more that people hear the name- and how great it is here- the more that people want to come. As locals, we have to be ok with this. We need tourism to sustain the amount of people that want to live here. And, we have to realize that we moved here for the same reason. We have to be ok with this....

Tourists get a bad rap. Locals need to realize how lucky they are to live here. I think some locals are mean to tourists. Some have an attitude. Think about the groups at the base lodge or at the local events in town- even my friends. We always sit in a circle with each other only. We are pushing everyone out. We have to be friendly. We have to be ok with the way this place is changing.

Despite R's strong belief that the area has changed in many ways associated with tourism growth and development, he is hopeful for the future, especially regarding the possibilities brought by new tourism business management and the potential participation of each local community member in working for the future.

### **Being a Tourist's Story: "Trying to Belong"**

The tourist story chosen for this chapter encompasses all the major categories and concepts that emerged in my semi-structured interviews with tourist informants. S is a repeat visitor to this area from the east coast. She visits friends and family every other year or so. I had three interviews with this informant, thus taking advantage of the ability to theoretically sample as needed. The data represented here is from interviews with S, as well as interviews with other tourists. Each of my interviews with S lasted from 30-60 minutes and were conducted in person or on the phone.

S is a white, middle-class, early 30s female passionate about her family and friends, her job, and her ability to successfully move forward with her life. She currently lives in a larger New England city and is in the process of moving to a recreation community on the east coast not unlike the community of this study. Her story is the most compelling of all my tourist

interviews as she continuously shared her personal perspective of transitioning from being a tourist to being an aspiring local, along the way exemplifying most vividly the acceptance issues associated with such a change, as well as abstractly reflecting on her life decisions as a tourist. Although S can be considered an atypical tourist since she is choosing to become a resident of a tourism-based location, I elected to present her story since she is a tourist who has progressed through both first-time and repeat visitor status and has been challenged by acceptance issues first associated with being a tourist and then with moving to a new place identified with tourism. Her somewhat atypical story represents a reflection of life decisions, the challenges of being a tourist, and the decision-making processes of becoming a repeat visitor or second home-owner and then looking to become a local. S's story is rich in insight as to how a tourist to this society perceives and feels about local residents and how these feelings impact making life changes and rethinking life decisions.<sup>10</sup>

S is a beginner skier who has participated in recreation here beyond winter sports. She has visited this area in both summer and winter and has spent time on the mountain and in town. S's main interactions and relationships with locals hinge on her interest in belonging. She has expressed to me that as a tourist she is looking to belong to the community she is traveling to, and, as someone who will be moving to a tourist-based area, she thinks she will experience similar challenges of acceptance. She believes the challenge with local and tourist relationships here and in other environments is wrapped in the lack of acceptance by locals of tourists, whether or not this is justified. The tourist acceptance challenges are supported through three

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<sup>10</sup> All of my tourist informants were like S, however, in that they did not confine their observations to this area but talked about other places they had visited, compared their home environment with this area, and described what it was like to be a tourist in other places they had been regardless of my attempts to confine discussions to this local society. Therefore, most interview excerpts are broader in focus than those taken from the interviews of R and T in this chapter.

main categories that emerged in my interviews with S --wanting to know the lifestyle, being curious about negative perceptions of tourists, and making the move. All of these categories were strengthened by material from my other tourist interviews, which build on the relevant categories and concepts emergent in S's narrative.

In this section, the ethnographic frame is slightly broken to incorporate a discussion of second home-owners. Bridging the participant observation data analysis findings with my interview findings were a way to draw out differences from and parallels with S's narrative. Including such related content from other methodologies is a way to not only add dimensions to S's story but also to include all sub-groups of the tourist population.

### **“Wanting to Know the Lifestyle”**

S expressed to me that as a tourist she and others want to know the lifestyle here, both the characteristics needed for membership in the local group and the intricacies related to everyday life and life decisions. She believes this is an important impulse for travel itself, wanting to know and experience the lifestyles of the traveled to place. Her desire for this is most immediately evident in her concern about her appearance, her conscious intent to fit in with the local community, and in the very decision to travel in order to experience what it is like to be a local. These three categories form the “wanting to know the lifestyle” concept.

S expressed her need to know the lifestyle by looking like a member of the local community when she skied or participated in other recreations, attempting to match the acceptable and popular clothing choices. She described her initial choice of bright, unmatched colors guided by the hopes that this was what locals considered “cool.” S went so far as to ask her spouse, who had spent more time skiing, if she looked appropriate and if she matched locals'



choices, thus reducing her likelihood of sticking out in a crowd. When we discussed this, S surmised that all tourists want to look like locals to some extent, even citing her mother, who wanted to be perceived as a local rather than a tourist during a recent trip to Europe.

As soon as I asked her about this she mentioned her mom. Her mom is in Europe for a week and she said her mom was concerned that she was going to look like a tourist. Her mom said she doesn't want to be a tourist but wants to fit in with the locals.

Another informant, G, who periodically visits friends and family here, also expressed the commitment to the same appearance as the local community. Discussing the difference between locals' choice of dress compared to tourists, he mentioned that you can tell the difference because only tourists wear clothing clearly associated with other places they may not have visited, almost as if to flaunt it, whereas residents only wear clothing of places they have lived or truly experienced.

He said one of the things he noticed is how tourists look different. He owns a hat from Jackson Hole that someone had given him when they took a trip there. (OC- He has never been there.) He thinks that if he wore it with the locals in [a tourist-based environment] they would ask him if he had lived there at one point. It is almost as if it is 'posing' for someone to wear a piece of clothing of another place that they had never experienced fully. But he thinks you always see tourists wearing names of ski resorts- and they may wear them even if they have never been there. G suggested that the use of names on clothing suggests a difference between locals and tourists. To give an example, he asked how many locals have I seen wearing a piece of clothing with this resorts name on it compared to tourists? G suggested that many tourists will wear the name- even if they didn't ski on their trip. Similarly, G asked that I think about someone with all the stickers on their car, suggesting that-they most likely haven't been to half of them. It is this idea that there is a difference between showcasing where you experienced or lived, like he thinks locals would do; or just pretending, like he thinks tourists do.

The second way S and other tourist informants expressed valuing the local lifestyle was by trying to fit in on multiple levels during a stay, something S identified as especially important for really experiencing the lifestyle and feeling safe in the new environment. She felt that the more completely you fit in, the less likely are local people to see you as different and act differently toward you. As noted in Chapter 6, I observed many tourists attempting to belong by

starting conversations with locals or collecting items that seem to represent the nostalgia and romance of skiing. In this excerpt, S discusses how challenging it is to fit in, especially in relation to the fear she has as a tourist about to become resident in a tourism-based community.

S said that she thinks most tourists aren't wanted by locals, meaning locals really would rather not have tourists in their communities, but tourists want to know what it is like to be a local in that place. She said she hears that locals in tourist-based locations say they have to change their daily routines in the tourist seasons, for example they can't shop at the local grocery store because the prices are too high and it is too busy because of the number of tourists there. S shares that she has heard people say that the tourists are annoying and that locals and local businesses try to screw tourists. She is nervous because she does not want to be viewed as a tourist. She feels like she will be on other people's turf and she doesn't belong. She wants to figure out how to fit in.

Less intimidated, perhaps, by the challenges associated with fitting in, another multi-time visitor, M, made it clear that fitting in and really learning about the local community was her main travel focus.

M shared that fitting in to the local community while traveling is a really important aspect of the experience, for both her and her husband. They always try to find a running race to participate in, a recreation of the season that the locals would be partaking in, or a local restaurant/bar to hang out at. M said it is important for her while traveling to experience what life would be like in that location- she wants to know the environment and the people who choose to live there. M feels this is an important part of traveling- it is about education. For her and her family, educating themselves about the culture and the geographic area is extremely important to really understanding who the people are there and how they are similar to or different from her.

Lastly, S and other tourist informants believed that in order to know the traveled to lifestyle associated with this area they need to go beyond appearance and making connections to actually trying to live the life locals have chosen. One first-time visitor, F, expressed this:

F said as a tourist he believes that his role is to take everything in and to ski/snowboard as much as he possibly can. Basically, to drink it all and soak it all in. (OC- I think he was trying to say that his role as a tourist was to enjoy every moment and to get the most out of it as possible. And, to really experience what the people who live here do on a daily basis, to truly live the life the locals do regardless of the time frame he is here.)

Going a little deeper, M suggested that people here have a certain feeling about the place and that to have the full travel experience tourists would have to have and express those feelings, in the way that she found locals to be ‘generally outgoing, and...they really love where they live.’ Tourists who really want to know the lifestyle need to understand why people would want to live here and what the experience of living here entails. M expanded on this by making suggestions for the resort. She considers herself a good skier but out of practice. She thinks that if the resort catered to different levels of skiing she would have more access to the trails and be able to spend more time skiing, thus participating more fully in one of the locals’ more favored recreations. If the mountain provided differing levels of terrain, everyone could participate together, co-existing in a shared recreational reality for a time, allowing tourists to experience a key part of the lifestyle the locals value.

M feels her role in all of ski/snowboard culture is to get back to it, be a part of it again. She believes that the resort should keep the mountain user friendly so that it can be accessible for all levels. M thinks they should focus on beginner terrain for both skiers and snowboarders instead of keeping it inclusive as it is now. (OC- Basically, she is saying that they need to think about everyone that will be using the mountain so everyone can participate together while skiing or snowboarding.)

Most tourist narratives identified a desire to know and fully experience the lifestyle on some level. S, G, M, and F were typical in wanting to know the lifestyle by managing their appearance, trying to belong by making multiple connections, and seeking to experience the lifestyle completely. Thus, S constantly asked herself: Do I look like a local? How can I fit into the local community? Does my travel experience reflect the locals’ experience?

### **“Being Curious About Negative Perceptions of Tourists”**

Another aspect of trying to belong as a visiting member of this society is being aware of and curious about the negative persona of the tourist. As a member of the tourist group trying to

belong to a local population, S questions whether the negative reputation of the tourist population is justified. S felt that, if it is not justified, the tourist group should not be considered a burden or interference in the locals' world. This was an interesting topic to many tourists since it touched directly upon their ability to belong, to be accepted by the local population.

This concept about the curiosity of the negative perception of the tourist image emerged from four categories: 1) attaching a stigma to tourists; 2) failing to see that people live here; 3) questioning tourist care for the place; and 4) being a hindrance to full-time residents. Only category three reflects a particularity of tourists rather than locals.

In each of S's interviews, she questioned whether local residents were right to stigmatize the tourist population as a negative element in their local scene. We discussed the idea that in many places in the world, areas completely different from the traveler's own, there may be justification for the negative valuation of the tourist population because tourists' differences from locals may be quite extreme and their impact on local cultures may be much more noticeable than in a U.S.-based location.

S said there are definitely negative stigmas of tourists out there because tourists visit people's homes for short periods of time. S is not sure if the stigmas are justified because she doesn't live in a tourist-based community, but from her experience she never thought it was justified. However, after she talked to locals in the town she wants to move to and reevaluated her travel experiences, she thinks it may be justified because of the ways the local population need to alter their life during certain time frames. She thinks this town is not as welcoming as the town she is moving to. She suggested it may be because she is seen more as a tourist here, there is more tourism here, or there are more tourists that have a negative impact on the life here.

This was further supported by a repeat tourist, H, when he noted the significance of tourists expecting service because they have paid to be at the destination. H believes this contributes to the negative tourist perception because it reminds the local population that *'it all*

*goes back to money. They spend the money to be there so they want the service.* ' H proposes that locals may harbor a negative view of the entire tourist population based on this:

When he travels, H tries to make sure not to act like other tourists he has seen. He has been surprised at how rude tourists can be. H thinks that tourists pretend to know more than others working in the traveled to place; they think they are the experts and know more than the person working. H has seen tourists treating locals badly – almost looking down on them. H has decided he does not want to be like that.

The second category that emerged to support this aggregate category is the idea, expressed by S, that the negative image associated with tourists may be related to the perception that many tourists seem to be unaware that people actually live in these locales, that tourists' destinations are more than tourist amenities and experiences and services, as if the real people involved cease to exist when not servicing tourists. S explained that once she decided to move to a tourism-based area, another reason she wanted to be viewed as a local is because she believes if she is viewed as a tourist she will be associated with the kind of people above, people who do not invest in the place.

S thinks people that visit or only show up to work for the season don't invest as much care in the place as someone who lives there full time. It is not just about skiing for her, she wants to move there permanently for many reasons. ....It seems that a lot of people that visit don't take it seriously, they don't realize that people actually live there. Many tourists are fans of that place, but they don't really invest in it or realize that the local community is actually invested; that the area is more than a tourist haven.

A first-time tourist, U, reflected on how some people who travel just think about themselves and fail to recognize the actual, full communities that make up the area they are in. He said:

It is like a tourist would never even think to live there. They don't think you can actually live in these places. U suggested that tourists often forget that people need to live here to provide the amenities.

My informant F supported this idea when he shared that he really didn't interact with or see locals while visiting this location. He even went so far as to suggest that the local community does not play much of a role in the functioning of a major tourist attraction.

When asked about the local/tourist relationship, F said that when he was here he saw no major interactions between locals and tourists. And that he thinks the locals don't really have a role in the resort.

M's narrative supported this view:

M believes that the resort should focus on more activities beyond skiing at the mountain. The resort and other tourism businesses need more amenities beyond the actual recreation of skiing. They need to realize that some tourists aren't everyday skiers so they need more things to do. Tourists do not always want to go to town to do things if they don't want to ski. If the resort offered more options, the tourists could stay up there.

I asked M how she thinks this could impact the local community.

M shared that she doesn't think expanded terrain or expanded recreation options will impact the local community much at all. She said there is a community doing the recreation already- expansion should not impact them. M said it would just be a way for the resort to make more money by increasing business. It would impact the locals by providing more jobs, but the impact would really be financially for the resort and other tourism businesses.

This category supports the participant observation category from Chapter 6 where tourists' sometimes have unreasonable service expectations. All of my tourist informants that were interviewed, although not always recognizing that the local population was a part of the environment beyond the service, were supportive and sympathetic to the local community during our discussions.

The third category is, in a sense, the locals' side of the category above: questioning tourists' genuine care of and respect for not only the people but also the place they visit. As S and I talked about this, she recognized that people who travel are usually not invested in their destination physically, emotionally or financially. The result is a lack of concern about the area and a lack of understanding of local residents. S suggested that many tourists may be "fans" of

the places they travel to but they do not devote energy to care for these places and thus remain a distinct step away from the local community and the natural environment.

This concept extends the Chapter 6 categories and related examples exploring the tourist population's tendency to disregard the environment, excess litter being one example of that; and also, second home-owners' choice against becoming full-time residents because of a perceived lack of work related to their profession or uncertainty of success in this location. While my field notes reflected that second homeowners invest in and contribute to the economy through property taxes and spending, they do so without making the full commitment to the community, remaining a distinct step removed.

The specifics of the perception of the negative image of tourists' lack of care were attached to their impact on the housing market, environment, and expectations of the local community in the service field. Conversations with second home-owners and tourists suggested that second home-owners and both first-time and repeat tourists did not view themselves as failing to care for this environment or community. Their comments did, however, suggest why the local community might feel this way as most locals have made direct, obvious, personal investments in the area, a fundamental commitment to its longevity, success, and protection.

These conversations and interviews are also connected to the last category, which concerns how tourists can be viewed as a hindrance to full-time residents. As S and I discussed changes to the local community due to travel influxes, she felt compelled to share conversations she had had with local community members in other tourist destinations, who identified tourism as a hindrance through increased pollution and congestion.

S suggested that there may actually be some truth to the locals' negative opinion of the tourists. It seems that there are a lot of tough aspects involved in choosing to live in

tourist-based communities- hard to get into a restaurant, can't go to town, roads are busy, recreations are crowded, etc. To S, it seems like tourists may really be a hindrance to the full-time resident. (OC- When we started this topic in the conversation it seemed like S did not believe that tourists should be viewed as negative, although she was aware that some locals held this bias. Here, at the end of the conversation, she seems to have decided that tourists can be a hindrance- and it seemed to make her nostalgic reflecting on her personal role in the tourist population during her travel experiences.)

G offered further support when he mentioned noticing separations in bars, where local and tourist groups stay in distinct areas unless a tourist decides to talk to a local. He further observed that locals position themselves based on where the tourists are, intending to avoid them. G's observation is a simple example of how the local community may feel that the tourist population can be a hindrance to their daily activities because their presence is connected to changing performance and behaviors within any social setting. G even suggested that the interiors of service businesses look different when there are different numbers of tourists, for example when there are less tourists the distance between the local and tourist groups are not as pronounced as when there are large numbers of tourists; or, when there are larger numbers of tourists, local groups may be nonexistent in the settings altogether.

Many tourists and second home-owners linked local perception of the negative image of tourists with issues of acceptance. In all of our conversations, S questioned whether the negative tourist image was warranted, but also saw the possible justification in the tourist tendency to miss the fact that people actually live in the community, understanding that many locals may have reason to perceive that tourists don't care about the environment and believe, from experience, that tourist flows hinder the daily lives of full-time residents.

### **“Making the Move”**

Unique to S's story was her position as a tourist moving toward residency in a tourism-based community. This important aspect of her narrative touched upon a change occurring in this community, as well, insofar as population is growing as people move to the area because of the



lifestyle. Further, S's unique story offers some insight into possible decision-making processes of second home-owners and into how tourists' and locals' lifestyle choices can change.

The concept of "making the move" is uniquely connected to S's story, but is important not only as a prominent part of our talks but also as a help in painting a fuller picture of the tourist/local relationship. S's story of questioning, fear, and apprehension surrounding her desire to live in a similar tourism-based community made her story compelling as she contemplated the importance of belonging and the problematic negative image associated with being a tourist. The "making the move" concept developed from three emergent categories: 1) wanting a simpler life; 2) feeling like I don't belong; and, 3) showing locals I will make a commitment.

The first category that emerged to develop the "making the move" concept was wanting a simpler life. S was straightforward about this aspect of her move, saying that she wants a simpler life and is interested in experiencing the lifestyle she has witnessed as a frequent visitor in the community where she intends to live. She also wants to connect to the community of residents there.

S wants to move to that location because she wants a different lifestyle. She doesn't want to struggle with the things she has been struggling with and instead wants simpler living. She wants to be able to stay home more. She feels if she moves there she will make her own fun and will go out less for entertainment. She is excited to not be in a city but to be in the woods. She thinks it will be a huge transition for her because it is slower-paced, like the community of this study, and the values and behaviors of the local community members seem to be different than in the city where she lives now. The perceived lifestyle she believes is connected to the tourist-based society is driving her to move there.

In a similar vein, the two second homeowners identified in Chapter 6 explained how they wish they had had the ability to spend more time in this community prior to retirement or partial-retirement. They both suggested that people who can live here without strong desires to make money or to be successful in their field are lucky because they are free to enjoy the beautiful

environment and relaxed atmosphere. Conversations with these two second home-owners directly paralleled S's perception that local community members live an ideal life, which is what drives some tourists' desires to spend more time in locations such as this.

S made it clear that although she wanted to, she did not feel that she belonged when being a tourist. She felt that locals viewed her as a tourist and she did not feel successful at fitting within any groups and sub-groups that make up the local community. Even as she is committed to moving permanently into a similar tourism-based location within the next year, she felt frustrated by being viewed as a tourist in that or any similar community. S would like to feel that she belongs in the new community like she belongs in her current home community. She does, however, understand that it is difficult for locals to view her as anything other than a tourist until she makes the move.

Right now, when she visits the place that she will be moving to, she feels like she is being brushed off as they still see her as if she was a tourist. S wants someone to recognize that she is making the move there; that she is making the conscious decision to move from one group (tourist group) to the other group (local group). She said she went up the other day during off season and someone recognized her at the bar. She said she was proud that they realized that she was still there- she hadn't given up on the place.

She further stated that.....

S is sick of not feeling like she doesn't belong- she is really trying and she doesn't realize why it is so tough to be accepted.

S also believes that a key requirement of making the move is showing the locals that she wants to and can make the commitment to the area. S's expression of how important this is developed this category as a strong example of how the ability to demonstrate assurance can change the local/tourist relationship.

She thinks she gets respect because she continues to visit in the off-season. She is telling the locals she has met that she is serious about moving there, that she is actually going to do it. She feels once she makes a commitment to the new environment then she will be

taken seriously. She can't just talk about it, she actually needs to do it to prove to the local community that she cares about that place.

S's narrative is supported by M, who observed that tourists can't really make a commitment to the area until they are full-time residents:

M said that a person can only make a full commitment to a specific place if they live there. She continued: anyone that is visiting a location can try to join the community for a short time frame by picking up the local newspaper and participating in local events or shopping at local businesses, trying to help the community where they can. But people cannot be 100% committed to a place unless they move there. However, M believes that every tourist has a responsibility to commit in some way to a local community while traveling because it is every person's responsibility to be good to each other and to this earth. (OC- M was very passionate about being kind and respectful regardless of spending time in one's home environment or in a traveled to environment.)

S believes that a major way that travelers can be accepted is through understanding locals' reasoning for living in a locale—and then possibly deciding to make the same move. The feeling that she would like to but does not belong to the residential community drives her willingness to show locals she will make a commitment by moving because she wants a simpler life, the kind of life she perceives theirs to be. To some degree, second home-owners also glimpse the possibility of that simpler life and thus try to make a commitment to the local community, although not full-time.

### **Being a Decision-Makers Story: “Dealing with the Challenges of Change”**

The tourism business decision-maker story I offer in this section encompasses all of the major categories and concepts that emerged in my interview process with informants whom I, or they themselves, classified as tourism business managers or decision-makers. T has worked in tourism businesses in ski towns for more than twenty years and in this town for more than fifteen. For the past two years, he has held a prominent position in the city tourism office, where he coordinates initiatives to increase and expand the tourism market. The data presented here is

from one hour-long interview in his office. I did not have the opportunity to theoretically sample. However, the data is supplemented by interview notes from other informants in the tourist business decision-maker population, whose insights made some contribution to these categories. It is the case, however, that only T commented on the social aspects of tourism; other informants tended to remain focused on the economics of tourism in this area.

T is an avid recreation enthusiast well known in town for his support of tourism endeavors, his actions to increase the economic benefits of tourism in this area, and his participation in tourism endeavors in both town and resort. I chose T's story in part because he is spearheading the current movement to increase tourism and in part because he knows tourism business decision-makers well and has had the opportunity to understand and explore many aspects of this community as a member of different boards and groups.

T's main interpretation of the interactions and relationships between locals and tourists can be distilled into the challenges of change and acceptance. As a member of the local community who is a proponent of development, he confronts the task of convincing the local community to accept tourism and tourism growth. T perceives acceptance issues to be connected to the diversification of tourism offerings, the changing social fabric of the area, and locals' personal reluctance to change. The tourist business management challenge is monitoring and managing acceptance issues in this local society, reflected here in three main categories that emerged from my interview with T and gained support from other tourism business manager interview comments: 1) being/marketing a unique place; 2) overcoming local reluctance to change; and 3) making decisions about the future of the community.

### **“Being/Marketing a Unique Place”**

This category reflects T’s view that this area faces challenges not shared by similar areas in other parts of the country. Three categories that reflect the challenges associated with this specific area are: being a small, Colorado recreation community; working to become a more diverse area; and reliance on the natural environment.

First, T sees challenges of change particular to a smaller recreation community in Colorado. Importantly, state funding and support allocations are simply less than larger recreation-based locales enjoy. T highlighted differences from the area nearest Denver and the fact that the size of this location and the availability of funds means local tourism business decision-makers must either compete with a big city or just ride on its coattails. The challenge that T sees is how to position this area uniquely to positively reach into new markets to earn a proprietary share of the travel to this state.

We are a small ship in a big wake. The Denver area is the area that really holds the tourism in this state and we receive some impact from there. The thing is we have so many different things to offer here- we are different because we have all the recreation that is [there] and we have the [culture and history] aspect [that is here].

T also identified the challenge of working to become a more diverse region, increasing tourism by offering more options for tourists. In the interview, he presented growing tourist options as economically imperative.

[The resort] and skiing is not the only winter attraction here. We have so much to offer. 70% of our hotel rooms in town are sold in the spring and summer. Basically, this means that we cannot get people to come to town in the winter- most likely because the families can’t come because of school. So, we have to work on conferences or group things to build tourism in the winter. .... We are a multi-dimensional community. ‘Diversification saves our economy’ we need all of these industries to survive.

The prominent manager of a tourism business in town, P, offered a similar point of view by noting that in his twelve years working in tourism businesses here he has seen offerings to the tourist population significantly increase. P's company has been in existence for long enough that it has more than once refocused service/recreation options and marketing efforts. P does not view a resulting increase in competition between recreations or amenities as negative, but instead he sees the growth as positive with the development of more diverse travel experiences to actively meet growing interest in tourism.

Another unique aspect of this area is how closely recreation offerings are tied to the natural environment. In response, T and other tourism business decision-makers are trying to envision attractions less dependent on the natural environment. When recreations are weather- and environment-dependent, there is little to fall back on if the environment changes unpredictably. T thinks the way to meet this challenge is for the local community and local businesses to understand and accept this reality as a first step in making the appropriate changes to support the economy with less weather reliant recreation and tourism offerings.

An issue with tourism in this area is that it is natural amenity driven. All of our tourism surrounds natural recreation- so anyone can open a boating company with a boat, or a jeeping company with a jeep. People don't understand that all we have here is based on the recreation- so we are dependent on weather and changes to the environment. It would make more sense to expand beyond this to get people to travel here at different times.

From my discussions with T and other business decision-makers dedicated to tourism, it became apparent that the unique aspects of this area pose both opportunities and challenges that must be addressed—being a small ship in the wake of a big city, acting to diversify offerings, and moving away from complete dependence on the natural environment.

## **“Overcoming Local Reluctance to Change”**

T’s story reflects the perception that the local community’s reluctance to change is a major challenge for business decision-makers. T understood the local community as resistant on many levels: they reject congestion from expansion and development, they lack understanding of the importance of tourism to the local society, and in his view, some conclude that they want to close the door on tourism entirely.

T identifies reluctance to change as rooted in congestion, expansion, and development already experienced. It seems that all three rise with tourism, making the local community ever more reluctant to support any efforts to grow tourism. T was quite aware of the social aspects and personalized nature of this resistance:

Most locals don’t want to increase tourism through taxes because a lot of them don’t want tourism to increase. Tourism changes the social fabric of areas, and people don’t want that. They complain about congestion and want to close the doors to any development. .... T mentioned that somewhere else he lived was faced with the same issues, the local population was complaining that they couldn’t get their parking spot in front of their favorite restaurant because tourists were coming in... He suggested: ‘talk about changing the social system.’

Second, T and all other tourism business decision-maker informants suggested that the local community’s strong resistance to change comes from a lack of understanding of the positive contribution tourism brings to this area, especially economically.

But they don’t understand how much tourism helps our economy. They don’t understand that every business in this area is technically dependent on tourism. I said R’s business is definitely indirectly dependent on tourism. T started discussing more that he could convince anyone that the hardware store is dependent on tourism. But people really don’t want to expand at all. They just don’t want more tourism here because they don’t understand.....I asked if he thought locals were anti-development and anti-tourists. He said definitely anti-development but wanted to know if I thought they were anti-tourism-I said yes because people don’t want to share their mountain or their river. T said the local community just doesn’t understand that if tourists don’t ski or don’t use the river then they won’t be able to live here. He said locals really don’t understand the economy; locals fail to understand what tourism does for this area.

As to some members of the local community rejecting tourism entirely, T mentioned that he has made many suggestions for increasing tourism in this area, especially through options not so reliant on natural resources, but even these environmentally aware ideas were met with a great deal of opposition.

T said he would really like to put in a big conference center. One that people would be interested in coming to for big events- this would help build tourism in other time frames and would move the tourism to be less dependent on natural resources.... T also thinks it would be a good idea to put a large field for sports. His only issue is that there is no money to put into this. The parks and recreation department is concerned with providing the parks and recreation for the community- that is their job to provide for the locals. Most people do not know that. And, he can't ask for help from the city because some city council members want to close the door on tourism all together.

Discussions with T and other tourism business decision-makers made it apparent that all saw their second major challenge as the local community's reluctance to change, rooted in underappreciation of tourism's economic benefits and dislike of the social implications of the congestion and expansion it brings, resulting, for many, in a complete, and perhaps implacable, rejection of tourism.

### **“Making Decisions About the Future of the Community”**

The final challenge T's story suggests is about where this town will go in the future. T is currently focused on building an alternative infrastructure open to tourists and not reliant on natural resources, while at the same time working to convince locals that tourism growth will economically benefit all.

The infrastructural centerpiece was a non-recreational building imagined and thought about at the time of my fieldwork-- a convention center or other facility to accommodate various events. T and other tourism decision-makers thought such a facility to be the next step in



solidifying for the town a successful tourism-based identity while contributing economically to all local community members, indirectly or directly.

B, another business decision-maker I interviewed also prioritized building, as he saw tourism to be in a growth stage that should be focused on attracting market segments that were not being touched. B pointed to tourists staying in smaller towns near this location because of a lack of knowledge of this town's offerings despite those towns offering less to do and see. He was adamant that tapping those markets by broadening this town's tourism marketing reach, or by increasing the tourism options (i.e., more infrastructure to support different reasons for travel here) would contribute to the future economy of this area.

Recognizing that it would not be possible to move forward with a facility such as a convention center without local embrace of tourism, T said it was important for him to convince the local community members of the positive impact tourism has on their livelihoods. T spoke about the first step in helping the local community work through acceptance issues:

And, then if they (the potential funders) want the local community involved that would have to change the positioning of the conference center... maybe call it a community center so that the locals will be all for it... or put up a theater and tell the locals that the high school students can use it and then every once in a while they will get someone outside to come in and use it.... it is all about how they position it. It is a political thing for this city but it is very difficult to convince the local population that the development is worth it economically.

T and other tourism business decision-makers saw that the last major challenge of change in this local society was connected to making decisions about the future. T and other business decision-makers felt that tourism growth is a positive thing but only possible if changes are made to the tourism infrastructure in this area, e.g., through less dependency on natural resources, and only if workable strategies are devised to convince the local population about the importance and benefits of tourism-related changes.

## Closing Thoughts

This chapter has further refined the broad picture of this community presented in Chapter 5. Here I focused on how the growth of tourism can impact local/tourist relationships and interactions and intensify issues of acceptance for each group. The emergent categories used to interpret these groups' relations exemplify how locals' acceptance challenges center on a changing lifestyle and how tourists experience acceptance issues related to their ability to belong to the community.

The local story suggests that, for residents, their resistance to tourism has much to do with a desire to recapture some of the soul, or historic lifestyle, of the area, possibly through a reduction in tourism or, for some, and to end it altogether. These findings empirically support Doxey (1975), Nash (1977, 1989), and Ponting & McDonald (2013) through findings that identify the locals' way of life changing due to increasing tourist presence in the area and, as a result, growing inability to accept a large tourist population.

The tourist story bases their relationship with the local community on belonging, being accepted into the community. The findings provide empirical evidence of the challenges of belonging associated with the unwanted gaze of the local upon the tourist (Urry, 1990) notably experienced by S and causing her to reflect on and question the perception of the negative opinions of tourists. Furthermore, the findings of this chapter support the literature that addresses the impact of second home-owners on local communities (Bright, 2011; Hall & Muller, 2004), particularly through S's comments on reasons a tourist would choose to become a full-time resident or purchase a second home being related to the desire for acceptance coupled with affinity for the lifestyle.

The tourism business decision-makers favoring tourism growth, identify challenges associated with attempting to encourage the acceptance of tourists among locals who have definite points of resistance. T's story supports and extends the tourism development literature that addresses growth (Butler, 1980) and irritation (Doxey, 1975) by empirically supporting the link between tourism infrastructure development and local reluctance to accept changes in community lifestyle. The findings also identify intents to 1) better market uniqueness and diversify offerings and 2) reposition tourism for locals through new infrastructure that respects the environment, regardless of locals' dedication to being against it.

The stories of the local, tourist, and tourism business decision-maker informants I interviewed thus confirm that increased tourism activity has intensified acceptance issues in this growing society and then clarify the underlying nature of acceptance challenges, thus contributing to the understanding of this aspect of the holistic picture of this local society.

## CHAPTER 8

### LOCAL/TOURIST/TOURISM BUSINESS CONNECTIONS:

### TOURISM CAUSES DEVELOPMENT DISAGREEMENT

#### **Introduction: Understanding the Tourism Business Role in this Society**

In this chapter, I finish pulling apart the broad view of this community discussed in chapter 5 by considering the last piece of the puzzle, the relationship between tourism businesses and each of the two other groups, the local community and the tourist population. The focus is on how tourism can lead to disagreements about development (i.e., tourism infrastructure development, real estate development, new business/service development, community institution development, and land development) between each group and tourism-based business decision-makers. The findings in this chapter describe a relationship between tourism-based businesses and the local community based on disagreement over development and a relationship with the tourist population based on building the relationship and strategizing and managing infrastructure (i.e., adding amenities and diversifying services).

These findings rely primarily upon collection and analysis of data from secondary sources, a process that leads me to argue that exploration of the actual dynamics of disagreements between the local community and tourism business decision-makers identify that the local population possesses some power regarding tourism development. This finding partly supports and partly contests the literature that assumes power is held by gatekeepers and released by means of formal political power (Hall, 1994, 2010a; Reiter, 1977), insofar as my analysis finds that gatekeepers are not necessarily the tourism decision-makers or others who hold formal political power, but can instead or also be the local community. In addition, my findings

empirically support the tourism and power literature that contends social power is exercised by individuals or institutions that control tourism (Cheong & Miller, 2000; Hall, 2010; Hollinshead, 1999; Hollinshead & Kuon, 2013; Jordan & Aitchinson, 2008; Urry, 1990), insofar as I find that social power can impact decision-making about and the success of tourism development efforts.

During my immersion in the field, I constantly collected secondary sources whose content represented all groups and subgroups. The objective of this chapter is to “unpack” the categories and concepts that emerged from collection and analysis of this data in order to understand the discourses of tourism development that make it possible to answer the third question depicted in Figure 10: *what/how/why is happening between the locals and tourists and the tourism businesses?* (Figure 9 depicts a sub-section from Figure 1.)

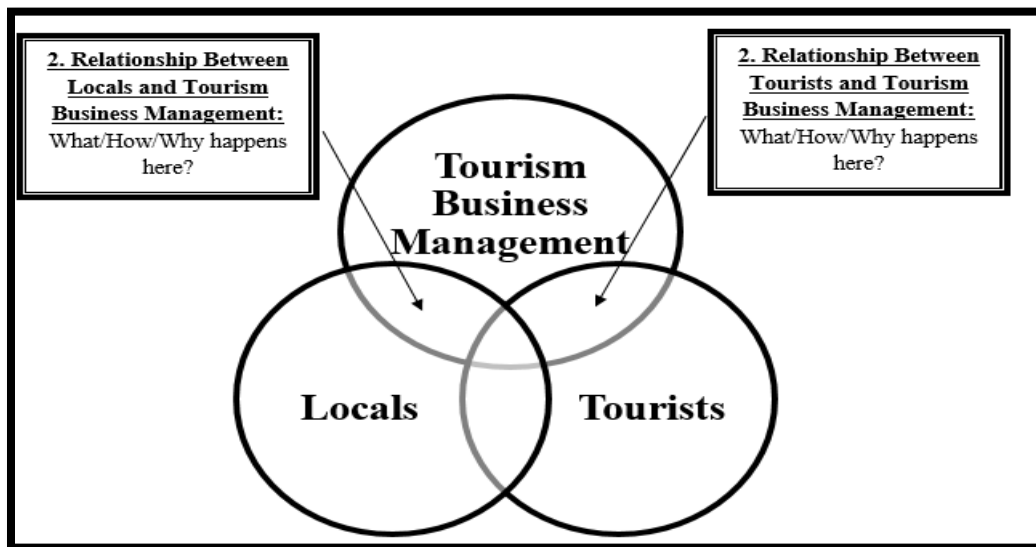


Figure 10: Understanding the tourism business relationships

As with the other methods used in my research, the process of collecting and analyzing secondary source documents led to the emergence of significant analytical concepts and categories, in this instance those relevant to the local/tourism business and tourist/tourism

business connections. I identify the connection of the categories as a way to present the third part of my theoretical model.

I reviewed more than 100 secondary sources, which included official city documents, city council meeting minutes, newspaper and magazine articles, real estate documents, websites, resort documents, historical books/documents, marketing pamphlets, notes from tourism expansion meetings, vision statements for the town and prominent businesses, real estate blogs, and zoning documents. The documents ranged from one to 250 pages in length and spanned the period from 1960 to 2016. The data reduction process yielded 58 usable documents, and provided content coded into 17 first order categories, 6 aggregate categories, and 3 emergent concepts. Figure 11 summarizes the first order categories, aggregate categories, and emergent concepts on which I built the relationship structures that pertain to tourism development.

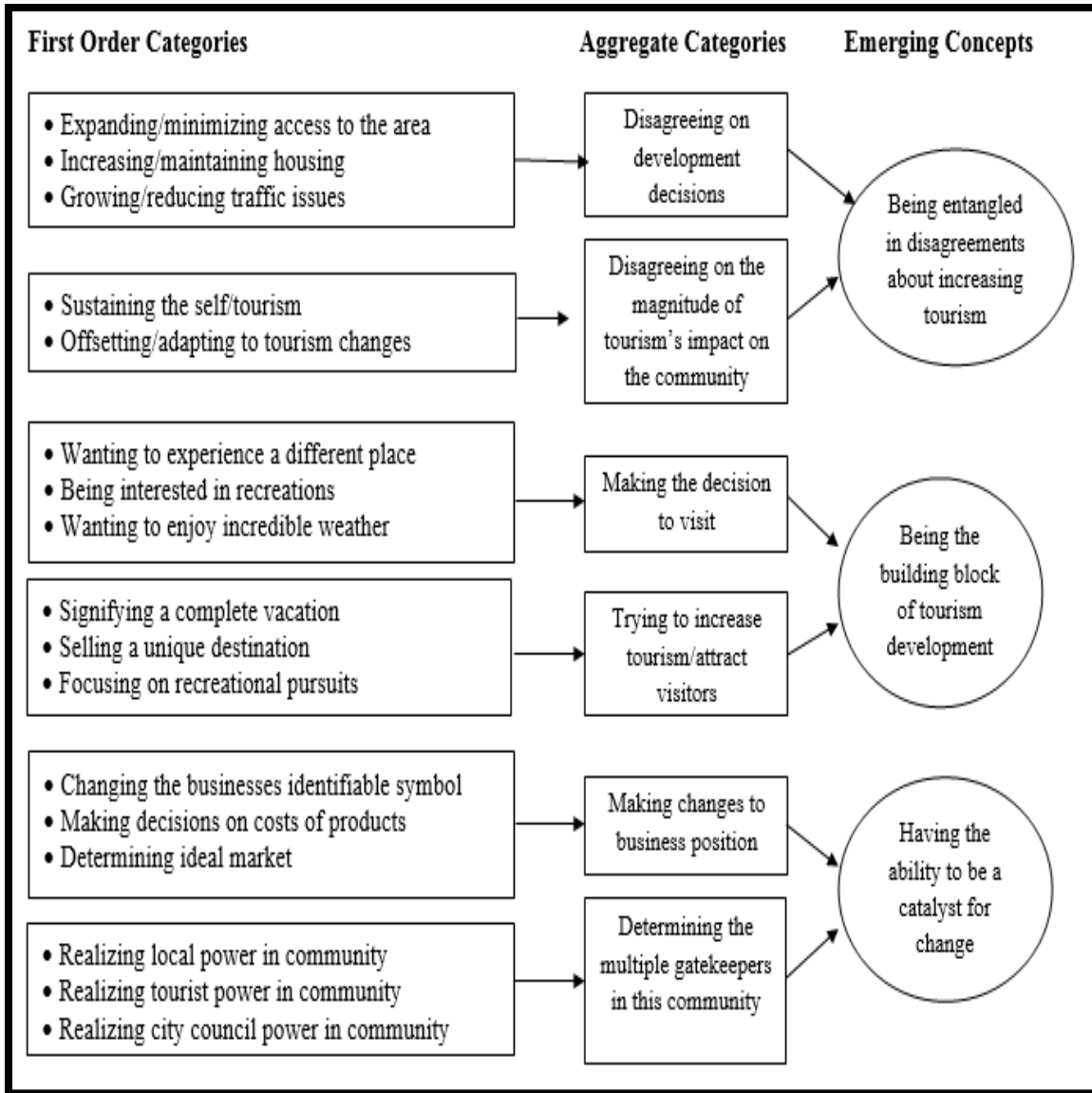


Figure 11: Secondary sources data structure

### **Major Analytical Categories and Emerging Concepts**

Secondary sources allowed me to view this society through a different lens by interpreting the visions of journalists, authors, city and county officials, website designers and content contributors, and marketing professionals. As with the other elements of my methodology, the process of simultaneous data collection and analysis of secondary sources

allowed co-creation of processes and practices, in this instance resulting in three major concepts: (1) “being entangled in disagreements about increased tourism,” signifying the local/tourism business relationship; (2) “being the building block of tourism development,” signifying the tourist/tourism business relationship; and (3) “having the ability to be a catalyst for change” signifying the conflicts and challenges within the tourism businesses related to its relationships. Each major concept and the related categories are described below.<sup>11</sup>

### **Being a Local and Tourism Business Relationship: “Being Entangled in Disagreements About Increasing Tourism”**

This is the first major concept that emerged from my collection of secondary sources. As I read the documents, it became quite apparent that tourism business decision-makers and the local population were entangled in disagreements about the direction of the community. At the heart of the disagreements and related conflicts were different perceptions of both tourism’s impact on the local community and the need for further tourism development. Both historical and recent city documents showed tourism business decision-makers frequently in favor of increasing development related to tourism, believing tourism to be of great economic benefit to the community. Many secondary sources reveal a local community not always supportive of tourism-related development, often on the basis of doubting that tourism was entirely responsible for the strong economy of the area. Thus, “being entangled in disagreements” was the concept developed from two emergent categories representing the relationship between the local community and tourism business decision-makers.

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<sup>11</sup> In previous chapters, I have reasonably protected the identity of my informants when describing participant observation and interview findings. In the same vein, I do not directly name any secondary source, but redact identifiers to protect the anonymity of this area.



## **“Disagreeing on Development Decisions”**

During my time in this community, the three main disagreements that emerged from my secondary sources were expanding vs. minimizing access to the area, increasing vs. maintaining housing, and growing vs. reducing traffic.

I had the opportunity to read many newspaper articles, opinion pieces, and city meeting minutes that presented differences of opinion regarding a proposed airport expansion to improve access to the community. A small airport built in the late 1980s services this city and resort (City/Area Document #8, 2016); there had been little expansion, upgrading or changes since. Airport activity reached an all-time high during my research period, as travel to the area increased throughout the year, and in March 2015 reached a high point in tourist traffic (City/Area Document #9, 2016). There was debate about the sources of funding for an airport expansion. Through the middle period of my immersion in the community, the debate was over sales tax or property tax as the revenue source. Many local residents supported a 2015 measure to fund airport expansion through a sales tax, a strategy that would apply to all parties utilizing the airport (Newspaper Article #14, 2015). The following two newspaper excerpts document the nature of disagreements.

- (1) “The mayor was not surprised voters supported the sales-tax option. ‘Sales tax is less personal, it is perceived to be paid by tourists and non-locals,’ he said.” (Newspaper Article #14, 2015)
- (2) “While reactions were mixed, many people agreed improvements need to be made to improve baggage claim, expand parking and create more space for employees to work. But the vision for the airport varied greatly....Several business-minded people hammered the importance of the airport’s impact on the tourism industry..... ‘We have to make this improvement to the airport for the economic stability today and for the future,’ said [one tourism business owner]. A possible property-tax increase could go before the voters. To finance \$40 million in debt, the county projects a homeowner with a \$300,000 home could pay about \$36 a year...Residents asked officials to look

at a mix of financing options, not just property taxes.....” (Newspaper Article #6, 2015)

Housing was the second field of disagreement about tourism development. The population of the area increased by more than 4 percent since 2015 (City/Area Document #9, 2016) and was said to be continuously growing at a very quick rate (Newspaper Article #12, 2015), as more residents who came first as travelers later chose to stay. Tourism business decision-makers supported increased housing and lodging options to support the growing tourist numbers, but many in the local community supported maintaining existing units so as to counteract current and future congestion issues. Currently, two new hotels are under construction (City/Area Document #12, 2016). There was a major discussion about zoning changes for existing housing. The excerpts below showcase the mixed issues and opinions regarding housing and lodging.

- (1) “Accessory dwelling units and vacation rentals spent time in the public spotlight, as [the city] Council contemplated how to incorporate the competing interests surrounding these parallel density issues. Those seeking to put their property to maximum use- either with extra units for long-term rentals or with accommodations for travelers- found themselves at odds with some neighbors uninterested in the increased traffic, population and neighborhood instability such mixed use can draw. It was a lively discussion that involved striking a balance between divergent community values.” (Newspaper Article #3, 2014)
- (2) “Tourism, which increased in 2014 at all three of the area’s biggest attractions, is predicted to increase again in 2015 because of low fuel prices, [X] said. Many people who move here or buy vacation homes first come as tourists. Two hundred new hotel rooms on the horizon, scheduled to open in 2016, will give [this town] more tourism capacity.” (Newspaper Article #8, 2015)

The intent to develop more housing and dwelling units is further evidenced by the ski resort master development plan expansion (Zoning Document #1, 2002; Zoning Document #2, 2003; Zoning Document #3, 2011; Zoning Document #4, 2011), where the projected goal is to build more than 1500 new sleep units within five villages and significantly increase the skiable terrain.

The last disagreement over development pertains to the more general growth of the area. This disagreement is undoubtedly related to the above two, but it can be best understood through the mission statement of the city council, which states that the goal of elected officials is to “manage our growth and development in a manner that respects our environment and preserves the unique character and identity of our community. We view our citizens as our most important resource” (City/Area Document #3, 2016). This statement reflects a city council positioning itself as a proponent of the local community’s opinions regarding expansion, and presents an approach to managing growth that adheres to the wishes of the local community and its respect for the natural environment. It became apparent in my secondary source analysis that growth issues were implicated in the issue of traffic, i.e., amplified traffic associated with increased travel to the area. Consequently, the city council focused on managing growth aimed to support a reduction in traffic, thus respecting the desire of many in the local community who believe increases in tourism could result in traffic issues negatively impacting the character and identity of both the community and the natural environment. On the other side are entities supporting growth, period. One such is the local tourism office, which simply and unproblematically states that “tourism is one of our largest and most reliable industries” (City/Area Document #13, 2016).

Disagreement on tourism development decisions is decisive for the local/tourism business decision-maker relationship, with all secondary source excerpts and related examples depicting discord focused on conflict surrounding increased travel-- airport expansion, the housing and lodging stock, and struggles over the implications of growth through tourism.

### **“Disagreeing on the Magnitude of Tourism’s Impact on the Community”**

The relationship between the local community and tourism business decision-makers is also entangled in disagreement on the magnitude of tourism’s impact on this community. During

my immersion in the field, it became apparent that the local population did not think tourism was, or needed to be, the dominant factor in the economic strength of the community, whereas tourism business decision-makers believed it to be necessary for economic health, stability, and growth. Two common themes make up this concept: (1) sustaining the self vs. sustaining tourism, and (2) offsetting vs. adapting to tourism changes.<sup>12</sup>

Many newspaper articles, city documents, and historical data described how dramatically the economic character of the area has changed over the years. This community has been economically dependent on mining, transportation, oil, and recreations in different periods (Related Literature #1, 1969; Related Literature #2, 1984; Related Literature #3, 1989; Related Literature #4, 1992). The secondary sources indicated that this growing community was at a crossroads economically during my time there, being confronted with a choice between continuing to increase tourism in order to grow the economy of the area or to sustain itself by alternative strategies. Meaning, tourism business decision-makers believed that tourism had a large positive economic impact on the community and should be fostered. The two excerpts below were written by a tourism business decision-maker.

- (1) “In tourism, as in sports, momentum is an important factor. Colorado is coming off two consecutive years of record setting tourism numbers, and 2015 is expected to be as strong. Talk to anyone who has taken a recent vacation, and they will tell you, ‘The place was packed with tourists.’” (Newspaper Article #13, 2015)
- (2) “Tourists produce 1/3 of city sales tax.” (City/Area Document #13, 2016)

Such statements exemplify the idea that tourism business decision-makers believe tourism plays a large part in this community’s economic stability and it should be sustained as a

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<sup>12</sup> As observed in Chapter 4, tourism is one of the main industries in the area but not the only one. Also, as noted in Chapter 6, tourism employs more people than any other area industry but documented payroll expenses show that the tourism employers are not the highest paying.

main economic driver. The local community does not share the same view. When the city council is understood as a supporter of the local population's positions regarding tourism growth, their main goal can be identified as an endeavor to encourage and support the community in relying on itself instead of on outside economic drivers such as tourism. The council's first goal states: "Promote community sustainability through economic, organizational, and environmental resiliency" (City/Area Document #3, 2016). The local community thus fosters the idea that tourism is not entirely responsible for the current state of the economy. Accordingly, some believe an economically self-sustaining community should be the focus of development.

The second aspect of disagreement over tourism's impact is in the preferred response to tourism growth-- offsetting or adapting to it. Members of the local community often thought in terms of offsetting changes brought by tourism rather than adapting to or embracing them. This perspective is another encoded in city council goals, expressing the objective of developing and preserving a sense of place that maintains the lifestyle and identity of the area for the local community. This goal offsets tourism to emphasize action to solidify the local community's identity and needs.

"Goal 4: Envision [this city's] Sense of Place by creating character districts, promoting responsible land use planning, and maintaining the community's sense of identity."  
(City/Area Document #3, 2016)

As might be expected, tourism business decision-makers more often promote adapting to increased tourism. The following quotation from a newspaper article by the new owner of the resort touches upon the importance of adapting to, encouraging, and supporting tourism.

"'Skiing is not a cheap sport,' he said. '[This resort] is a destination mountain, and guests expect a certain level of service with that. So you can't have it both ways. The reality is there's much more skiing here than there would be without the destination skier. They pay for so much.'" (Newspaper Article #9, 2015)

Disagreement on the impact and value of tourism in this community is another key axis of the local and tourism business decision-maker relationship. The ground of disagreement is regarding how much tourism affects and should affect the community. Specifically, there is disagreement about whether the community should grow through tourism or by other means, and whether the community should welcome and adapt to tourism changes or minimize their impact.

### **Being a Tourist and Tourism Business Relationship: “Being the Building Block of Tourism Development”**

This second major concept resulting from my collection and analysis of secondary sources expresses the strictly tourist-based relationship between tourism business decision-makers and the visiting population. To put it simply, serving tourists, increasing their interest, and cementing the bond between the tourist population and tourism businesses are the main components of the relationship. The goal of tourism business decision-makers is to increase tourism in the area by focusing on new markets while pleasing existing markets to secure future returns. Many city/area documents and marketing materials suggested reasons tourists travel to this location and it is not surprising that tourism business decision-makers highlight some of these reasons to increase tourism and attract new visitors. It became apparent from the data that challenges in the tourist/tourism business relationship largely involved matters of building and developing. The two categories that emerged to develop this concept are 1) why tourists make the decision to visit this community; and 2) how tourism businesses market to new tourist groups.

## **“Making the Decision to Visit”**

The relationship between tourists and tourism businesses is plainly dependent upon tourists’ decisions to come to this area. I witnessed increased interest in visiting during my immersion in the field and analysis of my secondary source data. One real estate document characterized increased visitation:

“We’ve experienced some stabilization and uptick in the market, and have recently experienced a decrease in listing supply, with steady increase in demand for all types of property in the area. ....I’ve had several new leads and folks drawn to our great niche of [deleted] Colorado who are captivated by the beauty and lifestyle, eager to establish a residence or second home here.” (Real Estate Document #3, 2015)

My analysis of secondary sources suggests that tourists make the decision to visit this location because 1) they want to experience a different place; 2) are interested in one or more particular recreations offered here; and/or 3) want to enjoy the incredible weather.

Tourists are regarded as the building blocks of tourism business decision-making as their attraction to this area has much to do with their perception that it is different in many ways, even from other Colorado ski towns. Most tourists have a passion for travel to this area related to its uniqueness. The following 1995 resort document promotes an overall image of how the resort is different from others

“With all of today’s overcrowded and urbanized ski areas, it’s nice to know there’s still a place that remains true to what winter in the mountains should be.” (Resort Documents #1, 1995)

The decision to travel to this location is also tied to interest in the recreation. The physical structure of this area connects one town with many recreations, as described below, offering a multitude of options for recreation travelers.

“Simply put, the [city] downtown is the epi-center of lodging, shopping and restaurants while the county provides significant outdoor activity, cultural attractions and recreational pursuits.” (Newspaper Article #13, 2015)

The natural environment is also imaged as providing the ideal landscape for a traveler ready to pursue recreations while on vacation. As it was put in a brochure two decades ago

“The secret is the mountain’s incredible natural shape, a mountain that matches itself to the latest equipment – shaped skis and carving snowboards.” (Resort Documents #1, 1995)

Lastly, tourists choose to travel to this location because of the weather itself. My personal experience and discussions with informants support the idea most people who live and travel here find the weather pleasant or, in fact, ideal.

- (1) “There’s one thing we can’t improve – the weather. Last season, [the resort] chalked up 29 feet of legendary Colorado powder with 101 days of brilliant sunshine. More mountain. More snow. More warmth.” (Resort Documents #1, 1995)
- (2) “‘I can ski and golf on the same day (in the spring),’ said [a local], who embraces all seasons. ‘That’s why I moved [here]. There’s not many places in the world you can do that.’” (Newspaper Article #2, 2014)

The relationship between tourists and tourism business decision-makers is centered on tourists as the building blocks to the structure of travel development here, a building block only as strong as the desire to travel to this particular place. Tourists choose to travel to this location because they want to experience this different environment, are interested in recreational pursuits, and/or are drawn by the incredible weather.

### **“Trying to Increase Tourism/Attract Visitors”**

The second main category relates to tourism business decision-maker attempts to attract more visitors. In this relationship, the tourist group is the building block, the driver of all development, because as tourism increases the more the local society must do to accommodate



the growing influx. The local newspaper excerpt below quotes a tourism office employee in the context of an article discussing the importance of initiating new efforts to increase tourism.

“Be assured that the [city tourism office] is taking full advantage of all these positive signs and firing on all cylinders with public-relation efforts, sales, advertising and social-media programs running in high gear. A special late-summer [deleted] campaign is also in the works.” (Newspaper Article #14, 2015)

My analysis indicates that an important tourism business strategy is to “sell” this area to new and repeat tourist markets by offering a complete vacation, describing the area as unique, and emphasizing recreational pursuits tourists favor. Throughout the period of my immersion in the community, the local tourism office was in the process of rebranding this area, seeking to make it known as more than just focused on skiing or on history but, in addition, a destination offering many different amenities, recreations, and options for differing types of travelers. This newspaper article excerpt intimates this wide-ranging vision.

“The [area] is not a single attraction destination. Our area is the most scenic and amenity-rich region in the state. We are a highly desired vacation destination, and few visitors leave disappointed.” (Newspaper Article, #13, 2015)

In a similar vein, a marketing document from the city tourism office aligns the area’s many amenities with the overarching image of what Colorado offers.

“Rich in outdoor and recreational amenities and we have what Colorado is promoting.” (City/Area Document #13, 2016)

The second category that emerged under strategies to expand the market was describing the unique aspects of this area. The main marketing strategy of the town tourism office observes that if people are not invited to this area, they will not come (City/Area Document #13, 2016). Therefore, a favored tactic is to entice or invite tourists by presenting them with a unique destination that provides a central location with distinctive recreation and non-recreation

activities close by (City/Area Documents #3, 2015). The unique aspects of the area frequently used to market to potential visitors are exemplified in the following:

“Check out [deleted]’s cosmopolitan side when you experience all of the comforts and attractions that [deleted] has to offer. Immerse yourself in our town’s vibrant heritage on a walking tour through historic downtown, and savor a gourmet meal at one of the area’s many cafes or restaurants. Take in a show at a [deleted] theater or music venue, or feed your creative side at one of [deleted] museums or art galleries.... Whether you’re planning a small family vacation or a large conference, the [deleted] area has plenty of lodging options that will fit any size group. From cozy bed & breakfast and rustic alpine cabins to large luxury hotels, [deleted] accommodations and lodging options are perfect for any occasion.” (City/Area Documents #3, 2016)

In addition to the features called out above, marketing the uniqueness of this area also touches upon the facts that this town and its related recreations have won more than 36 awards in the last three years from numerous national and international magazines, newspapers, and websites, many of which cite the small, intimate feel of the area, its scenic views, adventure atmosphere, and great weather (City/Area Document #11, 2016).

Lastly, tourism business decision-makers attempt to increase tourism and attract new visitors through recreational pursuits. As described in Chapter 4, recreations and related businesses are already extremely important to both local and tourist population. Consequently, not only do tourism business decision-makers highlight recreation options but some regularly add offerings. One example is the resort, which has expanded skiable terrain, summer recreation choices, and lift options (Newspaper Article #9, 2015). All of these endeavors are aimed at increasing tourism and providing supporting amenities to offer more complete recreations. The local tourism office projected an increase in tourism in 2016 based in part on the National Parks 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and in part on upgrades to the ski/snowboard mountain (City/Area Document #13, 2016).

Efforts to increase tourism and attract new visitors are central to the tourist/tourism business relationship and form the basis for development and building in this area. The attempt to attract repeat and new visitors is a matter of showcasing the area as offering a complete vacation in a unique setting replete with recreational pursuits.

### **Having a Tourism Business Conflict: “Having the Ability to Be a Catalyst for Change”**

Interpretation of the documents shows that tourism business decision-makers face a major conflict related to having responsibilities (1) to provide for tourists an ideal travel situation; (2) to help locals maintain the lifestyles they favor; and (3) to meet their own business performance benchmarks. The crucial challenge of being a tourism-based business in this community hinges on these multiple responsibilities, which put tourism business decision-makers in a position to be leading catalysts for change as they make decisions regarding both their business position within the community and their appeals to specific markets. These decision-makers as catalysts, however, are dependent on the decisions of those who hold gatekeeping power over tourism development in this society.

My analysis of many recent city and resort documents, as well as newspaper and magazine articles, indicates that tourism business decision-makers tend to prioritize their own economic success by escalating tourism options, whether or not their activities are supported by all groups, especially the locals and local government representatives. Therefore, the major concept of “having the ability to be a catalyst for change” developed out of two emergent categories that represent tourism business decision-makers faced with the challenges of 1) providing services and amenities for the tourist population; 2) connecting with and fulfilling the wishes of the local community; 3) being responsive to local government officials (some of whom

also belong to the local and/or tourism business groups); and 4) making a profit for their businesses.

### **“Making Changes to Business Position”**

This first major category under “being a catalyst for change” points to the fact that tourism businesses are faced with challenging decisions regarding their business position in this society, specifically whether they intend to be considered a tourist-based business or a *local*-tourist-based business. Observation throughout my immersion in the field made it apparent that some businesses catered to the local population as evidenced by such features as their location, price, discounts, and connections, just as other business catered to tourists through accessibility for that group, higher prices, and décor, for example. There is no exclusivity to either type of business: residents and tourists both patronized most businesses to one degree or another. For instance, businesses catering to locals also attracted a tourist subgroup interested in experiencing the service or product alongside members of the local community. What I observed, however, was an implicit understanding of what constituted a local-tourist-based business versus a straight tourist business. The distinction was sometimes made by locals in conversation, as they noted that straight tourism business managers know the seasonal ebbs and flows of the market and cater to different people depending on the time frame of the tourism seasons.

This section discusses three examples of the challenges inherent in changing business positioning that emerged in data analysis: 1) changing symbols associated with the business; 2) changing price structure; and 3) adapting to and realigning the business with different target markets.

The first challenge, changing business symbolism, took place at the resort during my 18-month fieldwork period. At the start of fieldwork, the resort name connected town and resort as being similar, enabling people not from the community to associate them (i.e., the resort name was similar to the town name or incorporated it in some way, thus helping visitors link resort and town together as if one entity). The name was chosen for the tourist population as it became a linkage to town allowing for ease of travel planning and a connection for real estate sales. This is consistent with development decisions during the earlier phase of my fieldwork, as the resort was more heavily concentrated on real estate development rather than mountain improvements (Resort Document #2, 2015/2016). As a local newspaper observed about the original name,

“[The old name] never did exactly roll off the tongue. It was, perhaps intentionally, more evocative of real estate than skiing.” (Newspaper Article #5, 2015)

Later in my immersion in the community, the new owner returned to the original name of the resort. That name has no relation to the town name, so that those traveling to this location would not associate this resort with this area or town. Many older local community members never stopped using this name, having been upset that it was changed in the first place. There was much speculation about the why of the prior name change, some believing change was real estate driven, others believing it was for tourist appeal. Regardless, the return to the original resort name and the changes that appeared connected with it appealed to the local community, as shown in a local newspaper article:

“In February, [the owner] closed on his purchase of [the resort] for an undisclosed sum. He immediately won the appreciation of so many locals renaming it [back to the old name]. [The] purchase surprised all but a few at [the resort]; he largely was unknown to the [city] business community.... ‘I like development, too – it’s just not the priority,’ [the owner] said. ‘Skiing comes first, you know?’” (Newspaper Article #9, 2015)

The second example of tourism business changes related to positioning is with pricing of resort passes that altered throughout my immersion in the field. Changes announced for the 2016-2017 season include multiple discount levels for different age groups of skiers, such as College, Young Adult (18-29), and Young Adult (30-36), as well as a payment plan option allowing buyers to pay in increments (Resort Documents #4, 2016). These options differ from the 2015-2016 season; the Young Adult (30-36) discounted pass price and the payment plan option were new (Resort Documents #4, 2016). Such changes provide more options for local community members. In many conversations I had with local informants, there seemed to be a communal agreement that the new owner was changing his business plan to support the local community. The pass price changes for the upcoming ski season are allowing more local community members the option to buy passes and to pay for them in increments. This was reiterated in one interview depicted in Chapter 7 where my informant, T, proposed that the new owner made changes for locals rather than for the tourist population or real estate development.

The third example of tourism business changes related to positioning is targeting the ideal market. Most businesses in this community variously target to the tourist market, the local market or both together. The secondary source data suggests that tourism businesses adapt to the challenge of determining proper target markets by offering products with specific attributes to the local community at certain times and selected services to the tourist population at other times. The best example of this adaptability is recreation businesses that provide for both the local community and the tourist population on different levels. For example, many rafting businesses make their summer season profit from tourists but capture supplemental income in the off season by offering locals such options as special pre- and post-season rafting and rental opportunities and discounts on rafting products. This effort to provide for the local community is in evidence

at the annual spring rafting swap and sale (City/Area Documents #15, 2016), where local rafting companies sell used equipment at a lower price to local residents. Similarly, the ski/snowboard recreation businesses hold an annual ski swap in November (City/Area Documents #2, 2014), inviting the local community to buy used equipment. These recreation businesses discounting products for locals display an understanding of their responsibilities as businesses within this community.

On the other hand, for the tourist population, these same recreation businesses offer services geared to enabling visitors to complete their recreations. The rafting companies and ski/snowboard businesses that sponsor local gear swaps also cater to the tourist population by selling their rafting services (City/Area Documents #16 and #17, 2017) or their ski/snowboard rentals and guides (Resort Document, #2, 2015/2016). The tourist population is reliant on these services to ensure that they experience the vacation they desire, with safety and instruction for their recreational pursuit included. These recreation businesses thus adapt their offerings to fulfill their responsibility to the visiting population. Tacking between the two markets, they remain adaptable to both the season and the groups present in the society at those times.

The above discussion of the resort name change, differential pass pricing, and targeting the ideal markets during specific time frames exemplify how tourism business decision-makers change their business plans and positions, and thus maintain the ability to position themselves as potential catalysts for change in this society depending on the results of their decision-making. Tourism business managers are the group that builds in change as part of its identity and its ability to survive; and, by virtue of this orientation, changes in this group's practices leads to the wherewithal to catalyze positive changes in social relations as well).

### **“Determining the Multiple Gatekeepers in this Community”**

As discussed above, a major challenge for tourism business decision-makers is positioning a business to serve multiple groups. An underlying theme embedded within this process is acknowledging and understanding the gatekeepers in this social system and the power associated with decision-making. My data collection and analysis resulted in an emergent category identifying tourism business decision-makers’ challenges in recognizing, understanding, and adapting to multiple gatekeepers.

This mountain community is at a crossroads in terms of tourism development; there were many disagreements about how the community should proceed on growth and development. While tourism business decision-makers have the ability to influence the success of any level of tourism development, working through secondary source data made it apparent that decision-makers themselves were at a crossroads as to how to define their own role in development because the role of gatekeeper in this community was neither established nor constant. The aggregate category I came to associate with gatekeeping was developed from three first-order categories that identify possible gatekeepers and policy-makers by virtue of their exercise of power in tourism development.

My research established that the local community held significant power over tourism expansion and development decisions. Both local business owners and local residents who did not own businesses adamantly made their opinions known in tourist development and expansion decision-making and did not always accept the development activities proposed by political actors or tourism business decision-makers. One discussion with my main informant, R, capsulized the power of local community members to influence decisions regarding the changes to town infrastructure.



R said he believes the local community still has money, although they may not have as much as other communities. He remembers when the local community tried to stop Starbucks and Coldstone from coming into town- they wanted to keep the money with the local companies. The local community was exercising their right to form the town how they wanted to.

I said- I heard what he was suggesting, but the businesses did come in and it looks like they are doing ok.

R responded: Right- but we can still decide where we want to spend our money. That is why we have a local's book and a local's card- we have the power to choose where we put our money. People have always wanted to fight change- it is a constant struggle. It is tough for me because the place has changed so much since I have been here- but people always fight it- they may not always win, but they will always fight growth. They fought the ski area, they fought the growth of the valley. Look into who we voted for- every election some are for growth and some are for limiting growth. I think we are all about voting for the people we want to maintain the integrity of the town by establishing rules for growth. The community elected these people. Think about the high development that was supposed to go into (X) St. - the locals fought that and it was turned down 5 times. The guy ended up selling the lot. The people shut it down- they wanted to put in high density construction- the maximum amount of spaces in the lot. People decided the street was busy enough so they went to the town hall meetings. And- remember what happened to me! They wanted to put a roundabout in the middle of the restaurant to expand the road- we fought it. We had over 700 petitions- we went to the meetings. The restaurant is still here today. The people fought for it- and we won.

The gatekeeping power of the local community was also evident in its limited support for airport expansion. The expansion has been on the ballot for the last two elections, once proposing funding through a sales tax (Newspaper Article #14, 2015) and then through a property tax (Newspaper Article #18, 2016). Despite the support of the city council, numerous political notables, prominent business owners, and local tourism groups for the property tax increase, funding will come from a sales tax (Newspaper Article #14, 2015; City/Area Document #17, 2016), thus reflecting locals' preference for including tourists among those who will make an economic contribution to the expansion.

My immersion in the field allowed me the opportunity to view first-hand another aspect of local influence on business decision-making. As depicted in Chapter 6, during winter months it was not uncommon to see unscheduled business closings during large snows, when door or

window signs might read, “Closed- Powder Day,” or summer closings when signs read, “Closed- Gone Fishing.” These unscheduled closings reflect a degree of local control over business decisions, including not only local business owner power but worker and service power within the community.

In the exercise of power over spending decisions, new infrastructure, funding of tourism-related projects, and opportunistic business closings reflecting community values, the local community acts in a political, gatekeeper role, directly influencing tourism development and growth decisions.

The second actor among the multiple gatekeeper possibilities is the tourist population. Secondary sources data analysis revealed that tourist spending habits are directly related to such important functions as taxation, job availabilities, wage rates, infrastructure development, and tourism business success. The importance of the tourist population to development decisions became apparent to me in an interview with a well-known public official, X, who discussed the city budget and the relationship between the community’s financial stability and the tourist population.

X said the city budget is reliant on sales tax- it pays for a lot of what we do in this community. It is important that we encourage the growth of and invest in tourism. X went on to say that the locals come first in her mind, but we need tourism. She said we should pride ourselves in being a tourists’ economy. X also stated that there are mixed feelings of people who support tourism or not, but she thinks the impact of the recession has helped everyone see that tourism is important for this community.

In addition, the tourist population’s influence upon gatekeeping is reflected in the workforce and sales tax revenues. As noted in Chapter 6, the tourism industry directly employees more than 6,000 people in this community and statistical sources affirm that hospitality industry employment is constantly rising (Newspaper Article #17, 2016). Likewise, the number of lodgers

and sales tax revenues rose in 2015 (City/Area Document #18, 2016). A spokesperson for the local tourism board stated the following:

“As we see our numbers going up in lodging and sales tax, when we have strong tourism, it correlates that you need more people in the workforce.” (Newspaper Article #17, 2016)

This recent trend of increasing numbers of tourism-related jobs depicts tourists directly and indirectly contributing to the economic stability and financial security of the local economy and local residents. While they may be indirect, abstract participants in local political decision-making regarding development, the tourist group nonetheless directly influences development and growth decisions.

My secondary source research led me to conclude that the city council focused on the overall success of the community by trying to balance the needs and interests of locals, tourists, and tourism businesses. This depicted the council as the place where the tensions between the three major groups came into view and were addressed in action, sometimes by setting specific priorities, frequently by providing a stage for disagreement, discussions, and balancing opinions. Despite careful analysis of the sources and the multiple interests of the social groups, it remained difficult to decipher precisely when and how the city council was working for the best interests of the local population (as was discussed above with the city council goals), the tourist population (as was suggested in their acknowledgement of travel to the area and the conversation I had with one political leader), or tourism businesses. Some even consider city council itself to be a tourism-based business.

The nature of city council's power in this community was thus not entirely clear as its members tended to play multiple sides in decision-making processes. As noted above, the council favored tourist and tourism business interests in the airport expansion. Recent news

suggests that the city council supports increasing local property taxes to fund that project, thus favoring accessibility for tourists largely at the expense of locals (Newspaper Article #18, 2016). On the other hand, the city council also recently proposed financing five organic parks supported and encouraged by local residents, despite city staffers raising budgetary issues (Newspaper Article #19, 2016). The council also supported the local call for help with homeless resources and tourist/local public education in the summer, and help with snow removal (Newspaper Article #20, 2016), both of which endeavors benefit businesses and locals.

These multiple decisions of the city council to support tourist and tourism businesses in some capacities and the local community in others showcases the unique nature of the city council as gatekeeper with multiple interests. City council and associated political actors directly influence tourism development and growth decisions, whether the council is viewed as local community members, tourism business decision-makers, or a composite of both. Therefore, the council is a major contributor to political decision-making in this mountain community.

The tourism business challenge of being a catalyst for change is complicated by the challenges of understanding the multiple gatekeepers in this community and determining which gatekeeper may hold determinative power in any decision area. The above examples of the roles and differential powers of the local community, the tourist population, and the city council in tourism development decisions exemplifies how tourism business decision-makers have difficulties determining the magnitude of the multiple gatekeepers in this community.

### **Closing Thoughts**

This chapter focused on the third, and last, step in refining the broad picture of this local society outlined in chapter 5 by clarifying the characteristics and dynamics of tourism business

relationships with locals and with tourists, as well as the challenges and opportunities of being a tourism business. The findings from secondary sources identify the complex relationships among the groups in this community, as well as the role conflicting views about the need for and benefit of increasing tourism plays in shaping tensions between the major groups in this society.

The relationship between locals and the tourism business decision-makers is entangled in disagreement, specifically related to the impact of increasing tourism in this local society and the questions of future tourism development. These findings empirically support Doxey's (1975) irritation index as they imply that the more tourism increases, the more discord and disagreement grows, in this case around issues of growth and infrastructure development as they relate to tourism. This finding also aligns with the view that tourism can cause change (Nash 1977, 1989) and extends Nash's (1977) findings by depicting this local community as opposing some tourism development ideas and working toward reducing tourism growth to mitigate the infrastructural, social, and cultural impact of tourists in this mountain community (i.e., work towards less congestion, infrastructure, etc.).

Second, my findings demonstrate that the tourist and tourism business relationship is about building infrastructure and increasing tourism. Tourism business decision-makers focus on adapting to tourists' desire to travel to this particular location and on creating ways to attract new and repeat visitors. These findings support Ponting and McDonald's (2013) argument that tourists' decisions are somewhat like commodities sold to them by industry marketing practices that aim to increase interest through packaged uniqueness and total experiences. Thus, tourism-business managers and decision-makers have the ability to make strategic business decisions that increase tourists' desire to travel to this community, as Ponting & McDonald (2013) concluded for surf culture.

Lastly, the conflicts and challenges faced by tourism business decision-makers are rooted in their potential to be a catalyst for change. The often competing responsibilities of tourism business decision-makers to the local community, the tourist population, and their own business imperatives are major challenges associated with business positioning and finding acceptable paths to tourism growth. The challenge of acting as a catalyst is deepened by the difficulty of understanding how gatekeeping works in this society. This finding partly supports and partly contests the work of Hall (1994, 2010a), who maintained that political gatekeepers hold decision-making power in communities. That is true to some degree in this community but both locals directly and tourists indirectly can exert forms of gatekeeping power as well. My findings also complement the literature depicting that the locals as hosts and tourists as guests form complex relationships with different and fluctuating understandings of who is in control (Canziani & Francioni, 2013; Cheong & Miller, 2000; Eddleston, Kidder, & Litzky, 2002; Ford & Heaton, 2001; Mills & Morris, 1986; Spreng, Harrell, & Mackoy, 1995; Weatherly & Tansik, 1993), since power and control within this local society are complex and multidimensional insofar as any group may act as gatekeeper at one point in time or in relation to particular issues.

## CHAPTER 9

### CONCLUSION

#### **Implications of this Research**

The goal of this research was to contribute to social theories within the tourism discipline through an ethnographic, emic interpretation of the complex, interconnected relationships associated with tourism growth in a community dependent upon mountain-based recreation tourism within the larger milieu of the advanced industrial society of the United States. The foundational works of Doxey (1975), Mason (2008), and Nash (1997) shaped my understanding of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Specifically, Doxey (1975), provided me with a framework to understand how host communities view increased tourism over time and Mason's (2008) work helped me to envision how social impacts are related to changing attitudes and behaviors of group members within a society that are brought about and constructed through social interactions and relationships. Nash's (1977) work, which focused on tourism as a form of imperialism, helped me refine my understanding of the power dynamics that occur in communities that focus primarily on tourism-based enterprise. Together, these works foregrounded my understanding of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism and lead to the development of my key research question: *what is tourism doing to this mountain community, specifically to the local residents and their relationships?*

My research has led me to conclude that tourism in this community has transformed interactions between locals and tourists, the tourism business decision-making process, and the entire community's social relations. Due to the nature of tourism-related changes impacting this community, it has been identified that the more tourist visits increase and the more tourism

businesses increase efforts to attract new tourist markets, the greater the conflict and disagreement over questions of tourism growth and the more profound the alteration of the local community's social relations, especially those between local residents and tourists. Furthermore, my findings indicate that tourism has the power to affect this community's social structure by identifying tourism as constituted through power relations with certain consequences, such as through the shaping of the social dynamics impacting how social groups identify themselves, how each group accepts the others, and how disagreement over tourism development can cause significant conflict between the groups.

Original research following the constructivist grounded theory approach specified by Charmaz (2014) can make a contribution to scholarship through “(1) an analysis in a new area, (2) an original treatise in an established or a fading area, or (3) an extension of current ideas” (p. 289). My findings fit into the third category by supplementing our understanding of current issues that challenge tourism scholars, especially by supporting and expanding Doxey's (1975) irritation irridex and scholarship on the social impacts of tourism growth. The findings also contribute to Nash's (1977, 1989) view of tourism as imperialistic; to the literature that focuses on power in tourism communities, notably Hall (1994, 2010a, 2010b); and to three bodies of literature not previously discussed in chapter 2, as their relevance emerged during the course of research and data analysis. These bodies of literature concern the relationship between increase in tourism and quality of life, issues of belonging, and the impact of second home ownership. In addition, my research and the subsequent theoretical model I constructed help to fill the need for more integrative conceptual frameworks for understanding the complexities of tourism destinations suggested by Pearce (2014) and the need to identify the complexities of a destination in a nonlinear format suggested by Baggio & Sainaghi (2010, 2016). My model also reflects the current challenge of depicting the complex



dynamics of tourism communities in a conceptual model that can sufficiently show the multi-dimensional, interactions and relationships that co-construct the community (Baggio & Sainaghi, 2010, 2016; Pearce, 2014). Although my rendering of model is flat and static – bounded and embedded in text, this model aims to convey a complex, multidimensional abstract representation of the holistic exploration of this community. It should not be interpreted as a linear, static representation of the community, but instead as a moving, fluid model designed to represent the complexity of the community. More importantly, my theoretical model presented in chapter 5 (depicted again below in Figure 12) aims to contribute to the social theoretical perspective of the impact of tourism by identifying the dynamic nature of the shifting, multi-layered relationships in which locals, tourists, and tourism businesses are intertwined.

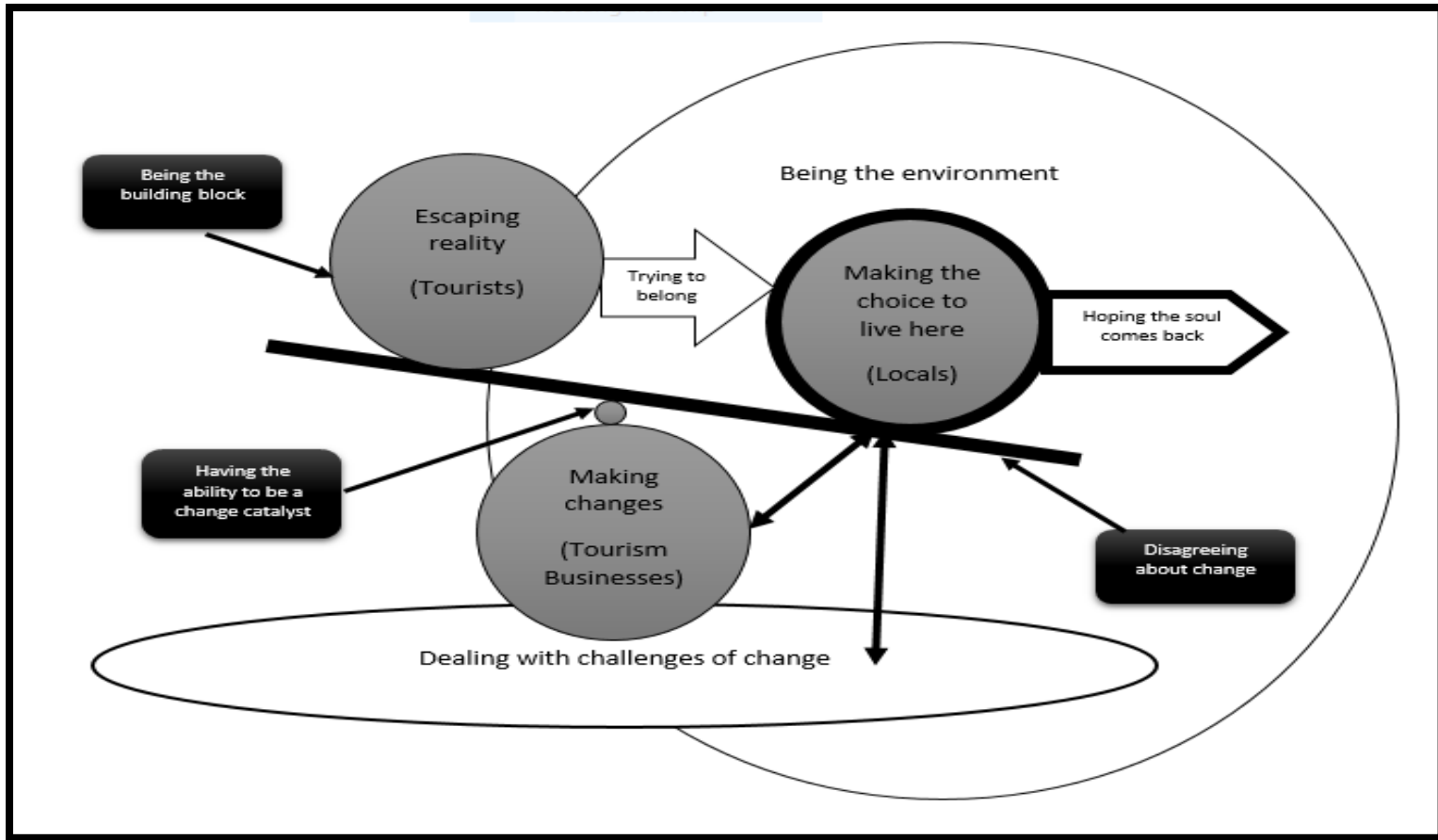


Figure 12: Recap of the theoretical model interpreting the relationships of the three key groups in this community

### **Contribution to Doxey (1975)**

This study's most significant contribution is providing empirical evidence of Doxey's (1975) position that the relationship between locals and tourists becomes more problematic as tourism increases. While Doxey (1975) viewed his "irridex" model as a way for planners to assess the irritations resulting from interactions between residents and tourists, insiders and outsiders respectively, in relation to a destination (p. 195), my research supports and extends the model to explore the ways in which tourism actually affects the members of this local society. Commonalities between Doxey's (1975) original model and my findings include interpretations of the ways increased growth of tourism over time changes the way of life of the residents.

Working from the perspective of the local community and pursuing an integrated, qualitative approach to data gathering and analysis that required extended involvement in the local community, resulted in findings that contribute to Doxey's (1975) original model by adding a number of insights to the "irritation irridex" and two additional tolerance thresholds to Doxey's four. Table 4 and the following discussion summarize the key tenets of Doxey's (1975) model and the ways in which this study supports, challenges, and extends his model from the perspective of residents in the mountain community I studied.

Table 4: Cartier’s extension of the Doxey model - Interpreting a better understanding of what tourism “does” for a community

Doxey’s (1975) Irridex Model for Planners	Cartier’s Extension of the Doxey Model - Interpreting a Better Understanding of What Tourism “Does” to a Community	Examples from the Data
(1) Euphoria (Visitors welcome, little planning)	Historical accounts suggest that this phase occurred. Supports Doxey’s Model.	Historical accounts suggest that this phase occurred.
(2) Apathy (Visitors are taken for granted, more formal interactions, planning related to marketing)	Historical accounts suggest that this phase occurred. Supports Doxey’s Model.	Historical accounts suggest that this phase occurred.
(3) Annoyance (Visitor numbers reach saturation point, planning focused on increased infrastructure rather than reducing visitor numbers)	Annoyance & Serious Concern Social and environmental carrying capacities have been exceeded. Supports and Extends Doxey’s Model.	Informants describe the challenges to their way of living and the irreparable harm that is being done to the physical environment. This is viewed as one interconnected and inseparable problem that goes beyond annoyance.
(4) Antagonism (Resident irritation expressed verbally and physically where the outsider is seen as the problem, planning remedial)	Subversive Antagonism Residents are purposely excluding visitors and creating clear insider/outsider zones or ways of psychologically accessing the place. This is particularly problematic for tourists who want to experience a place like a local. Supports and Extends Doxey’s Model.	Tourists want to “live like a local” which means that they want to fit into the way locals manifest their antagonism, although locals are less open to this (e.g., local accounts of ownership, lack of conversing and interacting with tourists, limiting interaction with tourists especially in recreation activities).
	(5) Avoidance At this stage, residents choose to live away from outsiders - some times by choice, other times by necessity. The choice to live away from tourists is perceived as insider space which excludes outsiders. Extends Doxey’s Model.	When resorts and recreational facilities as well as second homes consume prime land, the cost of living in the community increases and available housing decreases. Some locals live on the outskirts of the community because they can’t afford other options. Others make a similar choice to maintain a better way of living.

	<p>(6) Sadness/ Loss/Resignation          At this stage, there is a shift from the external manifestations of irritation to the internal manifestations of irritation such as sadness and feeling of loss and then resignation. The locals realize they need to accept the changes, although they don't have to like them.          Extends Doxey's Model.</p>	<p>Way of life and physical landscape have substantially and irreparably changed as a result of increased numbers of outsiders. The area has become a multi-season destination that brings multiple types of tourists throughout the year. The only way to truly avoid the situation and the irritations experienced from living here would be to move away.</p>
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Table 4 depicts that the findings of this research project affirm stages 1 and 2 in Doxey's (1975) model of irritation. Stage 1, Euphoria, indexes the initial phase of tourism, often welcomed by the local community and subjected to little planning or control (p. 195). Stage 2, Apathy, indicates that, as tourist numbers grow, interactions between locals and visitors become more formal and marketing planning is initiated (p. 195). The historical accounts of this community provided in chapters 2 and 4 support the processes associated with these two stages.

Doxey's (1975) Stage 3, Annoyance, marks the point at which the local community begins to show signs of misgivings, as policymakers look to enhance tourism infrastructure rather than limit its growth (p. 195). The research findings of this dissertation support and extend this insight, demonstrating that pushing the limits of social and environmental carrying capacities in this community has taken local informants beyond annoyance to serious concern about their changing way of life and their altered physical environment. Such concerns were prevalent from the beginning stages of this research project, when local residents commented on the changing physical environment around the ski resort and the river as recreation participation and infrastructure development grew, concerns repeated in other discussions and in

documents verifying increasing traffic and congestion, as well as overuse of existing infrastructure.

Doxey (1975) describes Stage 4, Antagonism, as the point when the visitor is viewed as a problem and the local community expresses its irritation verbally and physically (p. 196). This research found that some locals purposely excluded visitors, especially from recreation activities and group interactions, and created zones for locals and zones for tourists, including businesses marking themselves as for locals only. The Doxey (1975) model is further refined by the idea of subversion, identifying Stage 4 as Subversive Antagonism, a more active marking of the insider/outsider divide. My findings reflect this situation in observations of local informants claiming ownership of the physical landscape (i.e., “our mountain”) and local infrastructure (i.e., “our local businesses”), and expressing resentment through plainly negative attitudes toward tourists’ use of natural and social spaces (i.e., not wanting to share the mountain, not wanting to sit next to a tourist at a bar).

Doxey’s (1975) irritation irridex stops at Stage 4. I recognized two additional stages as they emerged over the period of my fieldwork. Stage 5, Avoidance, is based on observations that, beyond the resentments of subversive antagonism, some locals actually extend the space between themselves and outsider-tourists by moving away from the more populated tourist areas of the community. As tourism increases and prime land is taken by recreation and tourism businesses and second home owners, some locals move to the outskirts, both to preserve their chosen way of life and to escape the high cost associated with tourist-dominated areas. A number of local informants described thinking about moving away as the only response to the cost of staying. Such discussions of the

economic challenges associated with living in this area and secondary sources documenting rising home prices in or near the popular downtown area also support the identification of Stage 5.

With Stage 6, Sadness/Loss/Resignation, I denote a shift from *external* to *internal* manifestations of irritation and, in fact, a response deeper than irritation. This is when members of the local community realize they must accept changes associated with tourism growth. At this stage, tourism has grown to the point of being a dominant industry. The only way to avoid continued infrastructural accommodation to the growing tourist population is to move away from the home location. One example of this was in an interview with R, my key informant, where he explained his perception that the wave of second home ownership had changed a once pristine physical landscape and expressed sadness and loss associated with his inability to protect the environment. Similarly, many local informants included in this dissertation spoke with a certain resignation about having little choice but to move away.

Stages 5 and 6 expand Doxey's (1975) model to more thoroughly trace the path of locals' progressive responses as they gradually perceive that their way of life is irreversibly changing, the physical environment they valorize is being destroyed, and their economic security is compromised by growing tourism and responsive development dedicated to infrastructure meant only to support more tourism. They do not see consensual growth respectful of and responsive to the needs and wants of those who have chosen to make their home in this mountain community.

### **Contribution to Nash (1977, 1989)**

The findings of this study support and extend Nash's (1977, 1989) features of the local/tourist relationships. Nash (1989) argued that the emergence and growth of tourism requires cooperation from local people (p. 43), who may decide to either prevent or promote tourist/local relationships (p. 44). This study empirically supports Nash (1977, 1989) in findings that the local community has historically cooperated to a discernible extent with tourism in the area and has to some extent established relationships with tourists. Nash (1989) continued to also argue that relationships between tourists and hosts are based on "understandings about how the parties involved will treat each other and on the condition that could bring about the termination of the relationships" (p. 44). The findings of this research affirm this view: the relationship between the local community and the visiting population is based on an understanding of how the parties will treat each other and the physical environment, and thus contains a possibility that the relationship may terminate if the understanding is not honored by one party or both. An example of moving toward curtailing the relationship is the local community limiting tourism to some degree (i.e., the airport expansion) and possibly resisting tourism infrastructure development (i.e., the building of a conference center) because of the negative social and environmental impacts tourism had already had on the community, from crowding and expensive housing and goods, to unreasonable service expectations.

Nash (1989) also identified mediators found in tourism based societies, people he called "culture-brokers" who play a role in social differentiation and the mobilization of local-tourist relationships (p. 45). In this study, tourist-based business managers most closely conform to the culture-broker role, as these decision-makers have the potential to



identify and act upon multiple responsibilities-- to their businesses, to tourists, and to the local community. This was highlighted in my discussions of the decisions regarding the name of the resort, adjusting product prices and sales in the different seasons, and dedication to determining the ideal market for products or services. Nash's (1989) description of the "culture-broker" as providing a role in the local/tourist relationship was further supported in my interview with the tourism business manager, T, where he confirmed his awareness that working with local and tourism populations together, trying to please both, was a challenge and an opportunity integrated into his role in the community. The findings of this study also extend Nash's (1977, 1989) findings by arguing that culture-brokers can be catalysts for change, with the caveat that actually being able to act as a catalyst depends on accurately determining and negotiating the power held by multiple gatekeepers in this local society.

Lastly, Nash (1989) argued that "the tourist is not usually expected to make the adaptations necessary for involving himself in the essential life of the host society" (p. 46). The findings of this study partially support, add another dimension, and partially contest this idea. The data do generally show that tourists are not expected to adapt to this community on a social or cultural level, as evidenced in discussion of how the local community caters to tourists and how the tourist population is set apart in terms of economic means, values, and choice of lifestyle. The findings add another dimension to Nash's (1989) findings by suggesting that although tourists are not expected to change, they often try to adapt and "live like a local" during their visit through such devices as purchasing ski nostalgia, talking to locals, and questioning their own lifestyle choices, as well as attempting to belong by dressing like locals. Finally, the findings partially contest

Nash (1977, 1989) to the degree that it reveals the sense of loss and sadness felt by the local community as likely related to latent/unspoken expectations that tourists would, somehow, be more like locals in their respect for the environment and in respect for the boundaries of the host/guest relationship. This finding was depicted in R's account of the building of second homes and in the observations of local informants' sadness and disappointment at the actions of tourists that represented a feeling of entitlement (i.e., excessive littering), suggesting that locals *did* have at least some expectation that tourists might respect the natural environment and respect residents as equals.

### **Contribution to Hall (1994, 2010a, 2010b)**

The empirical findings of this research demonstrate that social groups' orientations to tourism can result in disagreements on the effects of tourism on the local social system and on tourism development. These findings support the power literature, notably that of Hall (1994, 2010a, 2010b), who argues that there is a lack of understanding of the "role of power relations between actors" (p. 44), particularly in tourism settings, where vagueness surrounds the power balance. This research was able to dispel some of the vagueness as the methodological approach enabled exploration of the relations present in what could be called a power maze in this community, where power is not confined to one group, but instead fluctuates, as locals, tourists, business decision-makers, and city council members each exert power over the others at different times. In addition, I found that the local community holds more power than initial assumptions suggested, as evidenced by the tourism business informant, T, who commented that overcoming local reluctance was necessary to improving infrastructure for tourism growth. Likewise, my tourist informant, S, said that the only way she would be able to fit into a tourist-based

community is through acceptance by local residents. These examples from the findings claim that although the data supports Hall's (2010a) findings that knowledge of the power relations between actors is vague, they also extend his (Hall, 2012a) findings by implying that there may be more power in the hands of the local community informants than was previously suggested.

Hall (2010a) argues for a relational view of power where "power is exercised every time a group or individual is dependent upon someone else for carrying out a role or task" (2010a, p. 42). He (Hall, 2010a) claims that by its very nature, tourism embeds power in all aspects of the travel experience, including interactions with the local community. That certainly was in evidence throughout field research whenever I witnessed or discussed interactions in the service or social environment, even though informants often appeared to be unaware of power relations in what they were saying or the actions and events they were describing. The exercise of power and the related struggle emerged from the data for each major group in a number of ways, including: (1) local residents' feelings of ownership of the mountain and the physical environment, their power residing in their treatment of and respect for the physical environment, as well as their refusal to support certain infrastructure developments; (2) tourists' expectations of service that locate this group's power in the economic contribution they made to the area; and (3) tourism business decision-maker power, which lay in their awareness of multiple responsibilities-- to convince the local community of positive aspects of tourism development, to increase options for the tourist population, and to deal with the powers of various gatekeepers.

Further, Hall (1994) argues that there are benefits (positive effects) and/or costs (negative effects) of tourism that are “not evenly spread throughout a host community” (p. 12) where they are based on the perception of the society members. The findings of this study support Hall’s (1994) findings by maintaining that tourism in this society has both positive aspects (i.e., providing jobs in the service industry, trails, recreation sites, etc.) and negative aspects (i.e., reduction in open space, increase in home prices, congestion, etc.). Hall (1994) also argues that an identification of the community political structure is essential to understanding “the most benefit in the analysis of political dimensions of tourism” (p. 14), as this study empirically identifies with the exploration of this society’s political structure leading to the identification of the prominent gatekeepers and their influence on expansion and decision-making processes.

### **Contributions to Literature Identified in the Course of Research**

The fully developed constructivist grounded theory process, as described by Charmaz (2014), was established in this research by the constant comparison processes and the abstract positioning and repositioning of findings in relation to the relevant literature I identified in the beginning stages of this project and discussed in chapter 2. The process also produced an understanding of additional literature that became relevant as data collection and analysis progressed. This integral part of the constructivist grounded theory process further links my theoretical model (discussed in Chapter 5 and included again in Figure 11) and corresponding data structures (included in Chapters 6, 7, and 8) to an expanded base of literature and results in a more complete narrative of the entire research endeavor, as well as a more thorough understanding of the contribution to a comprehensive body of scholarship.

Charmaz's (2014) suggestion of the abstract positioning and repositioning of findings as supporting and expanding the relevant literature became a process of constant movement and change in which I worked with and through the data, analysis, and related literature throughout the whole process identifying my contribution to the tourism discipline. As Charmaz (2014) notes, the result of the constant comparison process is that “[i]n the last stages of analysis, researchers compare their major categories with those in relevant scholarly literatures” (p. 342). The process thus enables a more accurate positioning of this research in the theoretical framework connected to the “specific purpose and argument” of my inquiry (Charmaz, 2014, p. 307). During the last stages of the constant comparison process, I discovered three additional bodies of literature, which my empirical findings can address: (1) tourism growth and quality of life, (2) belonging, and (3) tourism communities and second home ownership.

### **Tourism Growth and Quality of Life**

Findings from this research project suggest that even in a complex context such as the U.S., where constant development is a normal feature of local activity, the level of acceptable tourism development in a given community depends on resolving many competing views of what quality of life means in that community. Fayos-Sola, Moraleda, and Mazon (2014) suggest that certain variables, such as quality of life, should be considered in the holistic exploration of communities maintaining that consideration of this concept will lead to a more “knowledgeable approach” to the study of development (p. 27).

In the location chosen for this research, increased prosperity and real estate development came about as a result of increased recreation-based tourism. Prosperity and access to new housing were not evenly distributed, however, among all group members. Therefore, at issue there for those with enduring ties to the local community is the level and kinds of acceptable change in quality of life, the optimum level of tourist arrivals, and what acceptable infrastructural development is required to attract and accommodate tourists. My interpretation of the local community's level of acceptable change relative to tourism growth supports Butler's (1980) stages of tourism development research. Additionally, my findings suggest that this community cannot be located in just one of Butler's (1980) stages of development, but instead can be identified in multiple stages simultaneously, as the local community and the tourism businesses are in a constant process of growth and differentiation. However, this study provides empirical evidence of Butler's (1980) stages of tourism development, specifically movement between stage 3 (Development Stage) and stage 4 (Consolidation Stage) where control over development, lifestyle, and economic gain become less inclusive of local residents as social power bends toward increasing tourism and travel. This emerged in the data from conversations and semi-structured interviews with local community members and tourism business decision-makers, which indicated that tourism was growing beyond initial capacity to a stage where new infrastructure, housing, and job creation would be aimed solely to support increased travel to the area.

This research also empirically bridges Butler's (1980) model of tourism development and Doxey's (1975) irritation index. A combination of Butler's (1980) findings and Doxey's (1975) findings could identify why the social irritation and

annoyance connected to tourism development leads to disagreement between social groups and a re-evaluation of perceived quality of life for the local group. For example, the data points to the reality that some members of the local community primarily invested in protecting and preserving their quality of life resist developing more tourism-based amenities and accommodations, even if they promise economic rewards for the community. While the ability to achieve financial stability through higher pay is important for this sub-set of the local community, it is not the driver for their quality of life. They see increased tourist arrivals and new development planned around tourism as unacceptable shifts towards a lifestyle they seek to avoid, as the economic rewards from tourism are unevenly distributed and most locals tend to end up with services jobs, which are not traditionally high paying, work schedules that may reflect seasonal fluctuations in tourist traffic, and with a cost of living somewhat high in relation to their earning ability. Therefore, when a society is moving into a consolidation phase, as described by Butler (1980), tourism development is not just a cause of social irritation, but also a major problem that can incite the members of the local community to reevaluate their situation in the community as well as their responses to the presence of tourists, as discussed above with the addition of the Avoidance Stage and the Sadness/Loss/Resignation Stage, thus combining Butler's (1980) and Doxey's (1975) findings.

### **Belonging**

My empirical findings support and extend the literature of belonging, fit, and otherness. These issues are especially important as one of the main conclusions of this research is that tourists not only want to experience the lifestyle for short periods of time but some want to truly live the lifestyle of this community. These findings fit into

scholarly research on the relationship between experience and travel (Argenton, 2015; Binkhorst & Den Dekker, 2009; Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2011; Urry, 1990; Wearing & Wearing, 2001), cultural and heritage tourism (Liu, 2014; Urry, 1990), and practical applications connecting travel and experience (Airbnb.com, 2016; Benner, 2016; Miller, 2012). Specifically, the findings of this study support a new practical trend of belonging by contending that some tourists are more inclined to visit specific places if they have made some kind of connection there and if they believe that connection will grow by being in that location. The new Airbnb taglines, “Don’t go there: Live there” and “Live like a local” (Airbnb.com, 2016; Benner, 2016), appeal to this tourist desire to experience the local lifestyle. The empirical findings of this research and the related theoretical model offer a scholarly representation of this practical marketing position. Both this research and the practical slogans claim that belonging to the local community, regardless of travel time and length of stay, is important for the tourist population.

A related finding of this research is that that tourists (regardless of time frame, multiple visits or second home ownership) do not, in practice, live like locals. On vacation, they abstractly imagine the local lifestyle. Actually, living like a local would entail work, likely in a service occupation, and economic struggle, an experience of the other side of the imperialistic equation, as described by Nash (1977). Godde, Price, and Zimmerman (2000) argue that tourists’ attraction to a mountain destination is often for opposite reasons than locals. This study supports that argument, as the data depicts local community informants choose to live in this area to become part of the environment and truly live the lifestyle, whereas tourist informants choose to visit the area to escape their personal reality and fulfill the desire to be served.



Lastly, my data show that a major difference between locals and tourists resides in their choices concerning this location-- one chooses to live here, the other to visit. The data depicts that this difference is understood and accepted by both groups, supporting the findings of Urry (1990) where he argues that “people both gaze at and are gazed upon the other” (p. 141) and that “...gazes are constructed through difference” (p. 1). Urry’s (1990) findings of the unwanted gaze gain support in my research findings, insofar as tourist informants may express feeling unwelcome when local residents gaze at them. This was evidenced, for example, in the account of a local informant recognizing the tourist group at the bar or local informants commenting on tourists pursuing their recreations in a different manner than locals. The gazes are meant to keep tourists separate and unable to belong, affirmed by locals’ actions to exclude tourists, noted earlier, through their refusal to initiate conversation. Yet, as discussed in this dissertation, many tourists want to belong, fit in, or experience life like a local resident, at least temporarily by dressing like a local, for instance, or starting conversations with local groups. These findings support Urry’s (1990) findings, as my field notes depict the continuing gazes of the locals maintaining the separation despite tourists’ desires to belong regardless of the gaze. Further, as Urry (1990) noted, the gazes can also be on the local from the tourist, as was empirically supported in the tourists’ unreasonable expectations of service where, the gaze of the served upon -- the server/servant-- is also an unwanted one that upholds separation and difference. This supports the idea that both groups participate in this dynamic of constructing difference through the gaze.

## **Tourism Communities and Second Home Ownership**

Empirical materials regarding second home ownership in this mountain community led me to related tourism literature. My empirical evidence of the effects of second homes, both physical --as evident in R's account of the changing mountain view-- and social --as the participant observation account of second home owners choosing to spend more and more time in the mountain community-- index changes connected to growth in second home ownership. Bright (2011) argued that, "...depending on the cultural differences between long-time local residents and more recent second homeowners, what starts as a positive economic boon to a region may eventually morph into a social environment of mutual mistrust and dislike between the two groups as a result of different held values and expectations of appropriate planning within the region" (p. 226). My data support Bright (2011) through accounts of the local community resisting real estate planning and building for tourists, including second home developments. It also supports an account of the local community's and second home owners' differing values as locals' choice to live in this mountain area reflect their rejection of perceived big city values, corporate greed and control, and complicated, fast paced, consumption driven ways of living, each of which second home ownership signifies to some degree.

In line with Armstrong and Stedman (2013), the growth in second home ownership has had a significant impact on the local community in terms of the clashing of cultures. Armstrong and Stedman (2013) argue that, because lived experiences of local residents and visitors differ, those who own second homes perceive less culture clash than local residents (p. 340). They (Armstrong & Stedman, 2013) also argue that the local

community has a “sense of membership and collective identity,” which increases as peak tourism season approaches, whereas “second home owners do not have the opportunity to form a place-based, collective identity separate from year-round residents” (p. 340). The result is second home owners being less aware of their collective difference. My study supports this argument; second home owners I talked with expressed feeling themselves to be part of the local community, although distant from it most of the time, and would like to have joined it sooner had they had the economic means. At the same time, local informants expressed a collective identity that grew stronger with the increase in tourism and second home development, and they identified a separation between themselves and second home owners on the basis of financial wherewithal, career success, and commitment to the mountain lifestyle they perceived second home owners to lack.

My research findings suggest that locals consider second home owners to be not only tourists but also members of a specific socio-economic category, one not occupied by most other tourists’ and certainly not by locals themselves. This is consistent with the literature exploring the connections between second home ownership and affluence (Barr, 2015; Hall & Muller, 2004; Lundmark & Marjavaara, 2013; Norris & Winston, 2010), which bears out the empirical difference I found between local and second home owner populations I encountered. Hall and Muller (2004) argue that second homes can be considered status symbols (p. 11), as “most households purchase second homes in order to achieve some dimension of lifestyle that is not available at their primary residence” (p. 12). Hall and Muller (2004) further observe that “second home landscapes are turning more and more into playgrounds of the elite” (p. 11). The findings of this study support their observations; the move toward an elite playground is suggested by the increasing

focus on catering to tourists and second home owners in the service sector, the new offerings focused on the tourist elite (i.e., the private club with no handle), and the development of special areas for tourists and second home owners based on second home location or the contribution to the economy of the area through the buying of goods, recreations and services.

Clifford (2002) and Coleman (2004) both reflect on the challenges associated with increasing impact of second home owners on the area economy, both positive and negative. While these scholars' (Clifford, 2002; Coleman, 2004) accounts find that rising tourism and second home ownership in mountain communities can directly lead to job creation and economic stability, they also maintain that these same effects can produce price increases and depress first-time home buying by local residents. In accord with this, I found that the buying power of second homeowners, driving up prices, and the limited availability of land for constructing housing drove residents' decisions to move farther from the community in which they worked or at least consider doing so, a finding that is also consistent with the work of Hall and Muller (2004). My local informants were fully aware that their incomes were highly dependent on tourism but it was also clear that this dependency led to a type of love/hate relationship with tourists, tourism, and tourism-based businesses. A sub-set of the local population openly resented the changing lifestyle brought about by increasing numbers of tourists and second home owners and the development that accommodated them. Although the local community needed the tourism businesses to survive, they did not appreciate or accept what that stood for-- rising home prices limiting available housing, changes to the physical landscape, tourism business actions that reduced interactions between the local and tourist groups, for

instance. A certain tension arose from the fact that, without business offerings reliant on sufficient tourism, such as lifts, trails, water ways, boats, the local community would likely not be able to engage in varied, valued recreations, one of the most important components of their quality of life.

### **Limitations**

Although my dissertation both supported and extended previously discussed theory and positively contributed to the tourism literature, it is important to address its limitations. The first is related to use of grounded theory. There are three main critiques of using grounded theory in ethnographic research: (1) the two distinct research approaches cannot be used together (Schram, 2006); (2) when used with ethnography, grounded theory separates data and theory, meaning it “slights the processes whereby data are assembled” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 167); and (3) the grounded theory process lacks rigor.

My work addresses each critique. First, I used grounded theory in conjunction with an ethnographic endeavor because it allowed me to see what emerged from my data. In this, I privilege the school of thought that understands grounded theory to be a method and analysis that is applicable to the interpretation of ethnographic data. Second, gerund coding enabled me to remain close to my data throughout the analysis process, which coincided, as described, with data gathering processes. The virtually simultaneous engagement in collection and analysis meant that I did not separate the data from any emerging theoretical implications, but instead intertwined and developed them jointly throughout my analytical process. Finally, following Charmaz (1990), I constructed conceptual categories in the reality of the setting, as “the rigor of the grounded theory

method depends upon developing the range of relevant conceptual categories, saturating (i.e., filling, supporting, and providing repeated evidence for) those categories, and explaining the data.” (Charmaz, 1990, p. 1163). This allowed a process I have, earlier in this dissertation, shown to be both detailed and rigorous.

Another limitation of this study involved access to informants. Despite multiple attempts, I was not able to conduct semi-structured interviews with resort managers or second home-owners although I had informal conversations with second home-owners as I engaged in participant observation. This resulted in a narrower focus on town officials and first-time and repeat tourists for interview data collection and analysis. I countered this limitation as much as possible by including all groups in participant observation and collection of information from secondary sources. Therefore, although I was not able to interview these subgroups, two of the three research methods I used included both.

A further limitation is coming short of a holistic discussion connecting the full range of elements that impact this mountain community. My focus on the socio-cultural impacts of tourism that was developed from my interpretation of Nash (1977, 1989), Doxey (1975), and Mason (2008) permitted some, but not a complete and integrated discussion of those factors along with the economic and environmental impacts, as that requires an undertaking beyond the time frame designated for completion of this research project.

### **Criteria for Evaluation**

The criteria for evaluating this type of research, as outlined by Denzin and Lincoln (2011) and Guba and Lincoln (1994), are: trustworthiness, credibility,

dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Using Ponting and McDonald (2013) as a guide, I believe the following aspects of my research process helped me to meet these criteria:

- 1) For trustworthiness and credibility, I utilized theoretical sampling as a way to work with and through the data. Having the ability to go back to informants, secondary sources, and extant literature allowed me to validate my emerging theoretical model as a contribution to scholarship and practice.
- 2) For dependability, I used a constant comparison process in data analysis. That enabled me to determine if the codes, categories, and concepts that emerged were the most representative of the interpreted realities present in the empirical materials. I also chose to stay in the field for more than one year, a prolonged time that gave me the ability to build relationships with informants and become part of a number of subgroups in this mountain community.
- 3) For confirmability, I used a constellation of three methods (i.e., engaging in participant observation, conducting semi-structured interviews, and collecting related secondary source documentation) to explore this community, which provided the capability of using three different approaches to understanding the existing social structure. Further, I recognized my positionality in the field-- who I am and my predispositions regarding this social world. A final aspect of confirmability came with the opportunity to share parts of this dissertation with my main informant. His observations helped me to construct and reconstruct with greater accuracy the reality of this community as I experienced it.

- 4) From my perspective, transferability is somewhat lacking. Although my research may not be fully adaptable to other geographical areas and structures of tourism, I hope that it can nonetheless offer guidance to scholars undertaking research on the sociocultural issues in other tourism-based environments connected to a recreation.

### **My Reflections**

My immersion in the field and, in fact, the entire research endeavor, stimulated a complex of emotions including joy, anger, fatigue, sympathy, sorrow, and happiness. At the same time, the rigorous process has helped build my research ability to levels I had not thought possible. As I reflect back on my memo writing, time in the field, data collection and analysis, and progression through writing and revising, I see four aspects of the research process most significant to me personally.

### **Selecting an Ethnographic Approach**

From the beginning of this process I was adamant that an ethnographic approach in a place to which I was already connected would bring useful advantages. Reflecting back, I see significant advantages, such as securing my main informant early on and being able to start data collection immediately in an area where I already knew something about sociocultural features. However, there were also disadvantages. These included finding a limited number of people who agreed to interviews because of my perceived closeness to and involvement with the issues; encountering the challenges of sharing sensitive information; and battling with myself regarding who to include in my informant list. Nonetheless, I believe these challenges drew me more closely into data collection



and analysis processes, while also helping to strengthen my connection with this community.

### **Concentrating on Ski/Snowboard Recreation**

As a direct reflection of my own interest in the area, I framed this study of tourism issues around ski/snowboard recreation. As I progressed through data collection and analysis, however, I realized that the community relies on many recreations dependent on seasons, weather and environmental changes. As a result, my research concentrated on broad recreational pursuits as definitive of this area, rather than just ski/snowboard recreation, and the more general term became the one pertinent to fully discussing the characteristics and values of this area and the local community.

### **Engaging in Memo Writing**

This writing process, specific to constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014), became an exceptionally valuable daily activity during my immersion in the field. Memo writing was the main avenue into reflecting on my data collection process, into brainstorming from my analytical diagramming, and into remaining present as a researcher within my data as the memos recorded personal reflections on feelings, beliefs, and emotions regarding both my research encounters and my developing theoretical model. Memo writing is a valuable process that I will continue in future research.

### **Adopting a Social Perspective**

My original idea for this dissertation, outlined in Chapter 1, was to attend to what was happening in this community from a social viewpoint. Given that guiding stance, economic and environmental impacts were not salient. As I immersed myself in the

community and my own data collection/analysis process, I realized that I was constructing a *social* view of the community in which economic and environmental effects and interpretations were entwined. Thus, it became apparent to me that although my holistic interpretation of tourism in this community is viewed through the lens of the social, it also necessarily takes into account some of the economic and environmental impacts of tourism as they are experienced and described by groups in this community, a reality that provided a more truly emic view of tourism's social consequences.

### **Future Research and Concluding Remarks**

This research re-begins and joins scholarly discussions of the social and cultural impacts of tourism in recreation-based communities. I was able to contribute to previous research by identifying a holistic, complex account of this recreation-based community to shed light on how interconnected relationships cause conflict and disagreement, as well as how tourism business decision-makers gain the ability to influence the relationships of the major players. I trust that my findings lead toward additional research, both qualitative and quantitative, that explore (1) the impact of local residents on power and political decision-making in tourism-based communities; (2) the simultaneous positive and negative impacts of tourism on local communities; and (3) the influence of alarming changes in weather on the environment and on economic, social, and cultural levels impacting the people living in or visiting tourism-based locales where seasonal recreations or activities are crucial to economic stability.

This study suggests three specific directions for future research. First, my research can be replicated for a comparative view of similar recreation-based economies, such as surf cultures, highlighting the interconnected social and power relationships in these

communities. Second, research could further explore the fantasy aspect of the tourist trying to live like a local. To date, only volunteer tourism sets a scene where the tourist lives like a local in the same environment, as the tourist works along with and through the local community. Future research could expand our understanding of this type of tourism, which is coming to play a notable role in U.S. culture as more young people pursue this type of “living like a local” experience. (3) Finally, it would be beneficial if future research explored tourism’s environmental impacts on recreation-based communities as a way to more holistically investigate and understand all dimensions of tourism and tourism/local relationships within local societies. A second aspect of this, understanding the connection between weather and tourism, especially for recreation-based communities, could aid tourism business managers’ decisions about positioning themselves in a changing world.

From a practical standpoint, my goal with this research was to arrive at a sense of how a less problematic interactional dynamic between locals and tourists might be achieved. Instead, at this end point, I offer the more limited hope that the findings of this research will help each group and sub-group understand other groups in a more empathetic way and take different conclusions from that. Second, it is possible that both members of the local community and tourism business decision-makers will discover that some of my findings help to establish a clearer vision of the positive and negative aspects of tourism growth, which in turn may contribute to more informed discussions and comprehensive planning within the community.

I believe the principal challenge for this local society now lies in keeping a balance between learning how to sustain the local community by preserving its valued

lifestyle, identifying and pursuing the interests of new tourism markets, and expanding recreational offerings and amenities. This challenge seems to me to lie in tourism business decision-makers' hands. It is my hope that tourism business decision-makers will be able to use this research as a stepping stone to realizing how members of the local community feel passionately about tourism and the changes related to it and, as a result, identify more clearly how and why the local community resists adaptation to tourism, resists its continued growth, and opposes many development initiatives. Furthermore, I hope this research helps tourism-business decision-makers more fully understand why this community values their life in this "postcard" and why they will persist in constructing, securing and sustaining its defining social, cultural, and environmental characteristics.

**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**

**APPROVED IRB DOCUMENT**

**Isenberg School of Management  
Human Subjects Review Approval Form**

**Primary Investigator Name:** Elizabeth Cartier

**Project Title:** A view from inside the bubble: Tourism culture envy through the lens of ski/snowboard culture

**Phone Number:** 413-262-9262

**email address:** [ecartier@som.umass.edu](mailto:ecartier@som.umass.edu)

***Please check the box that best describes the proposed research:***

The data obtained from human subjects can be easily disaggregated or will be reported at an individual level. Subjects will be informed of their rights in accordance with university guidelines and written consent is required.

The data obtained from the research proposed will only be reported in aggregate, and procedures will be implemented to make individual subject identification highly improbable. Subjects will be informed of their rights in accordance with University guidelines but written consent will not be required.

*In particular, all subjects will be informed that they are not required to complete the research study, and student subjects will be informed that any course credit can be obtained through a non-research alternative of equivalent length and difficulty.*

*Please provide the appropriate supporting documents using the following checklist:*

CITI Training Course Completion Record ( check here if copy is already on file) [for information and to take the training, go to <http://www.umass.edu/research/comply/citi.html>]

One page summary of the project, describing the research objective and sample of human subjects including:

- How they were obtained
- Methods used
- How consent will be gathered
- How data will be safeguarded
- Any potential risks to subjects
  - Copy of supporting documentation including consent forms and any questionnaires or interview scripts.

*I understand that any unanticipated problems causing increased risks to subjects and any changes in procedure will be reported to the Human Subjects Committee.*

Investigator's Signature\*: Elizabeth Cartier

Print Name: Elizabeth Cartier Date: 9/29/14

\*If research is conducted away from the UMass Amherst campus by faculty of other institutions, other signatures may be required.

**Submit completed form to D. Anthony Butterfield, Chair of the Isenberg School of Management Human Subjects Review Committee**

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*To be completed by the Isenberg School Human Subjects Review Committee:*

- project is approved by the Isenberg Human Subjects Review Committee

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of the Isenberg School Human Subjects Review Committee

## **A view from inside the bubble:**

### **Tourism culture envy through the lens of ski/snowboard culture**

#### **Summary of the project**

The objective of this research project is to gain an understanding of the socio-cultural impacts of tourism in an area that is reliant on recreation tourism. Specifically, the aim of this project is to understand the conflicts that exist between locals and tourists in a ski community, concentrating on their disagreements on how to live life, the purpose of the other, and the purpose of the resort.

#### **Human Subjects**

This paper will use a qualitative ethnographic framework utilizing both primary and secondary data sources. Secondary data will be obtained from internet websites, publications, government documents, historical documents, and the media. Primary data will be collected through non-structured conversational in-person interviews and participant observation. The informants, as well as their identifiable information, will not be recorded in any way. Using a subjective, interpretive approach I will speak with the interviewees or observe and then document field notes after the discussion. I think this is the most important way to go about this research as I feel this is a sensitive subject for the people living and working in the community.

**For the interviews, the following applies:**

#### ***Sample***

The sample will consist of residents and travelers to Colorado that have a direct relationship with the ski industry, whether they work for the industry, live in the town, actually ski/snowboard, own second homes here, or travel here to use the recreation.

#### ***How Consent will be Gathered***

At the start of the conversation, interviewees will be asked for their consent to participate in the conversation. They will be informed that I am conducting a research project on ski/snowboard culture and the impact tourism has on the local community and that I would like their opinion on the subject. I will reveal that the information that will be

provided will be kept strictly confidential with no connection to them and that they may terminate the conversation at any time. I will ask them to verbally agree or disagree to participate before beginning.

Verbal consent will be discussed in a similar manner to the following: *I would like to discuss your opinion and experience regarding ski/snowboard culture and the relationship between tourists and locals in the mountain environment. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may stop responding to any question at any time if you feel uncomfortable. The information that you provide will be kept strictly confidential and reported anonymously. You may terminate this conversation at any time. If you agree to participate please say "Yes" now.*

### ***How Data will be Safeguarded***

All in-person interviews will be interpreted by the researcher and written into field notes. The non-identifiable notes will be entered into my personal computer and/or UDrive, which will be password protected.

### ***Any Potential Risks to Subjects***

There are no known risks to the subjects, as participation is voluntary and interviewees are permitted to skip questions or withdraw from the research at any time.

### ***Interview Questions***

The non-structured discussions may flow in a different manner than planned, but topics that I would like covered are as followed:

- Discuss your background.
- Are you from the area?
- What is your relationship with skiing/snowboarding?
- Discuss your understanding of tourism in this area.
- What is your view on tourism here?
- What could be improved in regards to tourism here?
- Discuss what ski/snowboard culture is.
- What is your role in ski/snowboard culture?
- What is the tourists/locals role in ski/snowboard culture?
- Discuss your relationship with tourists/locals.
- How do tourists/locals impact your time here?
- What could be improved in your relationships with tourists/locals?



- Discuss your relationship with the resort.
- What do you think tourists/locals relationship with the resort is?
- What could be improved in your relationship with the resort?
- Discuss what is important to you in life.
- What do you value in your life?
- Where does skiing/snowboarding fit into your values?

**For the participant observation, the following applies:**

For the participant observation, I do not plan on recording any conversations, but instead plan on observing behavioral interactions and writing extensive field notes after the interactions. I imagine the majority of the observation will be done in local restaurants, bars, gear shops, etc. I will not be doing anything out of the ordinary, but just observing as I go about my experience. Afterward, I will write extensive field notes when I have left the area. During this time, I may have informal conversations, but not planned discussions. I will gain access to the observed spaces through the owners or top management of the areas. I will ask for written consent from these people and will explain the purpose of the study to them. I have included the written consent document below.

***How Data will be Safeguarded***

All observation will be interpreted by the researcher and written into field notes. The non-identifiable notes will be entered into my personal computer and/or UDrive, which will be password protected.

***Any Potential Risks to Subjects***

There are no known risks to the observed subjects.

***Written Consent for Participant Observation:***

I, \_\_\_\_\_ grant permission to Elizabeth Cartier to conduct research at this establishment. The total research requirements involve observing interactions and conversations that will take place in this space. I understand that these observations will have no identifiable information recorded.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name (print)

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Signature

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APPENDIX B  
REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES OF 1<sup>ST</sup> ORDER CATEGORIES

Examples from Field Notes

First Order Category

Aggregate Category

*Participant Observation Examples*

<i>I talked many times with people like F who said they were making it here because they had a job, but really just making it because the prices are so high.</i>	Having an inconsistency between pay and cost of living	Struggling to survive
<i>It is hard to save part of one's pay here because things are so costly- people know they should, but it is really difficult to do that.</i>		
<i>When talking about the really expensive prices on passes, they mentioned that they are upset that other areas are less with more options to ski in more places- they said the prices are too high here.</i>	Being directly tied to tourism influxes	Struggling to survive
<i>There has been a lot of talk of people who lost their jobs because of influxes in the economy here.</i>		
<i>The goal for these people was to be in the snow. It was about nature, the environment, being outside, and being together.</i>	Having a social network	Making a connection with the community
<i>When we left the restaurant, I noticed that R and X said goodbye to every single person in the place- literally all 20+ people.</i>		
<i>She said she has been in the area since the summer and was excited to come to this bar because she heard someone from New England owned it</i>	Reminiscing about the place one is from	Making a connection with the community
<i>I was talking to a person whose boyfriend was from NH and knew Amherst really well- we discussed the Pats and the Sox and how much we miss the food there.</i>		
<i>There was a fight last night at the bar- when D told me about it he said that the locals all came together to make sure the visitor left and didn't hurt anyone.</i>	Relying on others	Struggling to survive

<i>Everyone I talked to said they would not stand for that behavior- not in their home place.</i>		
<i>P agreed sharing that this place is a small family of people that want to live in nature and near the snow.</i>		
<i>There is a local snow festival that all the local population is looking forward to where there is a celebration of the mid-winter, appreciating the fact that snow is here and that water has returned to the mountains.</i>	Being about following the water	Being the lifestyle
<i>Following the water and nature is about a different way of life- it leads to a different understanding of what is important.</i>		
<i>Some of the people here never want to give up this unique life, no matter how much money they can make somewhere else.</i>	Being different from the rest of the U.S.	
<i>I was having some issues the other day trying to decide where I wanted to get a job. R suggested I needed to choose the lifestyle I wanted- he said there are only two places, relaxed, outdoorsy, adventurous places, or places that are about making money and moving up the corporate ladder.</i>		
<i>It was interesting that having technological connection with other people was not important as he skied. He wanted to be fully aware of his journey as he experienced it.</i>	Valuing the journey	
<i>He said he really liked living here because everyone lived on island time plus 5 minutes.</i>		
<i>It was a beautiful bluebird day- almost the perfect day where everyone was smiling and so happy to be there.</i>	Being thankful for this place	Becoming part of the environment
<i>I live in the most beautiful place in the United States. I am one of the luckiest people because I can call this place my own.</i>		
<i>He was insinuating that he was waiting for the tourists to leave so we could ski on our mountain.</i>	Having a sense of ownership	

<i>He meant that the place (the mountain) was returned to the rightful owners- the local population.</i>		
<i>She said she had a work event but would rather go fishing with R instead. She decided to go fishing instead of going to work.</i>	Focusing on the environment over other priorities	
<i>To him nature and the environment are important, his job is not as important as this place.</i>		
<i>Then we started talking about how this person was really mean when ordering a drink- like they were expecting extra service.</i>	Expecting unreasonable recreation service	Being served
<i>People just expect things like this when they are on vacation.</i>		
<i>X said he is not surprised, all he said was that they were tourists and that is what they do. He said he bets they wouldn't do that when they are at home.</i>	Expecting service that someone can do in their home environment	
<i>The people traveling here expect people to pick up after them.</i>		
<i>There was a lot of talk this month about vintage ski stuff, posters, ornaments, even clothes.</i>	Connecting to the nostalgia of skiing	Trying to understand the lifestyle
<i>I walked down the main street the other day and I could not believe the number of people in fur boots, with fur jackets, and fur hats</i>		
<i>I was walking down the main street the other day with D, when an older male stopped us to ask where he could buy marijuana.</i>	Talking to the locals	
<i>One person came up to B and said he remembered him when he worked at the resort.</i>		
<i>But they love it here and wish they could have spent more time here earlier in life.</i>	Questioning one's decision regarding home choices	
<i>They have discussed that they like it here more than their original homes</i>		

<i>She said because they were tourists and had the money to dress like that.</i>	Having different economic means	Being distinctly different
<i>A said there was no way I had money like they did and I would never be able to buy those clothes.</i>		
<i>Y said it seemed like they thought it was important to look like that.</i>	Having different values	
<i>They didn't look like the locals at all. He joked that they must think they are in a ski movie.</i>		
<i>I said that it has always been difficult working in the service industry here because the people that come here really like to party- like REALLY like to party... and party with him or other locals.</i>	Understanding the lifestyle differently	
<i>The tourists think the Colorado lifestyle is a party all the time.</i>		
<i>We discussed what will happen to locals- both locals that live on the mountain and locals that live in town if the weather continues to change. (i.e., not as much snow).</i>	Having changing/unpredictable weather	Having a tourism flow cycle
<i>C commented that most people that live here actually have a 2<sup>nd</sup> hobby- whether it is fishing, golfing, hunting, or biking – everyone has something else.</i>		
<i>But he said it is up to the tourism businesses to change- to make sure the tourists come- and to make sure the locals can still survive to live here.</i>	Understanding tourism influxes	
<i>When we are in the off-season, everything mellows.</i>		
<i>It was not conducive to people talking or mingling- the auction items- which were very expensive were in a completely other room than the bar.</i>	Having a separation between tourists and locals	Making a separation
<i>But no matter how much people that serve try to be on the same level as those that they serve, they never will be.</i>		
<i>A pass that can only be used Monday-Friday, but there are blackout dates- this means that the locals with this pass cannot ski during certain days.</i>	Noticing separations within groups	

<i>We all discussed that we knew this was a strategy to sell more passes at cheaper prices, but it just seems like it provides more of a separation saying they want the locals there on certain days and tourists there on other days.</i>		
<i>He also talked about the manager of the club, who he knows well and how the tourists seem to really like him.</i>	Wanting to not be separate	
<i>D said he didn't feel like we were really invited or that we should be there.</i>		
<i>C said people make the choice, they know before they start skiing how dangerous it really is.</i>	Being centered on a dangerous sport	Connecting to the ski business
<i>We begin to talk about how this is a dangerous sport, but people choose to do it anyway.</i>		
<i>Whatever they decide to do we both think they will update Facebook regarding their practices- it seems that they are using Facebook more this year than ever.</i>	Imposing marketing practices connected to a short season	
<i>It was interesting to R, myself, and other locals that the owner decided to announce the full take over during the biggest storm of the year.</i>		
<i>It seemed to me that the resort decision-makers had their specific motives in mind but maybe did not explain their reasoning completely. These changes in employment seem to be moving throughout the entire resort structure.</i>	Making employment decisions	
<i>I heard of one woman who has been with the resort for 15 years and was offered another position, so she spoke to the resort about it and asked for more money to stay. They offered her basically nothing so she left.</i>		
<i>N said that she thinks a lot of locals would like this mountain to turn more into a 'locals' mountain' instead of a 'tourist mountain.'</i>	Being a local	Understanding the impact of a change in management
<i>He lives in the area and his children go to local schools.</i>		
<i>He is considered a good skier, so much so that one article depicted that he skied moguls last spring with a local coach.</i>	Being a skier	

<i>R said if he really is a skier's skier than he should know what the local population wants at the resort- lower prices and less development.</i>		
<i>Within days of receiving the email and the newspaper articles about the ownership change, the name of the resort reverted back to the name that it used to be.</i>	Making changes immediately	
<i>W also said he cannot believe the new owner is changing terrain and putting in a new lift.</i>		

*Interview Examples*

<i>You want the resort to make enough money to survive, but you don't want it to be like Vail.</i>	Deciding not to live in Vail	Being different then corporate America
<i>You don't want tourists to overpower the locals on the mountain, like Vail.</i>		
<i>I don't charge tourist prices in my business.</i>	Choosing personal business structure	
<i>This is a tough place to live, so I try to take care of my people (i.e., employees).</i>		
<i>The resort is pretty much corporate America in this town- they control a recreation and control the people that work there.</i>	Linking resort and corporate America	
<i>The resort is like corporate America because they provide the ability to do something we want to do- and they don't care much about the people who live here.</i>		
<i>The more that people hear the name and want to come here, the less space there is do the recreations</i>	Wondering how much space is left	Living a recreation battleground
<i>I keep pushing farther and farther north to get away from people because there is no space left.</i>		



<i>When I first got here there was plenty of space and trees, now the environment has changed.</i>	Cutting up the forest	
<i>Some locals always blame the tourists because they don't like how the environment is being changed.</i>		
<i>When the ownership changed the whole mentality of the resort changed- went from skiing to development.</i>	Seeing the 90's change	Seeing the changing lifestyle
<i>20 years ago, the whole mentality of skiing changed here.</i>		
<i>We all may be hurting financially, but we are all doing what we love.</i>	Being difficult to stay here	
<i>When I first got here, you could actually survive in this area, that was back when it was easy to stay here.</i>		
<i>The local people are changing because it is more challenging to stay here. People are in and out these days.</i>	Changing ski bums	
<i>The ski bum lifestyle is changing. People may not want to live this life anymore.</i>		
<i>The new owner seems to be going back to the skiing mentality.</i>	Having new management	Hoping for the future
<i>Yeah- this guy is bringing in tourists, but it is more about changing the mountain to be for the skiers, the locals</i>		
<i>They were previously trying to make money with real estate, but now they are changing and trying to make money with skiing.</i>	Changing business position	
<i>He is a skier, less of a business person, so he is changing the place to be about the skier</i>		
<i>As locals, we have to be ok with this (OC- tourists and increasing tourism).</i>	Accepting this reality	
<i>I hope the new guy (owner) can change the animosity regarding the past decision-making at the resort.</i>		
<i>Her mom is in Europe for a week and she said her mom was concerned that she was going to look like a tourist.</i>	Being concerned about appearance	Wanting to know the lifestyle

<i>It is this idea that there is a difference between showcasing where you experienced or lived, like he thinks locals would do; or just pretending, like he thinks tourists do.</i>		
<i>She is nervous because she does not want to be seen as a tourist.</i>	Wanting to fit in	
<i>She wants to figure out how to fit in.</i>		
<i>F said as a tourist he believes that his role is to take everything in and to ski/snowboard as much as he possibly can.</i>	Traveling to experience what it is like to be a local	
<i>Tourists want to know what it is like to be a local in that place.</i>		
<i>They say the tourists are annoying and that the businesses try to screw over the locals by charging more.</i>	Having a negative stigma of tourists	Being curious about negative perceptions of tourists
<i>Tourists visit people's homes for short periods of time, so it makes sense that there may be negative stigmas about them.</i>		
<i>It seems that a lot of people that visit don't take it seriously, they don't realize that people actually live there. ... that the area is more than a tourist haven.</i>	Acknowledging people may live there, maybe	
<i>It is like a tourist would never even think to live there.</i>		
<i>S thinks people that visit or only show up to work for the season don't invest as much care in the place as someone who lives there full time.</i>	Questioning tourist care	
<i>People are generally just big fans of the places they travel to-- but they don't want to really invest in the place.</i>		
<i>There are tough parts associated with being a local that she has heard of.</i>	Being a hindrance to full-time residents	
<i>It seems that there are a lot of tough aspects involved in choosing to live in tourist-based communities- hard to get into a restaurant, can't go to town, roads are busy, recreations are crowded, etc.</i>		
<i>She doesn't want to struggle with the things she has been struggling with and instead wants simpler living</i>	Wanting a simpler life	Making the move

<i>She is excited to be in the woods and not be in the city- slowing down in a place where she can stay home more.</i>		
<i>Right now, when she visits the place that she will be moving too, she feels like she is being brushed off as they still see her as if she was a tourist.</i>	Feeling like I don't belong	
<i>S is sick of feeling like she doesn't belong- she is really trying and she doesn't realize why it is so tough to be accepted.</i>		
<i>She is telling the locals she has met that she is serious about moving there, that she is actually going to do it.</i>	Showing locals I will make the commitment	
<i>M believes that every tourist has a responsibility to commit in some way to a local community while traveling because it is every person's responsibility to be good to each other and to this earth.</i>		
<i>Around the Denver 170 area are the places that really hold the tourism in the state and we receive some impact from there.</i>	Being a small recreation community is Colorado	Being/marketing a unique place
<i>We are a small ship in a big wake.</i>		
<i>This place has so much to offer- we have the same as Denver but we also have the [deleted] aspect which they don't.</i>	Working to become a more diverse area	
<i>We need to work on getting people here in the slow seasons with group things or a conference center.</i>		
<i>An issue with tourism in this area is that it is natural amenity driven.</i>	Relying on the natural environment	
<i>All of our tourism surrounds natural recreation.</i>		
<i>He explained that there are so many options to increase tourism, but the funding is limited, most people do not know that- he can't ask for the city to help with funding because some city council members want to close the door to tourism all together.</i>	Addressing concerns of locals wanting to close the door on tourism	Overcoming local reluctance to change
<i>They (some locals) complain about congestion and want to close the doors to any development, but they don't understand how much tourism helps our economy.</i>		

<i>Positioning new tourism infrastructure to the local community is important in convincing them that development is worth it economically.</i>	Educating locals who are against congestion/ expansion, and development and have a lack of understanding about tourism	
<i>He thinks they can convince the local population to support expansion by highlighting how they can use the new infrastructure for school functions or the arts.</i>		
<i>He would like to put up a conference center or other type of attraction that would help build tourism in other time frames and would move the tourism to be less dependent on the natural resources.</i>	Building new infrastructure to develop non-recreation based tourism	Making decisions about the future of the community
<i>Diversification saves our economy- we need all of the industries to survive.</i>		
<i>He said that locals just don't understand that if tourists don't ski or don't use the river than they won't be able to live here. He said that locals really don't understand the economy here.</i>		
<i>It is a political thing for this city but it is very difficult to convince the local population that the development is worth it economically.</i>	Wanting to convince locals about economy and tourism	

*Secondary Sources Examples*

<i>Sales tax is less personal, it is perceived to be paid by tourists and non-locals. (Airport expansion)</i>	Expanding/minimizing access to the area	Disagreeing on development decisions
<i>We have to make this improvement to the airport for the economic stability today and for the future</i>		
<i>Those seeking to put their property to maximum use- either with extra units for long-term rentals or with accommodations for travelers.</i>	Increasing/maintaining housing	
<i>Two hundred new hotel rooms on the horizon, scheduled to open in 2016, will give [this town] more tourism capacity.</i>		

<i>Neighbors uninterested in the increased traffic, population and neighborhood instability such mixed use can draw.</i>	Growing/reducing traffic issues	
<i>Manage our growth and development in a manner that respects our environment and preserves the unique character and identity of our community.</i>		
<i>Talk to anyone who has taken a recent vacation, and they will tell you, 'The place was packed with tourists.'</i>	Sustaining the self/tourism	Disagreeing on the magnitude of tourism's impact on the community
<i>Promote community sustainability through economic, organizational, and environmental resiliency.</i>		
<i>The reality is there's much more skiing here than there would be without the destination skier. They pay for so much.</i>	Offsetting/adapting to tourism changes	
<i>Envision [this city's] Sense of Place by creating character districts, promoting responsible land use planning, and maintaining the community's sense of identity.</i>		
<i>I've had several new leads and folks drawn to our great niche of [deleted] Colorado who are captivated by the beauty and lifestyle, eager to establish a residence or second home here.</i>	Wanting to experience a different place	Making the decision to visit
<i>With all of today's overcrowded and urbanized ski areas, it's nice to know there's still a place that remains true to what winter in the mountains should be.</i>		
<i>Simply put, the [city] downtown is the epi-center of lodging, shopping and restaurants while the county provides significant outdoor activity, cultural attractions and recreational pursuits."</i>	Being interested in recreations	
<i>The secret is the mountain's incredible natural shape, a mountain that matches itself to the latest equipment – shaped skis and carving snowboards.</i>		
<i>More mountain. More snow. More warmth.</i>	Wanting to enjoy incredible weather	

<i>There's one thing we can't improve – the weather.</i>		
<i>We are a highly desired vacation destination, and few visitors leave disappointed.</i>	Signifying a complete vacation	Trying to increase tourism/attract visitors
<i>The [area] is not a single attraction destination.</i>		
<i>Immerse yourself in our town's vibrant heritage on a walking tour through historic downtown, and savor a gourmet meal at one of the area's many cafes or restaurants.</i>	Selling a unique destination	
<i>Take in a show at a [deleted] theater or music venue, or feed your creative side at one of [deleted] museums or art galleries</i>		
<i>An increase in tourism may be related to the 100th anniversary of the National Parks.</i>	Focusing on recreation pursuits	
<i>Rich in outdoor and recreational amenities and we have what Colorado is promoting.</i>		
<i>[The old name] never did exactly roll off the tongue. It was, perhaps intentionally, more evocative of real estate than skiing.</i>	Changing the business identifiable symbol	Making changes to business position
<i>He immediately won the appreciation of so many locals renaming it [back to the old name].</i>		
<i>Two newer passes and 2 lower priced passes for the 2016-2017 season.</i>	Making decisions on costs of products	
<i>Changing payments to allow payment plans- this is the first time many locals have seen this.</i>		
<i>The ski swap that is being advertised before the season begins is aimed toward providing discounted products to the local community.</i>	Determining ideal market	
<i>The businesses in town that participate in the ski swap also provide products (to be bought or rented) during the season.</i>		
<i>We had over 700 petitions- we went to the meetings. The restaurant is still here today. The people fought for it- and we won.</i>	Realizing local power in community	Determining the multiple gatekeepers in this community
<i>Right- but we can still decide where we want to spend our money.</i>		

<i>X said the city budget is reliant on sales tax- it pays for a lot of what we do in this community.</i>	Realizing tourist power in community
<i>As we see our numbers going up in lodging and sales tax, when we have strong tourism, it correlates that you need more people in the workforce.</i>	
<i>Backers of the measure include the city council... and some prominent business owners</i>	Realizing city council power in community
<i>The city was considering a proposal from staff members to take six of eight parks out of the organic management program.</i>	

Using Nag & Gioia (2012) as a guide, two quotes for each 1<sup>st</sup> order category are displayed. Further quotes representing the 1<sup>st</sup> order categories are available through the author.

APPENDIX C  
SECONDARY SOURCES

	Type	Year	Author	Reference or URL
<b>City/Area Documents</b>	City of Durango Website	2015/2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.durangogov.org/">http://www.durangogov.org/</a>
	City of Steamboat Springs Website	2015/2016	N/A	<a href="http://steamboatsprings.net/">http://steamboatsprings.net/</a>
	City of Telluride Website	2015/2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.telluride-co.gov/">http://www.telluride-co.gov/</a>
	Durango Colorado Facts	2014-2016	US Census	<a href="http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08/0822035.html">http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08/0822035.html</a>
	Steamboat Colorado Facts	2014-2016	US Census	<a href="http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/0873825">http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/0873825</a>
	Telluride Colorado Facts	2014-2016	US Census	<a href="http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08/0822035.html">http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08/0822035.html</a>
	City of Durango Meetings: Meeting Minutes	2015/2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.durangogov.org/index.aspx?nid=146">http://www.durangogov.org/index.aspx?nid=146</a>
	City of Steamboat Meetings: Meeting Minutes	2015/2016	N/A	<a href="http://steamboatsprings.net/index.aspx?nid=89">http://steamboatsprings.net/index.aspx?nid=89</a>



City of Telluride Meetings: Meeting Minutes	2015/2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.telluride-co.gov/AgendaCenter">http://www.telluride-co.gov/AgendaCenter</a>
City of Durango 2016 Proposed Budget	2015	N/A	<a href="http://www.durangogov.org/DocumentCenter/View/5529">http://www.durangogov.org/DocumentCenter/View/5529</a>
City of Steamboat 2016 Proposed Budget	2015	N/A	<a href="http://steamboatsprings.net/index.aspx?NID=118">http://steamboatsprings.net/index.aspx?NID=118</a>
City of Telluride 2016 Proposed Budget	2015	N/A	<a href="http://www.telluride-co.gov/122/Budget-Financial-Statements">http://www.telluride-co.gov/122/Budget-Financial-Statements</a>
La Plata County Election Results	2016	N/A	<a href="http://co.laplata.co.us/cms/one.aspx?pageId=1632931">http://co.laplata.co.us/cms/one.aspx?pageId=1632931</a>
Routt County Election Resorts	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.co.routt.co.us/index.aspx?nid=221">http://www.co.routt.co.us/index.aspx?nid=221</a>
San Miguel County Election Results	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.sanmiguelcounty.org/164/Elections">http://www.sanmiguelcounty.org/164/Elections</a>
Durango Airport Website	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.durangogov.org/index.aspx?nid=202">http://www.durangogov.org/index.aspx?nid=202</a>
Steamboat Airport Website	2016	N/A	<a href="http://steamboatsprings.net/index.aspx?nid=333">http://steamboatsprings.net/index.aspx?nid=333</a>
Telluride Airport Website	2016	N/A	<a href="http://tellurideairport.com/">http://tellurideairport.com/</a>

Fort Lewis College	2016	N/A	<a href="https://www.fortlewis.edu/">https://www.fortlewis.edu/</a>
Colorado Mountain College	2016	N/A	<a href="http://coloradomtn.edu/">http://coloradomtn.edu/</a>
Colorado State College	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.colostate.edu/">http://www.colostate.edu/</a>
Durango Area Tourism Board	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.durango.org/">http://www.durango.org/</a>
Steamboat Springs Chamber of Commerce	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.steamboatchamber.com/info/visitor.center.asp">http://www.steamboatchamber.com/info/visitor.center.asp</a>
Telluride Tourism Board	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.visittelluride.com/">http://www.visittelluride.com/</a>
Durango Ski Swap (Ski Patrol)	2014	N/A	<a href="http://www.durango.org/events/event/hesperus-ski-patrol-swap">http://www.durango.org/events/event/hesperus-ski-patrol-swap</a>
Steamboat Ski Swap (SSWSC)	2015	N/A	<a href="http://www.steamboatsmyhome.com/blog/steamboats-best-prices-on-gear-sswsc-ski-swap/">http://www.steamboatsmyhome.com/blog/steamboats-best-prices-on-gear-sswsc-ski-swap/</a>
Telluride Ski Swap (KOTO)	2015	N/A	<a href="http://koto.org/event/koto-ski-swap/">http://koto.org/event/koto-ski-swap/</a>
Durango: River Rafting	2016	N/A	<a href="http://durangoraft.com">http://durangoraft.com</a>
Steamboat: River Rafting	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.coloradorafting.net/destinations/steamboat-springs/">http://www.coloradorafting.net/destinations/steamboat-springs/</a>
Telluride: River Rafting	2016	N/A	<a href="https://www.tellurideoutside.com/river-rafting">https://www.tellurideoutside.com/river-rafting</a>

	Lodging in Durango	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.durango.com/durango-lodging/">http://www.durango.com/durango-lodging/</a>
	Lodging in Steamboat	2016	N/A	<a href="https://www.steamboat.com/plan-your-trip/lodging">https://www.steamboat.com/plan-your-trip/lodging</a>
	Lodging in Telluride	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.telluridereservations.com/?source=bing&amp;pid=844-757-6754">http://www.telluridereservations.com/?source=bing&amp;pid=844-757-6754</a>
	Colorado Travel	2016	N/A	<a href="https://www.go-colorado.com/">https://www.go-colorado.com/</a>
	Labor Statistics	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.bls.gov">www.bls.gov</a>
<b>Newspaper Articles</b>	Article	Ma. 12, 2001	Ross, T.	Ross, T. (2001, May 12). Looking ahead: Author to discuss the link between tourism and the local economy. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
	Article	Jun. 11, 2001	Hohl, F.	Hohl, F. (2001, June 11). Turnaround may ease traffic: City discusses congestion in Ski Time Square. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
	Article	Jan. 16, 2002	Salzman, A.	Salzman, A. (2002, January 16). Officials mull airport authority. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
	Article	Jul. 9, 2003	Ragan, E.	Ragan, E. (2003, July 9). Transportation planning under way in region: Plan will cover five counties in northwest Colorado. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
	Article	Jun. 30, 2004	Metz, C.	Metz, C. (2004, June 30). Steamboat airport delayed. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
	Article	Ma. 25, 2005	Metz, C.	Metz, C. (2005, May 25). Airport offers promotion: Steamboat looks to increase aviation traffic during shoulder seasons. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
	Editorial	Sept. 24, 2006	Larson, T.	Larson, T. (2006, September 24). Driving problem. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
	Article	Oct. 29, 2006	DeLaCruz, A.	DeLaCruz, A. (2006, October 29). Tourism with a twist. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
	Article	Dec. 20, 2007	N/A	No Author. (2007, December 20). The less crowded skies. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Feb. 1, 2009	Kelley, J.	Kelley, J. (2009, February 1). Vail seeks tourism oversight. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .	

Article	Feb. 27, 2009	Dudley, M.	Dudley, M. (2009, February 27). Transportation plan feedback sought: Solutions committee highlights recommendations for local, regional needs. <i>Steamboat Times</i> .
Article	Feb. 7, 2010	No Author.	No Author. (2010, February 7). Let's vote committee: There is no traffic solution. <i>Steamboat Times</i> .
Article	Jan. 21, 2011	Ross, T.	Ross, T. (2011, January 21). White speaks about tourism to Main Street Steamboat Springs. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
Article	Nov. 18, 2011	Preston, B.	Preston, B. (2011, November 18). With winter tourism, much depends on the snow. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Nov. 27, 2011	Preston, B.	Preston, B. (2011, November 27). County closes on conservation easement. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Nov. 30, 2012	McRann, C.	McRann, C. (2012, November 30). TMRAO, Telluride Tourism Board announce partnership. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Editorial	Jul. 11, 2013	Bevill, E.	Bevill, E. (2013, July 11). Add a grocery store. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
Article	Aug. 5, 2014	McRann, C.	McRann, C. (2014, August 5). Four Corners project gets conceptual PUD approval. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Nov. 2, 2014	Slothower, C.	Slothower, C. (2014, November 2). DMR buyer looks to expand. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Dec. 1, 2014	McRann, C.	McRann, C. (2014, December 1). MV council reinstates resident parking near town hall. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Dec. 14, 2014	Sackett, H.	Sackett, H. (2014, December 14). Tourism board recounts successes in 2013. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Dec. 21, 2014	Peel, J.	Peel, J. (2014, December 21). Winter: Yay or nay? <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Dec. 27, 2014	No Author.	No Author. (2014, December 27). 2014. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .

Editorial	Feb. 18, 2015	Holstrom, K.	Holstrom, K. (2015, February 15). Housing brainstorming. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Cartoon	Mar. 1, 2015	No Author.	No Author. (2015, March 1). Why stop with the ski area? <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Mar. 1, 2015	No Author.	No Author. (2015, March 1). <i>Purgatory Again</i> . <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Mar. 4, 2015	Shinn, M.	Shinn, M. (2015, March 4). Public Split on airport upgrade. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Mar. 10, 2015	Kunkel, B.	Kunkel, B. (2015, March 10). Durango's tourism marketing takes the whole enchilada. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Mar. 11, 2015	Butler, A.	Butler, A. (2015, March 11). There just isn't enough housing here. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Mar. 18, 2015	Slothower, C.	Slothower, C. (2015, March 18). Skier, developer, 'creator." <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Cartoon	Mar. 22, 2015	Reynolds,	Reynolds, J. (2015, March 22). Purgatory Resort: Thanks Mr. Coleman. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Apr. 15, 2015	Ristow, T.	Ristow, T. (2015, April 15). April Stools Day event cleans up local parks, trails. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
Article	July 15,2015	Slosson, M.	Slosson, M. (2015, July 15). Town council considers bigger Town Park stage. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Ma. 9, 2015	Rodebaugh, D.	Rodebaugh, D. (2015, May 9). Our snowpack is lackluster. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Ma. 22, 2015	Slothower, C.	Slothower, C. (2015, May 22). Durango's population sees strong growth. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Jun. 10, 2015	Kunkel, B.	Kunkel, B. (2015, June 10). A look at the summer tourism forecast. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .

Article	Jun. 10, 2015	Shinn, M.	Shinn, M. (2015, June 10). Voters favor airport sales tax. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Jul. 16, 2015	Olivarius-McAllister, C.	Olivarius-McAllister, C. (2015, July 16). Too busy, broke or tired to save the earth? Think again. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Aug. 20, 2015	Franz, S.	Franz, S. (2015, August 20). New I-70 mountain express lane expected to open by year's end. <i>Steamboat Times</i> .
Article	Oct. 30, 2015	Roosi, J.	Roosi, J. (2015, October 30). Changing times. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Oct. 23, 2016	Shinn, M.	Shinn, M. (2016, October 23). Will airport upgrade take flight with voters? <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Oct. 25, 2016	Shinn, M.	Shinn, M. (2015, October 25). Durango City Council asks for clean sidewalks, panhandling outreach. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Nov. 16, 2015	Shinn, M.	Shinn, M. (2015, November 16). Ambassadors coming to downtown this spring. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Nov. 27, 2015	Elliot, S.	Elliot, S. (2015, November 27). Mountain Village leaders ponder water conservation. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Feb. 1, 2016	Peters, A.	Peters, A. (2016, February 1). Barriers mount against workforce housing projects. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .
Article	Mar. 16, 2016	Pace, J.	Pace, J. (2016, March 16). La Plata County job growth attributed to diversification. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Jun. 24, 2016	No Author.	No Author. (2016, June 24). More than 12,000 visitors expected in town today. <i>Steamboat Today</i> .
Article	Nov. 2, 2016	Shinn, M.	Shinn, M. (2016, November 2). Durango City Council hears compromise on city parks. <i>The Durango Herald</i> .
Article	Nov. 15, 2016	Salvail, A.	Salvail, A. (2016, November 15). Lack of snow means opening day delay. <i>Telluride Daily Planet</i> .

	Article	Nov. 29, 2016	Nichols, J.	Nichols, J. (2016, November 29). Feature: The tourist trap. <i>Planet Jackson Hole</i> .
<b>Real Estate Documents</b>	Durango Real Estate	2014- 2016	N/A	<a href="http://wellsgroupdurango.com/">http://wellsgroupdurango.com/</a>
	Steamboat Real Estate	2014- 2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.steamboatrealestate.com/">http://www.steamboatrealestate.com/</a>
	Telluride Real Estate	2014- 2016	N/A	<a href="http://realestateintelluride.net/">http://realestateintelluride.net/</a>
	Durango Real Estate Blog	2016	N/A	<a href="http://buydurango.com/blog/">http://buydurango.com/blog/</a>
	Steamboat Real Estate Blog	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.steamboatsprings-realestate.com/blog/">http://www.steamboatsprings-realestate.com/blog/</a>
	Telluride Real Estate Blog	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.searchtelluriderealestate.com/blog/">http://www.searchtelluriderealestate.com/blog/</a>
<b>Resort Documents</b>	Ski Resort	2016	N/A	<a href="https://www.purgatoryresort.com/">https://www.purgatoryresort.com/</a>
	Ski Resort	2016	N/A	<a href="https://www.steamboat.com/">https://www.steamboat.com/</a>
	Ski Resort	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.tellurideskiresort.com/">http://www.tellurideskiresort.com/</a>
	Ski Resort	2016	N/A	<a href="https://townofmountainvillage.com/">https://townofmountainvillage.com/</a>
<b>Related Literature</b>	Book	1969	Backus, H.	Backus, H. (1969). <i>Tomboy bride</i> . Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing Company.
	Book	1978	Wenger, M.	Wenger, M. (1978). <i>Recollections of Telluride Colorado (1895-1920)</i> . Durango, CO: Basin Reproduction & Printing, Co.
	Book	1979	Fetter, R.	Fetter, R. (1979). <i>Telluride: From pick to powder</i> . Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press.
	Book	1984	Griffiths, T.	Griffiths, T. (1984). <i>San Juan Country</i> . Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing Co.

Book	1989	Langdon, C.	Langdon, C. (1989). <i>Durango ski: People and seasons at Purgatory</i> . Durango, CO: Purgatory Press.
Book	1992	Smith, D.	Smith, D. (1992). <i>Rocky mountain boom town: A history of Durango, Colorado</i> . Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.
Book	1998	Buys, C.	Buys, C. (1998). <i>Historic Telluride</i> . Lake City, CO: Western Reflections Publishing Company.
Book	1998	Gick, E. & Tamulonis, C.	Gick, E. & Tamulonis, C. (1998). <i>Telluride mountain almanac: A book about life in the Colorado Rockies</i> . Libri Silvestres.
Book	1999	Eggebroten, E.	Eggebroten, E. (1999). <i>Adventures of a Telluride native</i> . Western Reflections Publishing Company.
Book	1999	Olsen, D.	Olsen, D. (1999). <i>Steamboat Springs legends: A centennial collection</i> . Steamboat Springs, CO: Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association.
Book	2000	Benjamin, E.	Benjamin, E. (2000). <i>Telluride: Landscapes and dreams</i> . Telluride, CO: Montoya Publishing.
Book	2006	Barbour, E.	Barbour, E. (2006). <i>Images of America: Telluride</i> . Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing.
Book	2006	Bie, T.	Bie, T. (2006). <i>Steamboat: Ski town USA (Roadside history series)</i> . Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing Company.
Book	2008	Primus, D. & Merrill, M.	Primus, D. & Merrill, M. (2008). <i>Steamboat Springs: Memories of a young Colorado pioneer</i> . Western Reflections Publishing Company.
Book	2009	Ellis, D.	Ellis, D. (2009). <i>Steamboat Springs (Images of America)</i> . Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing.
Book	2009	Larese, S.	Larese, S. (2009). <i>Durango perspectives</i> . Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, Ltd..
Book	2014	Lundahl, I.	Lundahl, I. (2014). <i>Telluride: The outlaw spirit of a Colorado town</i> . Telluride, CO: Telluride Publishing.



	Book	2014	Vass, J.	Vass, J. (2014). <i>Sleeping big in smallville: A Telluride story</i> . Vass Company.
	Book	2015	No Author.	No Author. (2015). <i>Close to Heaven: Fifty years of Purgatory</i> . Durango, CO: Purgatory Resort.
	Book	2015	Bauer, A.	Bauer, A. (2015). <i>Telluride</i> . Amazon Digital Services, LLC.
	Book	2016	Whittum, J.	Whittum, J. (2016). <i>Reflections from northwest Colorado</i> . CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
<b>Zoning Documents</b>	Durango Development	2016	N/A	<a href="http://co.laplata.co.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=1942050&amp;pageId=2512454">http://co.laplata.co.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=1942050&amp;pageId=2512454</a>
	Steamboat Development	2016	N/A	<a href="http://steamboatsprings.net/index.aspx?nid=141">http://steamboatsprings.net/index.aspx?nid=141</a>
	Telluride Development	2016	N/A	<a href="http://www.telluride-co.gov/108/Planning-Zoning-Commission">http://www.telluride-co.gov/108/Planning-Zoning-Commission</a>

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