UNDERSTANDING PLACE IN SEDONA, ARIZONA, THROUGH TOURISM, SPIRITUALITY, AND PLANNING

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ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING PLACE IN SEDONA, ARIZONA, THROUGH TOURISM, SPIRITUALITY, AND PLANNING

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Sedona, Arizona, attracts many tourists seeking spiritual renewal through the city's reputation as a spiritual center or nexus of energy. Marketing by the city and various businesses in Sedona characterize the city as a "spiritual Mecca" that is the "perfect place for spiritual and personal enrichment of the body and soul." Intersecting planning, spirituality, and tourism can yield insights into how place is produced and understood in Sedona and advance studies of place and spirituality more generally. An investigation into Sedona's tourism culture is explored through a review of tourism studies, place and planning literature, and interviews with business owners, tourists, city employees, and locals. Findings will show how place is produced through an interconnection of actors, networks, and systems of power, while providing a relational ontology of place that negotiates across scales and between individual and collective understandings of place.

Keywords: *tourism, spirituality, planning, place*

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

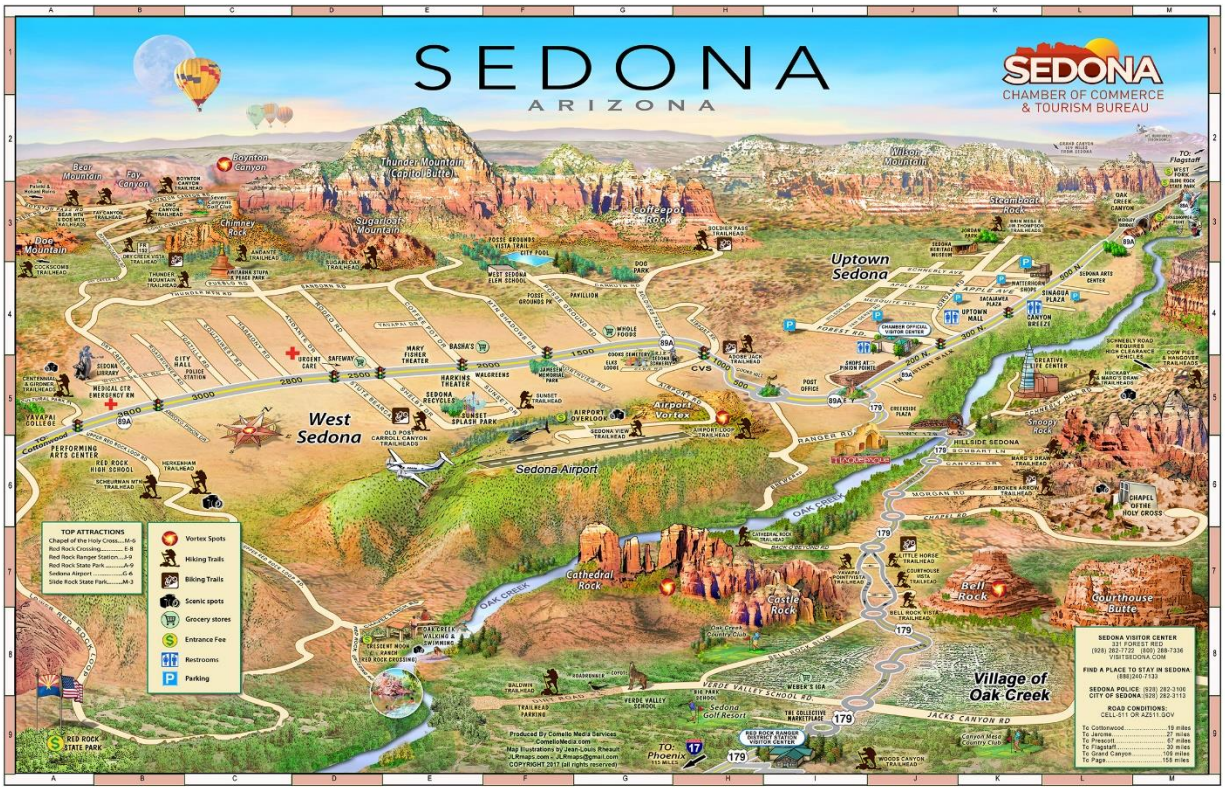
This project is concerned with better understanding questions of place through the case site, Sedona, Arizona. Place is a complicate and elusive concept, with much research focused on place-attachment, meaning, and rootedness (Cresswell, 2004; Massey, 2005). For this project, the investigation on place will examine how three pressure points or nodes intersect to collectively inform and produce place: tourism, planning, and spirituality. These three are chosen because they each have prominent roles in Sedona while also, at first glance, carry generalized overlaps. Within Sedona's tourism industry, spiritual tourism occupies a niche sector. Meanwhile, Sedona considers tourism heavily in its city planning, namely through its recent Sustainable Tourism Plan, which seeks to reshape and transform tourism for the city. Finally, connections between spirituality and planning will be investigated, considering how planning impacts people's experiences of spirituality in the city and how spirituality impacts planning.

History and Demographics

Sedona was incorporated in 1988, though its history as an Anglo-American settlement is a bit longer. In the late-1800s homesteaders who sought to develop the natural resources of the nearby land, including mining, agriculture, and fishing, settled the area, while the town was a popular site for Western films up until the 1970s. Tourism developed in Sedona in the 1950s, and much of Sedona's built landscape was constructed in the 1980s and 90s. Religion and spirituality have long been a focus of travelers to Sedona, particularly nontraditional religious practices. In the 1980s, Sedona became known as a "center for New Age consciousness," with a focus on "vortex energy centers." ("History of Sedona," 2018).

Figure 1

Map of Sedona, Arizona



Note: https://www.elportalsedona.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/map-sedona-interactive-1200x824.jpeg

According to the 2010 census, about 10,000 people live in Sedona, while the Verde Valley region, which includes Cottonwood, Camp Verde, and the Village of Oak Creek, has a population of around 66,000 ("About the Verde Valley," 2021). According to Data USA, the median household income in Sedona is $60,000, similar to the state of Arizona's $59,000, although the median property value in Sedona—$480,000—is nearly double that of Arizona's at $260,000 (2021).

Sedona and Tourism

Sedona, Arizona, is a popular tourist destination in Central Arizona known for its red-rock landscapes. It also maintains a reputation as a "sacred and powerful" place, with multiple locations said to feature "vortexes" of energy "conducive to healing, meditation, and self-exploration" (Naylor, 2020). The Sedona Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau reported an increase of tourism-related spending by $35 million, $16.9 million in sales tax revenue from tourism-related spending in FY 2018-19 and an annual impact of over $1 billion, accounting for almost 10,000 jobs in the region. Tourism-related spending has tripled in the last decade (Sedona Chamber of Commerce, 2019; U.S. Forest Service, 2016). Sedona's target demographic in its marketing is people ages 35-54, who make more than $150,000 per year and hold college degrees. The FY 2018-19 annual report also refers to "those seeking renewal" as a target demographic for visiting the city. According to a survey, over half of the businesses in Sedona report being involved in tourism, while hiking is reported as the most popular tourist activity. Visitor traffic comprises 75% of weekday traffic and 84% of weekend traffic (Sedona Chamber of Commerce, 2019).

Sedona attracts tourists with its many hiking trails, archaeological sites, museums and galleries, festivals, tours, and spiritual and wellness resources. Visitors to Sedona generate about 70% of the City's sales tax revenue, a number somewhat compounded by the city's lack of property tax and taxes paid by residents. In other words, Sedona's tax base is both narrow and almost entirely fueled by tourist dollars (Sedona Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau, 2020). Despite the many ways one can be a tourist in Sedona, this project will focus on spiritual and wellness tourism in Sedona because of the intersection of land, place, planning, and spirituality.

Prevailing issues with tourism in Sedona include crowding of streets and popular areas, traffic congestion, conservation of natural areas, and affordable housing. To combat traffic congestion, Sedona has developed a Transportation Master Plan (TMP) aimed at increasing public transportation, cycling infrastructure, and walkability. Sedona's increasing tourism volume places pressure on its housing market, particularly as it coincides with a rise in short-term rentals in the area. Housing in Sedona is quite expensive, estimated to be 103% the national average, with a median home price of roughly $700,000, according to Payscale.com. There is little Sedona has done, or can do, it seems, to counteract the effects of short-term rentals. An estimated 825 short-term rentals operate in and around Sedona, though an exact number is difficult to track. The expansion of short-term rentals following AZ Senate Bill 1350, which blocked local governments from regulating them, has led to a rapid deterioration of neighborhood continuity while increasing the cost of housing for locals. Last fall, the city initiated a complaint hotline and website, which could serve as an asset if the city should push for an amendment to Senate Bill 1350.

Finally, Sedona's annual report refers to "those seeking renewal" as a target demographic for visiting the city. This is hardly a signal to anything specific to the branches of tourism this project is investigating—surely, the Midwestern family seeking respite at a beach resort in Florida seeks renewal just as the Sedona tourist. Still, it provides a departure point for the research questions and the inquiry: what role does spirituality and spiritual tourism play in Sedona?

Spirituality

Religion and spirituality have long been a focus of travelers to Sedona, particularly nontraditional religious practices. In the 1980s, Sedona was known as a "center for New Age consciousness," with a focus on "vortex energy centers," while it has more recently been

characterized as “America’s new age capital” and a “cathedral without walls” (Burton, 2017). Debates over the existence of the vortexes notwithstanding, the exact number and location of these vortexes is contested, with some viewing the entire region as one vast vortex rather than many individual vortexes. In addition to the core set of vortexes denoted by the Chamber of Commerce, which are regularly recognized, some businesses claim to be situated among a conflux of vortexes, conveniently located on-site (Coats, 2009).

Vortexes in Sedona serve as an exclamation point on an otherwise robust spiritual and wellness tourism industry which provides visitors with a range of services including resort-and-spa settings, various types of retreats—yoga, silent, walking, meditation—psychic readings, chronic illness or cancer therapy, and many more. While Sedona’s tourist economy—and its economy in general—may not be situated solely upon the spiritual and wellness sector, these services both contribute to and are extending from a spiritual openness that pervades the town.

Sedona’s status as a spiritual center is representative of a broader trend in the growth of spiritual tourism in general, noted by Kujawa (2017) as a discursive shift away from “fossilised forms of institutionalised religions” and toward an “attempt to regain or rediscover original religious experiences” as well as “filling a great spiritual vacuum” created by dogmatic and routine religious practices (p. 196). Indeed, it’s quite popular for people to identify as ‘spiritual but not religious.’ While this trend may be considered modern, Sedona’s spiritual roots are anything but, as the Sinagua people are said to have considered the area sacred and held gatherings there long before the town was incorporated in 1988. There are some accounts of this history on various websites and some resorts channel this history with ‘Native American influenced experiences,’ offering vision quests, sweat lodges, and other many experiences. A notorious example of the relationship between Native American heritage and these tourist

experiences occurred in 2009, as two people died in a "nontraditional sweat lodge," reigniting a conversation about the use, misuse, and appropriation of indigenous practices and culture.

Sedona's culture of spirituality is also represented through both the Sedona Metaphysical Spiritual Association (SMSA) and University of Metaphysics, an unaccredited distance learning school focused on providing an education in "religion without dogma." SMSA functions as a resource for both practitioners and visitors, providing visitors with a list of reputable spiritual professionals and acting as a networking tool and, more importantly, allowing members access to SMSA's Forest Service permit.

Finally, included in Sedona's Economic Diversification Strategic Plan are a series of "transformative projects" which could reduce the city's reliance on tourism revenue for its municipal budget. One of these transformative projects is the creation of the Sedona Center for East-West Medicine, which would become a "destination for workshops, forums, summits, seminars, and conferences" on integrative healthcare and alternative medicine (City of Sedona, 2020, p. 38). The plan specifically cites Sedona's "'spiritual healing' image" as an asset to be leveraged in this project (City of Sedona, 2020, p. 38). This plan is a broad movement toward reducing Sedona's reliance on the tourism industry and to create a "sustainable and healthy community." Through a collection of values outlined in the plan—work toward sustainability, embrace change, welcome diversity, leverage assets, focus on local, and creative placemaking—the plan presents a five-year window to develop a group of targeted industries, including biopharmaceuticals, business services and information technology, and healthcare. Alongside those targeted industries, the plan identifies the aforementioned transformative projects, focusing on health and wellness, entrepreneurship or economic gardening, and co-working spaces.

Sustainability and Planning

Sustainability is a popular topic in both tourism and planning. The concept is often framed through developing practices which promote wellbeing today without sacrificing wellbeing in the future. It is common for sustainability initiatives to focus on an individual's ecological footprint or to promote ecological and economic sustainability at the expense of social sustainability—failing to appropriately link the three. Even more so, sustainability initiatives must compete with broader economic priorities—growth and accumulation.

Sedona has a sustainability coordinator on city staff, a sustainable municipal plan, and a sustainable tourism plan, which has received support from community groups such as the Sustainability Alliance and Keep Sedona Beautiful. The Sustainability Alliance (SA) is comprised of eight NGOs which "address a wide range of issues like water, waste, climate change, food and hunger" (Sustainability Alliance, 2021). SA also adopts four principles of sustainability: reducing concentrations of both harmful natural and synthetic substance (e.g. fossil fuels, chemicals); reducing environmental degradation (e.g. deforestation); and removing "structural obstacles to people's health, influence, competence, impartiality and meaning" (Natural Step, 2020). Each principle is framed through what an individual can do to counteract these forces that undermine sustainable society, like planting a garden, getting rid of clutter, buying energy-efficient appliances, shopping at sustainable businesses, and reducing waste. SA's primary initiatives within Sedona are education in schools and communities, sustainable business certification, and zero waste events.

The Municipal Sustainability Plan's goals include "reducing consumption, increasing effectiveness, and enhancing employee retention." Specific initiatives such as water efficiency,

zero waste commitments, carbon neutrality, and resilience are supported by conducting wildfire risk assessments (resilience), gathering data on energy consumption and renewable energy opportunities (carbon neutrality), implementing waste reduction and composting strategies (zero waste), and developing a water conservation standard and install new water efficient irrigation systems (water efficiency).

Figure 2

Sustainable Tourism Plan's Four Pillars

Note: https://visitsedona.com/sustainable-tourism-plan/the-end-of-tourism-as-we-know-it/

The Sustainable Tourism Plan identifies four categories of a sustainable future: environment, resident quality of life, quality of the economy, and visitor experience. The

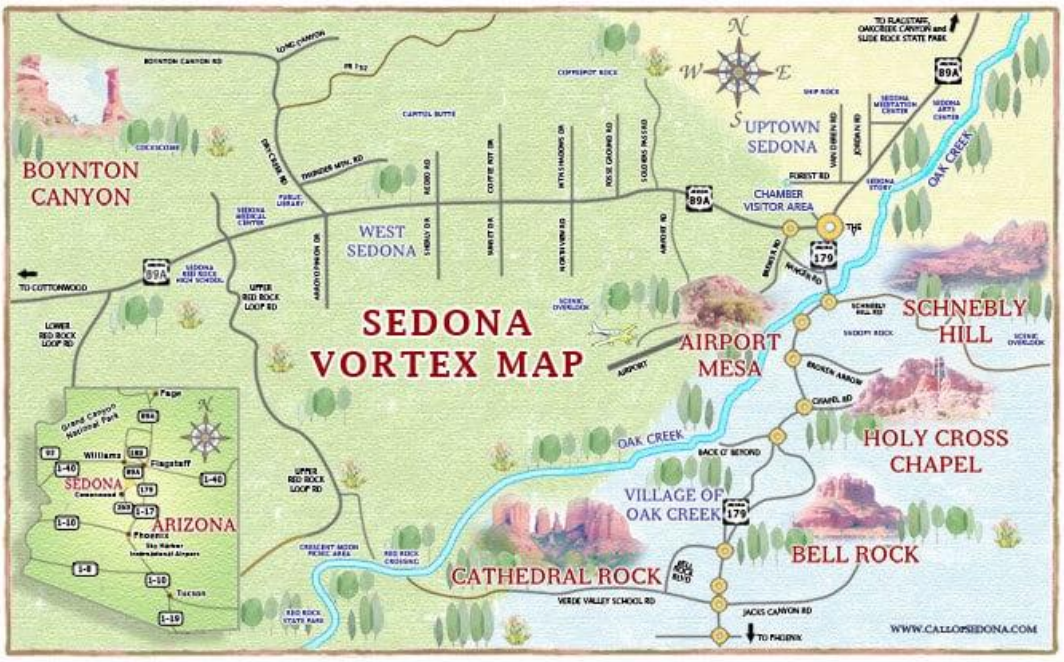
Sustainable Tourism Plan is a comprehensive report compiled after an 18-month review process. It's key findings reflect a need to mitigate the ecological and social drawbacks of the heavy tourist activity Sedona receives while maximizing the economic benefits. The plan suggests a transformation of the tourist process, moving away from the "visitor as a mass consumer" to a "discerning soul seeking shareable experience that resonates with their relationships, self-image and sense of what is authentic and unique" ("The End of Tourism As We Know It", 2020). Some early, material practices for this plan include monitoring trail use and educating visitors, developing voluntourism experiences, and creating a "dynamic online process where Sedona and the world can follow our progress" ("The End of Tourism As We Know It", 2020).

Land

Sedona's red rock landscape is renowned, and this landscape constrains sprawl to an extent. At the very least, there isn't much room to expand, particularly northward, and the city's economic diversification plan signals no plans for outward growth. Given Sedona's tourism revenue, it would seem disadvantageous to build out *or* up very much at all and risk diminishing the natural landscapes that are a draw for tourists. In this sense, the land would appear to be a factor in tourism planning and planning in general. Sedona in fact has a Land Development Code which prioritizes "scenic beauty" and regulates the built environment through specific building colors, height, and materials in order to blend the built environment with the natural environment (City of Sedona, 2018).

Figure 3

Map of Vortexes in Sedona



Note: https://detoursamericanwest.com/where-to-find-an-energy-vortex-in-sedona/

On another note, there are links between land and the spirituality that informs Sedona's sense of place. Specific locations such as Bell Rock, Cathedral Rock, Boynton Canyon, and Airport Mesa comprise the four most well-known vortexes. If the connection between the vortexes and the spiritual culture in Sedona is strong, then you might consider the connection between the land and the spiritual culture even stronger. These locations, along with Devil's Bridge, Chimney Rock, Snoopy Rock, and many others, contribute to the sense of place in Sedona—that it is magical, sacred, and transcendent.

Problem Statement and Questions

The primary purpose of this project is to attain a better understanding of place in Sedona through the connection between spirituality, tourism, and planning. The secondary purpose is to extend current research in several overlapping branches of tourism studies, including wellness tourism, spiritual tourism, digital-free tourism, holistic tourism, and new age tourism, with an eye on seeking more concrete definitions of "spirituality" and "spiritual and wellness tourism." Present research in these fields struggles to establish a consensus for terminology, typology, and definitions, necessitating an examination of this collection of branches rather than focusing on one (Voigt, Brown & Howat, 2011).

Place exists variously among different actors, who each likely have their own, nuanced understandings and experiences of a place. Situating place as something which is produced through intersecting forces and filtered through a subject will help offer insights into its process and these forces. Investigating the spiritual landscape and the tourism industry in Sedona, its effects on the city and its residents, and the degree to which this landscape is shaped by the city's planning efforts will allow an interrogation in what place means and how these pressure points or nodes generate place. Examining how both place and spiritual tourism function will make broader contributions to research on place and spiritual tourism. The research will focus on answering the following two questions:

1. How do planning, tourism, and spirituality intersect to produce place in Sedona?
2. How does spiritual tourism function in Sedona and how does this fit into broader literature about spiritual tourism?

Thesis Overview

Chapter two, Literature Review, provides a conceptual framework for understanding the significance of tourism, planning, spirituality, and place, as well as providing the linkages between these nodes. Chapter three, Methods, discusses how the research was conducted and how qualitative analysis can provide insights to counterbalance the quantitative analysis conducted by Sedona's Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau. Chapters four and five, Results and Analysis, provides an analysis of the research results, examining how planning, spirituality, and tourism intersect to produce and inform place. Chapter six, Conclusion, offers a discussion of place, Sedona's Tourism landscape, and reflects on questions and contextualizes recommendations which emerged in the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Triangulating Place Production through Spirituality, Tourism, and Planning

Place is reproduced through continually interconnecting flows. An event rather than an object, the result of a convergence of a "constellation of processes," amounting to a "throwntogetherness of place," in a constant state of becoming (Massey, 2005, p. 141). This understanding of place as an open process draws from Massey's (1991) conception of a global sense of place, a response to accelerating globalization in the late 20th century, where distant travel became more common and "places," as they were historically conceived—sites of meaning and authenticity—were growing more homogenous. This conception of place runs counter to more fixed, static, *a priori* understandings, and while it endorses the social construction and production of place, it resists the idea that place is produced by (and/or against) the backdrop of a system of mobile capital. Place in this sense is driven by the lived experience, the motion of the everyday, famously "routes, not roots," and may be echoed by Leopold Bloom's remark that "a nation is the same people living in the same place" (Joyce, 1992, p. 325) It embraces the idea that place is elusive, both in its conception and as it reflects the broader genealogy of the term.

Place is understood as a process rather than a static object, while also being elusive, with its many permutations through the development of place as a concept alongside the various experiences and understandings of a particular place. Place, also, does not require boundaries in the sense that being in a place allows one to engage with it in a fundamentally different way than being outside of it. Releasing the necessity of a bounded place cuts through the classical insider-outsider understanding of what produces a place. Extending from the release of the boundary mandate allows places to be understood multiply rather than as having singular or unique

identities, which brings with it the host of conflict and tension one would expect out of any place teeming with life and activity. The "specificity of a place" emerges from the unique "mixture of wider and more social relations," taking with them the record, both natural and social, on which these relations unfold, zoom, and entangle (Massey, 1991, p. 29).

Massey's conception of place extends from a lineage of understanding place which has a few permutations. Even as space, landscape and place are highly contested, place is even moreso contested, with different usages across disciplines. There is internal conflict in understanding and applying place as a concept and in differentiating it from space. It functions both as an object to be studied and as conceptual framework in itself. In many cases, place is applied via dichotomies of insiders and outsiders or here and there. Early regional geographers used place in a de facto way, conflating it with concepts like region and area, as a way to delineate one region from another and apply logic to those delineations while finding specificity within each place (Cresswell, 2004). This can be seen in products like the Middle East or Orientalism, through the works of Edward Said (1979), on a political level, but is evident in more contemporary research as well, seen in Yuval Noah Harai's *Sapiens* (2011), which makes the case that certain regions contain unique genetic ancestry. The point is that place functions here very much as a particular object to be observed and studied, while operating on a level of common sense that does not merit or demand interrogation.

Within the broader response to positivism, humanistic geography emerged to make substantial claims about place that positioned themselves across from the heavy emphases on space within spatial science (Cox, 2014; Relph, 1974; Tuan, 1974). Here, place became a formal concept, with a focus on subjectivity and experience of place. Drawing on phenomenology, place became a fundamental component of the human condition rather than a particular object of

study. Rather than think of ‘this place’ or ‘that place,’ the question became how place differentiated itself from space. Opposing place, space is seen as a “realm without meaning,” or a fact of the matter, much like time, which exists a priori as a container in which material conditions rise and events occur (Smith, 1991). Lefebvre laid the foundation for understanding space as a social construct (1974), drawing distinctions between abstract notions of space and lived space, which he termed social space. Differentiating between place and social space is tricky, at the two are often conflated or used interchangeably, with the differences between them resting in what they are concerned with (Cresswell, 2004). While a social space framework focuses on the processes which produce material conditions, place frameworks are more concerned with meanings and attachments. Extending from the humanistic geography work of Relph and Tuan, place has become synonymous with authenticity, meaning, and rootedness. “Places” exist due to some fundamental nature of themselves as experienced by the people who inhabit them. This is opposed to placelessness, or non-places, which lack the authenticity of a place, yet which proliferate and multiply, seen through the tens of thousands of McDonald’s arches (Relph, 1977).

Finally, in this survey of place, we arrive at the concept that place is produced and constructed via social relations, that it is not a ‘fact of the matter,’ nor is it natural or given. This assertion opens up futures wherein a place can change, and the study of a particular place will yield findings that link the characteristics of that place to broader, totalizing processes such as capitalism. For example, the rise and fall of Detroit, Michigan, can be explained by the globalizing economy and deindustrialization of the U.S. To say that places can change is hardly groundbreaking, as any study on gentrification will point out, but the concern over the underlying social processes that produce and reproduce place, as well as the way that the

product—the place—can then be employed to alter or perpetuate those relations, drives social constructionist understandings of place (Cresswell, 2004; Harvey, 2020). Place in this sense becomes simultaneously and object to be demystified, a tool to be wielded, and, to a lesser extent, a process.

Harvey (1989; 1996) argues that place has reasserted itself in the wake of time-space compression, and that the 'specificity of place' becomes more important in dualizing processes of homogenization and differentiation, where its fixedness opposes the mobility of capital. Time-space compression refers to the ways that the capitalist organization of labor and the resultant technological advancements have fundamentally altered both space and time, producing a series of destabilizing effects, particularly around place (Harvey, 1989). As time and space are compressed, differences between places become muted and suppressed (Urry, 1992). Other effects include an emphasis on instantaneity and disposability, in which all manner of things are both quickly obtained and discarded, and the proliferation of signs and images, which exemplify this compression, and sometimes involve the production of simulacra, signs which bear no resemblance to the object which they signify and become their own reality altogether (Baudrillard, 1981; Urry, 1992). The social construction of places is, for Harvey, driven by broad, totalizing systems of power, and it is in locating that power that questions of place must arrive. Harvey, as well, focuses on the exclusionary aspects of place, as represented by gated communities and obstacles to entry (not discussing, on the other hand, obstacles to exit, a perhaps more compelling undertaking). Obstacles to entry with regard to place are symptomatic of an erosion of security in place due to accelerating capital mobility and accumulation. The fortunes of a town in Ohio can turn according to the capital decisions made by multinational corporations. A factory shuts down: will an Amazon facility arrive?

Which brings us back to the idea that place is a process or an event. Rather than focus on how the individual can find themselves 'in-place,' as Seamon (1980) endeavors, but drawing on his overall thesis that place is flexible and mobile, we can reassert the open, collective, and dynamic sense of place that is in a constant state of becoming at the intersection of lived-experience, social systems, and ecological landscape.

It is not in accordance with any one usage of 'place,' but at its many intersections that we might arrive at a concept of place for this project. While we take Massey's conception as the foundation, we are still studying 'a place' insofar as we might make claims or draw conclusions. We are also understanding that a place is not fixed or static but always being reproduced by a "series of interconnecting flows," and that there may be broad, totalizing systems which affect and drive these flows and processes, but resisting the temptation to draw causal links or ascribe any conclusion solely to these systems. Time-space compression, where space is shrunk through technological advancements, may indeed renew, through a differentiation resultant of homogenization, an emphasis on place and specificity, but the same compression may also disperse place and produce it beyond its location, as people access place digitally or, more traditionally, bring a piece of a place—a rock, a vial of sand—with them when they leave. And, finally, that the place as experienced is a vital component of these flows, whether a component of that experience is meaning, authority, or mere routine and practice. The question then becomes: what flows are interconnecting in this or that place? How are they relating? And what is driving them? Rather than try to map the many identities that exist in a given place—as they are likely infinite—we may try to identify certain pressure points within and between these flows and identities as a small piece of a larger project.

Dimensions of Place Production

Now that we have a working understanding of how place functions, we can look to elements or flows which impact the production of place in the study site. There are two subjects to which we will direct our attention: tourism and planning. Within tourism, some extra attention will be paid toward spiritual tourism, a niche tourism existing within the broader industry and discipline.

Tourism

Tourism, like place, can be a messy and elusive signifier, for people are rarely, if ever, exclusively one of many diffuse classifications. Historically, geographical inquiry into tourism has been predominantly focused on personal experience, public policy, and economic output rather than a meaning examination of place grounded in theoretical foundations of place and geography. As Cartier and Lew (2005) observe, there is a relative lack, though that has changed to an extent, of an examination of the tensions and contradictions which manifest in tourism and inform place, such as intersections of global/local, cultural/economic, psychological/physical/phenomenological, residents/visitors, and work/play, among others. As Crang (2013) notes, recent scholarship has worked to dissolve dichotomies which have dominated tourism and leisure studies, such as insider and outsider, guest and host, traveler and tourist, and, most notably, authentic and inauthentic.

The definitions of tourism have evolved across the decades of research in the field. Beginning from a historical hierarchy of explorer, traveler, tourist, organized according to their relational epistemology, or how well-known their journey is, the tourist occupies a position of well-worn paths and a reproduction of the familiar (Crang, 2013, pp. 34-40). Tourism in this

sense is travel to the familiar. This definition is complicated by MacCannell (1976), as he defines a tourist as someone who seeks authenticity through travel, which has extended a large shadow over inquiry in the field. The nature of this authenticity has evolved over time, from an authenticity of object to an authenticity of phenomena to an authenticity of self (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). The preoccupation on authenticity has been challenged by perspectives on postmodern tourism, which relay a tourist's desire for inauthenticity, as they relish in the 'game' of it, occasionally supplanting a search for the authentic, while the rise of 'personalized experiences' provide supposedly unique or tailored, albeit nonetheless reproduceable, experiences. Urry (1995), as well, notes how tourism has transitioned from a standardized, prepackaged method toward a more decentralized, segmented, flexible process.

Urry is credited with documenting the 'tourist gaze,' formalizing the idea that tourism is a fundamentally visual practice and diagramming the process by which this gaze inevitably degrades the object of the subject's gaze while diminishing the 'authenticity,' and reducing the allure of the object. As a 'site' grows in popularity, an infrastructure develops around it, through guidebooks, social media posts, websites, kiosks, and brochures, a process lampooned in Don DeLillo's *White Noise* with its 'Most Photographed Barn in America' (1985). The expanded infrastructure obfuscates the power of the gaze, resulting in a tourism that is an "expanding structure always looking…for the next 'untouched valley'" (Crang, 2013, p. 36).

The centrality of the tourist gaze, and in turn the supposed fundamentally visuality of tourism as a spatial practice, have been increasingly challenged in recent work in the field, which has refocused on an "embodied" tourism, democratizing the senses and the roles that they play within tourism. This approach is much more dynamic, relational, and multifaceted than the visual-centric approach, which inadequately accounts for the multi-dimensional experiences of

complex tourism practices and adds little to the understanding of how these sometimes non-representational practices can contribute to the production of place. By instead utilizing metaphors of performance, hybridity, and body, among others, the lens through which tourism is understood is widened (Edensor, 2001; Franklin, 2000; Thrift, 1996).

And yet, there remains room within this approach to reassess the visuality of tourism while also considering extrasensory practices within tourism. Experiences of the sublime (Bell & Lyall, 2002), for instance, can provoke a simultaneously visual, embodied, and spiritual experience, operating reflexively within the subject and producing place in dynamic, complex ways. These experiences transcend the oft-critiqued 'gaze,' wherein a tourist is said to be accumulating cultural capital, feasting their eyes on the difference that they encounter through their travels. Compared to the embodiment of, say, food tourism, a tourism focused on spiritual growth and development inhabits a form of embodiment not often included in tourism research: an embodiment that is inward-focused, perhaps metaphysical in its conception, felt, but at the same time ineffable.

There is a relative dearth of research on spiritual tourism, which will be expanded upon momentarily, although Cheer et al (2017) lay out a helpful conceptual framework for understanding the niche sector. Spiritual tourism is demarcated from religious tourism according to the tourism's focus. While religious tourism is focused on a higher authority or institution, spiritual tourism focuses on the self. Spiritual tourism is driven by wellness and healing, personal growth and quest, journeying, and recreation, while religious tourism is driven by ritualized practice, obligation, identity, and special occasion. There is room for the two to overlap, of course, as each can be considered driven by socialization in some way. Establishing separate camps for these two is one piece of understanding the larger role of spirituality in tourism, and it

is important to understand that the tensions between them, their individuated drivers, and overlaps may lend complex analyses and insights into tourisms role in spirituality and vice versa. To that extent, it is worth mentioning that there's spiritual tourism, as a niche tourism sector, as well as a broader spiritual component to tourism and travel, where a subject may encounter a spiritual experience through the travel. We are concerned primarily with the former over the latter, although, as has been shown with both tourism and place, there is likely nothing neat about their distinction.

The 'spiritual' of spiritual tourism, building on the above points, can be understood as a broader discursive shift in which the routine and ritualization of religiosity is rejected in favor of a more open and free appeal to a higher power. This spirituality has been understood as a search for authenticity not unlike the classical, humanistic approaches to place and tourism found in Relph and MacCannell. What is highlighted in here are the more rigid and formal practices associated with religion and the more "fluid and personal" practices associated with belief (Kujawa, 2017). The distinction between religion and belief, like religion and spirituality, is important. For the former, there is a mandate by an institution, while the latter is guided by an individual, though, as with place, this individual with swept into a network, and it is difficult to assign particular agency and autonomy to an individual's beliefs.

Tourism is fundamentally a spatial practice, while tourism destinations are both contested and dynamic—much like place and space itself. Tourism is often understood as a way of structuring space-time between the profane, or the everyday, and the sacred, or the extraordinary. Tourist destinations are sacralized in this way by both visitors and the destination's infrastructure. Cartier's (2005) discussion of the 'touristed landscape,' reorients an understanding of tourism destinations as containing fundamental binary oppositions and instead situates the

landscape as being "toured and lived." This understanding opens up the arena for subjects to move in and out of previously sequestered roles (visitor, local, traveler, sojourner) to highlight the complexity of "people doing different things" in a touristed landscape. The touristed landscape, thought to include natural environments, differs from amusement parks like Disneyland or from 'tourist towns' in that the environment's "integrity…fundamentally orient[s] [its] geography" (Cartier, 2005, p. 3). All of which is to say that the consumption of places and the consumption of tourist services is inextricably linked to the social relations that operate within them, themselves part of the series of "interconnecting flows" that (re)produce place.

Planning

The purpose of planning is a contested question. Historically, planning has tended to prioritize either state power or economic growth, often at the expense of low-income citizens' and minorities' wellbeing. While various movements throughout the history of the discipline have purportedly sought to promote and improve social well-being, planning has overall remained, first and foremost, an engine for economic growth. It is particularly interesting how one period's values and methods influence the next, and how seemingly just values become appropriated and incorporated into broader economic systems at the expense of the groups they had once sought to benefit. The purpose of this section is to provide a track record of different periods in modern planning and how the orthodoxy has evolved over the last two centuries.

Early major urban renewal efforts can be found in Paris in mid-19th century when Emperor Napoleon III hired Georges-Eugene Haussmann to overhaul urban space in the French capital. An early example of urban renewal, Haussmann's plan sought to modernize what the Emperor considered an unsanitary and dangerous place through the removal of low-income

neighborhoods, the widening of city streets, the creation of large green spaces, and the creation of a new sanitation system. In one sense, Haussmann's work created the Paris of today that many hold in their imagination. A more critical perspective, associated with urban Marxist scholars, considers the works representative of early authoritarian modernization and capitalist consolidation in urban centers (Lefebvre, 1996; Paccoud, 2016). While the contemporary characterization of Haussmann portrays a man with total authority, able to execute a militant and violent transformation of the city, some contemporary reviews show Haussmann was met with much opposition: political, financial, municipal, and social (Paccoud, 2016).

Haussmann's work oriented the city as the focal point for economic development, leading into 20th-century development in the United States characterized most prominently by the City Beautiful movement. As Jane Jacobs described US planning as "Radiant Garden City Beautiful," she fused three distinct but enmeshed movements: City Beautiful, Radiant City, and Garden City. Each considered, primarily, a city's aesthetic, prioritizing the appearance of a city's built landscape. Radiant City emerged from modernist architecture, led by LeCorbusier, in situating grand buildings surrounded by green space, while Garden City, promoted by Ebenezer Howard, focused on "medium-sized satellite towns," fusing town and country to provide the best of the two distinct entities. Finally, City Beautiful promoted grandiosity in urban landscapes and architecture through the first half of the twentieth century. Each plan sought to transform cities into modern, evolved spaces represented by large buildings juxtaposed with pleasant green space, imposing a visual order into urban space (Connolly, 2019). While these plans congealed into creating many modern US cities, like New York, Detroit, and Chicago, they often enacted their plans without consideration of the lived experience of cities, often at the expense of low-income and minority citizens (Jacobs, 1961).

Jacobs' calls to reconstitute urban space, which were critical of the "architectural design cult" that encompassed early 20th-century urban development, were co-opted by later thinkers like Florida, who promoted the rise of the "creative class," and sought to promote cities as spaces where creative elites could thrive for the wellbeing of the larger population. Jacobs' anti-establishment tenets fit within a contemporary neoliberal ethic popular among economic developers in US cities, and her ideology was considered in her time as being "free of the superimpositions and the great allocations of the planners" (Buckley, 1970, p. 218) and has since been recognized as being suitably vague enough to supply multiple sides of planning theorists with ammunition for their cause (Tochterman, 2012).

This approach is critiqued by Fainstein as ultimately privileging an upper class and educated population rather than promoting just outcomes for disadvantaged or alienated populations (2010). Essentially, the creative class ethic serves those people who are educated and empowered to find new, ostensibly fresh and authentic landscapes for them to inhabit and cultivate so that they may "innovate" and forge new economic opportunities. It is truly the difference of the urban unknown that this creative class seeks and fosters, which in Florida's ideology produces new and generative economies.

Critiques of planning have sustained concurrent to the developments within planning outlined above, led by scholars who are critical of planning's production of unjust outcomes for disadvantaged groups, with criticism spanning from Engels to Lefebvre, Harvey, and Fainstein. In general, they agree that planning prioritizes economic development at the expense of social wellbeing, at times noting how contemporary planning discourse, like Florida's technology and tolerance approach, maintains a "convenient facade," where an economic vision is masquerading

as a cultural, or where the state pretends to be “powerless in the neoliberal economy” (Tochterman, 2012).

There is a further contemporary divergence on whether just outcomes are possible within the current social, economic, and governmental system. While Fainstein believes that there is room to maneuver and leverage local social and political power to achieve just results, Harvey is skeptical of the capacity for any just outcomes within the capitalist system, advocating instead for a more radical transformation of the production of social life.

Fainstein’s thesis extends from the claim that equity, diversity, and democracy form the central criteria from which planning must emerge. She finds, however, that these three tenets are often at odds with each other. She cites, for example, how pure democracy often results in unjust outcomes, while diversity is co-opted into a marketing technique that achieves its goals only aesthetically, while noting that there is value in small, sometimes homogenous groups, such as ghettos and enclaves. Finally, Fainstein believes it is possible to “list criteria” that can be used to evaluate planning and policy activity, emphasizing that it is context specific. These scholars often fit more broadly within post-structuralist schools of thought, focused on situating knowledge and knowledge production. Extending from thinkers such as Foucault, Derrida, and Deleuze, they aim to flatten knowledge and reconsider the winners and losers in a given situation and place context at the center of planning discourse.

Recent critiques of planning have focused on the residual effects of suburbanization and placed a focus on regional development, sustainability, and social equity. In the case of regional development, Fainstein finds that there is nothing about regional bodies that makes them vehicles for greater equity, citing the Twin Cities and Johannesburg as being models for equity-focused planning initiatives yet falling short of their goals. Fainstein finds that their medium-scale

operations lack the “intimacy” of small communities and the bureaucratic power of higher government. Mixing suburbs and cities into a broader regional municipality may also strip power from low-income citizens by placing them within a broader power structure.

In the last forty years, much attention has been paid to the process of planning and sustainable development, with an emphasis on smart growth, win-win plans which balance growth against adverse environmental and ecological effects. Environmental concerns have a longer history than the current sustainability movement, with periodic focuses on preserving wilderness and creating parks, assessing environmental impact, and mitigating pollution (Daniels 2009). Today, the incorporation of environmental concerns into planning goals is the result of broader societal pressure to protect ecological environments and “ecological dissent” from the public (Long, 2016). Problematically, the “sustainability fix” is often “more political than material,” with sustainability used as a discursive tool, and its tenets deployed selectively. (Long 2016, p. 152). Greening is a key strategy within sustainability programs, such as the creation and promotion of urban agriculture, the transformation of unused industrial areas, and incentivizing green infrastructure and mobility, like solar paneled roofs and electric vehicles (Connolly, 2019).

Sustainability efforts face the challenge of being secondary to economic priorities in planning. While sustainability efforts place a fundamental emphasis on stewardship of planetary health, implementing sustainable practices and policies has proven difficult at the local, regional, national and global level, where policymakers opt instead for economically advantageous decisions at the expense of sustainability efforts (Daniels, 2009). Where sustainability has been touted as an integral part of planning, they are often illusory, relegated to discourse rather than action and yielding, when necessary, to economic and political interests (Krueger & Buckingham, 2012).

Alongside economic and ecological concerns, social equity constitutes a third realm of concern within planning. Lake critiques how "social justice" is deployed, determining that it is found in the "collective process forming individual subjectivities," and framing it as a broad issue is an invention "simplify the complexity" of a multiply interactive empirical world. Rather than the "social" being constructed by "determinative structures," it is the result of a continual "relational practices." Fainstein's assessment of social justice is more material, though similarly utopic, considering justice or equity as being evaluated by how much social welfare is redistributed among those who have the least, and suggesting that planning and policy should balance values of democracy, diversity, and equity to achieve just outcomes (Fainstein, 2010). Similar to Fainstein, Soja locates justice as specifically and necessarily spatial, examining the spatial distribution of resources and services such as access to affordable and reliable public transportation (2010).

A broad critique of planning lives in Lefebvre's essay *Right to the City*, which has evolved since its usage in 1968. Responding to intensifying urbanization and industrialization, at the expense of longtime city dwellers, Lefebvre's original thesis envisions a broad "de-alienation" among citizens and the radical dissolution of both state and corporate powers. Lefebvre believes this is possible only through renewed and continued political engagement through simple "meaningful encounters" among inhabitants of urban space. His vision emphasizes an open project, a society where citizens form the organizations of governance and direct the present and future of urban space. In the developments since, state and corporate powers, aided by technological developments, are doing more to intensify this alienation, keeping individuals and groups separate and preventing these meaningful encounters (particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic) (Lefebvre, 1996; Purcell, 2014).

In its contemporary application, Right to the City is a rallying cry for groups to use their collective power as leverage against state and corporate power to achieve beneficial outcomes for disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Marcuse envisions this as a broad class and ideological issue and asks "what right" is meant in the right to the city: the right to "a totality, a complexity," where discrete parts constitute a whole. This right prioritizes collective rights over individual rights. The "city" in question is not a discrete city, like New York or Barcelona, nor any present city, but a "future" city, where the "hierarchical distinction between the city and the country has disappeared." Dissolving hierarchy between rural and urban is echoed by Harvey (2012), who reaffirms the city as the location of future revolutionary change. Harvey argues that the fractured movements and protests centered around urban social life are the foundation of paradigmatic transformation. In Harvey's view, production should not be constrained to industrial production, but the production and reproduction of urban social life, which expands far beyond the geographic confines of the metropolitan area, as rural production flows into the urban.

The groups which adopt Right to the City, such as UNESCO, World Charter for the Right to the City, European Charter for Human Rights in the City, Right to the City Alliance, and the City Statute in Brazil, are more focused on enumerating and expanding liberal-democratic rights within urban space, emphasizing use over exchange value, and laying claim that simply inhabiting a city provides an individual these rights. This is very different from Lefebvre's conception, as it fits neatly into the broader liberal-democratic framework rather than envision a dissolution of state and capitalism (Purcell, 2014).

Tourism planning occupies a space within planning at-large, encompassing some of the broad issues in planning at a micro level. Tourism planning developed from a complete absence

in the 1950s to a recognition at the end of the 20th century that complete planning is necessary and that "total destination management" is the ideal method for tourism planning. Over the past thirty years, tourism planning and studies have tended to consider tourism activities in a vacuum, with a focus on specific projects rather than broad consideration of the industry, low attention to impacts of tourism, focus on economic factors at the expense of social or environmental, treating tourism planning within a business framework and excluding residents from the process (Moscardo & Murphy, 2014).

Due to these issues, sustainability is a fixture within tourism planning, as destinations seek to balance the impacts of tourism with the economic benefits. The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" (WTO 2005, p. 12). This definition has been considered vague and open to multiple interpretations for varying purposes (Saarinen, 2014). Within the subfield of sustainable tourism, issues persist, including a tourist-centric approach, focused on the destination space and ignores larger regional or global context. The field also highlights environmental concerns over other aspects of sustainability, such as effects on residents or other social disadvantages, and is often promoted by institutions that present sustainability as an science "achieved by the development and enforcement of rules and guidelines," (Moscardo & Murphy 2014, p. 2540).

Saarinen et al make a distinction between growth and development within tourism planning and identifies a gap in research where focus is inordinately rooted in "present-mindedness" at the expense of "grounded historical analysis." This point is important to my research, as examining discourse within a particular tourism sector or location risks losing sight

of the historical aspects of that discourse and how it has developed or changed over time. The authors also highlight the importance of social and political processes alongside economic processes in the tourism industry. Overall, there is consensus that tourism planners and policymakers need to move beyond rhetoric, "green washing," or eco-efficiency in favor of a firmer ideological commitment to sustaining (Moscardo & Murphy, 2014; Saarinen, 2014).

There are obvious ways which planning may inform and drive place production. In one of its earliest endeavors, the City of Paris was wholly remade from a convoluted network of narrow streets to boulevards, large enough to march troops through, bordered by large urban green spaces. Brasilia, as well as many cities in China, have been planned and built from the ground up, to varying levels of success. The Federal Highway Act of 1956 radically transformed city landscapes and neighborhoods, while also transforming how people think about place and distance (Ware, 2021). Many of these top-down plans have been critiqued as ill-advised, disregarding their effects on the communities they affect and their broad effects in general.

There is a tension within planning between organic development on one hand an top-down planning on the other. This is true for planning in general as well as planning with regards to tourism. Top-down planning can act as an arm of the state, influencing people's attitudes, behaviors, and perspectives of a place (Lew, 2012). This process has been characterized as placemaking, exemplified in the U.S. through City Beautiful and urban renew or revitalization projects such as that in Detroit, MI (Cilliers & Timmerman, 2014). These processes have the power to influence a population's identity, lived experience, and attitudes (Smith, 2002). Lew (2017) uses the term 'placemaking' to refer to deliberate, state-driven plans and actions to craft economic and cultural activity, producing place in the process. It is worth considering the intersections between bottom-up place formation and top-down placemaking, as well as the

tensions between these two. These tensions are teased out between leaders in planning thought, who, on the one hand, believe that the planning system and discipline provides a sufficient arena for incremental change, and on the other, believe that because planning is an extension of an already-embedded system of exploitation, believe that it will only serve to perpetuate existing trends in inequity and unsustainability.

Through this a few research avenues and questions emerge. It is fair to question how just outcomes in urban spaces will be achieved in the future. Creating sustainable systems—tourism or otherwise—differentiating between growth and development and expanding liberal rights in urban space are focal points within contemporary planning. While the tenets of democracy, diversity and equity are proposed as criteria for planning initiatives, it's unclear how likely these outcomes are achievable within a broader global economic framework (Fainstein, 2010; Harvey, 2012).

Typology of Spiritual Tourism

Finding an appropriate classification of the type of tourism under consideration is challenging, as there is both a lack of literature (Hunt, 2019) and consensus within the present literature (Voigt, Brown & Howat, 2011). There have been some attempts to fill gaps in this literature by providing definitions and classifications of terms.

New Age tourism appears to be the most understudied category among the five considered (Pernecky & Poulston, 2015), as well as the most nebulous. New age tourism activities include visiting power/sacred sites, wellness and holistic health, divination, eco-spiritualism, workshops and seminars, and others, including the purchase of crystals, study of UFOs, and visitation of spas and retreat centers (Pernecky & Johnston, 2006). Due to the "highly

subjective and multifaceted" character of New Age phenomena, researchers suggest that an *emic* approach, one that considers a phenomenon from within, is preferable to an *etic*, or external, approach (Pernecky & Poulston, 2015). Kujawa (2017) and Norman (2014) provide frameworks for understanding spiritual tourism, as a quest, an experiment, healing, or retreat, drawing on Cohen's (1979) typologies and classifications of tourists. Cohen presents five modes of tourism: recreational, diversionary, experiential, experimental, and existential. The modes are hierarchical in a sense, with each subsequent mode providing some evolution of a tourist's purpose or desire from the previous. Spiritual tourism likely falls within the experimental or existential mode (Norman, 2014). Tourists operating in the experimental mode are considered 'seekers,' who, in the absence of any religion or cosmic center of their own, experiment with the centers of other cultures in an attempt to fill that void. Tourists operating in the existential mode are similar to experimental but exhibit a tendency to commit to their destination as a spiritual center of its own (1979). In extreme cases, the existential tourist may even abandon their primary center in favor of the new one discovered via their tourism.

The differences between etic and emic approaches are representative of broader divides in social science to, on one hand, seek objectivity or understand the essence of an experience (etic), while on the other prioritizing the need to understand and study social behavior within its context (emic). Etic approaches are associated with outsider perspectives while emic approaches are associated with insider perspectives (Patton, 2002). The purpose of this project calls for a combination of approaches. Because the tourism experience is a subject of this research, it is necessary to gain some understanding from within the experience—interviews will help with this. However, a secondary purpose of this project is understanding how to classify and define a collection of overlapping tourism genres, something that may require an etic approach.

Literature in these fields have variously sought to track travel outcomes for tourists (Hunt, 2019; Voigt, Brown & Howat, 2011), determine levels of tourist specialization and customization to assist managers (Pernecky & Johnston, 2006; Poulston & Pernecky, 2014), perform exploratory studies (Attix, 2002), understand phenomenologies and travel experiences (Nilsson & Tesfahuney, 2018), analyze media representation of tourism (Li, Pearce & Low, 2018), and examine connections between one or more of these types of tourism and concepts like nature and mindfulness (Barbaro & Pickett, 2016; Jacob, Jovic & Brinkerhoff, 2009).

Research in this project will seek to understand broader societal connections and power relations between tourists, hosts, and residents in Sedona through an analysis of media representation and personal interviews.

Review

What is evident among these disciplines is an overall interconnectedness, movement, and tension. Both place and tourism can be understood through Massey's "series of interconnected flows," while planning belies a tension between the top-down, master planning that drives much development, the organic, bottom-up emergence of community, and the attempt to reconcile these two nodes. Typology of spiritual tourism—driven in part by the rise in spirituality as a discursive shift away from religiosity—is equally muddy, and there is some doubt within tourism studies toward the efficacy of developing such a typology. At the same time, given the breadth of niche tourism sectors and their relative overlap, along with the scope of this project, it seems worthwhile to consider and attempt to elucidate these terms and distinctions.

Chapter 3: Methods

Research Method Selection

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research methodology for this qualitative research aimed at gaining a more in-depth understanding of how place is produced and the nature of spiritual tourism in Sedona. This research purpose, which is concerned with individual's experiences and beliefs, lends itself well to qualitative analysis and in-depth, semi-structured interviews, and these methods are developed in order to best answer the research questions, rather than forming a question based on a preferred methodology (Bickman & Rog, 2009). Qualitative research is often placed in opposition to quantitative research, and historically has carried a stigma of a lack of rigor from quantitative research and natural sciences (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Qualitative research can provide researchers with novel avenues for inquiry and further research and nuanced understandings or interpretations of complex processes and phenomena (Given, 2008). Qualitative research may employ participant observation, interviews, document analysis and case studies, and qualitative research methods are increasingly being employed across multiple disciplines (Given, 2008). This research constitutes a case study, which is suitable for in-depth study of a phenomenon and the individual perspectives and broader discourses which intersect and relate to that phenomenon. Case studies provide a methodology oriented toward descriptive goals, which this research has, as opposed to causal assignments (Given, 2008). Case studies have emerged as a preferred method for understanding complex social phenomena and the characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2003, p. 2). Case studies are also preferred for answering exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive questions, while focusing on contemporary events which do not require a controlled setting (Yin, 2003, p. 3). These methods are optimal for answering the research questions for this project, which are focused

around understanding the phenomenon of place, the different actors, beliefs, and values which intermix in producing and negotiating place, and the roles that spirituality, tourism, and planning play in this production.

Case Study Selection

This research focused on Sedona, Arizona, as a place, town, and tourist destination. While Sedona was the official case study site, the broader region was considered during interviews, given Sedona's status as a tourist hub. To answer the research questions regarding place and spiritual tourism, Sedona was chosen because of its strong outward-facing place-image as represented through promotions, marketing, journalism, and social media. Its reputation as a 'spiritual mecca,' the mystique of the vortexes, and the volume of tourism made Sedona a suitable case for gaining a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of place which manifest in the site. Other sites which may be suitable for similar research include Mt. Shasta, California, and Crestone, Colorado.

Participants

For the research, 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants recruited via snowball sampling. In seeking interviewees, a diversity of perspectives was prioritized. Interviewees fell into one of four categories: tourism professionals, city employees, tourists, and community members. The final category, community members, was a moniker that denotes that participants were neither tourism professions nor city employees, but lived or worked in Sedona, and did not preclude from the participants categorized as tourism professionals or city employees from being community members or discussing community. The

participants included two city employees, four tourists, three community members, and five tourism professionals. Though these categories were applied for research clarity, it should be stated that there are overlaps between these categories, where, for example, a tourism professional may also be a community member, or a community member may also be a tourist. Research inquiries were made via email, with follow-up inquiries made a week after the initial inquiry if no response arrived. 44 inquiries were made via email, while advertisements were posted on social media groups dedicated to Sedona life and tourism. Another fifteen inquiries were made using social media, primarily seeking tourists for participation. Further participants were recruited via snowball-sampling. Snowball-sampling involves recruiting some participants of the study population and asking them to help recruit or identify other individuals who would provide valuable perspectives for the research (Bickman & Rog, 2009). Considerations of exclusion must be included here, where, due to the electronic nature of recruitment and the conducting of interviews, people without access to these are excluded from the sample base (Given, 2008).

Procedure

The research was conducted through semi-structured interviews ranging from 30 to 90 minutes and focusing on participants' beliefs, experiences, and relationships to the research subjects: place, planning, tourism, and spirituality. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews were conducted remotely, through Zoom and over the phone. Interviews were recorded and transcribed shortly after the interview's completion. Semi-structured interviews are one of many ways to gather data for qualitative research. Besides interviews in general, surveys are commonly used for data collection. Variations in interview methods include structured, semi-

structured, informal, and retrospective interviewing. Semi-structured interviews, compared to surveys or structured interviews, allow the researcher to maintain a research agenda while allowing room for participants to provide spontaneous descriptions or build narratives throughout the interview. Semi-structured interviews employ many open-ended questions, allowing participants to provide in-depth, nuanced responses, and making room for follow-up questions to diversions from the interview script (Given, 2008). Interview questions, found in Appendix A, asked participants about their roles in Sedona, their views on tourism and spirituality in Sedona, perceived challenges to growth and sustainability in Sedona's future, and their relationship with the place and with tourism. As more interviews were conducted, and themes emerged, interview questions were added, removed, and refined to promote better data. Interview content differed heavily between the different participants, with certain groups speaking more about their area of expertise or interest, such as planning or spiritual practices.

Transcription and Coding

Each interview was transcribed shortly after its completion. Transcriptions were then read and re-read, with thematic codes emerging through these readings. Participants were given an ID, such as R1 or R2, and were denoted by categories using a letter ID (E for city employee; C for community member; T for tourist; P for tourism professional). Codes provided a structure to assign meaning to the "descriptive and inferential information" compiled through research. Coding constituted both analysis in itself, as the assignment of codes and categorization of the research required an interpretation of the data, as well as a preparatory exercise in developing conceptual threads for the written analysis (Miles & Huberman 1994). Data was first organized through descriptive codes, a word or short phrase assigned to a passage, and later through pattern

codes, where differentiation within descriptive codes emerged. As codes emerged, interview questions were tweaked, added, and removed to better focus on the emergent codes. Coding is an effective method for analyzing data in qualitative research, which is quite different from how coding is often employed in quantitative research, with a focus on frequency counts of items. In qualitative research, the purpose of coding is break the data and rearrange it in order to allow difference and intersections among like categories to emerge (Bickman & Rog, 2009).

The primary descriptive codes used were tourism, planning, development, spirituality, energy, tourism, housing, traffic, crowds, community, Indigeneity, landscape, and vortexes. These descriptive codes contained referent passages to one or more of these codes. There was much overlap between codes, and pattern coding assisted in delineating similarities and differences between perspectives within and among these codes.

COVID-19 Research Considerations

Due to health and safety concerns, interviews were conducted remotely using Zoom and phone calls. The COVID-19 pandemic required a dramatic recalibration of the research, as participant observation could not be conducted, in-person interviews and sampling could not be conducted. Because scheduling interviews was done primarily through email, response-rate was lower than it would have been if the researcher had been able to visit the case site more freely, further complicated by the researcher's own health condition. This research would greatly benefit from both participant observation and extended visitation of the case site during a period of public health normalcy or in absence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chapter 4: Results

Themes emerged from the 14 interviews that intersected across the three primary dimensions of investigation, revealing significant overlap between them. Between tourism, planning, and spirituality, participants showed concerns with crowds, traffic, housing, community, landscape, energy, and Indigenous ancestry and representation. Data analysis reveals multiple, diverse themes which each contribute to an understanding of place production in their own way, while relationally contributing to a deep and complex understanding of place in general. While the themes included in the results are representative of the collective emphases in the research, they are hardly exhaustive, as many other topics emerged alongside and within them. However, these other topics, ranging from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic to discussions on the effects of climate change, while important and interesting, are not included in the results and analysis to keep the project focused on the research questions relating to place, planning, and spiritual tourism. The emergent themes which were chosen, were characterized by a diversity of perspectives and beliefs in the research, with some broad consistencies as well as some more specific divergences and contestations. These results will examine perspectives on tourism, planning, and spirituality and review the emergent themes as they relate to these three areas.

Tourism

Tourism for itself proved to be a contentious subject. Several participants discussed the notion of Sedona as a “tourist trap” and expressed a sense of loss associated with tourism’s effect on the city and the landscape. R2 considered growth in tourism as a driver in the loss of

‘gathering places’ like cafes and independent shops, as well as the resultant fragmenting and loss of community that these shops provided. The process of Disneyfication (Relph, 1974) emerged as a key theme, where ‘authentic,’ local places are gradually replaced by places which will be familiar to tourists, such as Whole Foods and Starbucks.

Participants also expressed a sense of loss toward the landscape, as R1 stated that they “don’t want to see our red rocks fading” as a result of overuse by tourists. Peaceful experiences of nature are often interrupted or diminished by ATVs, the sound of helicopters, trash on and around trails and recreation sites, and trail users speaking loudly while hiking. These concerns raise divisions between “good” and “bad” tourists, a question which emerged in the research, along with the lamentation of a lack of tourist ethic in and around Sedona. Good tourists were characterized by respectfulness and care toward the land through actions like remaining on marked trails and applying a Leave No Trace practice, being polite and reasonable, and engaging thoughtfully with the spirituality in Sedona. Meanwhile, bad tourists are characterized by “trampling on sacred sites,” according to R2, leading to the erosion of trails and landmarks, an unfamiliarity with traffic roundabouts, displaying rudeness toward service workers, and a disruption of the natural serenity through loud ATVs and helicopters. The Sedona Tourism Bureau has issued a Tourists’ Pledge to establish an ethic of respect and care toward the city and the landscape, though many participants felt this pledge, while sounding good, has little effect on tourists’ behavior, though some respondents noted the importance of “training” visitors to be more polite in town and on trails, reflecting a sense that a driving force with ‘bad’ tourists is education. A temporal discrepancy regarding tourisms’ limit in Sedona arose as some had concerns about when Sedona will be “loved to death,” while others felt that point had already long passed. In being “loved to death,” Sedona is vulnerable to losing the characteristics, such as

natural beauty and serenity, which are considered its primary attractions. This tipping point is key to understanding place, as it positions place temporally, where there is a threshold that, once crossed, neutralizes or diminishes place. Some identified that the issue with tourism isn't simply the volume but rather that it's not being managed appropriately and there's a lack of infrastructure to accommodate the volume of tourists, as it functions in many ways like a National Park but does not have the infrastructure that many National Parks have that allow them to manage tourism volume. R1 and R9 suggested organizing space in Sedona to allow for specific 'tourist zones,' particularly with regards to hiking and recreation along Oak Creek and other landscape sites such as Bell Rock. R1 suggested protecting certain areas, such as Cathedral Rock, that were "more important," than others. Slide Rock contains some infrastructure, however, as R7 and R14 noted, many people park along the shoulder of 89A and descend into the creek on their own, limiting the effectiveness of the Slide Rock State Park's infrastructure.

While many people lamented the volume of tourists or their behavior, some also acknowledged the pervasiveness and necessity of tourism to the local economy, suggesting that no matter what industry someone works in, they are reliant on tourism revenue. This perspective emerged across participants in multiple groups, characterized by ambivalence. For those who do work in the tourism industry, a tension emerged between the people providing the service and the people spending the money, with concerns that there is not enough local money to support those industries, further showcasing the reliance on tourism. Many of the businesses and services which cater to tourists are variously unaffordable, unintended, or undesirable for locals, like high end hotels, multiweek detox or meditation retreats, and helicopter tours. This highlights a tension between the dependence on tourism, the cost of living, and the low pay of tourism jobs. The relativity of tourism—that people can be tourists in their own town or that everybody is a tourist

someplace—furthered the overall ambivalence and complexity of the subject among participants. Despite concerns about the adverse effects of tourism, there was a broader feeling that people still wanted people to visit Sedona. The beauty of the natural landscapes and the "unique energy" are better to be shared rather than restricted.

Sedona's Sustainable Tourism Plan (STP) identifies high-spending tourists who visit for multiple days as a way of maximizing revenue while minimizing impact. A concern for equity—who is allowed to visit Sedona and who belongs in Sedona—was expressed by R1, R2, R7, and R8. This question about belonging is central to studies of place, and in Sedona there are many boundaries and delineations around who belongs in Sedona. The equity questions raised by the target demographic in the STP draw delineations between wealthy people who spend money over an extended period and visitors who either can't afford or are uninterested in these practices and services. This delineation frames Sedona as a resort city, which places locals in service to tourists. The STP, which will be discussed in more depth in discussion on planning, promotes a symbiotic relationship between locals and tourists, where tourists—particularly as construed through the plan's target demographic—provide the revenue via sales tax that alleviates the need for a city property tax. Locals, meanwhile, provide the services and place character which attract these tourists. Zooming out, there is a second delineation between tourists and locals themselves, where locals feel like tourists are invasive to their claimed place. This feeling is complicated by an ambivalence which recognizes and accepts the need for these tourists, but laments the negative effects that these tourists bring.

Planning and Development

Issues revolving around planning arose through discussions of housing, traffic, land use restrictions, development codes, and economic diversification. Affordable housing proved to be a sensitive issue, where many concerns were lobbied toward the prevalence of Airbnb and its effect on the rental market. R13 noted that the saying in Sedona is that "you either have three houses or three jobs." Tourism and regulation restrictions by the state government are largely blamed for the short-term rental boom, and participants expressed concern about the ability of people who work in Sedona to live in Sedona rather than the neighboring towns of Cottonwood and Cornville. The expansion of short-term rentals to these neighboring towns emerged as well, signaling an increasing lack of affordability that many considered unsustainable.

Short-term rentals contributed to a perceived fracturing of space and community. As investment firms buy property and convert them to vacation rentals, with full crews attending to the grounds and a rapid flow of occupants, the sense of neighborhood community is converted into a more commercial production. A perceived downward trend of "working people"—people who live in Sedona and work there, in tourism services, otherwise, or often both—compared to retirees and tourists, constituted a loss of place and a loss of locality, as the "locals are kind of what makes this place special," according to R14. A discrepancy emerged between people who live in Sedona and host visitors—who maybe own one rental property—and investment firms who buy multiple properties. R3, R7, R10, R11, R12, and R13 felt that the independent property owners were acceptable and that there should be some way to differentiate between them. Short-term rental regulation and mixed-use development emerged as solutions to affordable housing issues.

Excess car traffic and crowds proved to be controversial as well, as there is "one way in and one way out" of Sedona, a lack of public transit and rideshare services, and a lack of road and crowd management infrastructure. The traffic in Uptown Sedona, where much tourism infrastructure is concentrated, makes it "difficult to value" the area, while the foot traffic on trails and at landscape sites such as Cathedral Rock led to concerns about preservation of natural beauty and sacred sites. The pedestrian crossing in Uptown, which is managed by crossing guards, was noted as a burdensome choke point that requires a different strategy.

Suggested solutions to traffic and crowd issues overwhelmingly included an increase of roads, as R14 noted "the only solution to handling more cars is more roads." Other solutions included improving ease and access for cycling and pedestrian traffic, increasing public transit, and protecting certain natural areas through limits on time and people. The suggested solutions were very often specific to the problem—traffic congestion, affordable housing—rarely considering the notion that Sedona's tourism problems might be symptomatic of a broader political economy or that a concerted effort to reduce tourism volume might alleviate these issues.

Planning and development for themselves were discussed as well, with participants recognizing that Sedona is largely landlocked as it borders National Forest land which restricts outward expansion. According to R6, a concern with an aging population, driven in part by an increasing population in retirees, as well as the economic dependence on tourism drive a movement for economic diversification. These diversification options presented by respondents included increasing coworking space for entrepreneurs and an emphasis on biotech, business services, healthcare, and video production, among others. Despite the recognition of the dependence on tourism and the need for change, there were mixed feelings about the outlook for

these prospects, as some expressed pessimism that anything would change, citing community pushback, inability to expand, and the resilience of the tourism economy as reasons for pessimism. The lack of jobs outside of the tourism industry and affordable housing issues were cited by R2, R5, and R13 as drivers in lack of community, where the lack of good careers contributed to a lack of young families moving to the area.

Concerns about sustainability, through the dependence on the tourism economy, rising housing prices, water availability and rising temperatures resulting from climate change, emerged among participants. Some commended Sedona's landscape development codes, which prioritize the built landscape blending in with the natural landscape through restrictions on building height and building color, although there remained some skepticism that the development codes were meaningfully sustainable. Enforcement was cited as a barrier to sustainability, as one respondent noted that money often circumvents rules, as illustrated by a lone, large, bright yellow house viewed from the Chapel of the Holy Cross. R4 raised skepticism of the efficacy of a sustainability initiative that is largely reliant on small businesses owners and individuals doing their part to be sustainable rather than having "any kind of city-wide united, central focus."

Spirituality

Themes of spirituality emerged through discussions about landscape, energy, vortexes, and community. Many people cited the land itself as a source of spiritual or cosmic energy, or that "spirituality extends from the landscape." Sedona's red rocks were described as "beautiful," "compelling," "angry," "aggressive," and "magical." The landscape was repeatedly considered to the be the driving force in attracting people to the area, either through the scenic beauty or

through the spiritual energy. It was described by R5 as a “portal” to other energy points on Earth and a type of cosmic gateway, while in another the land produced a particular energy through its unique mineral composition.

The spiritual energy of the land and place repeatedly arose, characterized as “unique,” “intense,” and “sacred.” Many people noted a tumultuous nature to this energy, with R2 describing Sedona as a place that “shows you your shit, then spits you back out.” The energy is cited as both a reason for attraction to the place and a force for driving people away. Participants remarked how, overwhelmingly, many people they know were “drawn to Sedona for a reason,” and that the energy “necessitates change,” “brings about life changes,” and is sometimes so strong that people need to leave in order to have a break from it. The spiritual energy was noted by R1 to affect someone “on a cellular level,” regardless of whether that person is “spiritual.” However, some noted not feeling anything, and wondered whether the energy required a belief in or attunement to it in order to feel it.

Energy in general was synonymous in many cases with vortexes, which constituted particular objects, albeit invisible, that produce this energy. Vortexes produced many discrepancies during interviews. Some felt that the entire area is one large vortex, others felt there are thousands of small vortexes, and others questioned whether the vortexes were real at all. The semantics of the vortex was, as some suggested the use of the word ‘vortex’ was a recent development coinciding with tourism in the area, and that what is now a ‘vortex’ has been a ‘sacred site’ for much longer.

Spirituality for itself produced several emergent and conflicting beliefs, ranging from the types of spirituality and spiritual people in Sedona, definitions of spirituality, and issues with the commodification of spirituality. Some people demarcated a boundary between fake and authentic

spirituality, where the fake spirituality is performative or represented by spiritual practitioners, such as psychics or shamans, who are not what they claim to be. The Sedona Spiritual Metaphysical Association (SMSA), emerged as a source of authentication, which people can consult as a way of ensuring a "good service." Along with divisions between fake and authentic, there were divisions between "crystal" spirituality and nature-based spirituality, where the former revolves around New Age or metaphysical beliefs while the latter is focused more on "going into nature" and "being with [yourself]." Besides these divisions within types of spiritual people, there were broader divisions within people in Sedona in general between "normal" people and "woowoo" people. There was much overlap between this division and the divisions within types of spiritual people, signifying a messy and complex taxonomy which lacks clear boundaries. However, spirituality was emphasized by R6 as a "big part of the community" and noted how you "don't have to be a shaman to be spiritual." R12 stated that many people find some kind of spirituality "for themselves" while living in Sedona. The city was considered a "spiritual mecca," for "all types" of spiritual people.

People defined 'spirituality' variously as "letting your spirit rule," "discovering true meaning," the act of "searching for something" or "connecting with the earth and with your spirit," and finding one's "own path." 'Connection' featured heavily in many responses, either with God, the spirit, a higher power, or "something bigger than [oneself]." Overall, the intersection of vortexes, hiking, nature, meditation showed Sedona as a "one-stop shop" for spirituality.

People found issue with the spiritual reputation of Sedona as a spiritual place, noting the irony of that reputation and the large crowds that diminish the sense of spirituality that provides

that reputation. This irony is expressed by some as the "commodification of spirituality," with one participant noting that you "shouldn't have to be in a particular place to be spiritual."

Community and Indigenous Ancestry

Besides tourism, planning, and spirituality, two other themes emerged which crossed across these three: community and Indigenous ancestry. Many participants noted how they felt they could be more open about their spiritual work and identity after moving to Sedona. One participant noted how before moving to Sedona, they would describe themselves as a grant writer and not mention the spiritual work that they do. After moving to Sedona, and despite still writing grants, they feel freer to speak about their spiritual work. Others described the "kinship" they feel in Sedona, that they could be more themselves and dress the way they prefer to dress, and the benefits of "having a tribe."

Community was understood in diverse ways through the research, reflecting the complexity and contentiousness of the concept. In some cases, perspectives of a duality within community emerged. For some, there was a duality between fake and authentic spiritual people, while for others there was a duality between spiritual or "woowoo" people and "normal" people. A third duality between wealthy retirees and working people situates divisions between class within understandings of community. An expression of dualities was not unanimous, however, as one respondent characterized Sedona's community as a "strange mix" Beyond these dualities, conflicting perspectives on cohesion within community emerged. On one hand, there was a lack of community, driven by a lack of families, jobs, and affordable housing, and illustrated by short-term rental housing management crews and the absence of familiar people at grocery stores and coffee shops. On the other, life in Sedona is full of random connections and chance

encounters, described as “the same as any small town” where everybody knows everybody and their business.

Pushback from the community regarding changes emerged as a prominent theme, supported by Sedona’s reporting that city residents oppose reducing tourism if it means having to pay a city property tax. Tourism was consistently regarded as a necessary evil in spite of people’s desire for less tourism and the frustrations with the problems that tourism brings and exacerbates.

Besides issues with community discussed with affordable housing and short-term rentals, one participant expressed concerns about exclusion and a “close the door behind you,” as described by R14, attitude toward people who move to Sedona and that when people move to Sedona they exercise a sense of ownership over the place that divides them from tourists. This raises questions of belonging and claiming a place that intersect with the other emergent theme, Indigenous ancestry.

Sedona’s Indigenous ancestry came up time and again. People relayed their awareness of the Yavapai, Sinagua, Hopi, and Apache, though these names were not always used. R1 observed the parallels between how these groups’ relationship with the land around Sedona was often transitory and ceremonial, and how the city is now a tourist destination. R1 noted how “Indigenous peoples feel like you shouldn’t live here. That you should come here, do you sacred work, and then go back home.” The archaeology of Indigenous peoples in this area is shrouded in mystery. The dwelling sites of Palatki and Honanki sites are considered to have been inhabited by the Sinagua people between 1150 and 1350 AD, and there is speculation about other groups inhabiting the region across different time periods. The perspective that the Verde Valley is more

meeting ground than settlement among Indigenous peoples slightly contradicts the archaeology but speaks to a broader understanding of what that land and place means to those peoples.

There was a strong sense that Indigenous people are either underrepresented or misrepresented. Underrepresentation occurs through a lack of acknowledgement that the land is sacred to some Indigenous peoples or of the violence that has allowed Sedona to grow. Misrepresentation is found in "incorrectly spelled Native street names," and "cheaply made," inauthentic Indigenous art. Authentic Indigenous art was considered to be unprofitable, as it takes a long time to make and is quite expensive compared to the "cheaply made" pieces that are for sale at tourist sites.

These results speak to the emergent themes of tourism, planning, spirituality, community, and Indigenous ancestry. These themes all intersect in dynamic, complex ways, and through them, we may begin to spell out analysis of how place is produced in Sedona, to what effect, and who is involved. Place may be induced from these themes and the connections between them.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion

This project's broad purpose is to contribute to literature about place and its production, examining pressure points in the study area including tourism, planning, and spirituality. Through these dimensions, an analysis of place and place production can be made which extends contemporary discussions of place and can serve as a model for future research. Besides the broad investigation into place, this project is concerned with better understanding spiritual and wellness tourism, a term used by Sedona's tourism website, as one of the many and expanding niche sections of tourism. This analysis draws on theoretical approaches to place, space, tourism, spirituality, and planning, teasing out tensions and intersections between them in order to better understand how place is produced. Existing literature in spiritual tourism focuses on drawing parameters around it, delineating it from other tourism niches, and examining classifies as spiritual tourism (Cheer et al, 2017), while other literature locates spirituality within tourism more broadly (Willson et al, 2013). Lefebvre (1974) and Harvey (1973) have paved the way in understanding the social construction of space, deconstructing the premise that space is an a priori container within which people live and societies are developed. Doreen Massey's (1991; 2005) work on place, as a constellation of negotiating trajectories, an interconnection of flows, and a wholly elusive process, heavily informs this analysis. Meanwhile, conflict around the purpose of planning—who it benefits, which outcomes are prioritized—and subsequent conflict over whether that purpose can be changed *through* planning, drives the reflections and analysis on planning and development (Fainstein, 2009; Marcuse, 2012). While there is some rich literature on these topics and some of the intersections between them, there is little literature which considers place through the lens of various foci in the way that this analysis will.

Contradictions

Sedona is a place full of contradictions. Contradiction is understood here as the simultaneous presence of opposing or conflicting forces in a given "situation, entity, process, or event" (Harvey, 2014). Harvey explains the pervasiveness of contradictions in daily life, as with work-life balance, as well as within – There is nothing inherently bad about a contradiction, though they certainly have the potential to lead to conflict. Understanding contradictions as tensions borne out of simultaneous opposing forces is key to an analysis of place in Sedona. Perhaps most notable among the contradictions in Sedona is its popularity as a tourist destination, where people visit seeking the red rock landscapes, transformative spiritual experiences, or some combination of both, only to be met by swaths of people and long waits in vehicular traffic. This tension predictably inhibits a visitor's experience, coinciding with theories of place and tourism from MacCannell (1976), Crang (2013), and Cresswell (2014), which track the development of authenticity in tourism practices and studies and it's connections to authenticity and rootedness of place. Sedona simultaneously has a strong spa culture and a growing ATV and offroad Jeep industry, two conflicting activities, with the idea of a spa connoting relaxation, while offroad Jeep tours suggest excitement and thrill. Coupled with Sedona's affordable housing concerns, the question of when Sedona will be "loved to death," or when the infrastructure that supports the tourism—and the tourism itself—will collapse the place, are inevitable.

Moreover, Sedona depends on tourism, but tourism depends on people providing services. The people who provide services need housing, but the expansion of short-term rentals has driven housing prices up, pushing these tourism workers to neighboring towns like Cornville and Cottonwood, which themselves are experiencing rising housing prices. The tourism industry

in Sedona, then, can be considered an expanding machine, pushing farther and farther out from the tourism destination. However, there aren't many neighboring towns that can accommodate a service workforce, and continuing to spatially fix (Harvey, 1981) the issue may prove unsustainable, resulting in a situation where there either isn't a workforce to supply the tourism services or those services must be provided in creative, albeit suspicious ways.

Sedona's Sustainable Tourism Plan, as well as its more recent Destination Recovery Plan, prioritizes attracting high-spending visitors. At the same time, about one-third of Sedona's visitors are day visitors, and the most popular activity for visitors is hiking, which is low-revenue. Given this, Sedona faces some challenging questions if it hopes to realize its vision for sustainable tourism. First, does prioritizing a certain visitor demographic mean dissuading or reducing day-only and low-revenue visitors, such as hikers? And if so, what does this say about who belongs in Sedona? And second, is this truly sustainable? On the one hand, people who visit for the day and hike provide carbon without any guarantee of sales-tax revenue. On the other, studies show that wealthy people overwhelmingly produce more carbon emissions than low-income or middle-class people (Gore, 2020).

Another contradiction rests in the duality of Sedona's spirituality. On one hand, there are people who either live in Sedona or visit Sedona and seek spiritual experiences within and for themselves, while on the other there are people who seek to acquire a spiritual experience, each three of these words being loaded, by purchasing experiences such as psychic readings, sound baths, and meditation retreats. These purchases constitute 'buying a spiritual experience,' an inherently contradictory conception. At the same time, the idea that spirituality or a spiritual experience may be for sale or acquired through a structured, paid-for program dovetails with Harvey's notion that nothing is truly unique because everything has a market value (2011).

A spirituality among locals exists underneath a commodified spirituality, where the local spirituality is more authentic while the commodified spirituality that tourists consume and is provided by some spiritual practitioners is “fake” or “performative” spirituality. This concept is supported in the literature by MacCannell (1976) and Crang (1997), whose works dissect the performance of tourist workers and the ways that tourism is “staged” for tourists in an act of masquerading. This duality was noted among multiple participants with differing characterizations and levels. R6 noted the division between “normal” and “woowoo” people, while R1, R2, R3, R7, and R8 describing the division between fake and authentic spirituality.

Place production

Place, as both a process and an object, is produced through an “interconnection of flows.” Place in Sedona is produced daily, with significant contributions from tourism. Place in Sedona is heavily influenced by the natural landscape, which constricts the development of the built environment while also informing it through the deployment of land development codes. These codes place specifications on building materials, building height, and building color in an effort to blend the built environment with the natural environment. Many people are attracted to Sedona because of the red rock landscapes, the natural beauty, and the energy which extends from it.

Sedona instantiates a global sense of place through both the flows of its 3 million tourists each year, who travel from around the world to visit, and the culture of spirituality, which, much like Kujawa (2017) argues, is a selective and assembled amalgamation of multiple practices and doctrines, exemplified by the Amitabha Stupa, the proliferation of crystal shops, and the

diversity of spiritual services available in the city, such as reiki, sound healing, and shamanic work.

At the same time, the extraverted sense of place that Massey advocates for feels absent at times, particularly considering many people's lamentations that Sedona isn't what it used to be and that Sedona is subject to issues of claiming and ownership by those who move there. The ethic suggested by Massey—one of openness and outwardness—would appear to endorse or at the very least accept the flows that tourism brings to the city, though Massey would likely take issue with problems of equity that manifest is the prioritization of high-spending visitors and the lack of affordable housing for working people in Sedona. In fact, it's fair to question whether Massey's ethic endorses a sort of radical acceptance of whatever place happens to throw at you. Given Massey's overall critique of David Harvey and the social constructionist's worldview that all of the material conditions in the world can be explained through capitalism, and that place should be understood as processed-based and future-focused, is there an openness associated with her global sense of place that might, in the case of Sedona, consider the tourists ontological equal to the locals? These questions of place, who belongs in a place or who is allowed in a place, are central to place studies and considerations in the present and future. Issues of equity and belonging were echoed by participants R2, R7, R8, R9, and R14, with R7 displaying concern for the limitations caused by making Sedona a destination for wealthy people, while R14 characterized a sense of place-claiming by new Sedona residents who feel that Sedona "belongs to them." Participants R2, R4, and R8 spoke of affordable housing equity and the resultant dislocation of Sedona workers to neighboring towns. This dislocation spreads the production of place in Sedona well beyond the limits of the city, supported by R10 and R11's reflection that social media posts from Sedona get an inordinate amount of attention and traffic relative to other

posts' locations. The digital dissemination of Sedona as a place or a site of meaning contributes to a global production of place in the digital realm that at the same time masks a lived reality, such as the workers who must commute to the city to contribute to that place production.

Fracturing Place

Issues with over-tourism, short-term rentals, and housing supply a fracturing of place. As neighborhoods are increasingly populated with vacationers and tourists, the sense of place for the locals becomes fractured, where they no longer feel the cohesiveness or unitary feeling associated with a neighborhood. While space has been considered fractured by digital communications (Poncet & Ripert, 2007), there is little that investigates how place can be fractured. Of course, the question of fracturing place is largely dependent on the positionality of the subject, as perspectives might differ between community members and visitors. At the same time, there is surely a tipping point where visitors develop an awareness of this fracturing, a looming moment which threatens Sedona's attractiveness, particularly if indeed "locals make the place."

Building on the collection of contradictions above, tensions between drivers of movement or visitation for people in Sedona contribute to fracturing place. Many people who move to Sedona feel called or drawn there, appealing to a higher spiritual power in their migration, yet at the same time there is a large economic infrastructure also calling people to visit in order to generate tourism revenue. Participants R2, R3, R4, R5, and R13 felt called or summoned to relocate to Sedona from other areas such as the Midwest or California, while R2 characterized this as an overwhelmingly signature experience of Sedona transplants. Based on Sedona's

reliance on tourism and the plans for economic diversification—which specifically prioritize 'economic gardening' rather than attracting new industries and workforces—it seems safe to say that few people move to Sedona for jobs. Economic gardening is understood as a development approach where developers fund local businesses and entrepreneurs rather than focus on attracting companies to relocate. Barrios & Barrios (2004) and Mayer & Knox (2009) argue that economic gardening is more sustainable than the alternative and challenges the "status quo of capitalism." Born & Purcell (2006) offer a critique of the 'local trap,' arguing that because scale is socially constructed and relational—local is only local in relation to what isn't local—it's problematic to assume that certain scales are inherently better or worse than others. For Sedona, as it works to diversify its economy with a focus on economic gardening, it would be prudent to make clear which outcomes it seeks through this localization and resist the urge to brand something as good strictly because it is local. If Sedona attracts few people through jobs, many of those who do move likely fall, in some way shape or form, into this dimension of purpose, where they feel summoned by the red rocks or the spiritual energy, drawn by a sometimes nebulous force.

Despite the desires to wean Sedona off of tourism, so to speak, the mandate for growth, embodied by tourism, continues and produces an increasingly Disneyfied version of Sedona, as expressed by R2 and R9, which undermines or threatens the spiritually-driven sense of place which so many Sedona locals cited as their motivation for moving there. The question then becomes: whose place is being fractured? Is place, as it is experienced and produced by and for a tourist, ontologically equal to place as experienced and produced by and for a local?

As place becomes fractured for individuals and communities through issues like traffic and affordable housing, the complex and interconnected flows of place also produce a fractured

place, where the sense of place in Sedona is understood quite differently among different actors. Participants R2, R3, R7, R13, and R14 suggested a loss of community through short-term rentals and the lack of affordable housing, while R14 lamented how the traffic in uptown makes it hard to value that space. The different actors' experiences and beliefs about Sedona are diverse, producing a collection of varied and discrete, if overlapping, understandings of place. This is illustrated by the simultaneous belief that Sedona is "just a small town," as claimed by R14, where everybody knows everybody's business and that one can walk into a grocery store or coffee shop and "not see a soul that you know," as noted by R12, along with the varying accounts of the different types of people who live in Sedona. A fractured sense of place, then, can also be considered as these many discrete and overlapping actors and their perspectives, individually, collectively, and relationally. This fractured sense of place is somewhat evocative of Massey's relational, global sense of place, characterized by "a constellation of trajectories" and an "interconnection of flows." Baldwin (2012) and Pierce et al (2010) leverage Massey's conception in their own research, illustrating how place processes are relational and how there are multiple 'versions' of a place.

Planning and Place

This project's main concern is understanding how place is produced through certain pressure points, including planning. There are several complex questions which help with this goal. For instance, we can examine the outcomes that Sedona's tourism and economic plans prioritize. But we can also ask broader questions, like: what is the purpose of planning? And how does planning produce place?

There's an obvious tension between Sedona's dependence on sales tax, which is largely driven by tourism, and the absence of city property tax. The sales tax is largely considered the reason that there's no property tax, and according to a 2018 survey, residents are overwhelmingly against the reduction of tourism if it means a city property tax. What's more, people accept and believe that they are directly dependent on tourism. Sedona without tourism seems incomprehensible to most, even though participants, such as R1, R2, R9, R10, R11, and R14 wish there were fewer crowds and less traffic. In producing place, this creates an interesting set of relations between tourists and locals, where there is a combination of frustration and gratitude from the locals to the tourists.

The city appears to be balancing keeping residents happy and maintaining the growth of tourism. It is currently pivoting toward sustainable tourism through its Sustainable Tourism Plan, which holds as its four pillars Environment, Resident Quality of Life, Quality of the Economy, and Visitor Experience. This plan's strategy involves prioritizing high-spending, longer-staying visitors, which raises questions of equity and who, exactly, belongs or is welcome in Sedona. It's also unclear just how effectively this plan will manage tourism volume, and, as Krueger and Buckingham (2012) show, sustainability initiatives often yield to economic development when push comes to shove.

If increasing tourism is fracturing place for Sedona residents, it's possible that reducing tourism could begin to repair these fractures. However, if people seek to restore Sedona in some way, it risks being trapped in the regressive sense—where a place is romanticized as some past-tense, idealized version—of place that Harvey (1996) finds so problematic. It's unclear if planning has the tools or the power to do this. Sedona has displayed engagement with tourism reduction in the past, when they eliminated promotions in Phoenix, their largest tourism market,

and experienced a significant decline in visitors and revenue. That experiment ended and tourism rebounded, and it doesn't appear like there are any plans to cease or reduce promotions in the future. Given that there is a direct relationship between promotions and visitor traffic, Sedona has a very potent tool at its disposal to manage tourism traffic. However, with the STP, it is opting instead to thread the needle of maintaining growth while reducing traffic. Time will tell whether this initiative is successful and what side effects it might have. In part, the conclusion depends on which perspective on planning is employed. Is the purpose of planning managing outcomes for a space? Is it to promote livability? Is it to ensure and maximize economic growth? There is surely a balance between these possible purposes but given that planning as a practice is embedded within a broader economic system, it is more in league with that system than it is opposed to it. Increasing housing prices, growing crowds and lines of traffic at roundabouts, and worsening environmental degradation will continue if the goal of economic growth trumps other goals.

An increase of roadways was often suggested as a solution to traffic congestion in Sedona, which contradicts Speck's theory of induced demand (2018), which shows that "more lanes leads to more traffic." Due to Sedona's landscape constraints, as described by R6, it seems unlikely that an expansion of roads will happen, but this belief speaks to many people's perception about traffic, planning, and growth. The instinctual response is to "make it bigger," paralleling the idea that growth is a required and beneficial process, which Harvey argues dominates both discourse and practice (1974). There were auxiliary suggestions, such as shuttles to popular tourist zones, bike lanes, and increased public transit. Suggestions did not vary much across different participant groups, and among the suggested solutions, almost none include facilitating a drastic reduction in tourism with responses ranging from pessimism that the city

and businesses would give up that revenue to gratitude for the revenue that tourists provide to ambivalence about the crowds.

Still, tourism is contributing to making Sedona unaffordable and unlivable for residents, largely driven by the prevalence of short-term rentals and the role this plays in fracturing neighborhoods and communities. There is some action currently underway in working toward regulating short-term rentals, and it's fair to wonder whether the cat is out of the bag and that Sedona won't ever be the same.

It's important to resist the urge for nostalgia and a regressive sense of place, where an idea of a place is always past-tense. However, this should be balanced against the other extreme, a radical acceptance of what a place *is*, as this end of the spectrum would argue that the place should develop 'naturally,' without interference. If place is understood as a process, always becoming itself, it's possible to construe this as meaning that there are normative claims to be made about place. This opens the door, however, for a Sedona that is exclusively tourists, or dominated by tourists, to be accepted as good and fine. There is a lot of ambiguity, but what's clear is that conceiving place and incorporating that into planning is complex and there's no easy answer. Planning could take inventory of how place is produced in Sedona and who is included in that production in order to determine place outcomes and develop strategies to ensure those.

Embodiment of Place through Spiritual Energy

A refocusing of tourism on embodiment, or a movement beyond the visual, has led researchers to focus on tourism experiences through the senses such as taste and smell, as in food tourism (Everett, 2009). An investigation into spiritual tourism and the experience of spiritual

places shows that there is yet another dimension of tourism beyond the visual which researchers can investigate: extrasensory.

Overwhelmingly, tourism professionals, who often engaged in spiritual and healing practices, attributed their experiences of spiritual attunement, an amplification of their spiritual insight, or their interdimensional travels to an energy located around Sedona. The sense of spirituality in Sedona was most pronounced and vivid among tourism professionals. Among other participant groups, there was a broad sense of spirituality which largely reflected Sedona's reputation as a spiritual location, but did not maintain the same lucidity communicated by tourism professionals. In the research, many people described graduating, so to speak, from tourist to local. As many people, particularly tourism professionals, relocated to Sedona from elsewhere, this moment of clarity and belonging crystalized Sedona as a place for them, rather than a place to visit. This moment of clarity was often a transformative spiritual experience in Sedona. At the same time, participants R5, R8, R10, and R11 considered the ambiguity about whether this energy requires a belief in it or an openness to it in order to feel it. For those who do feel something—a spiritual shift, vertigo, joy, fear—the experience is often intense and memorable. These experiences are embodied, yet they are not embodied via an object in the same way that food tourism might be. Instead, they are embodied through an invisible force, a belief, or some combination of both. As well, these experiences are directly tied to place, particularly considering the ambiguity of the source or veracity of the energy and the infrastructure of reputation which has developed around Sedona. In other words, it's difficult to say how much of these people's embodied, extrasensory experiences are informed by Sedona's reputation for this energy. What's clear, however, is that the red rocks, the place, and the location do indeed collectively drive the experience. By extending embodied place and tourism into this

felt, extrasensory dimension, researchers can begin to query the spiritual elements of place in a way that substantially furthers place and tourism studies.

Spiritual Tourism as Growth

The concept of an embodied tourism that's based on an innerfeeling, spiritual experience, or emotion, is rooted in postmodern approaches to tourism, which track the changes in the focus and desires of tourists across time (Selwyn, 1996; Gisolf, 2011; Cohen & Cohen, 2012). Where tourists once sought authenticity in either an object or a phenomena, things to gaze upon or participate in, spiritual tourists seek authenticity in feeling. Specifically, spiritual tourists participate in activities focused on the self through growth, healing, change, and transformation. There are a few interesting claims that can be made through this framing of spiritual tourism. First, understanding spiritual tourism as growth embeds it within a social constructionist understanding which attributes material conditions to broader power systems. In this view, a prioritization of economic growth underwrites decision-making and drives development. What parallels can be drawn between growth-based systems and growth-oriented tourism?

For one, this conception implies that self-growth can be purchased or engineered and that it is an inherently desirable or beneficial process rather than, much like economic growth, a social construction. When tourists participate in meditation retreats or consult with professional shamans, they are engaging in a transactional process of spiritual growth.

It's also possible to frame this type of tourism as a spatial fix. Characterizing tourism as a spatial fix is not uncommon, as Yrigoy (2013) and Fletcher (2011) have shown. In spiritual tourism's—and Sedona's—case, this spatial fix could amount to a supply of growth and self-reflection which is eroding in the spaces people travel from. Sedona, and other 'spiritual meccas'

or ‘spiritual capitals,’ are wellsprings of this type of growth, with growing reputations and increasing tourism traffic. People travel not just to get away or reset, a purpose classically ascribed to tourism practices and destinations, but to develop or facilitate positive change in their life. This carries with it an implicit absence or dearth of this spiritual growth, or access to it, in these traveled-from spaces, and there’s a potential positive feedback loop at play, where spiritually-specific sites become increasingly more popular and productive, while other spaces’ experience a continued decrease in these services and develop a reliance on these spiritual sites. Of course, these services are quite expensive, with a weeklong stay at Sedona Wellness Retreat costing $4,000 with a minimum stay of two weeks. The class of people who can afford the time and money on services like this is quite small, and to that end, spiritual tourism as a spatial fix produces an extreme niche where wealthy people are outsourcing their spiritual needs to places like Sedona.

The obvious caveat in all this is that there are certainly spiritual services in Sedona which, while they cost money, are not prohibitively expensive or exclusive, nor does one need to participate in these expensive programs to have a spiritual experience, in Sedona or anywhere. One might be just as likely to have a spiritual experience—an authenticity of feeling—hiking through Red Rock State Park or along the Cathedral Rock trail as they would spending a week at a wellness center. The point, however, is that in developing this reputation and the infrastructure around it, Sedona has become a place which supplies spirituality to people who lack it, wherever they might come from.

This tourism is also representative of broader discursive shifts in the framing of and approaches to spirituality. Initially discussed by Kujawa (2017), who provides a helpful initial framework, this discursive shift is wrapped up with a focus on the individual or self over the

community or the institution, though we could interrogate whether or not the self can be considered an institution. This spirituality is characterized by a desire for authenticity in feeling, as mentioned above, but also contains a decentralized secular modality, where people assemble a collection of beliefs and practices that is specific to them, borrowing from various traditions. This discursive shift is a movement away from organized religion and institutions, but it is also congruent with themes of individual choice and freedom which are tied into the U.S. identity, as well as access to information and time-space compression characteristic of postmodernity. In this framework for spirituality, it is as much the search for authenticity or the desire for growth which drives the spiritual tourist as it is the access to different spiritual practices and epistemologies, the belief that choice and freedom are good and valuable, and the flattening of knowledge.

Where spiritual tourism might overlap with other niche types of tourism such as holistic and New Age tourism is unclear, and it's possible, perhaps even likely, that whatever differences they have are negligible in the scope of things, as the purposes and practices are often nearly identical. What's important in each of them is the relational processes which underwrite and extend from them, and less so the semantics of which category means what. An inquiry into *why* these different terms exist in the first place, how the developed, and how they function in discourse would be a useful study.

The 'fake' or inauthentic spirituality in Sedona, which is described as performative and tied closely to the tourism engine there, fits in with Sutton and House's (2003) analysis of New Age tourism and the hyperreal, where they claim, drawing on Baudrillard (1981), that it "no longer matters if a real Indian guru is encountered." What matters is the "idea of themselves" being engaged with some higher power or force beyond themselves. In this way, spiritual tourism relies on a simulation of divinity. At the same time, going back to the idea that

authenticity of feeling rests atop the hierarchy of this sort of tourism—as opposed to authenticity of object or phenomena—does it really matter, for the tourist, whether the guru is fake or real? As long as the feeling is authentic, the tourist is succeeding in their purpose. Any performance or simulation by the guru, or any tourism service provider, must only maintain a sufficiently convincing appearance or performance in order for the tourist to obtain whatever feeling—growth, resolution, transformation—they seek.

How can understanding spiritual tourism in this way inform a broader discussion of place? It's often critiqued that framing everything in terms of a neoliberal economic system is reductive and unhelpful, or at the very least there should be some effort to push beyond a totalizing analysis and interrogate the particular relations which might manifest against the backdrop of such a system. As noted in the review of Massey, particulars—individuals, communities, relations—still exist, against this backdrop or otherwise, and those particulars hold meaning in dynamic, expressive ways that are not necessarily subsumed within a broader economic system. For one, Sedona's reputation as a spiritual place, which drives some tourism there—it should be noted that there are many people who visit Sedona who are not concerned with spirituality at all—and also collectively informs people's beliefs about the city, may be reducing the 'place' of Sedona to an essentialized form. The idea that you must travel to Sedona to have a spiritual experience or the inverse, that you must have a spiritual experience when you travel to Sedona, overlays a representation onto the city which masks a reality where people are living their life as they normally would. Essentializing Sedona in this way also implies that spiritual experiences can, and maybe must, be located and rejects the idea that a 'spiritual experience' can happen anywhere, and proposes that they can be manufactured or facilitated.

The notion that the authenticity of the provider is irrelevant to the tourist's experience poses a particular threat to both the authentic providers, people whose culture that service is based on, and the place itself. If no discernment is necessary between a fake and authentic guru, it's easy to imagine a situation where a population of entirely fake gurus has replaced the authentic gurus, and that Sedona drifts further and further into the realm of simulation. The Sedona Metaphysical Spiritual Association is somewhat of a barrier against that potential, acting as a certification entity which safeguards the authenticity of spiritual professionals. For this, they could be considered 'keepers of place,' if the placeness of Sedona depends on the authenticity of its spiritual people.

Of course, questions of authenticity often result in more questions. Authentic compared to what? Authentic for who? Much of the spiritual culture in Sedona derives from Indigenous tradition, while the land itself is sacred to many Indigenous peoples. While a future study could investigate place and spirituality in Sedona through an Indigenous framework, there are some brief conclusions that may be drawn from this project's interactions with that knowledge. Many participants were aware of the Indigenous relationship with the Verde Valley thought there should be stronger acknowledgement of that land. The Indigenous use of the land as a meeting and ceremony ground, as described by R1, parallels the idea of it being a spiritual, transient place. At the same time, characterizing Indigenous use of land as transitory and lacking dwelling has a long history in the U.S. and provides justification for settlement and occupation. One could go a couple ways with this parallel. On one hand, this parallel could be a verification of purpose or a seal of authenticity. As in, if the Yavapai and Sinagua people felt this land was sacred, they must be onto something. On the other hand, this parallel could be taken as a violation of that sacrality, where the version of it that exists now is desecrating that very sacrality.

Concluding Thoughts

The various threads that interweave in this analysis—planning, tourism, spirituality—collectively inform the production of place in Sedona. The many contradictions in Sedona discussed in this analysis illustrate how place can be contested, how elusive it can be, and how both individual actors and collectives, such as city governments, economic systems, and hegemonies, are frequently at-odds in complex ways. This is often not simply a one-to-one relationship, where two are opposed, but a network of tensions which formulate place relationally. The questions which emerged in this chapter deserve more thought. For example, does Massey's framework for a global sense of place flatten hierarchies between local and tourist in Sedona and other tourist destinations? Massey employs a strong critique of Harvey's concerns that place is being employed in regressive way—represented by right-wing nationalist movements and the proliferation of gated communities—by positioning place as being produced by individuals in spite of the systems in which their embedded. As questions of belonging are central to questions of place, it's fair to wonder whether this global sense of place, and the openness that underwrites it, allows for a future of exclusion via inclusion, where access to a place is predicated just as much on power or wealth as it might be in Harvey's regressive conceptions. This ontological question of people and belonging in place couples with the other prominent ontological question of whether place exists on a different level for different people or in different roles. The emergence of these ontological questions can be useful in evaluating and interrogating tourism, planning, sustainability, and spirituality in future studies. How do these discrete subjects account for the ontology of place and place-actors?

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In Sedona, at any given moment, one may be entering a grocery store full of strangers while another person, who just ran into four people they know, exits. One could be trapped in a traffic jam heading into Uptown, frustrated, while someone trips and falls while jogging on a trail and observes three different astral bodies continue running in different directions. One could be ogling the artwork at a gallery or the crystals at a shop, considering which object they wish to bring home with them, while another navigates the cleaning crews servicing one of many short-term rentals in a townhouse complex. Sedona's many diverse and fractured experiences and understandings of place exist simultaneously and relationally, sometimes opposing each other, other times complementing each other, and quite often providing slight difference or nuance between them.

The ontology of place and place-actors emerged as a key question in the analysis of this case study. How does place—as an object and a process—exist variously for different actors? And how do these actors exist different within that place and in relation to each other? Disneyfication, with elimination of difference, has the potential to produce, or simulate, contained places, cut off from the networked world, where ontology has the appearance of being blatant and unquestioned. In Disneyland in particular, there is a very clear delineation between who is visiting and who is hosting, as the hosts dress a certain way—like Disney characters—eliminating any ontological ambiguity. In Sedona, and other evolving tourist destinations, a continued trajectory toward this Disneyfication presents an increasingly clear set of ontological differences. However, Sedona, unlike Disneyland or a National Park, bears no simulation of containment, and it's unlikely the residents of Sedona will ever completely erode to yield a city that is exclusively tourists and hosts.

Place exists at multiple scales and through a relational ontology. At the scalar level, there are simultaneous collective and individual experience and understanding of place. These two understandings are not mutually exclusive but can at times conflict with each other. A collective understanding of place can be driven by representations, beliefs, and assumptions about a place. In Sedona, its reputation as a spiritual location drives a collective sense of place that is reproduced daily through social media posts, promotions, and tourism practices. This production of a collective place occurs locally, regionally, and globally, as place is reproduced digitally, and the place of Sedona can be viewed and experienced by people anywhere with an internet connection. The use of video communication in spiritual tourism practices, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, allows for place participation and experience without being located in the place itself. As spiritual practitioners, consulted in part because of their proximity to Sedona and the spiritual power and attunement that results from that proximity, conduct Zoom psychic and healing sessions, they are allowing a remote actor access to Sedona while remaining dislocated. Place is produced globally through these practices, as well as through social media and promotional representations. Place produced globally in this way is not necessarily synonymous with an extraverted, global sense of place, which recognizes the chaotic interconnection and constellation of networks, human and non-human actors, and systems of power. In fact, this reproduction of place can mask the lived reality and throwntogetherness of place through its singularity, where a place is 'one thing' that is characterized by an essence or a set of essential qualities. This is felt mostly at smaller scales, where an individual's experience of a place is disrupted, fractured, or undermined by the singular, large-scale place.

These differentiations between place across scales contribute to an ontologically multiple place, where place exists differently for different subjects. This ontological hybridity leads to an

unknowability, where however a place might exist, it cannot be known. This approach coincides with Pierce & Martin (2015) and suggests that while place may not be knowable, it is still possible to understand the processes which produce it, be it global, local, individual, or collective, and to understand which processes are yielding to others, which are endangered, and which are prioritized. Meanwhile, we can work to demystify the singular sense of place that is reproduced, both globally and locally, in favor of the unknowable, chaotic, interconnected place which operates underneath that façade.

It's important to contextualize some of the recommendations which were proposed by research participants. Many people suggested specific or narrow solutions to issues such as traffic congestion, overcrowding, affordable housing, and equity. The solutions proposed, such as more roads, limits on where people can go and how much time they can stay there, or regulations on short-term rentals, might relieve some of the pressure of these problems, but it is unlikely that they will be impacted in any meaningful way, particularly as long as growth-based development plans are employed and in the absence of a meaningful reduction in tourism. Sedona has demonstrated that it has at least one tool to reduce tourism through a reduction in promotions in its largest market, Phoenix. However, many businesses in Sedona are quite opposed to this as they depend on this revenue for their own growth and success.

It's also worth considering Sedona's Sustainable Tourism Plan and its prioritization on attracting high-spending, longer-staying visitors. A vision for sustainable tourism raises some challenging questions for Sedona. Namely, does prioritizing a certain visitor demographic mean dissuading or reducing day-only and low-revenue visitors, such as hikers? And if so, what does this say about who belongs in Sedona? The tension between residents' reluctance to pay a city property tax and their desire to reduce tourism represents perhaps the starkest contradiction

among the many discussed in the analysis. There is really no way that these two desires can be fulfilled. The Sustainable Tourism Plan represents a last-ditch effort to fulfill these two desires, but it's unclear, and unlikely, that tourism will be meaningfully reduced and managed through the prioritization of high-spending visitors and the reduction of low-spending visitors. There is not an effective, nor equitable, mechanism for keeping people out of Sedona. For this reason, this tension will continue, and it remains to be seen how it might evolve, unfold, or dissolve. The tension is not only between residents' reluctance to pay taxes and their desire to reduce tourism. It extends to the city's desire to grow—if not spatially, then economically—and the residents' approval, through the former tension, of this growth, tourism or otherwise. It seems that until residents become frustrated enough with tourism that one desire—to reduce tourism—yields to the other—to pay less taxes—the trajectory of increasing tourism will continue, which will continue to place pressure on residents and the ecology of the region.

Chapter 7: References

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Appendix A — Interview Script and Questions

Interviews are semi-structured and will be focused on learning the beliefs and experiences of the participants.

● I would like to start off by thanking you for taking the time to participate in my study. Over the course of this interview, I will ask about (1) your experiences with spiritual and wellness tourism in Sedona, (2) how your experience of Sedona, or life in Sedona, is affected by tourism, and/or (3) what benefits and challenges do you perceive in the growth of tourism in Sedona.

● Before proceeding I will provide you the necessary information about this project and ask for your informed consent to proceed. If you have questions, please feel free to stop me at any point.

● As described in the Informed Consent, your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may ask to stop the study at any point and may skip any questions without penalty. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Questionnaire (tourism professionals)

Thanks in advance for your time

I'd like to begin by asking you a few questions about your business

1. What services do you provide tourists?
    a. How long have you been providing these services?
    b. How have the services you provide changed or evolved over time?
2. Can you tell me about how you began providing these services?
3. How would you define 'spiritual and wellness tourism'?
    a. Do you feel your business fits this characterization?
    b. How would you define spirituality?
4. How would you describe your typical clientele?
5. Do you have any marketing efforts? If so, can you describe them?
6. What barriers have you encountered as you've grown your business?
    a. Are there any things that could help with these barriers?

I'd like to continue by asking some questions about your experiences with Sedona's city government and Chamber of Commerce

1. Do you have any relationship with the Chamber of Commerce?

    (if yes)

    a. How would you describe it?
    b. Do you feel supported by the Chamber of Commerce?

(if no)

a. Do you think a relationship with them could help your business?

Finally, I'd like to ask some questions about your experience of Sedona in general

1. How would you describe Sedona to somebody who has never visited?
2. How has conducting business in Sedona affected your experience of the city?
3. Is there anything you would change about Sedona? What would you change?

Conclusion:

1. Would you like to add anything else?
2. Do you have any questions for me?

Interview Questionnaire (city employees)

Thanks in advance for your time

I'd like to begin by asking you a few questions about your business

1. What's the process like for planning tourism?
2. In what ways does planning impact tourism?
3. How would you define 'spiritual and wellness tourism'?
4. How would you define spirituality?
5. What are current planning efforts prioritizing?
6. What challenges do you think Sedona will encounter in the future?
    a. What can be done to help with these challenges?

I'd like to ask some questions about your experience of Sedona in general

1. How would you describe Sedona to somebody who has never visited?
2. How has conducting business in Sedona affected your experience of the city?
3. Is there anything you would change about Sedona? What would you change?

Conclusion:

1. Would you like to add anything else?
2. Do you have any questions for me?

Interview Questions (tourists)

Thanks in advance for your time

I'd like to begin by asking some questions about your visit to Sedona

1. What business/retreat did you visit in Sedona?
2. Where did you travel from?
3. How did you hear about it?
4. Can you describe your experience with this business/retreat for me?
    a. What did you gain from it?
    b. Would you visit again? If so, what would you seek to gain?
5. Were there other people with you?
    a. What were they like?
6. Sedona characterizes this business as 'spiritual and wellness tourism.' How would you characterize it?
    a. How would you define 'spiritual and wellness' tourism?
    b. How would you define 'spirituality'?
7. Is there anything you wish you had done in Sedona during your visit?

I'd like to continue by asking some questions about your experience of Sedona in general

How would you describe Sedona to somebody who has never visited?

1. How did your experience at [spiritual tourism site] affect your experience of Sedona?
2. Is there anything you would change about Sedona? What would you change?

Conclusion:

1. Would you like to add anything else?
2. Do you have any questions for me?

Interview Questions (residents)

Thanks in advance for your time

I'd like to begin by asking some questions about your experiences with tourism while living in Sedona

1. Do you participate in any tourism in Sedona?
    a. What kinds of tourism?
    b. If there is tourism that you don't participate in, why not?
2. Sedona lists multiple tourism sectors on the city's website (provide list).
    a. Can you identify which three sectors you are most interested in?
    b. What interests you about these sectors?
3. 'Spiritual and Wellness' tourism is a category on the website.
    a. How would you define this type of tourism?
    b. How would you define 'spirituality'?
    c. Have you ever visited a business that fits this category (give examples)?
        i. Why or why not?
    d. Who do you think the target audience for this type of tourism is?
4. Is there anything you would change about tourism in Sedona? What would you change?

I'd like to continue by asking some questions about your experience of Sedona in general

1. How long have you lived in Sedona?
2. Do you work in Sedona?

    a. What do you do for work?

3. Do you have family here?
4. Who is in your community?
    a. Do people in your community share any feelings about Sedona or tourism in Sedona?
5. How would you describe Sedona to somebody who has never visited?
6. Is there anything you would change about Sedona? What would you change?

Conclusion:

1. Would you like to add anything else?
2. Do you have any questions for me?