

**“Sense of Place and Walking Tours:
A Case Study of the Tour Guys Downtown Toronto Tour”**

by
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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of this thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

Sense of place has been deemed an important notion for planners as it is understood to have both economic and social benefits. However, profound social, economic, and cultural transformations have made it increasingly difficult to retain a sense of local place and its particularity. Losing this sense of particularity limits a place's cultural and social capital – each of which are huge drivers of economic growth. As a response to this, guided walking tours – for example Jane's Walks established in 2006 – have emerged as a form of cultural interpretation to help maintain and foster a meaningful sense of place.

Despite a growing awareness of the benefits of guided walking tours, existing literature on how guided walking tours ought to be designed does not sufficiently address their complexity or understand their relationship to sense of place. This research attempts to fill this gap by analyzing how place is presented and experienced on the Tour Guys *Downtown Toronto Tour*. Using participant observation and interviews, this study suggests that guided walking tours have the potential to change the way people think and act by presenting them with distinctive place experiences. Therefore, guided walking tours, as they interact with sense of place, can be a powerful means for social and cultural transformation. Based on these findings, recommendations are made for effectively designing and using guided walking tours as tools for cultural interpretation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sense of place has become an important notion for planners as it is understood to produce both economic and social benefits in cities (Dempsey & Burton, 2012). To facilitate a sense of place, planners have employed place-making strategies to help foster distinctive place experiences. However, profound social, economic, and cultural transformations have made it increasingly difficult to retain a sense of local place and its particularity (Khirfan, 2014; Landry, 2008; Markwell et al., 2004; Massey, 1991). As a response to these dynamic changes, we have begun to experience a ‘cultural turn’ that has sparked a ‘new economy’ which speaks the language of creativity, human capital, and innovation (Mercer, 2004). However, many places, especially those without the density of resources and population size, have not been able to participate in this economy (Mercer, 2004). For this reason, they have struggled to maintain a sense of identity, and therefore a sense of belonging.

In the early 2000s, cultural planning emerged, and was used as a strategy to address the loss of identity and belonging experienced by some cities (Mercer, 2004). Today, cultural planning is a term that is used widely by urban planners, municipalities, and cultural organizations. However, cultural planning is often misunderstood and appended as an afterthought (Mercer, 2004). If cultural planning is to work and be successful, it must be integral to all planning processes (Mercer, 2004).

One major concept of which cultural planning is concerned is the concept of sense of place. Specifically, cultural planning is concerned with the concept of sense of place as it pertains to place-making and place-keeping. Many cultural plans include sections on place-making, and for cultivating place attachment. For example, Toronto’s Culture Plan (2003) states, “in a globalized world, only cities with a strong and particular sense of place will stand out and

succeed” (p. 10). For this reason, the Cultural Plan (2003) focuses on both Toronto’s cultural and physical heritage which, according to the plan, “create our sense of place” (p. 10). Despite this, there is little mention of how the city’s residents and visitors will engage with and interpret the cultural and physical heritage and therefore develop a sense of place. This is common in many of the cultural plans across Ontario, and more broadly in Canada. Planners often lack a clear understanding of sense of place and therefore fail to integrate it effectively into their communities.

Since walking tours are so aptly positioned to convey and foster distinctive place experiences, their potential as tools for cultural interpretation is great and, many communities have begun to recognize this potential (Aldenhuisen & Miller, 2016; Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015; Barlett, 2002; Bendiner-Viani, 2005; Butler, 2007; Markwell et al., 2004; Rabotić, 2008). One such example is the organization Jane’s Walks, which was established in 2006. The City of Toronto (2016) lists 38 self-guided walking tours on their website, and their arms’ length organization Heritage Toronto offers free guided tours throughout the year. Additionally, there is a long list of other private organizations that offer guided walking tours in the city, many of which are free. Currently however planners, and cultural institutions at large, are not recognizing the power of guided walking tours.

For example, guided walking tours, as a means for cultural interpretation, offer a unique opportunity for planners to interact with local knowledge (Coburn, 2003). At a base level, guided walking tours could be used to identify planning success stories and planning issues.

Understanding how and what stories are told about certain places, can help the planner gain a more holistic conception of the urban conditions in which they are operating (Sandercock, 2003). As Sandercock (2003) argues, “story has a special importance in planning that has neither been

fully understood or sufficiently valued” (p.1). Guided walking tours, as urban narratives have much to tell the planner about how people act, interact, and make choices in places. They have potential to be used as evaluative tools. Further, they could be integrated into the planning process and be used as a means of public information and participation.

Additionally, planners, those working in economic development and in cultural institutions, need to recognize the role that guided walking tours play in shaping a places’ identity. As a tourist, guided walking tours are often a person’s sole source for understanding a city. As a local, while guided walking tours are likely not the sole, or primary source for understanding their city, they can help to show the local their city in a new light. If conducted well, guided walking tours offer a unique opportunity to understand a place in a dynamic, engaging, and participatory manner. Further, guided walking tours, as a part of the recreation and tourism sector, can play a significant role in not only how cultural landscapes are viewed but also in how they are developed (Kianicka, Buchecker, Hunziker, & Müller-Böker, 2006).

1.2 Purpose of the Study

There is currently insufficient research on what constitutes a good guided walking tour (Best, 2012; Meged, 2010; Weiler & Black, 2015; Zillinger et al., 2012). Additionally, there is a lack of understanding about what the experience of a guided walking tour provides its attendees (Best, 2012). While some scholars have made a link between guided walking tours and sense of place, more scholarship needs to be done to fully understand this connection (Weiler & Black, 2015).

The other missing element is a better understanding of sense of place itself. Following the seminal writings of Tuan (1974), Norberg-Schulz (1980) and Steele (1981), there have been a multitude of definitions of sense of place and additional place concepts. This has led to the

development of a chaotic body of sense of place literature which has acted as a barrier to its integration in current affairs (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2006). This is seen explicitly in the discipline of planning which thus far lacks the tools needed to define the elements that constitute a distinctive place experience (Khirfan, 2014). Further, there are no tools for the evaluation of a distinctive place experience (Khirfan, 2014; Kianicka et al., 2006). This makes it incredibly difficult to plan for the future sustainability of the places that make up our cities and regions (Khirfan, 2014).

This research, using the *Tour Guys Downtown Toronto Tour* as a case study will adapt a modified version of Khirfan's (2014) framework for a distinctive place experience to understand how, and to what extent, guided walking tours foster a sense of place (p. 151). The objectives of the research are as follows: 1) To understand how sense of place established in a short amount of time; 2) To determine how walking tours can effectively be used as a tool for cultural interpretation and; 3) To provide recommendations for the design and presentation of guided walking tours so that they can effectively foster a meaningful sense of place.

The overall purpose of this research is to further develop effective place-making strategies that can be employed to conserve and create meaningful senses of place. By developing a better understanding of the conceptual relationship between sense of place and guided walking tours, this research will contribute to the development of tools for cultural interpretation and cultural planning.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Organizations such as Jane's Walks (2014) claim that walking and citizen led walking tours enhance our sense of place and create a sense of belonging. However, it is not entirely or empirically known how walking or guided walking tours achieve this. Further, they have not yet

looked at as tools for use within the planning process. Therefore, with a greater understanding of the value of guided walking tours, this research seeks to aid in their development and creation for use within the cultural sector, and cultural planning. This research updates recent work that focuses on guided walking tours and sense of place and helps to bring the gap between sense of place theory and practice by adding to the small body of literature on guided walking tours and sense of place.

1.4 Thesis Outline

Chapter 1. Introduction This chapter introduces my research topic, which centres on place experience and sense of place in walking tours.

Chapter 2. Literature Review This chapter begins by describing the chaotic nature of the sense of place literature and addresses the substantial gap between theory and practice in sense of place research. This section then proceeds to discuss the seminal sense of place literature before moving into a discussion of today's understanding of a progressive sense of place. The next section explores the role that walking, and walking tours play in the curation of a sense of place.

Chapter 3. Methods In this chapter I outline and justify the research methods used in my case study of the Tour Guys *Downtown Toronto Tour*. I explain why I addressed my research question using primarily a qualitative approach including participant observation, a quantitative survey, and interviews.

Chapter 4. Case Study Context In this chapter I provide a brief description of the organization Tour Guys, their *Downtown Toronto Tour*, and the route it generally takes. A short history of the financial district is also discussed. This will provide the background knowledge needed to understand how exactly downtown Toronto is featured on the *Downtown Toronto Tour*.

Chapter 5. Findings Chapter 5 outlines the findings from the qualitative survey, participant observation, and the interviews. The section is organized based on the method used.

Chapter 6. Discussion In Chapter 6 I discuss the findings from the participant observation, and the interviews and respond to my research objectives. I begin by analyzing the guides' role on the walking tour. I then go on to analyze how the walking tour was experienced by attendees. Following this, I look at how guided walking tours can effectively be used as a tool for cultural interpretation. I conclude this chapter by addressing the limitations of this study and by identifying areas for future research.

Chapter 7. Conclusion The final chapter summarizes the key findings of my research and offers recommendations for those seeking to design, or enhance, guided walking tours.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Sense of place literature has proliferated in recent years and there has been an increasing interest in our ties to, and conceptions of place. However, the body of research lacks clarity and remains relatively chaotic. Following the seminal writings of Tuan (1974), Norberg-Schulz (1980) and Steele (1981), there have been a multitude of definitions of sense of place and additional place concepts. This has contributed to a substantial gap between theory and practice in sense of place research making it difficult to find an overarching and comprehensive definition of sense of place. As Jorgensen and Stedman observe, “the disorganization that has characterized much of the sense of place literature has been a barrier to its effective integration with ongoing concerns” (2006, p. 316). For this reason, sense of place research has been primarily academic with little practical application.

This lack of practical application is seen in the literature on guided walking tours where there are only a few studies that examine the connection between sense of place and guided walking tours (Bendiner-Viani, 2005; Gentry, 2007; Guano, 2015; Hallin & Dobers, 2012). Gaining a better understanding of the role sense of place plays on walking tours has profound implications not only for guided tours, but additionally for our understanding of place experience.

Therefore, to bridge the theory-practice divide, the purpose of this literature review is two-fold. The first, is to outline the evolution of sense of place within the literature to develop a clear definition of the term and second, to understand the role that walking, and walking tours play in the curation of a sense of place. In doing so, this literature review aims to produce an

effective framework for the evaluation of sense of place within walking tours, thereby helping to bridge the gap between sense of place theory and practice.

2.2 Sense of Place

The philosophy of place, *topos*, first emerged in classical Greek philosophy particularly in the writings of Plato and Aristotle (Canter, 1977). Here, place was understood as a part of ontology, as inseparable from being or existence (Dovey, 2010). The ontology of place was again revisited by Heidegger in the early 20th century through his spatial ontology of being-in-the-world (Dovey, 2010). The 1960s marked the beginning of a fascination with spatial science and involved looking at the world and people as objects rather than subjects. Terms such as ‘location’, ‘spatial patterns’, ‘distance’, and ‘space’ emerged (Creswell, 2009). Moving into the 1970s, place was discussed as a humanistic critique concerned with balancing experiential perspective with scientific approaches (Creswell, 2009).

Place and place experience had been widely written about during the romantic period, the idea of place experience was new to humanistic geography in the early 1970s (Creswell, 2009). With the addition of experience into the vocabulary of humanistic geography, the scientific notion of space was transformed into the lived and meaningful notion of place (Creswell, 2009). As Tuan states in 1977, “What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value... the ideas “space” and “place” require each other for definition” (p. 6). According to Creswell (2009), the distinction made between abstract space and an experienced and lived place is the most important contribution of humanistic geography to the discipline. Tuan (1974), was one of the first scholars, following the romantic period, to make clear this distinction and, alongside Norberg-Schulz (1980), and Steele (1981) devoted entire

texts to the relationship between people and their settings. The following section outlines the work of these seminal scholars and examines their contribution to the field.

2.2.1 The Seminal Literature

To distill a definition of sense of place this section will review the seminal literature of Tuan (1974), Norberg-Schulz (1980) and Steele (1981). A review of subsequent authors is interspersed throughout and will provide an understanding of how sense of place is thought of today, in addition to an understanding of how the concept has evolved through time.

2.2.1.1 Tuan (1974) and Topophilia

Tuan was one of the earliest authors to examine the relationship between people and their environment. To examine this relationship, Tuan used the word *topophilia*, which literally translated means the love of place. However, Tuan (1974) describes this term as “the affective bond between people and their environment” (p. 4). Throughout his work, Tuan argues that the bond between people and their environment is embedded in symbolism and expressed through meanings and order. Further, Tuan notes that an awareness of place is dependent on the individual. For example, Tuan (1974) uses the example of the Bushmen in the Kalahari Desert who live in a land that is “not only barren but devoid of landmarks,” however “to the Bushmen the desert is not featureless and empty” (p. 78). This is an idea that was further developed by scholars such as Relph (1976) who reiterates that the characteristics of an individual and their motivations affect how they perceive place.

Another contribution of Tuan to the body of literature and thought, was that a place can serve more than one purpose and fulfil many divergent needs. To illustrate this, Tuan uses the example of local markets where visitors shop, socialize, and are entertained. What was different about this approach to place was that it broke from contemporary studies of environmental

perception which used mainly psychological methods (Nayak & Jeffery, 2011). Instead, Tuan's work focused on experience weaving together ideas from poets, classical Greece, art critics, and anthropologists. He captured the complexity of sense of place and the diverse aspects of place experience.

Topophilia (1974) has been widely referenced and is very influential in human geography and other environmental disciplines (Nayak & Jeffery, 2011). In *Topophilia* (1974), Tuan consciously chose not to present research methods as he believed they often miss the crucial problem. For Tuan (1974) the crucial problem was the "lack of sophisticated concepts with which to frame [the problem]" (p. 3). If these concepts were not defined or understood, then the methods would be irrelevant and ultimately useless. This is a problem that has continued to proliferate today as sense of place terms have multiplied across various disciplines, but these terms often lack clarity and consistency.

2.2.1.2 Norberg-Schulz (1980) and Genius Loci

Genius loci, meaning the spirit of place is the title of the architectural theorist Norberg-Schulz's 1980 work *Genius Loci* and, it is one of the best known substantial investigations of spirit of place. His work, based on work done by Kevin Lynch in the 1960s explores the character of places and their meanings for people (Jivén & Larkham, 2003). Here, genius loci is described as encompassing the sense people have of a place which includes physical and symbolic values in nature and the human environment (Norberg-Schulz, 1980; Jivén & Larkham, 2003).

Specifically, Norberg-Schulz (1980) describes place as a:

totality made up of concrete things having material substance, shape, texture, and colour. Together these things determine an "environmental character" which is the essence of place (p.7).

For example, Norberg-Schulz states the while Chicago is a place with large architectural features, these same features would sever a sense of place in Boston. In this example and in his work, Norberg-Schulz demonstrates the role of geographic location, meanings, order, mystery, and enclosure in the genius loci of a place.

The concept of genius loci has been used in many planning documents throughout the second half of the 20th century. However, many of the interpretations are either too generic or lack the complexity and richness of Norberg-Schulz's approach (Jivén & Larkham, 2003). For example, the vision of City of Toronto Official Plan is to “[create] an attractive and safe city that evokes pride, passion and a sense of belonging.” This can be interpreted as the want to create a “totality made up of concrete things” or a place with a distinct spirit, however the vision lacks clarity and the concepts it cites remain undefined and fuzzy (City of Toronto, 2015 p. 2; Norberg-Schulz, 1980, p. 7).

2.2.1.3 Steele (1981) and Sense of Place

Like Tuan (1974) and Norberg-Schulz (1980), Steele (1981) recognized that the spirit of place depends not just on physical attributes but also on our senses, intentions, and moods. However, as an environmental psychologist, Steele's (1981) *Sense of Place* was more concerned with emotional well-being (DeMiglio & Williams, 2008). Steele (1981) defines sense of place as

the particular experience of person in a particular setting... it is the pattern of reactions that a setting simulates for a person. These reactions are a product of both features of the setting and aspects the person brings to it. (p. 9)

Therefore, according to Steele (1981), sense of place is capable of influencing one's emotional well-being, but additionally one's actions. For example, Steele (1981) using New York's Fifth Avenue as an example, notes that tourists may be overwhelmed by the buildings, traffic, shops

and prices whereas a local may not notice these things and instead be intrigued by how the window displays change seasonally.

To contextualize sense of place, Steele describes features of the built and natural environment. For example, in San Francisco, the natural contrast between the steep hills and the flat bay that surrounds it, creates a unique environment. Further, a place that has a unique made-man or natural setting makes it more legible and therefore provides it with a stronger sense of place. Steele (1981), uses ethnic enclaves such as New York's Little Italy as examples. Additionally, Steele (1981), like Norberg-Schulz (1980) uses the term spirit of place. He uses this term to highlight that certain places such as the Grand Canyon, the Florida Everglades, and the Seine River, evoke the same meaning for many people. The idea of spirit of place or genius loci is a concept that continues to be discussed in the literature today.

2.2.1.4 In Comparison

All three authors in their seminal works recognize the role of the physical man-made and natural environment in evoking affective responses or by stirring emotions and feelings. Tuan (1974) focused on physical symbolism, Norberg-Schulz (1980) was primarily concerned with the built environment, and Steele (1980) was most concerned with geographical settings. Additionally, the authors indirectly introduce many key principles of place that revolve around conative, or the expectations and motivations that we develop over time, cognitive, or the way in which we process information and make sense of our surroundings and affective responses, or our feelings and emotional response. They suggest that these three elements are interactive but also hierarchical. For instance, our needs and motivations (conations) are responsible for how we understand a setting (cognition) and this leads to how we feel emotionally (affect).

Therefore, from these authors' contributions, a definition of sense of place can be established and is as follows: *the relationship between people and their environments embedded in individual conation which establishes how we cognitively make sense of our settings and create affective responses to that setting*. This definition highlights the multidimensional characteristics of place and recognizes that sense of place is produced through the confluence of cognition, and affect. The following section will discuss how this definition of sense of place has been expanded on and how it has progressed into the 21st century.

2.2.2 A Progressive Sense of Place

The works of Tuan (1974), Norberg-Schulz (1980), and Steele (1981) have inspired many researchers and led to the completion of many studies. They helped deconstruct the meaning of sense of place by breaking it down into the dimensions of conative, cognitive, and affective (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2006). However, there is still no common or widely agreed upon definition of sense of place. Further, it is a concept that is often contested (Dovey, 2010). Within planning practice, the concept is often misunderstood, or there is a presumed understanding of the concept. As Dovey (2010) argues, this “underwrites some dangerous practices [within the discipline of planning]” (p. 3).

Perhaps part of the misuse and presumed understanding of sense of place stems from some humanistic geographer's belief that since the 1970s the understanding of place has been too fixed, too bounded, and too rooted (Creswell, 2009). Viewing place in this way creates a dialogue of us versus them and perpetuates an idea of ‘otherness.’ For this reason, some scholars have welcomed mobility into their definitions of place (Creswell, 2009; Dovey, 2010; Massey, 1991). The idea of mobility and place was predicated by Seamon (1980) and Pred (1984) who both believed that the key to understanding place is through its relation to mobilities (Creswell,

2009). For Seamon, individual movement through places created a ballet, an unchoreographed yet ordered practice, that makes the place just as much as its static qualities do (Creswell, 2009). Pred (1984), viewed place as a process produced by social structures. These social structures created 'paths' which described how people moved through space and time over a given period of time (Creswell, 2009). Pred believed that it was these pathways that produced places. Therefore, place was dynamic and ever-changing. The ideas of Seamon and Pred, continue influence scholars today.

In the 20th century, Massey (1993) has argued that places are actively created by mobility through the movement of people, commodities, and ideas. For Massey, this is a 'progressive sense of place,' a 'global sense of place,' and an 'extrovert sense of place.' Thinking about place in this way, removes the dialogue of insider versus outsider and helps to dissolve the notion of 'otherness.' Further, it expands the idea of place, connecting it to the wider world and opens it up to a more global understanding (Creswell, 2009).

However, the mobility of today's global world has sometimes made it difficult to retain a sense of local place and its particularity (Massey, 1991). Many authors have warned that this could have detrimental effects to our communities as sense of place is understood to have both economic and social benefits (Arefi, 1999; Dempsey & Burton, 2012; Relph, 1976). For this reason, these researchers highlight the importance of gaining a better understanding of the relationships between people and places.

Khirfan (2014) believes that gaining a better understanding of the relationships between people and place can be achieved through determining what is at the centre of a distinctive place experience. However, as Khirfan (2014) argues, planning thus far lacks the tools needed to define the elements that constitute a distinctive place experience (Khirfan, 2014). Further, there

are no tools for the evaluation of a distinctive place experience (Ibid.). This makes it incredibly difficult to plan for the future sustainability our places (Ibid.). For this reason, Khirfan (2014) developed a framework for understanding the processes of a distinctive place experience. The following section explores this framework.

2.2.3 A Framework for Assessing Sense of Place

Khirfan's (2014) framework for distinct place experience was developed specifically to aid World Heritage and historic cities however, it has wider applicability. In fact, Khifan (2014) expresses that she hopes the framework will be expanded on, stating that one of the frameworks strengths is its flexibility which allows for additions to be made based on local contexts (p. 151). As Tuan (1974), Norberg-Schulz (1980), and Steele (1981) demonstrate because of our conations, cognitions, and affective responses, we all experience place differently. This framework privileges differing place experience and seeks to understand what they are so that we can learn to build and create places that work for everyone.

The theory that grounds Khirfan's (2014) framework reinterprets that of Canter who proposed that place is located at the centre of the physical attributes of a place, the activities of people in the place, and the conception of the place (Khirfan, 2014, p. 122 citing Canter, 1997, p. 158). In her framework, Khirfan (2014) combines Canter's theory, with Kevin Lynch's definition of the experience of a sense of place which is

the clarity with which it [place] can be perceived and identified, and the ease with which its elements can be linked with other events and places in a coherent mental representation of time and space and that can be connected with nonspatial concepts and values. This is the join between form of the environment and the human processes of perception and cognition. (Khirfan, 2014, p. 122 citing Lynch, 1981, p. 131).

Building on the idea that “non-physical constructs of place and their interactions with the physical ones are important aspects of place making and experience,” Khirfan (2014) posits that

the physical attributes of a place, the activities of people in the place, and the conception of the place yield cultural, social, and spatial processes (p. 123). The distinctive experience of place, following the ideas of Lynch among others, is situated at the core of these processes and refers to “the extent to which a person can recognize or recall a place as being distinct from other places – as having a vivid, or unique, or at least a particular, character of its own” (Khirfan, 2014. p. 123 citing Lynch 1981). While Khirfan (2014) does not refer to conation, cognition, and affect, it is clear from her description of a distinctive place experience that these three dimensions of place contribute to a distinctive place experience.

Khirfan’s framework makes use of many of Lynch’s ideas. His work, especially *The Image of the City*, written in 1960, makes light of the fact that space is composed of more than physical characteristics. In this work, Lynch (1960) provided empirical research on city planning in regards to how people perceive and navigate the urban landscape. As this study is interested in how place is perceived, Lynch’s ideas, and Khirfan’s as they draw on Lynch offer an excellent opportunity to evaluate sense of place on guided walking tours. To better understand this framework, this section will now turn its attention to a description of the processes and their components.

Social processes connect the activities that occur on the landscape to their meanings and conceptions. They include social interaction and place attachment. Social interaction represents the formal or informal social opportunities that arise from the landscape and its users. This can mean interaction between tourists and inhabitants or within their own respective groups. Place attachment is understood as the way people build connections to physical places through personal and cultural experiences. According to Mason, place attachment can be defined as, “the social cohesion, community identity, or other feelings of affiliation that social groups...derive

from the specific heritage and environmental characteristics of their home territory” (Khirfan, 2014, p. 125, citing Mason, 2002). Like Mason, Low, Bendiner-Viani and Hung (2004) understand place attachment similarly. However, to evaluate place attachment, they developed nine categories with which a person could develop an attachment to place. These categories are:

living or working in a place; ancestral relationship to a place (genealogical); pilgrimage to a place; spiritual / religious connection to a place; symbolic relationship to a place; artistic representation of a place; linkage through loss; political relationship to a place; recreational relationships; and propinquity to a place (Low, S. M., Bendiner-Viani, G. & Hung, Y, 2005. p. 85)

Spatial processes result from the activities of people and the physical attributes of the landscape and includes the following processes: compatibility, and congruence. Compatibility refers to extent to which the users and the built environment coexist harmoniously. Congruence refers to the balance of a place as both a tourist destination and as a living place. For example, is there a balance between the city as a living space and as a tourist destination. As Khirfan (2014) notes, congruence is challenged when monumental buildings are featured over ordinary buildings.

When the physical attributes of a historic urban landscape interact with the meanings and conceptions of that landscape, what results are the following cultural processes: symbolic significance and legibility. Symbolic significance refers to the holistic understanding of the complex processes and their relation to the physical landscape. When this understanding is not present, a place becomes indistinctive. Legibility, following the ideas of Kevin Lynch, refers to “the tourists and inhabitants ability to mentally represent, communicate and interpret the physical attributes of the place” (Khrifan, 2014. p. 124). These attributes include monuments, nodes, paths, districts, and edges.

The power of Khirfan's (2014) framework is in its analytical capacity which "facilitates the identification and the assessment of the experience elements of place" (p. 151). Further, the flexibility of the framework allows for additions to be made to each process based on local contexts. Most importantly however, the framework is a tool that can be used to assess sense of place, place experience, and authenticity to ensure the future sustainability of any given destination or place. As such, this is the framework that will be used to assess sense of place for the purposes of this thesis. However, before this is discussed further in Chapter 3, an understanding of how sense of place is related to walking, and walking tours must be gained.

2.2.4 Sense of Place and Walking

For many scholars, walking offers an alternative way to understand and engage with urban space (Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015). It provides an opportunity to "listen" to "a house, a street, a city," or the rhythms that constitute a place (Lefebvre, 1996, p. 229). According to de Certeau (1984), pedestrian movements give "shape to spaces" and "weave places together" (p.97). For de Certeau (1984), walking was a practice of everyday life. His work (1984), often used as a reference point in the academic literature on walking, has influenced the contemporary discussions of walking (Pink, Hubbard, O'Neill, & Radley, 2010).

As many scholars have noted, walking highlights the tactile nature of place (Gentry, 2007). For example Tuan (1974, 1977) asserts, since walking involves a multitude of sensory interactions with a location it is capable of developing a more complete sense of place (Gentry, 2007). Sensory interaction, specifically vision, is the faculty that Cullen (1971) focused on as one of the most important elements of achieving a vibrant 'townscape,' and therefore a more vibrant sense of place. Cullen (1971), like de Certeau, believed that cities became exciting and dramatic through personal interaction and the formation of relationships. To articulate this idea,

Cullen (1971) used the term, 'serial vision.' Serial vision refers to how even though a pedestrian may walk through a town at a uniform speed, the scenery of the town is discovered through a series of jerks or revelations (Cullen, 1971, p. 9). For Cullen, the juxtapositions that this kind of walk generates, is what makes the town come alive. Further, Cullen (1971) states that there are two ways in which a town is viewed; through an existing view, or what is seen and heard, and an emerging view, which involves human imagination and is what creates emotional narratives connected to place. Walking then, in concert with both the existing and emerging view, offers a powerful means of connection to place.

Moving into the 20th century, Cullen's (1971) ideas continue to be very influential. However, the discourse around the benefits of walking has changed as today scholars often measure the benefits of walking against other modes of travel. For example, Adam's, in 2001, conducted a study which found that walking contributes to a greater sense of place than bus or car travel (Gentry, 2007). This is because walking is an engaging exercise that, as Cardiff, like Cullen (1971) discussed, demonstrated in her 1999 project *Missing Voices*, illuminates the ever-changing nature of urban space. Further, as Pinder (2001) argued, walking is "a mode of apprehending the city that is tactile, aural and olfactory as well as visual" (p. 5). For this reason, Gentry (2007) believes that walking tours offer multiple ways of knowing and experiencing place.

2.2.4.1 Walking and the Layered Urban Fabric

Since walking is so tactile in its nature, scholars have argued that this makes it an excellent medium to understand and deconstruct our layered environments (Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015; Bendiner-viani, 2009; Bendiner-Viani, 2005; Gentry, 2007; Guano, 2015; O'Neill & Hubbard, 2010). As Bendiner-Viani states,

The city is made of layered environments, entwined with many people's experiences and connections. The urban context is gridded, marked, and mapped; there is an impulse to see it as transparent, as knowable, as though these marks and maps are where meaning is made and made visible. Yet there is important meaning outside these ordering structures; there are spatial tactics and emotional poetics that interplay with these structured everyday spaces. (Bendiner-Viani, 2009, p.)

For Dovey (2010), the complexity of our urban environments that Bendiner-Viani (2009) describes creates place assemblages. This means that a street, is more than just its own entity or a collection of building, trees, signs, cars etc. It is instead,

the relations of building-sidewalk-roadway; the flows of traffic, people and goods; the interconnection of public to private space, and of this street to the city, that make it a street and distinguish it from other place assemblages such as parks, plazas, freeways, shopping plazas, and marketplaces. (p. 13)

In short, place assemblages are dynamic and involve places that are “at once experienced, structured, and discursively constructed” (Dovey, 2010, p. 13).

Walking offers a unique opportunity to not only become involved in each place, but also to begin to understand and pull apart its layers or each aspect of its assemblage. However, this can prove difficult as we often “experience places primarily in states of distraction; we live in the world first and look at it second” (Dovey, 2010, p. 31). Quite often the way in which we walk in a space will determine how we look at a place, understand it, and will influence how we think about it (Edensor, 2010). According to Edensor (2010), we can choose to minimize our distractions while walking, but more importantly, no matter how we walk in a space, we are always participating in a continuous flow of attachment and detachment to place. This idea is exemplified by Labelle (2008), who argues that

walking may be a site for a radical placement and displacement of self, fixing and unfixing self to urban structures, locational politics and cultural form, locking down as well as opening up to the full view of potential horizons? (2008, p. 198).

These ideas stem from Lefebvre's (2004) premise that "everywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time, and an expenditure of energy, there is a rhythm" (p. 15). He further contends that, "every rhythm implies the relation of a time with space, a localized time, or if one wishes a temporalized place (Lefebvre, 1996, as cited in, Edensor 2010, p. 3).

Rhythm, and walking as an aspect of rhythm, play a large role in our everyday lives. Bendiner-viani argues (2009), they provide opportunities to understand the Heideggerian concept "lifeworld" which phenomenologist David Seamon (2000) describes as the "tacit context, tenor and pace of daily life to which normally people give no reflective attention" (p. 161). A lifeworld therefore, is how one engages with the everyday – it is full of everyday rhythm that involves habits, schedules, and routines. These routines help us to create a sense of belonging, to our friends, family, and even to our country (Edensor, 2010). Even though people often give no reflective attention to the lifeworld, it is the ordinary everyday moments and rhythms that Bendiner-viani argues (2009) "support a deep connection to place" (p. 81).

Walking as an act of everyday life and rhythm provides an opportunity to engage with and explore the lifeworlds of others and is thus often involved in fostering a substantial relationship to place (Bendiner-viani, 2009; Pink et al., 2010). Deleuze (1998) posits that one aspect of this relationship occurs as "...a body affects other bodies, or is affected by other bodies" (p. 123). This highlights the capacity that bodies have to connect to place through interaction with other bodies. Through this interaction, emotional experiences are founded. One important aspect of the interaction of bodies in a given space₂ is geography. As, for Gentry (2010), it is our geographically driven place experiences which foster deeper connection to places.

Walking as it has been presented in the literature is deeply connected to place, and the creation of a sense of place. It provides both consciously and unconsciously₂ a way to engage

with and understand our layered environments. Many have recognized the power that walking holds in experiencing a given place and have sought to capitalize on this power by using it to tell stories, and to help others see what it is that they see. For example, if a guest from out of town visits, often the first adventure their host will take them on is a walking tour. More formally as well, guided walking tours have gained in popularity and have begun to reach wider audiences. To better understand the phenomenon of guided walking tours, this literature review will now turn its attention this specific kind of walking to investigate how the literature has understood the guided walking tour, its benefits, its relation to place, and sense of place.

2.3 Walking Tours

Most of the literature examining the guided walking tour emerged in the fields of tourism studies and sociology between 1970 and 1987 (Best, 2012). Many of the papers written were featured in *The Annals of Tourism Research* and used observation to deconstruct the role of the guide in terms of the functions they performed (Best, 2012). The most prominent of these papers include: Cohen (1985); Fine and Speer (1985); Katz (1985); and Schmidt (1979) (Best, 2012). Of these authors, Cohen's (1985) work is the most influential (Best, 2012).

Today, normative texts focused on improving guided walking tours are aimed at practitioners (Best, 2012). They focus mainly on practicalities such as how to deal with latecomers, and how to address certain questions (Best, 2012). What they do not provide, is any understanding of how a sense of place is created or how to deal with the routine challenge of presenting a sense of place while maneuvering through busy and complex spaces (Best, 2012). The complexity of tour guiding is something that many authors have drawn attention to, as they have argued that more research needs to be done in order to fully understand this complexity (Best, 2012; Meged, 2010; Weiler & Black, 2015; Zillinger et al., 2012).

According to Larsen & Meged (2013), the lack of understanding of what guides' and guided tours provide has contributed to a stigmatized view of the guided tour, specifically in regards to tourism. As they state, the walking tour has been ridiculed and stereotyped by academics as "rehearsed, highly choreographed and superficial" (Larsen & Meged, 2013, p. 88).

Among the most notable critiques of guided walking tours are: they only cover superficial elements by directing the audiences' gaze, they suggest photo opportunities, they choreograph movements along prescribed paths and lastly, they define normalizing behavior (Larsen & Meged, 2013). Studies suggest that this form of rigid sightseeing creates enclavic spaces which prevents audiences from seeing a wider picture (Cheong, & Miller, 2000; Best, 2012; Gentry, 2007; Hallin & Dobers, 2012; Larsen & Meged, 2013). Edensor (2002) describes this type of enclavic tour as,

A highly directed operation, with guides and tour managers acting as choreographers and directors, the performance is repetitive, specifiable in movement, and highly constrained by time. Besides acting out there their own part in the drama by photographing, gazing and moving en masse according to well-worn precedent, the group also absorb the soliloquies of the central actor, the guides, who enact the same script at each performance. (p. 224)

When tour organizations and tour guides', view their tours in this way, they make the assumption that the tour is a form of one-way communication (Larsen & Meged, 2013). However, as Larsen and Meged (2013) argue, a walking tour audience is not always complicit, attentive, or cooperative. They found, following Meged's (2010) work, that tourists alternate between five different tactics throughout the course of a tour; the participatory, the attentive, the partial, the alternative and the absent (Meged, 2010). In this way, tourists co-produce their own version of the guided tour.

As guided walking tours take place in public spaces, especially those outdoors, it is impossible to choreograph every aspect of the tour (Meged, 2010). There should be room in

guided walking tours for creativity, improvisation, and occasional detours. Guides should be given the freedom to respond to their audience, their interests and their questions (Meged, 2010). When this occurs the tour can become, “more like a discussion than a lecture, one that allows improvisation and that facilitates the constructivist process” (Bruner, 2005. p. 116). The guides’ practice should be a relational one, “involving subtle bodily and verbal negotiations, fluid power-relations and interactions between guides’ and [attendees], and [attendees] and [attendees]” (Larsen & Meged, 2013, p. 100). When the guides’ practice is thought of as such, the tour can, as Overend (2009) argues,

[become] a particularly valuable way to engage with a site as an inherently process-based and relational construct, as the tour itself is a process, with the group undertaking a journey, moving through space, encountering and becoming part of its relationships. (p. 53)

Gentry (2009), shares these same ideas and argues that tours are only capable of properly engaging with sites if the tours occur in heterogeneous spaces or, sites open to multiple uses and not specified site-seeing spaces, rather than enclavic spaces. This is because in heterogeneous spaces there exists a weaving of narratives and a non-linear landscape of “business, homes, and street restaurants, where public and private spaces co-exist” (Gentry, 2010, p. 226). When walking tour attendees are shown heterogeneous spaces instead of rigid and controlled spaces, Edensor (2000) believes that attendees are “more likely to enjoy a more vivid and varied sensual experience” (p. 340).

Within heterogeneous spaces, walking provides tour attendees with a sense of agency, allowing them to participate in the everyday rhythms and lifeworlds of others (Gentry, 2010). In a study conducted by Gentry (2010), he found that attendees of ghost walks in Savannah, Georgia indicated that walking produced a more intimate and more authentic place experience. Further, 40 per cent of surveyed tour attendees stated that walking gave them greater control over the

experience, specifically the pace and their role in the storytelling (Gentry, 2010). As Gentry (2010) states, “through dialogue with the tour guide, tourists actively participate as authors and editors in the story presented on the ghost tour rather than merely passive consumers” (p. 232). While this example is specific to ghost tours, the same can be said for a variety of other walking tours that involve heterogeneous space such as traffic, weather, and local particularities.

Heterogeneous space flourishes in walking tours when they are not standardized (Smith, 2013). According to Smith, a UK guide and scholar (2013), the problem with standardized tours is that:

They tend to be segmented and episodic, made up of static episodes punctuated by short walks, fragmented in narrative structure (one thing after another rather than interwoven) and often without the kind of fully explanatory framing that might assist enquiring spectators in making independent critical judgements. (Smith, 2013, p. 104)

To remedy the problematic qualities of the ‘standard tour’, Smith (2010), proposes that tours be approached more reflexively and suggests the model of ‘the Mis-guided Tour’ as an alternative. This tour is built on four principles_ 1) The tour guides must immerse themselves into the narrative of the tour by, for example, enacting historical persons; 2) offhand comments are used to bolster the themes of the tour to construct a complex web of meanings; 3) a mix of academic and non-academic sources of information should be used and; 4) the audience should be involved in the tour and assist the guide in the performance (Smith, 2010).

Smith (2010) believes that if a tour is built on these principles, the attendees will be able to fully understand and appreciate the textures of a given place. As Meged (2010) states, this kind of tour becomes a “mobile street theatre” where “there is no highlighting of neutral positions and all performances are charged with value” (p. 217). Further, Meged (2010) believes that

constructing a tour in this way forces the guide to reflect on their role in the presentation of culture which takes place on guided walking tours.

In some cases, guided walking tours have been used to perpetuate, misrepresent, or ignore specific aspects of a place (Hallin & Dobers, 2012; Modlin, Alderman, & Gentry, 2011; Weiler & Yu, 2015). In other cases, like the tour created by Jay Brown in Bixton, London, tours have been used to provide opportunities to communities, such as celebrating a marginalized culture and commemorating local heritage (Harrison, 2010).

One way in which Black and Weiler (2015) argue that tour guides can reflect on how they present culture, and avoid misrepresenting a place, is by viewing guided walking tours through four forms of mediation. These forms of mediation include, physical access, encounters, understanding, and empathy. According to Black and Weiler (2015) guided walking tours and tour guides play an important role in brokering access to places and places. By doing so, they stage attendees' experiences. This is done not only by physically maneuvering attendees but also by controlling what and how spaces are presented. MacCannell (1976) refers to this as staged authenticity where guides can: focus on the 'front stage,' present real and authentic backstages if this is desired by the attendees, or, they can create pseudo backstages that provide the illusion of authenticity. Weiler and Yu (2015) found that guides can also mediate physical access by providing opportunities for attendees to use their senses to understand and connect with place.

Mediations of encounters on guided walking tours stress the mediatory role the guide plays in brokering interactions between the guide and the attendees, the attendees and the attendees and, the attendees and the community (Black & Weiler, 2015; Jonasson, 2007; Jonasson & Scherle, 2012; Larsen & Meged, 2013; Rabić, 2008). This can be done both passively or

actively. Additionally, the guide often acts as a role model for environmental, social, and cultural behavior (Black & Weiler, 2015).

The most researched form of mediation is understanding (Black & Weiler, 2015). According to Black and Weiler (2015), tour guides mediate understanding by, “using information and enrichment as a tool for conveying the significance of a place or site” (p, 36). This includes the use of interpretive communication strategies such as analogies, personal references, anecdotes, and non-verbal communication (Black & Weiler, 2015). This kind of mediation can be both positive or negative and, guides play a large role in either inhibiting or fostering understanding (Black & Weiler, 2015). Additionally, McGrath (2007) cautions against mistaking the transfer of knowledge for cultural mediation or understanding. Communication is central to this form of mediation, and for this reason has been widely researched. Most researchers studying the communication on guided walking tours, use Spitzberg’s model of communication competence (1984). For example, Oshell (2009), using Spitzberg’s model found that communication competence consists of knowledge, skill, and motivation.

The least conceptually developed domain of mediation is empathy or emotion (Black & Weiler, 2015). McGrath (2007) argues that it is not enough for the guide to present only physical or intellectual access, he must also help attendees develop emotional connections. Modlin, Alderman, and Gentry observed in their 2011 study, that this can be achieved through interpretive techniques, such as storytelling, to cognitive and affective connections to place.

From this discussion of the four domains of mediation, it is clear that guides on guided walking tours act as cultural intermediaries and in many ways inform an attendees understanding of a place both positively and negatively (Black & Weiler, 2015; Guano, 2015). This is the case Genoa, where Guano (2015) states that self-employed tour guides act as cultural

intermediaries and help to transform a formerly industrial city into a “city of culture.” This idea is shared with, Brochu and Merriman (2007) who argue that “interpreters or guides help audiences make connections with history, culture, science, and the special places on the planet” (as cited in Rabotić, 2008, p. 215).

While many scholars agree that this is who guides should be, there continues to be a lack of understanding of how guides act as ‘cultural intermediaries,’ or how they can better help audiences make connections. This lack of understanding stems from the lack of understanding of how attendees experience guided walking tours. Scholars have noted that gaining this understanding is crucial if walking tours are to be used as tools for cultural interpretation and aid in fostering sense of place in communities (Aldenhuisen & Miller, 2016; Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015; Barlett, 2002; Bendiner-Viani, 2005; Butler, 2007; Markwell et al., 2004; Rabotić, 2008).

Gaining this understanding will help planners use, and value, guided walking tours as a tool for planning practice. Guided walking tours, as they are involved with telling stories, are involved with narrating and making sense of our urban lives (Sandercock, 2003). They therefore contain valuable information that often cannot be gained in any other form. For this reason, Sandercock (2003) argues that if planners better understand stories they can become more effective as planning practitioners. This is because Sandercock sees stories, and storytelling involved in “conflict resolution, in community development, in participatory action research, in resource management, in policy and data analysis, in transportation planning, and so on” (p. 12). For Sandercock (2003),

Story is an all-pervasive, yet largely unrecognized force in planning practice. We do not talk about it, and we do not teach it. Let us get this out of the closet. Let us liberate and celebrate and think about the power of story. Let us appreciate its importance to the 21st century multicultural planning project, as a way of bringing people together to learn about each other through the telling of stories (p. 12).

Guided walking tours offer an excellent opportunity for planners to engage with stories, both in listening to the stories told by others, but also in seeking to tell their own stories. If planners look at guided tours in this way, they will see their potential for use within planning practice. As for example, a means of public consultation or participation in a planning process. Currently however, there is little to no research that seeks to investigate the use of guided walking tours for use within planning practice.

2.4 Chapter Summary

A large gap that exists in the literature on guided walking tours is an understanding of its relationship to sense of place for both locals and tourists. This is not surprising however, because our understanding of sense of place itself lacks clarity. Further, as discussed in section 2.2.3, planning is in need of tools to define the elements that constitute a distinctive place experience. Therefore, without the necessary tools to evaluate sense of place, or a clear understanding of what constitutes it, sense of place has become an elusive concept and is not formally part of the guided walking tours or walking tour literature.

As the importance and benefits of sense of place has been discussed in the previous sections, it is clear that its inclusion could greatly improve the flow and script of guided walking tours. If guides and tour organizations could present a more distinctive, and therefore authentic, place experience to its audience members, then those audience members would be able to attain a greater sense of place in a short amount of time. This is important as guided tours are often a person's sole source for understanding a city. As Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift (2002) say:

Cities take shape through a plethora of 'fixed meanings'. The challenge of reading the city thus also lies in the study of the devices through which cities are named. The most obvious ones are tourist maps and city guides which select particular routes and historical reconstructions to frame cities as attractive places. (p. 24)

The guided tour is a powerful tool that is by no means neutral. What is said and presented on a guided tour, “plays a role in representing and constructing the place, since it influences how others construct and fill the place with content, thus representing it, and giving it meaning” (Hallin & Dobers, 2012. p. 9). The guided tour as a tool to understand the city could be strengthened further through an understanding of its relationship to sense of place.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explain and justify my research design, which consisted of a case study of the Tour Guys, *Downtown Toronto Tour* with a qualitative approach. The purpose of this research is exploratory and seeks to understand how, and to what extent walking tours foster a sense of place. This chapter discusses the ethics and validity of my research and explores the three approaches to data collection I used: participant observation, a quantitative survey, and interviews.

3.2 Research Question and Objectives

My research was guided by the following question: how, and to what extent do walking tours foster a sense of place? Using the Tour Guys, *Downtown Toronto Tour* as a case study the following objectives of the research are as follows: 1) To understand how sense of place established in a short amount of time; 2) To determine how walking tours can effectively be used as a tool for cultural interpretation and; 3) To provide recommendations for the design and presentation of guided walking tours so that they can effectively foster a meaningful sense of place.

3.3 Research Philosophy

This research was guided by a constructivist worldview which holds that individuals develop subjective meaning of their experiences (Creswell, 2013). Following the ideas of Crotty (1998), there are three main reasons why constructivism was chosen as the philosophy for this research. These reasons are: (1) meanings are constructed by human beings when they interact with their surroundings; (2) humans engage with, and make sense of the world based on their historical and social backgrounds and; (3) meaning is generated socially through interaction with

others. As the way in which people develop a sense of place is through interaction with their surroundings, is based on their backgrounds, and is generated through social interaction, constructivism offers an excellent opportunity to fully understand how walking tours foster a sense of place.

3.4 Research Approach

3.4.1 Methodological Approach

A qualitative approach will be used in the research because it is the most effective way to answer the research question and to realize the objectives. This approach is useful in answering questions concerned with ‘what’, ‘why’, and ‘how’ as opposed to questions of ‘how many.’ (Berg & Lune, 2012). As the function of this research is exploratory, the ability to answer these kinds of questions effectively is important. Further, as Creswell (2013) suggests, the exploratory nature of qualitative research makes it best suited to explore a topic for which the variable and theory base are unknown. To expand on this, Creswell (2013) provides three concrete reasons for the pursuit of exploratory qualitative research, all of which apply to this thesis. These reasons are as follows: the concept is immature due to a lack of theory and existing research; a need exists to explore and describe the phenomenon and to develop theory; and the nature of the phenomenon may not be suited to quantitative measures (Creswell, 2003). Lastly, although this study is predominantly qualitative, consideration was given to demographic quantitative data.

3.4.2 Case Study Approach

In order to study how walking tours have the potential to curate a sense of place I selected a walking tour company and a specific tour as my case study. A case study approach was chosen as the method of inquiry for this study as it allowed for a concise but rigorous investigation of the research question (Stake, 1995; Balogh & Cook, 2006). The approach to case

study used was guided by Stake (1995) who stresses the importance of “[emphasizing] understanding the case itself,” so that “the real business of case study is on particularization, not generalization” (p. 8). Many authors, hold this same view. Yin (2012) defines case studies as originating from “the desire to derive a(n) (up)close or otherwise in-depth understanding of a single or small number of “cases”...” (p. 141-142). He believes that case studies provide a holistic view of the meaningful and multiple characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2009). Gerring (2004) defines case studies as “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units” (p. 342). Researchers such as, Gentry (2007) and Bray and Lugosi (2008), for example, have used case studies to gain deeper understandings of walking tours.

According to Flyvbjerg (2006), there are two common misconceptions often made about case studies. The first is that they are not generalizable and are therefore not useful. The second is that they are only beneficial as preliminary studies. Flyvbjerg (2006), counters these misconceptions by asserting that even if research is not generalizable, it is still capable of contributing to the literature. Hay (2010) also asserts that case studies are in fact generalizable.

To select a walking tour company, and a tour as my case study, I sent out emails to several tour companies in the Region of Waterloo and Toronto. In the email, I introduced myself and discussed the following points in an information letter: 1) the purpose of the study, 2) the benefits it would provide, and 3) the assistance I would need.

There were 3 companies that said they would be interested in participating in my study. I used the following criteria to narrow down which companies walking tour I would attend:

1. The tour offered was accessible and inclusive. This meant that the tour was free, open to the public, and the tour subject was not too narrow so as to be exclusionary.

2. The tour company had been operating for more than a year.
3. An understanding of attendance rates was gained through speaking with the tour organizer.
4. There was potential to attend more than one tour for the purpose of data collection.

Based on this criterion, the organization Tour Guys, located in Toronto, was chosen. Their tour *The Downtown Toronto Tour* was selected as the single unit of study. On the Tour Guy's website, *The Downtown Toronto Tour* is advertised as: "Power, Politics and the PATH: a free downtown Toronto walking tour from Union Station, through the Financial District, to City Hall" (The Tour Guys, n.d.). The tour is roughly 90 minutes in length and covers about 2 kilometers of distance. This is of average length and time for a walking tour in Toronto. The tour runs every day from 10:30am-12pm during the months of April until the end of October. From October to May the tour runs only on weekends.

The Tour Guys, *The Downtown Toronto Tour*, was attended 5 times on the following dates in 2016: October 25, October 26, October 28, October 29, and November 19. During each of the tours, participant observation was conducted. In total, across all five dates that the tours were attended, there were a total of 90 attendees.

3.5 The Research Framework

To evaluate the potential of walking tours to foster a sense of place, a framework for the evaluation of sense of place was developed. The framework was developed based on the premise that place, and distinctive place experience is produced through the confluence of conation, cognition, and affect. To provide a basis for this framework, Khirfan's (2014) framework for the process of a distinctive place experience was adopted and used to evaluate distinctive place experience on guided walking tours. Distinctive place experience refers to, "the extent to which a

person can recognize or recall a place as being distinct from other places – as having a vivid, or unique, or at least a particular, character of its own” (Khirfan, 2014. p. 123 citing Lynch 1981). It is understood to occur at the intersection of the activities, conceptions and physical attributes of a landscape which produce spatial, cultural, and social processes (Khirfan, 2014). Within the context of this research, these processes have been modified to represent the experience of place on walking tours. Figure 1 displays the framework, adapted from Khirfan (2014), that was used to evaluate whether guided walking tours foster a distinctive place experience and more broadly a sense of place.

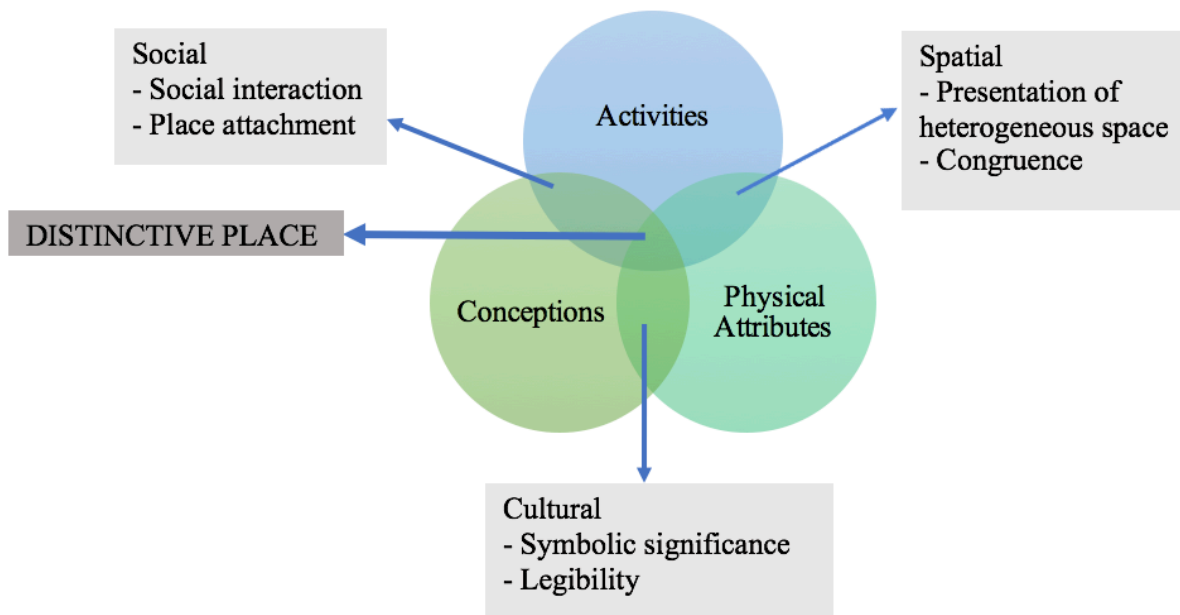


Figure 1 - Framework for a distinctive place experience adapted from Khirfan, 2014, p. 124.

Social processes connect the activities that occur on the landscape to their meanings and conceptions. They include social interaction and place attachment. Social interaction represents the formal or unformal social opportunities that arise from the landscape and its users. This can mean interaction between tourists and inhabitants or within their own respective groups. Within the context of this thesis, interactions are grouped based on interactions between attendees and attendees, attendees and the guides, and attendees and locals. Place attachment is understood as

the way people build connections to physical places through personal and cultural experiences. This thesis uses the work of Low, Bendiner-Viani, and Hung (2007), and understands place attachment as consisting of the following categories: living or working in a place; ancestral relationship to a place (genealogical); pilgrimage to a place; spiritual/religious connection to a place; symbolic relationship to a place; artistic representation of a place; linkage through loss; political relationship to a place; recreational relationships; and propinquity to a place.

Spatial processes of a landscape result from the activities of people and the physical attributes of the landscape. For the purposes of this thesis, these processes include the presentation of heterogeneous space and congruence. The presentation of heterogeneous space refers to whether the guided walking tour includes sites that are open to multiple uses and not just specified tourist sites (Gentry, 2010). Further, it refers to spaces where both tourist and non-tourist rituals coexist. This includes a landscape of public and private spaces comprised of businesses, homes, and restaurants. Congruence refers to where or not how the landscape is perceived, reflects the social processes. For example, is there a balance between the city as a living space and as a tourist destination. As Khirfan (2014) notes, congruence is challenged when monumental buildings are featured over ordinary buildings.

When the physical attributes of a landscape interact with the meanings and conceptions of that landscape, what results are cultural processes that are made up of symbolic significance and legibility. Symbolic significance refers to the holistic understanding of the complex processes and their relation to the physical landscape. This includes an understanding of the relationship between time and the landscape. When this understanding is not present, a place becomes indistinctive. Legibility refers to whether tourists or inhabitants can mentally represent

the physical attributes of the landscape and communicate them. These attributes include monuments, nodes, paths, districts, and edges.

3.6 Data Collection

I used three primary methods of data collection in my research: participant observation, a quantitative survey, and interviews.

3.6.1 Participant Observation

According to Kearns (2010, p. 245) participant observation allows the researcher to move beyond reliance on formalized interactions, for instance interviews, in order to better develop a geography of everyday life. For this reason, participant observation offered an excellent opportunity to gain an understanding of the nature and experience provided by the walking tour and to engage in a dialogue with the guides and attendees in an authentic way. Further, participant observation is often used by researchers to examine walking tours as it allows them to observe non-verbal communications and become immersed in a tour in a way that would not be otherwise possible (Angeles, 2002; Bray & Lugosi, 2008; Gentry, 2007; Guano, 2015; O'Neill & Hubbard, 2010).

Between the months of October and November 2016 five *Tour Guys Downtown Toronto Tours* were attended overtly and in the role of participant as observer for a total of seven and a half hours of observation. In total, there were 90 people that attended the tours that were observed. The tours were conducted by four different guides who, at the beginning of the guided walking tour introduced the researcher and informed the attendees about the overall purpose of the study. This role was chosen as it allowed the researcher to establish a rapport with the guided walking tour attendees which aided in conducting informal interviews during the course of the tour. While it has been argued that conducting research in this role may have a disturbing effect

on the phenomenon observed, it also has the effect of leading the observers to a more analytic reflection of the groups' function. (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

Observations were documented in the form of field notes which were descriptive in nature. Following Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011), the field notes sought to answer the following five questions: (1) What are people doing? What are they trying to accomplish (2) How exactly do they do this (3) How to people characterize what is going on (4) What assumptions do they make? And, (5) Analytic Questions: What do I see going on here? What did I learn from these notes? Why did I include them? Notes were made during and directly after the observation. These notes were conducted with an ethnomethodological approach and sought to understand the phenomenon of place experience on the guided walking tours (Silverman, 2011).

Additionally, informal interviews were conducted during each tour. Patton (2002) describes unstructured interviews as a natural extension of participant observation. Further, as Punch (1998) states, unstructured interviews provide an understanding of complex behavior without the imposition of any priori assumptions which might a study. Unstructured interviews were recorded during the observation in the form of field notes. These notes were expanded on after the tours.

3.6.2 Quantitative Survey

According to Palys and Atchison (2014), surveys are useful method for answering a wide range of questions, such as who, what, how, and why. Additionally, surveys are most apt at gathering anonymous data. For these reason, within this study, a quantitative survey was conducted to collect demographic data from the walking tour attendees. After each tour was finished I made an announcement asking attendees to fill out a survey for my study. It was made clear that completing the survey was voluntary. Of the 90 people that attended the five walking

tours I observed, 61 people agreed to partake in the survey and of those, 60 completed and returned it. Therefore, the overall response rate was 98%.

3.6.3 Interviews

Interviews, as Dunn (2010, p. 102) argues, offer a way to fill the gap in knowledge that other methods, for instance observation, are unable to “bridge efficaciously.” Further, they investigate in detail complex behaviours and motivations while collecting a diversity of meaning, opinion, and experiences (Dunn 2010). It of course must be acknowledged that the researcher’s presence may bias some of the responses and, it should be remembered that interviews are “active meaning-making ventures” (Holstein & Gubrium, p. 157).

3.6.3.1 Participant Recruitment

Participants were recruited during, and after the walking tours ended. At the beginning of the tour, I introduced myself, stated why I was attending the tour, the purpose of my study, and that I was looking for interview participants. I invited those willing to participate in an interview to let me know during or after the tour.

3.6.3.2 Participant Sample

In total, I interviewed nine people. Seven of these interviews were conducted with attendees of the walking tour. One interview was conducted with a tour guide and another was conducted with one of the Tour Guys Toronto organizers.

3.6.3.3 Interview Format

Interviews were conducted in person, by phone, and by email. The participants chose which interview format they would prefer. The in person and telephone Interview lengths ranged from 15 minutes to 35 minutes. All interviews were conducted individually.

During the interviews, a semi-structured format was used, which is theoretically situated between the structured and unstructured interview (Berg & Lune, 2012). Semi-structured

interviews typically consist of a set of predetermined open-ended questions. However, unlike a structured interview, probing questions, planned or stemming from the participant's response, may be asked (Bourgeault, Dingwall, & De Vries, 2010). Therefore, this format allows for interviews to maintain flexibility while still permitting a degree of standardization (Bourgeault et. al., 2010).

When ordering interview questions Berg and Lune (2012) recommend starting with easy non-threatening questions, for example, questions about where the participant lives. These types of questions can then lead into those that relate directly to the study. To validate interviewee's responses, Berg and Lune recommend that the researcher repeat questions but with different wording.

Berg and Lune's (2012) recommendations were incorporated into my semi-structured interview questions for interviews with the attendees and with the tour guide and tour organizer. I first asked attendees' basic demographic questions; for example, where they were from or how many times they had previously been to Toronto. For the interviews with the tour guide and tour organizer I began the interview with broad questions about the walking tour. The questions progressed to into more thought provoking questions.

Following the broad questions about the walking tour, the interview with the tour guide and the tour organizer moved on to ask questions that sought to understand how the walking tour was designed, what its purpose was, and what it provided the attendees. The interview for the attendees was divided into questions that referenced Khirfan's (2014) framework. It sought to understand how the spatial, social, spatial, and cultural processes, resulting from the activities, conceptions, and physical attributes of a landscape, contributed the attendees sense of place after attending the tour.

3.7 Data analysis

After completing all the interviews, I began the data analysis. Data analysis is a process that includes organizing and preparing the data, reading through the data collected, coding, and lastly interpreting the data (Creswell, 2013). To organize and prepare my data, I input the survey data into Excel, transcribed my interviews, and typed up my field notes. Next, I read through all the data before starting to code the interviews and field notes. As per Creswell's (2013) suggestion, codes were developed based on the following three categories: codes that were expected based on literature and common sense, codes that were not anticipated, and unusual codes. During the initial phase of data analysis, open coding was used. In this phase, I began to attach code labels concepts, ideas, and themes and group them together in categories noting similarities and differences (Benaquisto, 2008). These categories were then broken into subcategories. After this process of open coding, axial coding was used to relate the categories to the subcategories (Wicks, 2010).

3.8 Ethics and the Role of the Researcher

All research methods need to involve ethical considerations (Dowling, 2010). For this reason, my data collection procedures were submitted in October 2015 to the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo for approval prior to beginning data collection. In doing so, I could ensure that the research I was conducting in no way harmed the participants either psychologically or physically (Berg & Lune, 2012).

While attending the walking tours, I explicitly identified myself as a researcher, stated why I was there, and the purpose of my study. Additionally, I let attendees know that if they wanted to learn more, I had an information letter which they could have. This document, in addition to a consent form, was provided to all interview participants. The document explained my study,

ensured that participation in the interview was voluntary, and outlined the rights and responsibilities of the researcher and interviewees. The information letter additionally provided participants with the contact information of myself, my advisor, Dr. Pierre Filon, and the contact information for the University of Waterloo Office of Research Ethics. Concerning the survey, it was stressed that participation was voluntary. Lastly, to protect the anonymity of the participants, they have been assigned a number and are all referred to by the pronoun him.

3.9 Verification and Validation

I used several strategies to ensure the validity of my research. These included: triangulation, documentation of the research process, and the presentation of discrepant information (Creswell, 2013). The first strategy I used was triangulation whereby different data sources of information can add validity to a study (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, the use of both participant observation and informal and formal interviews allows for greater insight and has the potential to provide an expanded understanding of the research question (Creswell, 2009). Further, this kind of approach is often used in studies of walking tours (Dodek, 2012; Gentry, 2007; Lugosi & Bray, 2008).

Second, I documented my research process, an important element for qualitative research. This process helps ensure that were another researcher to conduct this same study by the steps outlined, they too would be able to draw comparable conclusions (Berg and Lune, 2012, p. 56).

Lastly, I presented discrepant information in my results section. Any weakness with the study design or analysis that had possible effect on the outcomes was noted in the results section (Babbie, 1990). Further, negative findings were only reported on as they related to the analysis (Babbie, 1990). In presenting discrepant information, my study could become more realistic and valid (Creswell, 2013).

3.10 Limitations

Limitations refer to the failings of the research design (Calabrese, 2012). Since my sample size was somewhat small, consisting of 9 interviews, and seven and a half hours of participant observation, I was unable to represent the full spectrum of people that attend walking tours. However, as stated above, case study research is capable of being generalizable research in addition to being able to contribute to the literature.

3.11 Chapter Summary

The data collection methods outlined above allowed me to create and execute a research design that was both ethical and valid. In doing so, the data collected was insightful and illuminating. It was therefore able to adequately address my research question and objectives. The combination of participant observation, a quantitative survey, and interviews provided complexity to my research, it therefore contributes to the existing literature and enhances our understanding of the role sense of place plays on walking tours.

4. CASE STUDY CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

To develop a context for the findings of this research, the following chapter provides a brief description of the organization Tour Guys, their *Downtown Toronto Tour*, and the route it generally takes. Additionally, this chapter provides a brief description of Toronto and the Financial District. This will provide the background knowledge needed to understand how exactly downtown Toronto is featured on the *Downtown Toronto Tour*.

4.2 Tour Guys

Tour Guys was founded as an independent tour guide cooperative more than a decade ago. They offer both free and paid tours in Toronto, Vancouver, and Ottawa. Each city is home to a small group of guides who are described as “a mix of professional tour guides, comedians, actors, history buffs, teachers, storytellers, and world travelers” (Tour Guys, n.d.b). In each city, tours are run throughout the year and cover a variety of different topics.

In Toronto there are four free walking tours that are offered: The Downtown Toronto Tour, the Old Town Toronto History Tour, The Food Tour – St Lawrence Market, and the Graffiti Tour – Queen St West. On tripadvisor (n.d.), Tour Guys Toronto states that their tours, “cover what's cool, interesting, and exciting about Toronto, from graffiti to ghosts, and the best places to eat, shop, and play.” As of February 2017, Tour Guys Toronto is listed as the sixth, out of 119, greatest tour company in Toronto, and has 500 five-star ratings (tripadvisor, n.d.). In 2017, they won the "Best Tour Operator - Toronto 2017" award from Luxury Travel Guide (tripadvisor, n.d.).

4.3 The Downtown Toronto Tour

The *Downtown Toronto Tour* is a 90 minute guided walking tour that covers roughly 2km of distance in Toronto's financial district. It begins at Union Station, heads north into the financial district, and ends at Toronto City Hall. The highlights of the tour as listed on the website are as follows: "The PATH: Toronto's "underground city"; Canada's tallest buildings and richest banks; Public art masterpieces and public spaces, Old City Hall - and the struggle to build it and save it; City Hall and science fiction; and Local politics and current events."

4.3.1 Tour Area and Structure

Below is a map that details the area covered by the five Downtown Toronto Tours that I observed. Listed from 1-13 are the places that were stopped at during the tour. Places in blue were visited on all tours, and places in green were featured on some tours. Of the places that were featured on some tour: stop 4 was featured 4 times, stop 6 was featured 4 times, stop 8 was featured 3 times, stop 9 was featured once, 13 was featured once. Other places that were discussed but not stopped at are not seen on the map.

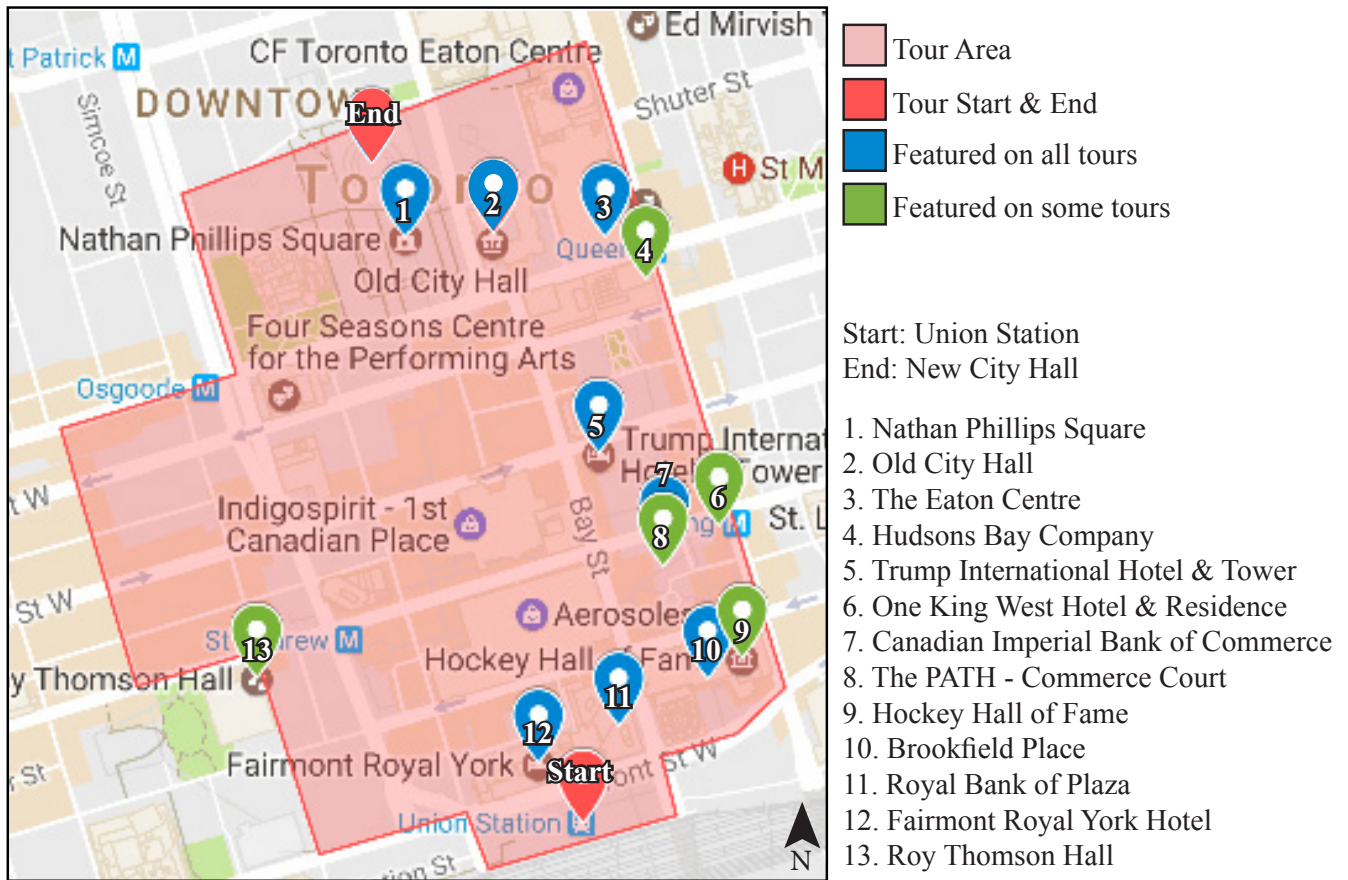


Figure 2 - Map of the area covered by the Tour Guys Downtown Toronto Guided Walking Tour and tour stops

This map displays that while each tour follows the same general template, they deviate to some degree. When compared with a map of the Toronto Financial District with PATH Connections (Figure 3), it is clear to see that the map of the area covered by the Downtown Toronto Tours is quite similar. The largest difference is that the area covered in some of the Downtown Toronto Tours expands one street to the west of the map of the Toronto Financial District Map with PATH Connections (Figure 3), created by the Toronto Financial District BIA in 2017.

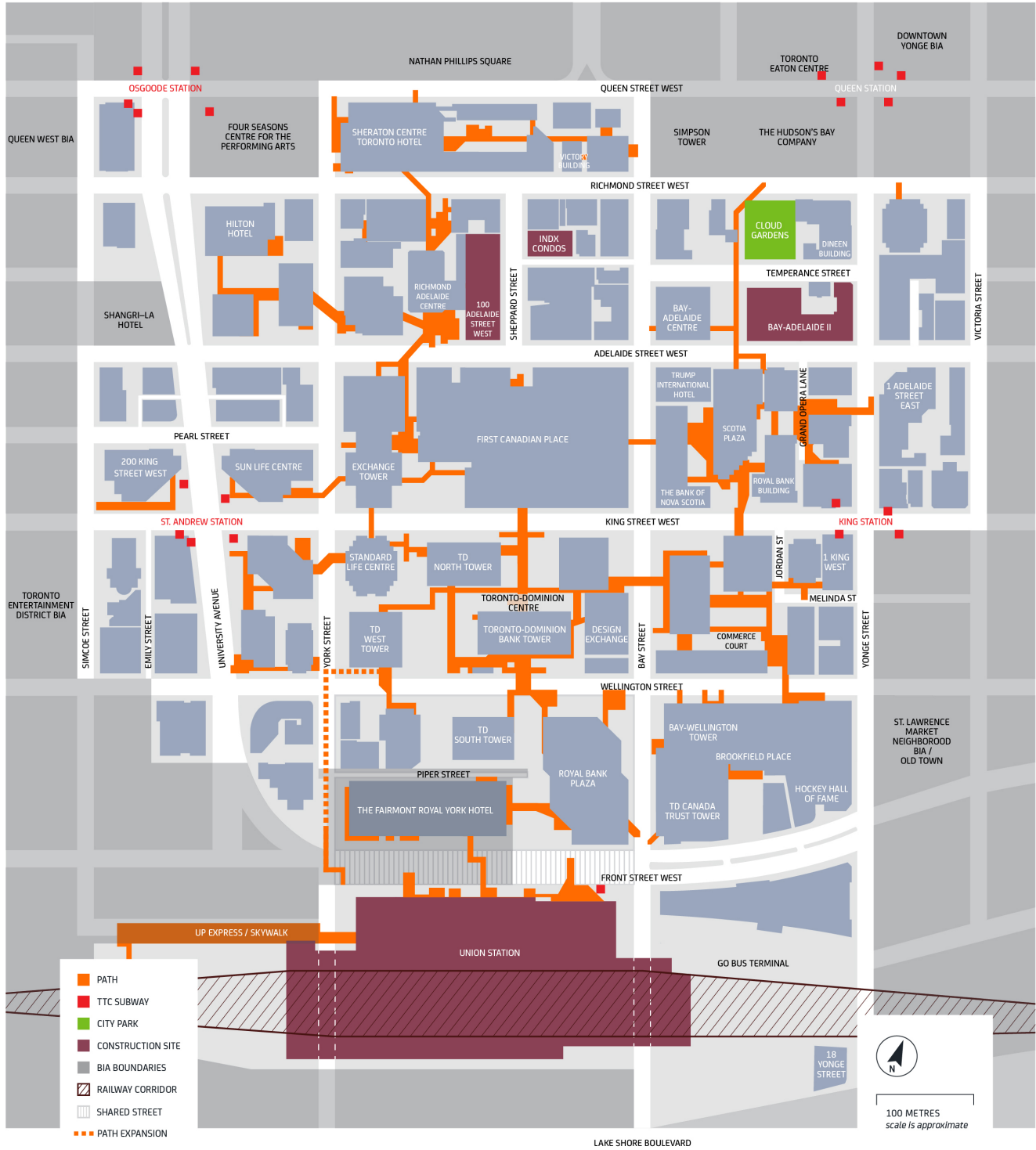


Figure 3 - Toronto Financial District Map with PATH Connections (Toronto Financial District BIA, 2017).

4.4 Toronto and the Financial District

This section provides a brief description of Toronto and the Financial District. Toronto is the largest of Canada's urban centres. It is a hub for Canada's commercial, financial, industrial, and cultural life (City of Toronto, 2017). People have lived on Toronto's land since just after the last ice age; however, the urban community only dates back to 1793. The name Toronto comes from the Mohawk word tkaronto, which means, "where there are trees in the water" (City of Toronto, 2017). The more commonly known, but incorrect name meaning for Toronto is "meeting place" (City of Toronto, 2017).

Starting in 1851, with the beginning of the construction of the railway, Toronto was transformed into an industrialized centre. Today, Toronto's population is 2.79 million people, including the 5.5 million people living in the GTA - Greater Toronto Area. Half of Toronto's population was born outside of Canada, and it is known as one of the most multicultural cities in the world as (City of Toronto, 2017).

Of the 140 neighbourhoods in Toronto, as of 2013, Toronto's financial district has daytime population of over 200,000 people (EnviroNics Canada, 2013). In the evening, this population drops down to about 2,239 people who live in about 1,500 households.

4.5 Toronto, the Financial District, and the *Downtown Toronto Tour*

The history of Toronto as described above was discussed in broad strokes on the tour. Generally, guides did not use exact dates or numbers, but instead estimations that were roughly accurate. Three of the five guides mentioned where the name Toronto came from, and briefly discussed who lived on Toronto's land prior to it becoming a city. All the guides cited Toronto as one of the most diverse cities in the world, referring to half of the population being born outside

of the city. Additionally, each guide cited that while the financial districts daytime population may be large, very few people live in the district.

5. FINDINGS

This chapter is structured according to the method that was used, and contains the findings from the qualitative survey, the participant observation, and the interviews. The first method presented is a qualitative survey given out to attendees of five separate Tour Guys *Downtown Toronto Walking Tour*. The second, is participant observation of attendees and guides of five separate Tour Guys *Downtown Walking Tour*'s. The final method, is interviews that were conducted with attendees of the Tour Guys *Downtown Walking Tour*, a tour guide, and a Tour Guys Toronto organizer.

5.1 Qualitative Survey

In this section I present the findings from the quantitative survey that was used to collect demographic data. Of the ninety people who attended the five walking tours I observed, sixty-one people received the survey. Sixty of the sixty-one surveys handed out were returned. Therefore, the overall response rate was 98%.

Of the sixty attendees surveyed 54% are female and 46% are male. 74% of the attendees have a university education and 95% have more than a high school education. The average age is thirty-three and the median age is twenty-seven. The youngest age is twenty and the oldest is seventy-four. By continent, the breakdown of the attendees' place of residence is as follows: 44% are from Europe, 18% are from North America, 11% are from Australia, 8% are from South America, and 7% are from Asia. To break this down further, only 7%, or four attendees are from Canada. Two of these four live in Toronto, and the other two live in the Greater Toronto Area. Therefore, the majority of people who attended the walking tours during the course of the research were tourists.

5.2 Participant Observation

Between the months of October and November 2016 five Tour Guys *Downtown Toronto Tours* were observed. All five of the tours were attended overtly and in the role of participant as observer, for a total of seven and a half hours of observation. In total, 90 people were observed. These observations are presented here according to an adapted version of Khirfan's (2014) framework.

5.2.1 Social Processes

Social Interaction

This section will be organized based on the following kinds of interactions: interactions with the tour guide; interactions with attendees; and interactions with locals.

Throughout the course of all tours, each guide made it clear that the tour was meant to be a social and communal experience. At the beginning of every tour, the guide encouraged the attendees to ask questions. For example, one guide welcomed questions at the start of the tour by stating,

If you have any questions about anything, including why the sky is blue, I will try and answer I like people actually talking to me so don't think this is a one-way monologue, think about it as a dialogue. So, by all means ask questions and if I don't know the answer I'll just tell you to look it up yourself.

In addition to this, all tour guides began their tours by providing the attendees with background information on where they were from, what they did outside of tour guiding, and through what lens they were approaching the tour – for example as a historian or a criminologist. Often, at some point during the tour, attendees would ask the tour guide questions about their background and would share with the guide their background. This personalized the experience and created a communal and friendly atmosphere.

Questions were welcomed by the guides and, would often direct the kinds of stories the guide would tell. Additionally, the guide would sometimes overhear a question that was asked

privately. If he thought it the question was one the rest of the group would find interesting, he would address the question in front of the group and answer it.

Through observing body language and verbal communication, it was clear that the attendees were conscious of making the guided walking tour a collective experience. They carefully positioned themselves around the guide so that everyone could see and hear, they pointed things out to one another and assured others that they had understood the guide correctly. When walking between stops attendees would share stories about their own personal experiences in Toronto or discuss what they knew about the city and what they were curious to learn. They made comparisons between their own hometowns and what they were seeing on the tour. Often, the dialogue between attendees resulted in the creation of a question that would be asked of the guide.

Interactions with locals rarely occurred during the tour. However, at the beginning of the guided walking tour, all the guides provided the attendees with a brief overview of the kinds of people that make up Toronto. They discussed how multicultural the city is and mentioned that most people who live in the city were not born there. After discussing the history of a place, the guides would discuss how a building was currently used and who it was used by. They would often ask the attendees to “look around” and see for themselves how the space was being used.

One example of this was in the PATH, Toronto’s underground pedestrian walkway. During the week, the guides would ask the attendees to look around and tell them what they saw. The attendees would reply by noticing that very few people were wearing a coat, or they were dressed in business attire. The guide would then explain that the PATH links together 30 kilometers of shops and services. The reason why so many people were wearing business attire, was because they would use the PATH to go to meetings throughout the day as the PATH

connects all the financial institutions. In providing this explanation, the guide sought to help the attendees understand who the locals were that were using that space.

As the tour guide was usually the only local that the attendees would interact with during the tour, many attendees would ask the guide questions about what they should do, eat, and see while in Toronto. These conversations often continued after the tour and usually at least a third of the tour group stuck around to listen to the guide's suggestions. In this way, they could obtain local knowledge of the city.

What was interesting about all forms of social interaction on the tour was that each attendee chose the level of interaction s/he wanted to get from the tour. If the attendee wanted to interact more with the guide then they would stay towards the front of the tour. If the attendee wanted to discuss something further that the guide had mentioned with another attendee, they would fall towards the back of the tour and have their own private conversation. Likewise, if the attendee did not want to socialize, s/he would follow along with the guide, and direct their gaze to whatever the guide was pointing out or discussing.

Place Attachment

In this section observations are presented which: display how the guide sought to build among the attendees personal connections to physical places through personal and cultural experiences, display how the attendees reacted to this, and display how the attendees, separately from the guide, built personal connections to physical places through personal and cultural experiences.

Throughout the course of my observations I observed the guides employ many tactics to connect attendees with Toronto, and the places visited on the tour. All guides began with a brief history of the city. A few dates and numbers were used in the telling of this history but primarily

the focus was on the stories and the construction of emotional narratives that appealed to the senses. One guide at the beginning of the tour said that he was going to help the attendees “narrativize” Toronto so that they would be able to understand the city. Another guide, when describing Toronto in the 1800s, asked the attendees to imagine they were an immigrant coming to the city for the first time. The narratives the guides used evoked the attendees’ imagination and, in a short amount of time, constructed a vast timeline of past and present.

One guide achieved this by asking his audience to forget that they were living in the year 2016 and pretend they had gone back in history to the 1800s. He explained that the reason why he wanted the attendees to do so, was because they were about to go into the Royal York Hotel. Since, he went on to say, this was such an upscale hotel, everyone on the tour had to transform themselves into Lords or Ladies. After saying this, he took a bow. The attendees laughed and a few of them also took a bow. After telling this story, the guide had the attendees’ full attention. The attendees were gathered tightly around the guide and looked eager to hear more about the hotel.

Another way in which guides sought to help attendees understand Toronto was through evoking feelings. For example, all the guides described the weather in Toronto. Generally, the guides would tell this story while in the PATH to help explain one reason why it was built. Here is one example of a guide describing Toronto’s temperature in the winter:

Minus 40, for those of you that have never felt what that's like let me tell you... it is so cold that your skin doesn't know what to do with it...The first thing that you feel is the pressure of the cold air forcing the hot air of your lungs out so it actually takes a couple minutes for you to figure out how to breathe in that type of weather so, that is what Toronto normally deals with...well historically that's what we dealt with.

While the guide was describing this, some attendees appeared visibly shocked, others made remarks like, “really?!” and many attendees crossed their arms over their chests as if they could

feel how cold that temperature was. This is one example of the many affective responses that guides evoked throughout the tours.

During the tours, I observed many attendees making connections to place through touch, movement, and gaze. While in buildings many attendees would touch parts of the building. For example, when talking about the architecture of a building, some attendees would move closer to a wall or another physical element of the building and touch the building. Their hands would often linger on these physical elements of the building as the guide described or told stories about the building. Other attendees would pace throughout portions of the building gazing all around as the guide spoke about the building. Other attendees would stay stationary but swivel their heads all around the building. Additionally, many attendees would take photos of the places visited on the tour.

Audibly, I overheard many conversations and remarks made about the places visited on the tour. The most common remark I heard employed a sentiment such as “wow, did you know that?” or “did you hear that?” Attendees would also swap stories of comparison between their hometowns and the history or built form of Toronto. This displayed that the attendees were actively engaging with the spaces visited on the tour.

5.2.2 Spatial Processes

Presentation of Heterogeneous Space

Observations are presented in this section that reflect the kinds of spaces the guided walking tour included, how they were included, and if the sites visited were open to multiple uses and not just specified tourist sites.

From the beginning of the tour, it was clear that the guide had a predetermined idea of the tour route. However, the guides sought to understand the specific interests of their tour groups

from the start of the tour. This was observed when the guides would ask the attendees where everyone was from and if they had been to Toronto before. They would continue this dialogue walking between the tour stops. The guide would ask attendees what they were interested in and what they wanted to learn.

After gaining an understanding of the interests of the attendees on their tour, the guides would adjust their tours according to the attendees' interests. For example, on one tour many of the attendees were interested in hockey; for this reason, the guide stopped at the Hockey Hall of Fame. This was the only time a guide included this site on the tour. Therefore, the guide made a spontaneous decision to slightly change and modify the tour route.

The spaces that were visited on the tour were open to multiple uses. Often, the tour guide pointed out these multiple uses and folded them back into the narrative of the tour. For example, the tour guides discussed New City Hall and Old City Hall at the same time. They would explain why New City Hall was built, and what the current use of Old City Hall was. On one tour a man wearing an orange jumpsuit ran out of old city hall while yelling "WOOHOO." As old city hall is currently home to a bail court, it can be presumed that this man had just been let out on bail. The tour guide, upon noticing this man, said to the group that this man was a perfect example of how Old City Hall was being used.

While some sites that were visited on the tour are common tourist sites (i.e. Nathan Philips Square or the Eaton's Centre), other sites were not. For example, sites that are not listed on Toronto's tripadvisor page were visited. These sites included public art, such as Tempo by Derrick S. Hudson, the façade of the Midland Commercial Bank, and the former Toronto-Dominion bank's original vault in the One King West Hotel and Residence.

Congruence

Each of the guides presented sites visited in multidimensional ways. They would do so by providing the attendees with a variety of information about each of the sites which included; information on the history of the space; structural information; and how the space was currently used. By doing so, the guides dissected the sites visited by highlighting their ‘everydayness’ and making them appear less monumental, and more real and lived in.

This was seen when the guides spoke about Union Station. First, all guides would talk about Union as a temple and discuss its architecture. After this, they would talk about how Union is currently being used. This involved discussing Union as a transit hub, discussing how construction has affected the space, and a personal story that the guide had about Union. Three guides chose to tell the story of when Union flooded and how an edited photo of the station with sharks swimming throughout it can be found online.

During informal interviews with attendees many mentioned how their perceptions of Toronto were changing because of the tour. They would attribute these changing perceptions to how much they were learning about the city with the help of the tour guide.

5.2.3 Cultural Processes

Symbolic Significance

From observing the tours and through conducting informal interviews with the attendees, two important aspects of understanding the symbolic significance of Toronto, and of the sites visited, presented themselves. These included the importance of the tour guide, and the importance of being geographically present.

Each tour guide discussed Toronto and the sites visited through a linear timeline. Every tour began with a discussion of how Toronto came to be and what it was like in its present. To convey this timeline, the guides told engaging stories that involved: hand gestures; humour;

vocal intonations; personal anecdotes; the use of questions; dates; and imagination. Attendees visibly reacted to these stories through facial expression, movement, and laughter.

During the tours, I asked many of the attendees why they chose to come out on the walking tour. The majority of attendees stated that they chose to attend because they wanted someone to help them understand Toronto. For example, one attendee stated that while he could have walked around Toronto on his own and looked at some of the plaques, he wouldn't have gotten as much out of the city as he had got on the tour. He attributed this to the engaging way in which knowledge was presented during the tour.

Attendees also stated that they chose to go on the walking tour because it was a much better learning experience than just reading about Toronto online or in a guide book. Further, some attendees stated that because the experience was so engaging that they would better remember the city.

Another theme that emerged from my informal interviews with attendees was the importance of walking and being physically present. For one attendee, this was the most important aspect of the tour because it allowed him to place himself in the city. Other attendees mentioned that they enjoyed being physically present because it made the history feel more real. Attendees who had previously been on bus tours mentioned that they preferred walking tours as it was important for them to be able to see the buildings "up close."

Legibility

Guides presented the physical attributes, or the paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks of the city to varying degrees. At the start of the tour every guide told the group where the tour would end and the rough distance that would be covered. This was primarily how the

guides conveyed the boundaries of the tour. To further convey the boundaries, one guide provided the street names within which the tour would be contained.

Each guide made it clear that the focus of the tour was on the financial district of Toronto. Throughout the course of the tour, the guides discussed other districts in Toronto that liked and spent time in. More detail was provided about these districts if attendees appeared interested or if they asked questions.

The one street that each guide mentioned was Yonge Street. They talked about this street as a main artery of Toronto. During the tour, each guide pointed out different stores, buildings, or businesses while walking. For example, one guide talked extensively about cannabis dispensaries while another spent time talking about restaurants.

During informal interviews, many attendees stated the main reasons they attended the tour was to learn the layout of the city. While walking in between stops attendees often asked the guide questions about where places were located, in relation to where they were on the tour. This helped attendees conceptualize the layout of the city. Other attendees made notes and discussed with their friends the location of certain buildings.

5.2.4 Summary

Elements of the social, spatial, and cultural process and their components were observed at a verbal and non-verbal level during participant observations. Overall, the observations convey the significance of the guides role on the tour, demonstrate that the tour is a co-created experience, and show that walking was an important aspect of the tour.

5.3 Interviews

To understand how and if walking tours foster a sense of place, interviews were conducted with attendees of the Tour Guys *Downtown Toronto Tour*, a tour guide, and one of the

organizers of Tour Guys Toronto. Interviews were conducted to supplement and bolster information gained during participant observation and the document analysis. They provide detail on the subjective nature of sense of place and investigate the diversity of meaning, opinion, and experiences of sense of place and walking tours.

The methodology of the interviews has already been explained in Chapter Three but it will be briefly reviewed here. Participants were recruited during and after the guided walking tours. Interviews were conducted in person, by phone, and by email. The participants chose which interview format they would prefer.

All interview participants authorized the use of anonymous quotations. To maintain the anonymity of the interviewees, interviews with the attendees have each been assigned a number from 1-8. However, the interviews with the tour guide, and the tour organizer have not been assigned a number and will be referred to as such. All interviewees will be referred to using the pronoun him regardless of gender.

5.3.1 Tour Guys Toronto Organizer and Tour Guide

Before discussing the opinions of the attendees of the walking tour, this section will begin by understanding how the tour organizer and tour guide think about their walking tour, and walking tours in general.

5.3.1.1 Tour Guys Toronto Organizer

The questions that were asked of the Tour Guys Toronto organizer sought to understand how the walking tour was designed and what the purpose of the guided walking tour was. Additionally, insight was gained regarding why the tour organizer thought people attended the tour, and what he believed they got out of the tour.

According to the Tour Guys Toronto organizer, the structure of all Tour Guys tours are very fluid. Each of their tours are centred around one theme and, “so long as you’ve got the starting/ending points set and the correct time length, the company is happy with whatever else you’d like to talk about” (TO1). Therefore, the design of the walking tour is left primarily up to the guide. During training sessions, new guides watch and listen to old guides run through their version of the tour. After this, the new guides are encouraged to put their own “spin” on the tour. In this sense, it is the guides’ responsibility to bring their own knowledge, ideas, and experiences to the tour.

For the organizer, some of the most important aspects of the tour are engagement and interest. While it is important to him that stories told on the tours accurate, he believes that it is always more important to tell a good story than a good fact. This is because it is the stories primarily, not necessarily the facts, that keep people engaged and interested.

For this reason, the organizer stresses the need for an overarching narrative that helps drive the guided walking tour forward. He argues, “If people wanted to know facts they’d stay home and read Wikipedia. . . . When designing a tour, you need to think about the stories you’re telling, and. . . the theme you’re presenting” (TO1). Therefore, it is only when the city is presented with an engaging narrative that it allows for attendees to see the city in a new light.

In addition to this, the organizer highlighted the role of history when constructing this narrative, stating that it should be woven into the stories told about the places visited as often as possible. This is because it helps the attendees to get a sense for how the city and the places visited on the tour change over time.

Another important aspect of the tour, as discussed by the organizer, is letting attendees know how places are currently being used. For example, “if I’m at City Hall, Dundas Square or the Harbourfront, I’ll always spend a few minutes talking about what goes on in those places, how

people can find more information about them, and if there is anything currently going on there” (TO1).

In terms of what motivates people to attend the tour, the organizer believes that attendees want to be entertained and, at the same time learn something. Additionally, he thinks that people are motivated to make connections to the places visited on the tour. When the tour is over, his hope is that attendees will be able to share the connections they have made with others. He wants attendees to, “be able to walk past a spot later and tell the same stories to their friends or family” (TO1).

When asked if the tour was related in any way to sense of place, the organizer was unsure. He had no awareness of the concept and the tour was not designed consciously with the goal of creating a sense of place for attendees. This does not mean however, that the Tour Guys tours are not involved in fostering a sense of place.

5.3.1.2 Tour Guide

The interview with the guide was similar to the interview with tour organizer in that it sought to understand how the walking tour was designed, what its purpose was, and what the guide believed it provided the attendees.

Like the tour organizer, the tour guide recognized the importance of engagement and interest. He understood his role as both a performer and storyteller. Additionally, he saw himself as an intermediary who unpacked the urban environment for the attendees. As an intermediary, he needed to be quite flexible as he could never predict who would show up on the tour. For this reason, the dynamics of every tour he ran were always different. He offered the following example, “what happens is that I will do the tour, and people will pitch in along the way of stories from their home towns or things that they can relate to and, that really is a co-created tour” (TG1).

That the tour is a co-created experience is important to the guide as he believes it enhances and makes the tour more engaging. As a part of this philosophy, he does not view himself as “a sage on the stage” (TG1). Instead, he believes that his job is to listen so that he can work with the attendees to create the tour together. Therefore,

As the tour goes on...it gets modified and adjusted to the interests of individuals of the group so it's more interesting for them because I have the knowledge base to certain degree and I can tweak it to make it really appealing to certain people so it's really worth their time (TG1).

This fluid and spontaneous nature of the tour, brings what the guide calls, “the human element” (TG1). The human element is present not only in the guide, but also in the act of walking. The guide argues that walking helps you access the information by learning through experience. Walking through the spaces, and being physically present, makes the places more relevant and helps to foster “a meaningful personal connection.”

As he saw the tour as being more about “the human element,” and shared the same view as the organizer in that he did not believe that dates and times were the most important aspect of the walking tour. For the tour guide, dates and times alone were not enough to foster a meaningful connection with a place. Attendees need to hear stories that will help them relate to the places visited and force them to reflect on their experiences.

The tour guides’ tour was not designed consciously with the goal of creating a sense of place for attendees. However, in seeking to help attendees to understand Toronto, and make connections to certain parts of the city, he is actively involved in creating a sense of place for the attendees.

5.3.2 Attendees

All the attendees interviewed were tourists and had been to Toronto no more than five times. Each attendee stated that they had either limited or no knowledge of Toronto prior to attending the guided walking tour. Table 1 displays this information in more detail.

Interviewee Number	Tourist or Local	Had the interviewee been to Toronto Prior to attending the tour	Was the interviewee familiar with TO Prior to attending the tour
I1	Tourist	Yes (4/5 times)	No, was not familiar but knew a little bit about Toronto
I2	Tourist	Yes (Often)	Had been to a few of places visited on the tour before and knew the names of some buildings, but had no further knowledge than this.
I3	Tourist	No	Did not know anything about Toronto
I4	Tourist	No	No, was not familiar but knew a little bit about Toronto
I5	Tourist	No	Knew a little about the population and geography of Toronto
I6	Tourist	No	No, was not familiar but knew a little bit about Toronto
I7	Tourist	No	No, was not familiar but knew a little bit about Toronto
I8	Tourist	Yes (2 times)	No, was not familiar but knew a little bit about Toronto

Table 1 - Number of visits and familiarity with Toronto prior to attending the tour.

The interview for the attendees was divided into questions that sought to understand how the spatial, social, and cultural processes, resulting from the activities, conceptions, and physical attributes of a landscape, contributed the attendees sense of place after attending the tour. The following section is organized by each process and what it is are comprised of.

5.3.2.1 Social Processes

Social Interaction

Five of the seven attendees interviewed indicated that social interaction was an important aspect of the tour for them. Many attended as part of a group, or with a friend or partner. For I7,

social interaction was the most important aspect of the tour. He enjoyed meeting new people on the tour and chatting with them as they walked. For him, this made learning about Toronto easy because the setting was friendly. I5 noted that being able to ask questions helped him learn more about Toronto. Being able to ask questions made him feel as though he could customize the tour and learn more about what he was specifically interested in. I3 enjoyed that his tour guide had them introduce themselves to one other person at the start of the tour and ask where they were from. When speaking about this he said, “I thought that was kind of a neat touch to see somebody you don't know and introduce yourself and to find out about them. I thought that was kind of cool” (I3). Overall, the attendees interviewed mentioned that a form of social interaction was either their motivation for attending and/or enhanced their experience while on the guided walking tour.

Place Attachment

Four themes emerged from the interviews regarding place attachment. These themes are; the importance of the guide, the importance of storytelling, the importance of the geographic nature of walking, and the development of a better understanding of place but not necessarily place attachment.

Throughout the interviews, the interviewees stressed how important the guide was to their overall experience of the tour. Specifically, two of the interviewees stated that they were aware of the place attachment their guide had and, found his attachment and enthusiasm for the places visited to be infectious. I5 recounted that because of the tour guide, he felt more welcomed in Toronto and, would be more likely to return to the city versus Montreal where he did not get the opportunity to attend a tour.

Storytelling and the use of stories to present a linear narrative was something that each of the interviewees mentioned. For example, I4 enjoyed the tour because, “It gave me stories to link and understand how the space had been used in the past and currently. It allowed me to connect places together with stories” (I4). The importance of a linear narrative of past and present was reiterated by all the attendees.

For I3, it was the facts woven into the stories that helped him develop an attachment to the city:

We were given many facts about Toronto; population, dates of settlement and names of important persons in its history. As a result, I began to understand and relate to Toronto and her citizens. I felt as if I knew the city. With that feeling of knowledge or familiarity came a familiarity that led to a sense of place for me (I3).

Other attendees expressed the same sentiment, stating that their expanded knowledge based of Toronto helped them develop connections to the city.

Another important aspect of the stories told on the guided walking tour were that they were geographically rooted. I4 exemplified this when he explained that by walking between places geographically it “allowed me to connect places together...and by walking between them geographically, I was able to build up a picture of what kind of a city Toronto was and had been” (I4). This helped I4 develop a greater connection to Toronto. The geographic nature of the walking tour brought to life the stories told on the tour in way that allowed for I4 to “feel a part of the city” (I4). This was common among all attendees.

Another reason why walking was important to the interviewee was that it allowed him to create their own experiences. I2 was excited to recount that at one point during the tour he briefly broke off from the group to further explore the Library Bar in the Royal York Hotel: “I just walked in there even though the [guide] was not in there so I just walked away from that and just walked into that bar and felt...I don't know, it was good experience.”

For many interviewees while their understanding of Toronto was greater after attending the tour, they did not necessarily develop an attachment to the city. I2 believed that this was because he had not spent enough time in Toronto and therefore had not collected enough memories that would have tied him to the city” (I2). If he was staying in Toronto for a longer period, then he felt that the tour would have played a greater role in his attachment to the city. I1 stated that as an outsider, it would be difficult for him to develop a greater connection to Toronto:

As an outsider, as someone who is not Canadian, it doesn't make me feel more Canadian if that makes sense. I know more about TO now because of the tour, but it doesn't make me... it hasn't enhanced my feelings or change the way I feel about it... It's just my understanding is greater now (I1).

Despite this, I1 still greatly enjoyed the tour and hopes to find a walking tour that he can attend in his own hometown. This sentiment was shared with two other interviewees.

Based on the interviews with the attendees, it is unclear whether they developed a place attachment to Toronto. While two attendees stated explicitly that they did not create an attachment to the city, the other attendees spoke about feeling connected to the city. It is unclear however, how strongly these attendees made connections to Toronto.

5.3.2.2 Spatial Processes

The Presentation of Heterogeneous Space

Overall, the interviewees expressed that the guided walking tour allowed them to better understand how space was used and designed. Prior to the tour many of the interviewees had heard of at least one of the places that were visited on the tour. However, they did not know how these places were used or what their function was.

For example, I1 stated, “I have heard of the Eaton Centre but I didn't realize that there was a whole other section that was all connected by these corridors as well as underground.” Walking through the Eaton Centre provided Interviewee 1 with the opportunity to experience the

building and see how it was used. This is not something that he was able to understand by hearing about the Eaton Centre, or by looking at a photo of it.

I5 noted that by walking through buildings on the tour, he was better able to understand their functionality. For I3, this was especially true with regards to Toronto's underground PATH. While he had heard of the PATH before, he did not know very much about it. He really enjoyed being able to use the PATH while on tour and, "actually get a sense that this whole city is underground." Other interviewees cited this example as well stating that had they not gone on the tour, they never would have known about the PATH. Therefore, for these attendees, the tour was involved in making parts of Toronto visible that would have otherwise been invisible.

Congruence

Prior to attending the walking tour interviewees expressed that they viewed Toronto as a monolithic city. For example, before attending the tour, I2 thought Toronto,

was just a big city like Sydney or Melbourne in Australia, just a big business district with retail shops and nothing that is...nothing that you warm to It does not give you any warmth it's a nice place to be and I never felt the warmth in Toronto because it was a business area but listening [to the stories] really brought it alive (I2).

After having attended the guided walking tour, I2 will think about Toronto in a more dynamic and complex way and he will no longer think of Toronto as just a financial city. Further, because of the stories told by the guide, he now thinks of Toronto as a city with warmth, or a city with more than just retail shops and businesses.

This sentiment was shared with I3 who, prior to the tour only thought about Toronto as a financial centre. After attending the tour, he stated that he now thinks about Toronto as a dynamic city made up of more than just finance. Two other attendees expressed the same feelings.

5.3.2.3 Cultural Processes

Symbolic Significance

In terms of symbolic significance, three main themes emerged from the interviews. These themes are: the importance of the guide, the importance of a linear narrative, and the importance of being physically present.

From analyzing the interviews, it became clear that the guide was instrumental to each interviewees' understanding of the relationship time and the landscape. For I6, this was because the guide made learning about the history fun and engaging. He thought that facts were presented in a quirky and interesting way which, was different from what he called a dull "history book perspective" (I6). I2 stated that he would not have been able understand Toronto on his own, he needed a guide to help him. As an example of this, I2 cited the historic stone facade of the Midland Commercial Bank in Brookfield Place. He said that prior to attending the tour, he would have just walked past that place and thought, "why have they put that old building in such a place, it wouldn't make sense, but it does now but it didn't it wouldn't have, unless I attended the walking tour" (I2).

Interviewees were able to gain a holistic understanding of the complex processes and their relation to the physical landscape through the linear narratives that were woven into the tour. As I6 explains, learning about the past and present of certain buildings, for example, how they had been renovated and are currently used, helped him better understand Toronto.

What aided in this learning process was the ability to be physically present in the spaces that were discussed. I1 exemplifies this when he says that the reason why he enjoyed the tour was because it involved "slow learning." To illustrate this, he says,

If you're on the bus or taxi or something like that you're going past things too quickly to actually get a good feeling for them. So to be able to go into the buildings and go down the stairs and you

know... touch them, and walk around in them. It gives you more time to soak in what was happening in the past.

Legibility

Four of the eight interviewees could recall that the tour focused on the financial district of Toronto. They stated that this was made clear at the start of the tour. Further, they each said that they liked that this focus was made clear at the start of the tour. The other four interviewees recalled that the focus was on Toronto more broadly.

The most mentioned places during the interviews that were visited were the PATH, Union Station, and the Royal York Hotel. Below is a breakdown of each of the buildings or places mentioned during the tour. Only buildings and places that were visited on each tour are included in table 2.

Buildings/Places Mentioned	Total number of times mentioned during interviews
PATH	1111
Union Station	11111
Old City Hall	111
New City Hall	11111
The Eaton’s Centre	11
The Royal York Hotel	11111
Nathan Philips Square	1
RBC building	111
Bank Vault	111
Brookfield Place	11

Table 2 - Frequency of the buildings mentioned during the interviews.

Three interviewees stated that one reason why they enjoyed that tour was because it would help them navigate Toronto on their own after the tour. For example, interviewee 7 stated that the main reason why he attended the tour was to get his bearings of the city. Interviewee 5 and 6 indicated that they were going to use the tour as a basis for their own exploration of the city later. For interviewee 2, walking allowed him to better understand the physical attributes of

the city. This was because he could ‘feel the walk’ as opposed to a bus tour where you drive past but cannot see or feel places up close.

5.3.3 Summary

Like with the findings from the participant observation, elements of the social, spatial, and cultural process and their components are present in the views of the Tour Guide Toronto organizer, the tour guide, and the attendees. Further, the findings from the interviews display that what the Tour Guide Toronto organizer and the tour guide deem to be important aspects of a guided walking tour are also seen as important to the attendees. Both sets of interviews highlight the importance of the guides’ role on the tour, the importance of a linear narrative, and the importance of being physically present.

5.4 Chapter Summary

Both the participant observation and the interviews display similarities in how each element of the social, spatial, and cultural process and their components were experienced while on the tour. In terms of social processes, the findings display that the tour is a social experience which includes many kinds of interactions, which enhanced the tour. In terms of place attachment, attendees built physical connections to places through personal and cultural experiences however, this did not necessarily result in place attachment. An analysis of the spatial processes indicate that the tours presented heterogeneous space in addition to featuring both monumental and ordinary buildings. Findings from the cultural processes show that the guided walking tour was successful in providing the attendees with an understanding of the relationship between time and the landscape. While aspects of legibility were observed during participant observation, attendees that were interviewed displayed only some ability to mentally represent the physical attributes of the landscape and communicate them.

As a whole, the participant observation and the interviews demonstrate the significance of the guides' role on the tour, the significance of the tour being co-created experience, the significance of a linear narrative, and the significance of walking and being physically present. The synaptic table below (Table 3) summarizes the findings in detail.

Process	Components	Themes	Expressed by Interviewees (out of 8)	Expressed by Tour Organizer or Guide	Observed During Participant observation
Social	Social Interaction	Was viewed as an important component of the tour	5 (I1, I3, I4, I5, I7)	TO1,TG1	✓
		Enhanced at least one aspect of the tour	8	—	✓
	Place Attachment	Importance of the guide	8	TO1,TG1	✓
		Importance of storytelling (and a linear narrative)	8	TO1,TG1	✓
		Importance of walking	6 (I1, I2, I4, I5, I7, I8)	TO1,TG1	✓
		Developed greater understanding of Toronto, not necessarily place attachment (*tour guides consciously sought to help attendees develop a greater understanding of Toronto)	8	* TO1,TG1	—
		Expressed that they did not develop place attachment	4 (I1, I2, I3, I6)	—	—
Spatial	Heterogeneous Space	Experienced heterogeneous space while on the tour (i.e. through learning about how places were used) (* tour guides sought to present heterogeneous space while on the tour)	8	* TO1,TG1	✓
	Congruence	Interviewees will think of Toronto differently after having attended the tour	5 (I2, I3, I4, I7, I8)	—	—
Cultural	Cultural Significance	Importance of the guide	8	TO1,TG1	✓
		Importance a linear narrative (storytelling)	5 (I1, I2, I4, I5, I6)	TO1,TG1	✓
		Importance of being geographically present	8	TO1,TG1	✓
	Legibility	Interviewees could recall the focus of the tour	4 (I1, I2, I3, I6)	—	—
		Tour as a navigation tool for stay in Toronto	3 (I5, I6, I7)	TO1,TG1	✓

Table 3 - Synaptic Table of Findings

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

This study examined the Tour Guys, *Downtown Toronto Tour* to understand how walking tours foster a sense of place. The purpose of this research was threefold. The first objective was to understand how sense of place established in a short amount of time. The second was to determine how walking tours can effectively be used as a tool for cultural interpretation. The third was to provide recommendations for the design and presentation of guided walking tours so that they can effectively foster a meaningful sense of place.

In this chapter, research objectives are discussed with reference to an adapted version of Khirfan's (2014) framework. This is followed by a discussion of the study limitations. To conclude, key areas for future research are identified.

6.2 Walking Tours and the Social, Spatial, and Cultural Processes

Findings of this study revealed that elements of the social, spatial, and cultural processes were present during the guided walking tours and, they were not experienced in silos but as interconnected parts of a whole. The experience of each of these processes was facilitated by the tour guide who acted as a cultural intermediary. As a mediator of physical access, encounters, understanding, and empathy, the guide minimized the attendees' states of distraction. Attendees were therefore able to both look and live in the world at the same time. Bolstered by the act of walking, and being geographically present, attendees came to understand Toronto, and the places as dynamic assemblages. This contributed to the experience of distinctive place. To better understand how this experience occurred, and what it contained, this section discusses the guides' role in the presentation of distinctive place, examines how this presentation was received by the attendees, and looks at what the overall experience of the tour afforded the attendees.

6.2.1 The Tour Guide

As discussed in the literature review, guided walking tours, and tour guides are often stigmatized. They are thought to only cover superficial elements by directing the audiences gaze, suggest photo opportunities, choreograph movements along prescribed paths and lastly, define normalizing behavior. In the case of the Tour Guys *Downtown Walking Tour*, if these elements were present, they were not at the detriment of the experience of heterogeneous space.

From the top down, Tour Guys is a company that encourages their guides to be creative, improvise, and revise the tour as they see fit. As Larsen and Megad (2013) argue, this kind of freedom allows the guides' role to be relational. The findings of this study indicate that being relational was an important contributor to the social processes of a distinctive place experience. Further, being relational allowed the guide to act as mediator, a role that both the tour organizer, and guide highlighted as an important aspect of guided walking tours.

As a mediator, the guide not only facilitated access to the social processes of a distinctive place experience but additionally to the spatial and cultural processes as well. The kinds of mediation offered by the guides fit into the categories outlined by Black and Weiler (2015) and include, mediation through physical access, encounters, understanding, and empathy.

6.2.1.1 Physical Access

Through the mediation of physical access, guides facilitated interaction primarily with spatial processes. Even though this physical access was staged, it was presented in an authentic way that revealed the backstages of places visited (MacCannell 1976). This kind of presentation was enriched by the guides' appealing to the senses of the attendees such as through sight, hearing, or imagination. On a more basic level, physical access was also mediated by physically maneuvering attendees along the tour route.

This however, is more difficult than it sounds, and is something that both the tour organizer and guide are aware of. Guides must respond to weather, building closures, and protests, among other aspects of a busy urban environment. This means that it is impossible for guides to choreograph movements along prescribed paths. Instead, their tours respond to place itself, as a mobile entity. In doing so, the guides interact with the everyday rhythms of space and present to attendees lifeworlds which, “support a deep connection to place” (Bendiner-viani, 2009, p. 81).

In addition to this, guides also mediated physical access by providing attendees with information about the physical attributes of the landscape which include monuments, nodes, paths, districts, and edges.

6.2.1.2 Encounters

The findings of this study display many kinds of encounters between the guide and the attendees, the attendees and the attendees and, the attendees and the community. By doing so, guides were engaged with facilitating interaction with social processes Encounters between the guide and the attendees, the attendees and the attendees were important aspects of the tour. In mediating these encounters, the guides created friendly self-contained spaces in which the attendees could feel comfortable. Once this space was created, the guide introduced attendees, by directing their gaze, to the community and locals of the financial district. In this way, the guides asked attendees to look at the lifeworlds of the financial district and, those that used the space. They drew the attendees’ attention to the everyday aspects of the place and asked them to think about its rhythms.

6.2.1.3 Understanding

As argued by Black and Weiler (2015), the mediation of understanding can be both positive or negative and, guides can either inhibit or foster understanding. In the case of the *Tour Guys Downtown Toronto Tour*, the tour guides were instrumental in mediating a positive understanding of Toronto and the financial district. As well, the findings demonstrate that the guides were not only engaged with knowledge transfer, but instead cultural mediation. Therefore, the guides facilitated interaction with cultural processes. This was evidenced through the use of a variety of interperative communication strategies, (i.e. analogies, personal references, anecdotes, and non-verbal communication) which aimed to reveal meanings and relationships rather than simply factual information.

Further, these interperative communication strategies were used purposefully, as the tour organizer and the guide both recognized the power that stories held over factual information. This meant that the tours, and the interpretation used during them, was outcome focused – an important aspect of effective interpretation (Black & Weiler, 2015). From interviewing the tour organizer and the guide, it was clear that everyone employed by the company was aware that their purpose was to create connections to place. For this reason, the tour was successful in helping attendees understand the people, places, and culture of Toronto. Additionally, since the guides were passionate about the people, places, and culture of Toronto, this passion was relayed to the attendees. In relying this passion to the attendees, the guides engaged with Spitzberg's model of communication competence (1984), as they were motivated by their love of Toronto to communicate in a competent manner.

6.2.1.4 Empathy

Throughout the course of the tour, the guides helped attendees create not only cognitive connections to place, but also affective connections. By doing so, the guides fostered interaction

with both social and cultural processes. Primarily, guides created affective connections to place through storytelling. Storytelling was the main mode of communication on the tours and was used to help attendees imagine, rather than just understand, the history of the places visited. This, was what the guide called “the human element.” Using the human element, guides helped attendees by creating emotive narratives, such as in describing the weather of Toronto. The guides wove these narratives together to create an assemblage of Toronto and the financial district. Further, this helped attendees not only hear and see the emotional narratives they told, but also participate in them. The idea that storytelling is imperative for understanding and connecting to place is central to Sandercock’s (2003) argument for its inclusion in planning and policy practice. This is because she recognizes its power to evoke change through the creation of empathy (Sandercock, 2003). Further it allows for greater engagement and participation in ideas and concepts.

In the context of the guided walking tour, participation in the stories being told was afforded through the act of walking. While the attendees walking was to some extent directed by the guide, the guides afforded the attendees some freedom in choosing the pace, the amount of time spent at each location, and in the places visited. This gave the attendees agency in engaging with the emotional narratives in Toronto through geography.

6.2.1.5 Summary

The guides acted as mediators of physical access, encounters, understanding, and empathy to make it possible for the attendees to engage with the social, spatial, and cultural processes that create distinctive place experiences. While the *Downtown Toronto Tour* was not designed consciously with the purpose of creating a sense of place for the attendees, this was something that the tour was actively engaged with. However, while the tour was intent on

creating distinctive place experiences, it is unclear whether the tour was successful. While the tour offered opportunities for attendees to engage with social, spatial, and cultural processes, it did not mean that the attendees saw, made use of, or wanted to engage with them. For this reason, the next section examines how the attendees experienced the tour to understand if it was successful in conveying distinctive place experiences and therefore, fostering a sense of place.

6.2.2 The Experience

Due to the mediation of the guide, attendees were afforded opportunities to experience the processes that contribute to a distinctive place experience. Findings from the participant observation and the interviews show that the most important experiences the tour provided the attendees included social interaction, the presentation of heterogeneous space, and symbolic significance. Generally, attendees did not indicate that they had gained legibility or place attachment from attending the tour. This section examines the findings which demonstrate how each process and relevant components were experienced by the attendees, and discusses whether they contributed to a distinctive place experience.

6.2.2.1 Social Processes

Social Interaction

The findings suggest that social interaction was one of the most important aspects of the tour for attendees. One reason for this could relate to the fact that through social interaction, attendees were able to co-construct the tour. As Megeed (2010) argues, tourists on guided walking tours are active co-producers who, “negotiate meanings and content with the other actors on the stage” (p. 18). The findings from this study, demonstrate that the same is true for the attendees of the *Downtown Toronto Tour*. As Bruner (2005) states, this is due to the “dialogic interaction” that occurs between the guide, and the attendees. From the beginning of each tour, the guides

worked hard to create an informal, friendly, and social atmosphere. It was this atmosphere, as cited by the attendees, that made them feel comfortable and at ease. This contributed to the creation of congenial space from which attendees could act as co-producers of the tour.

The friendly and informal atmosphere created at the beginning of the tour allowed the attendees to feel comfortable. This feeling of comfort, helped facilitate interaction with aspects of the spatial and cultural processes. Further, it allowed for a space in where, following the theory of Deleuze's (1998), bodies affected other bodies in ways that produce emotional experiences. This only occurred because attendees were in a closed environment in which they feel comfortable enough to be affected.

Another important aspect of social interaction on the tour was that attendees were able to choose the level of interaction they wanted. Like Meged (2010) found, attendees logged on and off from the guiding by employing one of the five tactics; participatory, attentive, partial, alternative, and active. In doing so, attendees got out of the tour what they wanted. If the attendee sought a more social experience, they would primarily employ the participatory tactic. The freedom and autonomy that this choice afforded the attendees contributed to the tour's dynamic nature.

One foundational element upon which the tour was built was social interaction. From the friendly and social atmosphere of the tour, each attendee contributed to the tour in a variety of ways. Alongside the guide, the attendees helped to produce the kind of tour they wanted and, as co-producers, they navigated spatial and cultural processes.

Place Attachment

Using the work of Low, Bendiner-Viani, and Hung (2007), place attachment is understood to consist of the following categories: living or working in a place; ancestral

relationship to a place (genealogical); pilgrimage to a place; spiritual/religious connection to a place; symbolic relationship to a place; artistic representation of a place; linkage through loss; political relationship to a place; recreational relationships; and propinquity to a place.

Findings from this study suggest that developing a place attachment to Toronto was the least important element of the tour for attendees. While it was important for attendees to develop an understanding of Toronto, they were not necessarily seeking attachment. This may be attributed to the limited time spent not only on the tour, but additionally in Toronto. Further, if we look at the categories developed by Low, Bendiner-Viani, and Hung (2007) for place attachment, the formal and informal interviews suggest that the main categories with which attendees would develop an attachment would be through a symbolic relationship to a place. Again, if the amount of time spent in Toronto is taken into consideration, attendees may not have been able to develop strong symbolic relationships to a place, let alone any kind of emotional relationship – an important component of place attachment.

What was interesting however, was that many attendees viewed the tour as a springboard for the continual development of connections and attachment to Toronto. Additionally, many attendees mentioned that they wished to find a tour in their home town. This suggests that while many attendees had a limited interest in becoming attached to Toronto, they believed that the tour could be a good vehicle for attachment to a place that they already had connections with.

6.2.2.2 Spatial Processes

Presentation of Heterogeneous Space

Having to stay with the tour guide forces attendees to, as Gentry (2010) states, “[stay within] a limited space of interaction and interpretation of place” (p. 230). Despite this, it would be incorrect to conclude that the *Downtown Toronto Tour* was entirely enclavic. Further, the

creation of a closed social group at the start of the tour made it easier for attendees to experience heterogeneous space. Alongside the guide, attendees acted as authors and editors in the stories they were presented with – they were active consumers. With this sense of agency, produced through social interaction as well, attendees were afforded the freedom to participate in the everyday rhythms and lifeworlds of others. Therefore, they could, as Edensor argues, “enjoy a more vivid and varied sensual experience,” which was a large contributor to experiencing Toronto as a distinctive place (p. 340).

Congruence

The inclusion of heterogeneous space on The *Downtown Toronto Tour* allowed the tour and the guide to display the balance of Toronto as both a living space and as a tourist destination. As a cultural intermediary, the guide plays a large role in presenting the city as dynamic and multifaceted. Attendees were taken to places that they would not likely find in a guide book and, places were not presented on pedestals. They went in to places, touched them, and experienced them by walking in them as locals would. This removed the monumentality from the buildings, and made them more accessible. Further, walking from place to place, and going inside building allowed attendees to piece together their own image of Toronto and gave the attendees another form of agency. The guides highlighted the subjective nature of place by telling stories which displayed their fluidity and multiplicity. In telling these stories, the guides asked attendees to reflect on what they were seeing presently. Attendees were therefore able to reflect on the history of the space as told by the guide in relation to how they saw it currently being used. Therefore, attendees were not told what to think, but were instead encouraged to think on their own.

Jonasson (2007), calls this kind of agency, a process of being in the world, one of the greatest strengths of tour guiding. Urban landscapes are never fixed, as Jonasson (2007) argues,

“they are built again and again for every time we pass through them.” Therefore, the tour can be deemed a creative process that enables new ways of seeing and experiencing, and this for the attendees was exciting.

6.2.2.3 Cultural Processes

Symbolic Significance

Alongside social interaction, another important aspect of the guided walking tour was symbolic significance. For many attendees, it was the sole reason why they decided to attend the tour. The findings suggest that being geographically present helped attendees understand with clarity the symbolic significance of Toronto and the places visited on the tour. The physicality of the tour, in combination with the creation of a safe and friendly group setting, the co-production of the tour, a sense of freedom and agency, and the experience of heterogeneous space, created a strong platform from which attendees could comprehend the complex processes and their relation to the physical landscape.

Walking, provided the attendees with an alternative way to understand and engage with urban space. As de Certeau (1984) posited, the pedestrian movements of the attendees “gave shape to spaces” as it involved engaging with a multitude of sensory interactions (p. 97). These movements gave attendees the opportunity to both deconstruct and understand the layered environment of Toronto. This included historical and current knowledge from the guide, in addition to knowledge the attendee was building up for himself through sensory interactions.

The findings suggest that attendees decided to go on the tour because they saw it as an opportunity to minimize distraction while experiencing place. During the tour, attendees did not need to worry about getting lost, about being in the right space, or about misinterpreting a place.

This created an atmosphere which allowed attendees could focus on understanding the lifeworld of Toronto and this, is what helped support a deep connection to place (Bendiner-viani, 2009).

Legibility

Findings from the interviews suggest that half of the interviewees could convey the intended focus of the tour. While it is possible that interviewees may have forgotten specifics between the time of the attending the tour and the interview, it could indicate several other possibilities. One such possibility is that the tour did a poor job at communicating the tour's focus. Observations made during the tours indicate however, that is not the case. The second possibility then, is that attendees were not interested in learning the specific districts, nodes or edges of Toronto. While this may be true, legibility, as it related to paths, edges, districts, nodes, was not a large aspect of the tours. Instead, information about monuments, or buildings, was the main focus of the tour. Perhaps this was done because information about monuments or buildings requires more specialized knowledge, and is not as easy to access as information about paths for instance. Further, informal and formal interviews show that attendees did not feel as though the tour was lacking in anyway. Additionally, many attendees saw the tour as an opportunity to gain a preliminary understanding of the layout of Toronto. During their stay in Toronto, they would grow this understanding. This may indicate that it is not possible to gain a sense of legibility from a place in a short period of time.

6.2.3 Summary

During the guided walking tour, attendees had opportunities to interact with each process. Since the tour was co-produced attendees could choose the extent to which they engaged with each process and its components. By engaging in all processes, attendees could either lay the foundation for a distinctive place experience, or have this experience in full after the tour. The

findings indicate that the tour was least capable of fostering place attachment, and legibility. This shows that fostering a sense of place in short amount of time is very difficult and, is dependent on each person's prior experiences.

One of the difficulties in fostering a sense of place in short amount of time has to do with the small amount of experiences attendees are able to collect during the tour. This study suggests that in order to develop a sense of place, one needs to have had numerous place experiences. For the attendees of the Downtown Toronto Tour, this development continues to occur after the tour as they return to the places they visited on the tour. It also continues as they return to their homes and reflect on what they have seen. Attending the tour inspired many attendees to take a tour in other cities or their hometown. In doing so, these attendees are interacting with place on both a global and local scale.

Another important aspect of the tour is, attendees must be willing, as Jonasson (2007) emphasizes, "to be put into a state where they are led in order to produce an experience beyond the ordinary" (p. 88). Part of what Jonasson (2007) is trying to convey, is that following is an important part of the process of learning. So too is leading. What is unique about the guided walking tour is that, as co-producers of the tour attendees can both follow and lead. This creates, as Jonasson (2007) highlights, "perhaps [the most] important conditions for achieving displacement of limits between what is, and what we want reality to be, and for creating associative connections and emotional intensities" (p. 88). If attendees allow the guide to lead them, they open the door to not only understanding Toronto as a distinctive place, but also experiencing it as such.

The guided walking tour is aptly positioned to provide people, both locals and tourists, with this experience as it encourages attendees to engage with space through personal experience

and reflection, and through proximity. Each of these elements are inexorably linked to the practice of walking. A virtual tour of Toronto, or any other city, is unlikely to elicit the same distinctive place experience as a physical guided walking tour. Guided walking tours are a powerful tool for cultural interpretation. The following section explores this idea further.

6.3 Walking Tours as a Tool for Cultural Interpretation

Since walking tours are so aptly positioned to convey and foster distinctive place experiences, their potential as tools for cultural interpretation is great and, many communities have been to recognize this potential (Aldenhuisen & Miller, 2016; Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015; Barlett, 2002; Bendiner-Viani, 2005; Butler, 2007; Markwell et al., 2004; Rabotić, 2008). As discussed in the literature review, many places, due to globalization are losing their sense of local particularity. Losing this sense of particularity limits a places cultural and social capital – each of which are drivers of economic growth (Landry, 2008; Markwell et al., 2004; Massey, 1991). Guided walking tours, in harnessing the soft power of these kinds of capital can not only help places reclaim their identity, but also shape and share it. This is what is being done by organizations such as Jane’s Walks.

In some cases, guided walking tours have been used to perpetuate, misrepresent, or ignore specific aspects of a place (Hallin & Dobers, 2012; Modlin et al., 2011; Weiler & Yu, 2015). However, if championed by locals, as the Tour Guys tours are, who state explicitly their own biases and acknowledge that their knowledge is not expansive, guided walking tours can minimize misrepresentation. Further, that guided tours present place in a subjective way should be looked at as a strength, not a weakness. Cities and the places they contain are not fixed, they are in constant flux. It is therefore impossible to present a place objectively. When tours seek to present sites as such, they become misrepresented. Tours must engage with space through, as

Overend (2012) argues, “an open, relational, performative and self-reflexive touring process that recognizes its place in the site that it tours, and acknowledges the inevitability of the exclusions and selections that it operates through” (p. 53). This is of course not easy, and involves a certain level of self-awareness not only of the tour, but of the tour guide himself. However, when the complex role of the tour and the guide is understood, the guided tour, as Overend suggests,

Becomes a particularly valuable way to engage with a site as an inherently process-based and relational construct, as the tour itself is a process, with the group undertaking a journey, moving through space, encountering and becoming part of its relationships. (p. 53)

Despite a growing awareness of the benefits of guided walking tours, existing literature on how walking tours ought to be designed does not sufficiently address their complexity (Best, 2012; Meged, 2010; Weiler & Black, 2015; Zillinger et al., 2012). Yet, it is imperative that individuals or organizations embarking on the design of a walking tour are aware of the complexity of this practice. For individuals or organizations to be adequately prepared to design walking tours which foster distinctive place experiences, more research needs to be conducted (Weiler & Black, 2015). This research is important because guided walking tours can present communities with many opportunities, such as fostering local identity, acting as a tool for place-branding and marketing as well as destination planning, and fostering economic growth and development. Further, the effects of walking tours in all their forms, have implications from planning, tourism, organizational, educational, geographical and branding perspectives (Jonasson, 2007). However, due a lack of knowledge and resources available, communities are not able properly design or understand the effects of guided walking tours. They are therefore often unable to fully take part in the tangible and intangible benefits they can provide.

One example of a guided walking tour that provides larger opportunities to its community is a tour created by Jay Brown in Bixton, London (Harrison, 2010). Her tour provides tourists

and locals with a way to access and learn about black culture in her community and, to promote black heritage (Harrison, 2010). In doing so, Brown promotes and commemorates black heritage in her community. Her tour opens the door not only for tourists, but locals as well, to see a culture that is often invisible (Harrison, 2010). As a as a means for cultural interpretation, Brown's tour acts as a small-scale intervention which has the potential to change the way tourists and locals experience not her communities culture, and its heritage (Harrison, 2010).

Guided walking tours have the potential to offer more than offer a superficial introduction to a place. To do so, they need to mediate place experience in ways that connect attendees to social, spatial, and cultural processes. However, as mentioned above, tour guiding is a complex practice that is not yet fully understood. Additionally, there is a limited understanding of how tour guiding relates to sense of place. Findings from this study suggest that guided walking tours and sense of place are inextricably linked, whether tour guiding companies are aware of this or not. Further, this study suggests that guided walking tours have the potential to change the way people think and act by presenting them with distinctive place experiences. Therefore, guided walking tours as they interact with sense of place can be a powerful means for social and cultural transformation. Successful guided walking tours as they foster sense of place can help communities retain a sense of local place and its particularity.

6.4 Recommendations

Successful guided walking tours do not happen by accident. They must be designed and presented with care. Below are a few recommendations that are important to consider when designing and presenting a guided walking tour. These recommendations are by no means exhaustive but instead are meant to start the conversation around effective guided walking tour design and sense of place.

The Design

1. The design of the walking tour needs to be flexible so that it can accommodate our ever-changing landscapes and the changing interests and wants of attendees.
2. The tour should be viewed as a “simultaneity of stories-so-far” and never as a fixed story (Massey, 2005, p. 9).
3. Tour guides should be afforded freedom to adjust and adapt the tour as they feel is appropriate.
4. As the tour takes place in a short amount of time, it is not possible to include every place or every story. Be mindful of what is and is not included, and why?
5. Speak to members of the community, what constitutes their sense of place? Including their suggestions on the tour will provide one avenue for attendees to experience heterogeneous space and congruence.

The Presentation

1. A social, friendly, and welcoming atmosphere should be created at the start of the tour.
2. Heterogeneous space should be presented. Unscripted opportunities should be provided for attendees to interact with this space.
3. Linear narratives should be built upon throughout the course of the tour which include both historical and current knowledge.
4. The guide should bring his personally to the tour by including personal anecdotes and his own experience with place.
5. Both current, and real-time examples should be used to demonstrate how places function. As Schmit (2010) states, this will create a complex matrix of meanings.

6. Time should be created for encouraging attendees to reflect on their own personal experiences.
7. Attendees should be allowed to apply whichever participatory tactic they prefer.

6.5 Study Limitations

Following the qualitative research paradigm, this study is based on people's experiences and their inherent and interpreted meanings. For this reason, this study has focused solely on one particular context, the guided walking tour, to explore, discover, describe and create new concepts by analyzing the ideas and thoughts of the attendees, guides, and organizers (Baxter & Eyles, 1996). Therefore, this study is constrained to this group of people, time, and setting. This group was relatively small, consisting of 9 interviews, alongside seven and a half hours of participant observation. Consequently, this research is unable to represent the full spectrum of people that attend walking tours. Despite this, the generalizability of this study was enhanced through other means, such as through detailing the approaches used to ensure rigour in both data collection and analyses in Chapter 3. This was done to allow for the theoretical underpinnings of this research to be effectively used in the logic and design of future research (Yin, 2003).

Another limitation of this study is that it primarily looked at what, and how, certain places were featured on the Downtown tour, but did not engaged with how these places were not represented. Examining this, would likely provide further insights into how sense of place is fostered during the tour.

Lastly, due to the fact that participant observation was conducted in the role of participant as observer, there is a possibility that guides and attendees acted differently than they would have if I had been a complete observer. However, I did not perceive that my presence was influencing the behaviour of either the guides or the attendees.

6.6 Areas for Future Research

Currently, there are only a few studies that examine the connection between sense of place and guided walking tours (Bendiner-Viani, 2005; Gentry, 2007; Guano, 2015; Hallin & Dobers, 2012). Gaining a better understanding of the role sense of place plays on guided walking tours has profound implications not only for guided walking tours, but additionally for our understanding of place experience. To gain this understanding, more research needs to be conducted that focuses on the attendee's specific experiences. Traditionally, the focus of guided walking tour literature has focused on the guide, while paying little attention to how the attendees respond to the guide. Since the role of the guide as a mediator is so important, a more detailed investigation of the effectiveness of techniques used for the four domains of mediation is needed.

Tour guiding research is currently not an interdisciplinary field of study. This is one of the reasons why tour guiding research has not, until recently, engaged with ideas such as place experience and sense of place, as these are ideas that stem mainly from literature on cities. Interdisciplinary research on guided walking tours will for example, help city planners concretely discuss creating a sense of place within their city through the development and use of guided walking tours. Further, it will allow the guided walking tour to grow in an interdisciplinary manner and be of better use for a variety of applications. For instance, heritage professionals, museums, municipalities, and more broadly cultural planners.

Interdisciplinary research will be necessary to further examine legibility and place attachment on walking tours as this study has identified them as potentially lacking on walking tours. It is unclear however, exactly why this was or, if this impacted the attendees sense of place

in Toronto. These are two specific elements of place experience that need to be further explored if place experience is to be fully understood on guided walking tours.

Most of the research that has been conducted on walking tours has been done with respect to tourists. However, it is not just tourists that attend walking tours. Jane's Walks for example, founded in 2006, is an organization that offers free locally organized walking tours which are primarily attended by residents. Other tour companies in Toronto also receive a significant number of local attendees depending on the time of year. Despite this fact there is little discussion in the literature on guided tours, or in the sense of place literature, in regards to how locals and tourists experience place differently (Kianicka et al., 2006).

Guided tours, as they receive large numbers of both tourists and locals provide an excellent opportunity to look more closely at what shapes peoples relations to places, particularly those from 'insider' and 'outsider' perspectives (Kianicka et al., 2006). As Kianicka et. al. argue (2006), an understanding of this information is important when thinking about what constitutes a regions cultural landscape. This is because guided tours, as a part of the recreation and tourism sector, can play a significant role in not only how cultural landscapes are viewed but also in how they are developed (Kianicka et al., 2006). Further, as Ewert and Stewart (2004) suggest, to avoid landscape conflicts and enhance sustainable landscape development that conforms with tourists' and locals' needs, an understanding of both parties' sense of place must be understood and evaluated. Guided tours offer a unique opportunity to understand a place, but more research needs to be conducted to uncover how exactly this understanding occurs. Gaining this understanding has profound implications not only for guided tours, but for our understanding of place and the landscapes they create.

7. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to better understand how guided walking tours foster sense of place through a constructivist worldview. Using participant observation and interviews, this study suggests that guided walking tours have the potential to change the way people think and act by presenting them with distinctive place experiences. Therefore, guided walking tours as they interact with sense of place, can be a powerful means for social and cultural transformation. As such, guided walking tours must be viewed as more than a static and superficial introduction to a place. They can have positive implications from planning, tourism, organizational, educational, geographical and branding perspectives (Jonasson, 2007). However, communities will only realize the benefits from guided walking tours if they design and use them effectively. For this reason, this thesis has identified a few ways in which this can be done. These recommendations are by no means exhaustive and more research needs to be done to better understand how walking tours can foster distinctive place experiences.

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