

The Experience of Hosting Friends and Relatives for Immigrants

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 the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

A substantial amount of travel decisions are influenced to a varying degree by personal relationships between visitors and residents. Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) travel is a term commonly used to refer to this form of tourism, but it has received relatively little attention from academics compared with other forms of leisure and business travel, and has been generally disregarded by tourism practitioners who traditionally target 'high yield' visitors for their destinations. In addition, those studies that have considered VFR travel have typically focussed on visitors rather than hosts, reflecting the business centric tendency of the industry overall. VFR travel, therefore, is an under-considered phenomenon in general, especially in non-economic considerations, and particularly lacking in perspectives of resident hosts and communities.

The potential benefits for a community who host VFR travellers are manifold. VFR visitors do spend in the local economy, and encourage resident touristic activity within the immediate community and regionally. Residents, as hosts, offer reason for repeat visitation, are a direct and influential communication channel to potential visitors, provide visitors with experiences perceived to be more authentic than other forms of tourism, encouraging the production of word-of-mouth marketing, and constructing more nuanced and layered understandings of the community as both a destination and a place to live.

Immigration and VFR have substantial overlap, as immigration creates expanding social cross-border networks, affecting potential demand for tourism related activity for both the home country as immigrants return for temporary visits, but also in communities that receive immigrants. Tourism and immigration have some additional similarities; both are forms of human travel, and although different in several aspects, involve newcomers attempting to interpret and make sense of a new environment.

This thesis is interested in the experiences of immigrants who host visiting friends and relatives. A narrative analysis of nine participants from six countries covers their immigration, settlement, and hosting experiences: the links between these experiences are presented as a whole to add context and further meaning that could otherwise be lost through thematic detachment. Narratives were co-constructed between participants and researcher in conversations that were video recorded and edited. The use of video served as an engaging medium to elicit stories, reflection and clarification in subsequent interviews, as participants reviewed their own narrative videos as well as those of others, generating a broader co-construction of knowledge around the experience of hosting stimulated by a greater variety and input of different voices.

Participants explained how hosting friends and family in their new homes provided a distinct context. For recent newcomers unfamiliar with their surroundings the chance to host can provide reason and inspiration to engage with their new communities, shifting their role from outsider to guide and interpreter. Participants were also able to interact in culturally and personally familiar relationships that offered a mutuality of care, the type of co-presence often unavailable in

the early days of settlement. Hosting often helped participants feel more stable, and was a positive influence on their ability to cope through the turbulence of settlement.

The leisure context of many early hosting experiences facilitated participants' engagement with the new community, its activities and places. Experiencing the new community in a leisure context with familiar guests who share a cultural and personal history provided a rich and valuable space for evocative co-constructions of meaning and knowledge. Places were experienced as a vacation, and attachments formed to places that are now the backdrop to a new routine. Participants also shared many examples of sharing places and activities that were important to them in their new community with their visitors, for example places of work or particular leisure activities. The typically positive reactions of visitors' fresh eyes reified the value and significance of these spaces forging stronger attachments for participants. Memories were created between host and guest, feeding bonds and connections between distant friends and relatives, and helped to create a sense of home in a foreign community.

As participants settled, the motivation for hosting experiences often shifted from leisure with implications for integration and attachment, to relationship maintenance between significant family members and friends. Sustaining connections with parents, siblings, and old friends, and establishing relationships with new nieces, nephews, and grandchildren often became the priority. What was once an exotic place becomes normal, for the participants as residents, but often for their guests as frequent repeat visitors, with trips solidifying the importance of relationships and demonstration of belonging. The absence of visits from significant relations was, for some participants, a cause for tension, perceived as a lack of desire and interest to know who they really are and how their environment has shaped their experiences and identities.

There are implications for tourism practitioners and marketers, those who work with immigrant populations, and academia. Tourism practitioners should consider the influence and roles that immigrant residents (and all residents) have in affecting tourism volume and activity to their destinations. Participants caused many people to visit, participating in numerous activities, and acting as cultural brokers to their guests providing experiences tailored to their interests and values. For many participants their first times visiting regional destinations and neighbourhoods, attractions, and festivals were inspired by visiting friends and relatives, helping increase awareness and exposure to a resident base of what is available on an ongoing basis in their communities. In addition, participants often spent their own vacation with visiting friends and family within the region, keeping their tourism spending in the local economy, an activity that is ignored by all tourism economic measures.

For professionals who work with immigrant groups, the appreciation of the value of hosting experiences in helping newcomers overcome a sense of isolation, especially in those early days, should be helpful. Of course not all immigrants are in a position to host, or have friends or relatives that are able to visit, but for those who do it is an interesting way to encourage a sense of belonging and raise confidence that has impacts beyond the trip itself. In addition, experiences of place

shared with a familiar visitor help generate a sense of home, as old and new worlds are linked and merged through the co-construction of memories and the accrument of physical souvenirs form lasting attachments to places and activities.

Methodologically this thesis offers an example of the use of video as a tool in the co-construction of narratives, a data collection method that is relatively unusual in the field, but has implications in the pursuit of integrating the multiple voices of those affected by a phenomenon into the public narrative production. Theoretically this thesis offers discussion on the role that hosting can play, drawing on leisure and tourism studies, and research on immigration and integration, to offer insight into the experiences facilitated by the distinct interactions between resident, visitor, and place, that only happen in a VFR travel context. The narrative arc of immigration, settlement, and hosting provides a useful and revealing framework for the understanding of hosting experiences, and their role in community integration, identity formation, relationship maintenance, and overall well-being for immigrants.

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1. Introduction

A significant number of tourism trips are motivated, or at least influenced by, the desire to visit friends or relatives (Backer, 2007, 2010; Seaton 1994). In 2010, more than one quarter (27%) of all international trips were made for the primary reason of visiting friends and relatives (VFR) (UNWTO, 2011) demonstrating both economic and social relevance for many individuals and communities worldwide. The term *visiting friends and relatives* (VFR) is primarily used to describe one of four main tourism motivation categories along with ‘pleasure’, ‘business’ and ‘other’ when measuring visitor volume and activity, a classification that is “enshrined in the rubric of countless international, national, and regional visitor studies and standard to their analysis” (Seaton, 1994, p. 316).

However, despite the substantial volume of VFR the phenomenon as a whole has received comparatively little attention from both academics and practitioners alike (Backer, 2007, 2011; Lee, Morrison, Lheto, Webb & Reid, 2005; Morrison & O’Leary, 1995; Poel, Masurel & Nijkamp, 2006; Scheyvens, 2007; Seaton & Palmer, 1997; Seaton & Tagg, 1995) with even fewer studies considering the experiences of residents who host, entertain, feed, and guide their guests around their communities (Bischoff & Koenig-Lewis, 2007; Shani & Uriely, 2012; Young, Corsun & Baloglu, 2007). For every VFR traveller, there must be, by definition, a host. The focus of much research on the travelling party within the VFR experience demonstrates the marketing driven interests of the industry which is in turn reflected by many in academia, and leaves a substantial gap in knowledge on the impacts and implications for communities and individuals who welcome visitors into their homes and communities. Those who have considered hosting have linked the experience for individual hosts to enhancing the sense of home within spatial boundaries (Larsen, 2008), described it as a catalyst to improved familiarity with the local area (Shani & Uriely, 2012),

and positioned it as a forum for meeting social obligations and strengthening family bonds (Havitz, 2007; Larsen, Urry & Axhausen, 2007; Mason, 2004). Hosting is something many of us do, perhaps as often as we travel for leisure, and is a part of our individual and communal lived experience on a significant yet under-researched scale.

An additional and important layer to VFR is the role of migration, a common prerequisite for much of this type of tourism (Asiedu, 2008; Brown, 2010; Feng & Page, 2000; Uriely, 2010; Williams & Hall, 2000). In this era of rapid globalisation (Cohen & Cohen, 2012) immigration affects a greater number of people than ever before. Not only do immigrants use their vacation time and travel funds to visit their home communities (Bolognani, 2014; Hung, Xiao & Yang, 2013; Mason, 2004; Pearce, 2012), they also establish demand patterns for ancestral and diaspora tourism as the generations pass (Asiedu, 2005, 2008; Brown, 2010; Duval, 2003; Feng & Page, 2000; Gamage & King, 1999; Hollinshead, 2004a; Hughes & Allen, 2010; Jackson, 1990; Langlois, Theodore & Ineson, 1999; Meethan, 2004; Morgan, Pritchard & Pride, 2003; Nguyen & King, 2004; Seaton & Tagg, 1995; Ziakas & Costa, 2010). In addition immigrants also become attractions and triggers of travel to specific destinations, an important consideration for communities with high levels of immigration (Bischoff & Koenig-Lewis, 2007; Feng & Page, 2000; Jackson, 1990; Jang, Yu & Pearson, 2003; Larsen, 2008; Larsen et al., 2007; Min-En, 2006; Prescott, Wilton, Dadayli & Dickson, 2005; Shanka & Taylor, 2003; Williams & Hall, 2000; Williams, King, Warnes & Patterson, 2000).

Acculturation and integration are terms that refer to the adaptation of a minority group “to cultural patterns and values of a dominant group” (Bauböck, 1996, p. 10), and the successful integration of immigrants is vital for all of society to prosper (Frideres, 2008; Horolets, 2012; Penninx, 2005). Those who study immigration have considered issues of integration extensively

(e.g. Berry, 2001; Cheong, Edwards, Goulbourne & Solomos, 2007; Pedraza-Bailey, 1990; Portes, 1997; Rudmin, 2003), and some have considered the links between leisure participation and the social cohesion of immigrant groups (Stodolska, 1998, 2000; Stodolska & Yi, 2003; Tirone & Shaw, 1997); but few, if any, have considered the role hosting can play in the integration process. Therefore a significant gap in the literature and industry discourse exists surrounding the experiences of immigrants as hosts; both to aid destination marketing efforts in an increasingly innovative and competitive global market (Baker & Cameron, 2008), and to understand the role and potential of hosting in improving community integration.

1.1. Purpose Statement and Research Objectives

The purpose of the current research, therefore, is to explore the role that hosting visiting friends and relatives from their natal home communities plays in immigrants' lives. Specifically, the research objectives seek to understand the role of hosting in relation to an individual's sense of place and community integration, the building of social and other capitals, and effects on identity to develop a fuller understanding of what the experience means.

The thesis considers the experiences of immigrants in the Toronto area who have had friends or relatives from their home communities stay with them for a temporary period of time for broadly defined leisure purposes. Toronto was chosen for a number of reasons; the high immigrant population, the familiarity of Toronto as a community and destination by myself (having worked in destination marketing in the city for 4 years prior to starting this PhD), and the potential for implications and knowledge transfer. This research was approached in a qualitative manner using a narrative analysis methodology, focusing on the lived experiences of the participants by collecting and co-constructing their meanings and understandings associated with

their hosting. The research attempts to holistically re-present these hosting experiences within the context of their broader lived experiences in order to consider the links to their immigration and settlement experience, and on the relationships with people, places and culture.

It is hoped that the implications of this research can provide inspiration for more community and holistic approaches to tourism marketing and service provision, as well as for those who work with immigrants in integration services. Additionally, there are academic implications as this topic has yet to be significantly explored. As well the methodological approach is relatively unusual in the field of tourism studies, and it is hoped it will lead to further discussion and application of innovative and useful ways to generate knowledge and understanding.

2. Literature Review

A literature review on various related topics provides an overview of the research topics and illuminates gaps and relevance for the current research interest. Initial discussion will focus on VFR, specifically its significant influence on tourism activity, the evolving conceptualisation and methodologies applied to the subject, the impacts of hosting on residents, and the linkage between VFR and immigration. In addition, a review of the political landscape of destination marketing helps explain the apparent lack of engagement by the tourism sector with the VFR market. The final section will consider immigrants' participation in leisure and implications for integration with the host culture and community.

2.1. VFR Travel Research

2.1.1. The politics of destination marketing.

As already mentioned, the term *visiting friends and relatives* (VFR) is primarily used by destination marketers to segment visitors into one of four visitor categories (alongside *pleasure*, *business* and *other*) (Seaton, 1994). VFR, in its common usage, is therefore a marketing term, and like much early tourism research in general has typically been framed within a business context (Ren, Pritchard & Morgan, 2010; Tribe, 2004; Uriely, 2010). The implied intended audience are Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), who generally aim to target high spending visitors to their destinations, or more explicitly visitors who stay in hotels (Ford & Peeper, 2008; Gretzel, Fesenmaier, Formica & O'Leary, 2006). A brief discussion of the DMO sector in North America follows to provide context to further discussion.

Destination marketing originated as an organised effort by the business community within a city to attract conventions (Ford & Peeper, 2008). These groups of businesses formed into Convention and Visitors' Bureaus (CVBs), the first of which was established in Detroit, Michigan in 1896 (Ford & Peeper, 2008). CVBs typically sell the destination and provide delegates with visitor information (chiefly on the paying CVB members such as local hotels, venues, restaurants, attractions etc.). In the 1950s, as leisure travel became more popular and accessible, these organisations often subsumed the role of leisure vacation marketing, and thus the tag of Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) (Ford & Peeper, 2008; Gartrell, 1988; Wang, 2011). The role of convention sales and pleasure tourism marketing typically falls to the same organisation in most North American cities, and they present themselves as either the DMO or CVB (or both) depending on the context and audience. The process and study of destination marketing is therefore a consequence of, and consistent with, the desire for economic growth and development rather than broad community enhancement as the benefits are primarily for the paying members of DMOs and CVBs.

DMOs take the primary role in facilitating interaction between inter-sectorial businesses, or similar service providers that often view each other as competitors, in order to benefit the destination as a whole (Pike, 2004); a highly political and delicate function. At the National and State/Provincial level DMOs are generally funded by the public in one form or another, with marketing initiatives often receiving partnership funding from the private sector. At the regional and city level funding strategies become more varied. The room tax (sometimes referred to as a *bed* or *hotel tax*) is often the core source of revenue for U.S. and Canadian city DMOs (HAC, 2012; Pike, 2004). Around 85% of North American city level DMOs are funded in this way (DMAI, 2008; Ford & Peeper, 2008); half of those receive payment directly by the hotels (DMAI,

2008) (as a *levy* as taxes by definition are collected by governments), and the remainder are funded by the government who collects and redistributes a certain percentage or fixed amount to the DMO (Ford, 2008). Therefore, DMOs are typically incentivized to improve hotel performance in order to increase their marketing budgets. The hotel sector is notoriously short-sighted, often run by multi-national companies, which can lead to a focus on the immediate future at the expense of the destination's longevity (Ford & Peeper, 2008; Pike, 2004). Tying a destination's marketing budget to the performance of the hotel community politically aligns the DMO with that group over others.

Tourism is the significant source of hotels' revenue, more so than any other sector that might be involved with a DMO (Statistics Canada, 2004), which leads to a substantial presence in many DMOs' board of governors (Ford & Peeper, 2008). A concern, however, is to what extent hotel representatives "who are mostly accountable to their ownership for short-term profit results and are seldom long-term residents of the community" (Ford, 2008, p. 129) can put aside their own pressures and biases to push the DMO in the best direction for the entire destination (Sheehan, Ritchie & Hudson, 2007). This means that for many DMOs, despite their growing stakeholder diversity (Wang, 2011), putting "heads in beds... is their main mission, the source of their funding, and the best and most objective measure" (Ford, 2008, p. 129) of their success. Arguably the community, its culture and people, are the common resource that is leveraged by profit driven DMOs and their members who commoditize communities for their own benefit.

This context of destination marketing helps lay the basis of why VFR has often been disregarded by both practitioners, and the shaping of a research agenda within tourism academe that is often heavily influenced by the desires of the industries which are the subjects of research.

2.1.1.1. Destination marketing in Ontario.

As the geographical focus of this thesis is the Toronto region, a summary of the regional destination marketing structure and political landscape is worth making. The DMO for the Toronto region is Tourism Toronto (where I was employed prior to conducting this PhD). Founded in 1926, as the Toronto Convention and Tourist Association, the organization now boasts more than 1200 members from several tourism related industries (Tourism Toronto, 2012a). Since 2003 Tourism Toronto has undergone two significant shifts regarding its role and funding mechanisms that have potential implications for the nature and scope of the organisation's work. This section is not meant to criticise Tourism Toronto, as within the discourse of destination marketing they have proven to be a very successful and innovative organisation. Rather, it is a critical reflection on the concept and activity of destination marketing, and an identification of its culture and power structures with relevance to VFR travel activity and engagement.

In 2003 the impact of the SARS outbreak was devastating for the Toronto tourism sector (PKF Consulting, 2004), and this time of difficulty inspired a new sense of collaboration among government and businesses. In response to the downturn, the Ontario government reduced the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) for accommodations by 3% in an effort to help boost the hard hit tourism sector. The hotel community in Toronto coalesced and decided to collaborate to improve the destination marketing efforts of the city. In 2004 the Greater Toronto Hotel Association (GTHA) implemented the Destination Marketing Fee (DMF) (HAC, 2012; MTCS, 2009). The DMF was a 3% fee that took the space left by the PST reduction. It was collected by the hotels and managed by the GTHA, who then employed Tourism Toronto as their industry's DMO. Prior to the DMF, Tourism Toronto's annual budget was in the region of \$9 million and made up principally of member dues and municipal funding (City of Toronto, 2003). By 2006 Tourism

Toronto's budget had ballooned to \$31.6 million, with the DMF representing around 85% of the organisation's income (Tourism Toronto, 2006). A Board of Governors and various committees oversee the operations, and government agencies were (and still are) important partners, but no funding or official influence was received from any levels of government. Tourism Toronto was entirely funded and managed by the private sector, with a predominant influence from the hotel sector.

In 2009, after a series of consultations were held with more than 500 stakeholders (MTCS, 2012a), the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS) published a document titled *Discovering Ontario: A report on the future of tourism* (MTCS, 2009). The report included twenty recommendations to improve tourism performance across the province. One recommendation suggested the creation of new and fixed tourism regions, each with a Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) that would fit into a province wide framework and essentially serve as a DMO, with some additional destination management responsibilities. The aim was to streamline tourism marketing and funding channels, as many regions had numerous overlapping groups providing destination marketing and visitor servicing. The report coincided with the Ontario Government's announcement of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) as a replacement of the PST and Federal General Sales Tax (GST) (Maurino, 2009). The HST removed the ability for the Provincial government to reduce sales taxes on specific services, and this meant that the 3% reduction for accommodations was no longer possible. Therefore, a dual change for Ontario's tourism marketers was laid out; DMO boundaries and scope were being redesigned by the *Discovering Ontario* report, and the taxation structure that allowed Tourism Toronto (and a couple of other Ontario city DMOs) to be funded by the private sector without placing additional financial burden on hotels and their customers was abolished.

The initial implications for Tourism Toronto meant that the organisation took on the role and responsibilities of an RTO as outlined in the *Discovering Ontario* report, included a change in boundaries. Previously Tourism Toronto engaged a membership base of businesses according to their interest to be members rather than a strict geographical boundary; for example tourism businesses from Niagara and Muskoka were members of Tourism Toronto in order to benefit from the international tourism market and relationships that the organisation could offer. Now there were thirteen RTOs with distinct regions established, and as RTO 5 Tourism Toronto strictly represents the municipal areas of Toronto, Mississauga and Brampton (all notable for their high immigrant populations). The other significant implication regards funding. The HST removed the 3% deduction in PST that the accommodation industry had enjoyed. Prior to HST implementation the Ministry negotiated with the tourism sector and RTOs to provide transitional funding from July 2010 (when the HST started) until December 2012, with levels to reduce substantially after that time. Under the RTO structure the funding was based on the amount of additional funds the HST would create for the Province that was now collecting 3% more tax on accommodations than it had since 2004, and therefore was tied to the recent past performance of the hotels. However, the funding was now collected by the government in the form of a tax (as part of the HST), and then distributed to the RTOs, including Tourism Toronto, by the government. During this period the funding for Tourism Toronto remained in line with its recent budget under the DMF system, although instead of receiving a fluctuating amount on a monthly basis because of the hotel sector performance, the funding was provided for a fixed term. The key changes are that Tourism Toronto started to receive its funding from a public entity rather than a commercial group, and on a consistent, albeit limited fixed term.

I have no strong evidence to suggest that this had dramatic implications for the work pursued by Tourism Toronto, but as a former employee of four years who left two months prior to the implementation of the RTO structure, I imagine that there was some slight but significant shift in responding to the influence of the major funding partner. The hotel industry is notorious for being short-term goal oriented, and government involvement might help instil a more holistic view of the impacts that tourism can have on a community, both positive and negative (Gretzel et. al., 2006). This change in funding structure, I feel, was a positive one overall that provided a greater likelihood that aspects of destination marketing that would benefit from long-term foresight might be addressed.

However, the longevity of the Province's funding at the original level for all RTOs was not long lasting. The Province initially committed \$65 million every 12 months to all 13 RTOs combined over the transitional period from July 2010 to December 2012, with RTOs receiving a proportion dependent on tourism activity and potential. After this time the funding was reduced to a combined \$40 million for all 13 RTOs, leaving a significant gap in budgets (Tourism Toronto alone had been receiving approximately \$25m a year). The original recommendation by the Provincial Government for sustainable RTO funding was to introduce a Regional Tourism Levy (RTL), a form of the DMF, where the hotel community within a region would vote on establishing a fee of a certain percentage that, if passed by the majority of voters, would be legislatively enforced and collected by the Province and distributed directly back to the RTO for marketing purposes. However, this met with industry resistance and was not adopted (L. Deneau, senior tourism policy and research coordinator at the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, personal communication, March 23rd 2012). RTOs are therefore not able to enforce a DMF or hotel levy, but they are allowed to initiate a voluntary scheme for hotels to contribute to destination

marketing efforts; and this is what Tourism Toronto have done. The Destination Marketing Program (DMP) is a 3% fee that is voluntarily collected by participating hotels within Tourism Toronto's boundaries, and is administered by the GTHA and provided to Tourism Toronto (GTHA, 2014). The most recent documentation publicly available on both the GTHA and Tourism Toronto websites (as of August 2014) does not state the amount generated by the DMP, number or names of participating hotels, or even the overall budget of Tourism Toronto.

Instinctively, implementation of the DMP seems an awkward task; hotels are extremely price sensitive and incredibly reluctant to add additional customer fees. The work of Tourism Toronto no doubt provides benefits to the destination, but it may be perceived by some hotels as a duplication of their efforts; I suspect there is a risk hotels may prefer to not charge their customers an additional fee for a central destination wide marketing program and (short-sightedly) pursue their own marketing and sales efforts. It is possible that there will be a split in the hotel community, and those who perceive to benefit from the actions of Tourism Toronto likely to participate, and this may exacerbate the influence on Tourism Toronto to focus on those partners who participate at the expense of those who do not. This distinction may well fall between large centrally located hotels, and smaller hotels and those outside of the downtown core. The absence of a legislated hotel levy means a more limited variety of hotel voices involved in Toronto's destination marketing. Without research into this delicate subject, of which there is little benefit for Tourism Toronto to make public, it is hard to draw strong conclusions. However, it is hoped that this discussion provides some insight into the political nature and tensions of destination marketing in Toronto and beyond, and that the incentives for DMOs to market VFR travel and engage their residents as influencers and participants in tourism activity discursively falls beyond the interests,

mandates, and perceptions of those who are involved in and influence the marketing of Toronto as a tourism destination.

The relevance for this research is that destination marketing in Toronto has undergone, and continues to go through substantial interruptions and changes in political influence. The likelihood of support for a VFR related campaign depends on the desires and interests of those who fund and manage the process. The insertion of the Province into the balance of power inspires greater optimism that programs not perceived to be directly beneficial to the hotel community might have a better chance of materializing. However, with the long term funding of Tourism Toronto's activities including a hotel levy of some level (in the form of the DMP), the explicit influence of the participating hotels will increase, and the level of communal enthusiasm for VFR type programs will be expected to decrease. However, having the Province as a funding stakeholder of Tourism Toronto, even though at a reduced level compared with the transition period, instils a more varied balance of voices at the decision table than there was prior to the RTO implementation.

The political context of the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC), the Provincial tourism marketing arm of the Ministry, compared to the larger city DMOs has allowed it to state an interest in the VFR market with greater capacity. The OTMPC had suggested an interest in working with other Ontario RTOs to generate visits from Toronto immigrants and their visiting friends and family (L. Guiry, VP marketing, OTMPC, personal communication, September 13th 2011), however these efforts seem to have fallen by the wayside in more recent marketing plans. In addition, a report available on the Ministry website states that DMOs should:

...better equip hosts to become willing ambassadors capable of exciting their guests about Ontario... [and that] promoting VFR within the host community rather than

the potential guest population would seem to make good economic sense. Hosts are, by definition, easier to reach from a simple geographic perspective... [and] are receptive to the idea of promoting the province and already exhibit the required behaviours. (MTCS, 2011)

The fact that the provincial level DMO and Ministry responsible for tourism policy have published research and begun to engage markets that demonstrate an interest in VFR provides a relatively positive and encouraging environment in which to create this type of research. There are, of course, lots of barriers for VFR to be taken as a serious touristic force, but there are growing glimmers of interest among those who are responsible for marketing Toronto and Ontario in innovative and efficient ways.

2.1.2. Early VFR research

As a result of the discursive disregard for the significance of VFR travel and its potential, early VFR studies focussed on revealing the true importance of the market for different destinations. Jackson (1990) is generally acknowledged to have authored a seminal study with his rhetorically titled paper *VFR tourism: is it underestimated?* (Backer, 2007, 2008; Hing & Dimmock, 1997). Jackson (1990) reviewed secondary visitor data and made several foundational observations, including VFR visitors' extended length of stay, their use of more local businesses causing fewer economic leakages, and the reduced capital investment required to accommodate them.

Most significantly however, Jackson (1990) exposed a key flaw based on the practice of visitors defining themselves in surveys as motivated by pleasure, business, VFR or other; "whilst straightforward holiday-making tourists are very unlikely to classify themselves as VFRs, persons who are VFRs could readily, and honestly, state that they were [pleasure] holidaymakers" (p. 11). Ultimately many visitors who may be considered VFR by tourism professionals will actually record themselves as pleasure visitors resulting in VFR being undervalued, and pleasure tourism

inflated, in official statistics (Jackson, 1990; Lee et al., 2005; Moscardo, Pearce, Morrison, Green & O’Leary, 2000).

This definitional issue that permeates through much of the VFR literature (Backer, 2007; Lee et al., 2005; Morrison & O’Leary, 1995; Poel et al., 2006; Seaton & Palmer 1997; Seaton & Tagg, 1995; Young et al., 2007), consolidated with perceptions that VFR visitors do not use paid accommodations (Backer, 2010; Braunlich & Nadkarni, 1995; Feng & Page, 2000) and are immune to marketing efforts (Morrison, Woods, Pearce, Moscardo & Sung, 2000; Morgan et al., 2003) exacerbates and entrenches the low value of VFR among destination marketers.

2.1.2.1. The economic argument for VFR.

As much of the discussion on the lack of attention that VFR has received in practice has focussed on its limited ability to positively impact a community’s economy, a summary of literature that suggests the contrary is a useful starting point. Several authors have found that VFR visitors do spend substantial sums in destinations, and trigger significant activity for the paid accommodation sector. However, there are more nuanced reasons why VFR is economically beneficial to a community that are also discussed.

2.1.2.1.1. Accommodation use and visitor spend.

The literature on VFR is born from a context of proving the market’s worth, and a large number of earlier papers followed Jackson’s (1990) course of proving the economic value VFR in the industry using the accepted measurements of visitor spend and use of paid accommodation (Griffin, 2013d). For example, Braunlich and Nadkarni (1995) looked at VFR tourists’ use of paid accommodation. Their study of the behaviour of *leisure* travellers (the combination of visitors who state main trip purpose of ‘pleasure’ and ‘VFR’) from northern states in the U.S. found 21.4%

of VFR visitors stayed in paid accommodations, compared with 57.1% of pleasure visitors. Of those leisure visitors who stayed in paid accommodation, VFR visitors had a lower daily spend (\$38.67 versus \$47.88) but a longer stay than pleasure visitors (5.7 nights versus 3.3) making the total VFR visitor trip spend higher (\$220.42 versus \$158.00). Various others in different destinations have corroborated these results. For example in a study of visitors to the Sunshine Coast in Australia, Backer (2010) found that 26.0% of VFR visitors used paid accommodation, representing 10.6% of all those who used paid accommodation, and Hu and Morrison (2002) found that 12% of U.S. VFRs used paid accommodations, compared with 55% of non-VFR travellers. In studies using secondary data I found that of all Canadian leisure visitors to Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and Ottawa combined, 21.4% of person nights spent in paid accommodations were attributable to people claiming VFR as their main trip purpose (Griffin, 2011), and that of all person nights spent in paid accommodation in Toronto by international leisure visitors 27.8% were by VFR visitors (Griffin, 2013b). Finally, although many VFR trips have little or no use of paid accommodation in the host's place of residence, it is likely that side trips are at least occasionally taken by both the host and guest to other nearby destinations. For example, Min-En (2006) demonstrated that international students in Australia not only inspire VFR visits to their temporary city of residence, but also used the hosting experience as inspiration to visit other places with their guests. VFR is often, therefore, an important and substantial contributor to regional tourism business and accommodations.

2.1.2.1.2. Diversification of spending.

In comparison to some forms of pleasure tourism that segregates visitors and residents, VFR visitors are more likely to patronise a more diverse range of businesses because of the higher propensity to stay in and visit non-touristic areas of a destination (Havitz, 2007; Scheyvens, 2007).

The economic leakages associated with VFR travel would be expected to be at a much lower level due to the greater proximity to the residential economy and the slower pace of the experience (Asiedu, 2005; Caffyn, 2012; Sandbrook, 2010; Scheyvens, 2007). Tourism is not a single industry, but a composite of outputs from various others such as retail, transport, and food services. Some tourism related industries are reliant on the patronage of tourists, while many others receive custom from residents and visitors alike (Smith, 1988). If the goal is to improve the overall sustainability of a community then distributing visitors' patronage across varied providers should help boost the broader local economy and have a greater overall impact than if consumption is concentrated in a few core tourist zones and corporations, a critique applied to some forms of non-VFR leisure tourism (Mundt, 2011).

The impact of VFR demand on a community has different implications than other forms of tourism. The political capital exercised by residents and their guests through their consumption is likely to be more organic, and changes in demand should be more gradual and in line with resident behaviour overall. Any additional built capital that VFR tourism encourages will be more consistent with the community's multiple voices rather than serving the interests of visitors alone and those who cater to them (Scheyvens, 2007), and will be accessible to residents of the community.

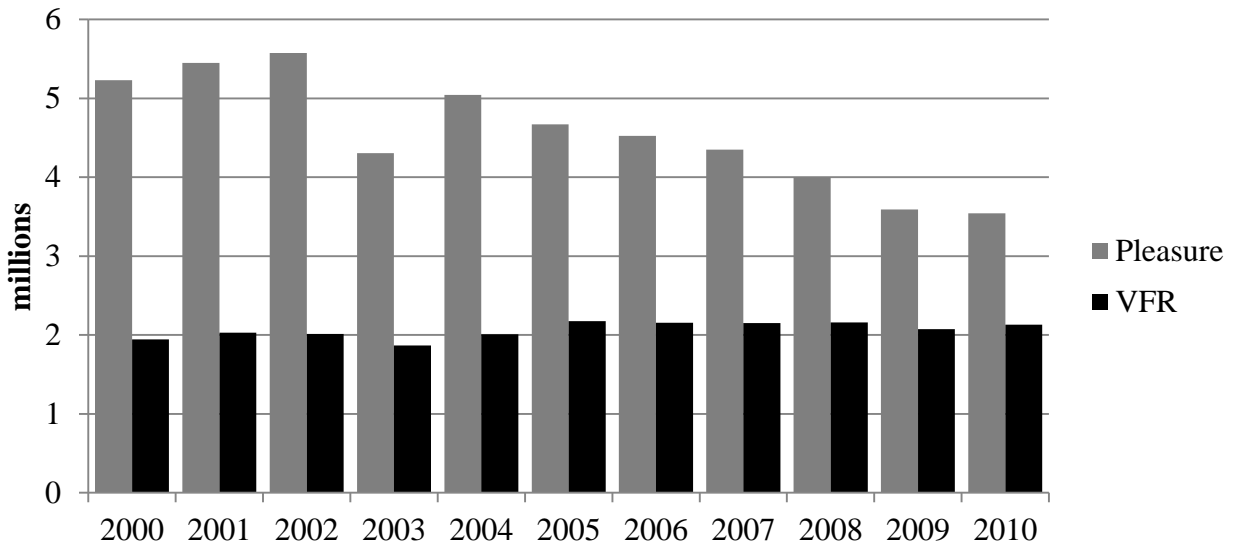
2.1.2.1.3. Demand.

Tourism is notoriously a volatile source of income for destinations, subject to numerous external influences. VFR tourism, however, provides a more stable source of demand, is less prone to some of these concerns and has shown resiliency in times of uncertainty (Scheyvens, 2007). For example, it is affected to a lesser extent by seasonality than other leisure tourism and this helps

offset the peak seasons providing restaurants and attractions with business in the quieter months. This supports the tourism infrastructure which benefits the destination overall, making it a more attractive place for all tourists (Hu & Morrison, 2002; Lehto, Morrison & O’Leary, 2001; Seaton & Palmer, 1997; Seaton & Tagg, 1995; Young et al., 2007).

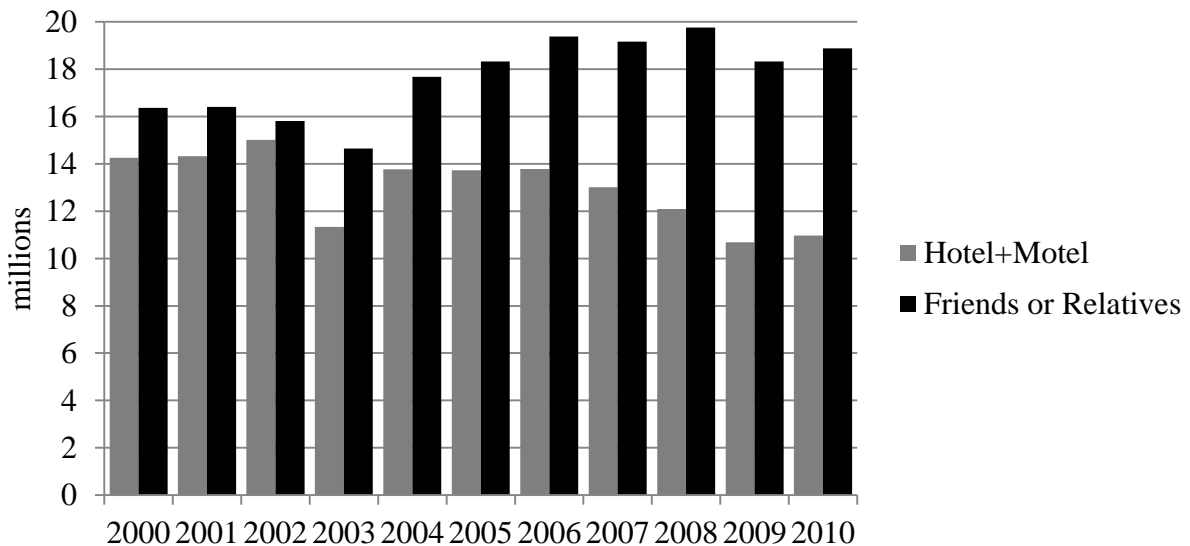
Additionally, in times of severe external threats the demand for VFR can provide communities with a more consistent source of business. For example, the Ontario tourism sectors suffered disastrously after the SARS outbreak in spring 2003. The impact on the hotel sector was extensive, with the last six months of 2003 showing losses of CAD\$339 million and 1.7 million room nights on the same period in 2002 (PKF Consulting, 2004). Figure 1 depicts international (Overseas and U.S.) visitors by pleasure and VFR main trip purposes to Ontario. Figure 2 displays person nights by accommodation type for all trip purposes (VFR, Pleasure, Business and Other) from 2000 to 2010. It is evident that the pleasure visitor volumes, and nights spent in paid accommodations, were affected by a far greater extent than VFR volume and nights spent in unpaid accommodations. Not only was the difference noticeable at the time of the SARS outbreak in 2003, but the recovery is also noticeably dissimilar. VFR visitation has remained relatively constant at around 2 million throughout the decade and posted only a slight decline in 2003. On the contrary, pleasure visitors have fallen from a high of almost 5.6 million in 2002 to 3.5 million in 2010; it is highly likely that a number of other events and influences have contributed to the decline in pleasure visitor volume (e.g. recession, exchange rates, gas prices, passports etc.), but VFR volume and demand appears to be far more stable and reliable.

Figure 1: International visitors to Ontario by main trip purpose



(Adapted from Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS, 2012b))

Figure 2: International visitors' accommodation use (by person nights) (includes all trip purposes)



(MTCS, 2012b)

As communication technology improves, our personal relationships with distant friends and relatives can be more easily maintained (Janta, Cohen & Williams, 2015), and it is expected that demand for VFR travel will persist as “[c]opresent interaction remains... *the* fundamental

mode of human intercourse and socialization” (Boden & Molotch, 1994, p. 258 [original emphasis]). The desire to spend face-to-face time with loved ones does not dissipate in the same way the desire to visit a destination does. The personal ties that fuel VFR and link visitors to specific destinations are far more likely to trump difficulties involving health scares, exchange rates, visa barriers, and more, than they are for a vacationer choosing a destination or a meeting planner selecting a site.

2.1.2.1.4. Resident as consumer and attraction

The required involvement of residents is unique to VFR as a type of tourism. Economic implications include the additional spending that hosting requires. Hosting friends and relatives can involve entertaining, feeding, guiding and other such responsibilities (Bischoff & Koenig-Lewis, 2007; Shani & Uriely, 2012; Young et al., 2007). Young et al. (2007) surveyed residents of Las Vegas and found that resident ‘tourism’ spending, in a County region of 1.7 million people, totalled \$80 million. Host spending is traditionally not captured in tourism economic impact studies, but the value of the average VFR visitor must be greater than the sum of their own spending, as they are a catalyst for additional resident spending. Moreover, there is the possibility that hosts who attend neighbourhoods, attractions or festivals for the first time because of hosting will return after their guests have left, opening up a new and potentially regular consumer base. A further important, yet unknown impact relates to how the hosting of VFR encourages residents to stay and spend in their own community where they might otherwise take vacation outside to other destinations.

In addition to consuming in their own communities, hosts act as cultural brokers for their guests and can have a strong level of influence over their behaviour (Backer, 2007, 2008, 2010;

Bischoff & Koenig-Lewis, 2007; Michael, Armstrong & King, 2004; Min-En, 2006; Williams et al., 2000). Young et al. (2007) found four cluster groups of hosts in their study in Las Vegas; 31% were 'neutrals' (few visitors and low influence on their behaviour), 34% were 'talkers' (few visitors but high influence), 15% were 'ambassadors' (high number of visitors and high levels of influence), and 20% were 'magnets' (high numbers of visitors but low influence). Almost half of the hosts surveyed claimed to have a high amount of influence on the behaviour of their guests. Shani and Uriely (2012), in their study of domestic migrants in a tourism town in Israel, proposed distinguishing between 'guest-oriented' and 'self-oriented' hosts. Guest-oriented hosts played the role of tour guide, taking time off from their usual routines to spend time with their visitors, whereas self-oriented hosts continued their usual routines, and often viewed their guests to be motivated by the availability of free accommodation rather than the opportunity to connect with them. This acknowledges that hosting and VFR in general falls on a continuum, with some VFR activity falling beyond the behaviour and interests commonly associated with leisure based tourism, but with much activity overlapping significantly with tourism marketing and service provider interests and typical patterns of consumer engagement. As a marketing channel to disseminate materials to visitors, residents are a relatively homogenous and captive target market for a DMO or tourism business to engage with.

Another under-researched aspect of VFR is the return on investment, or cost of conversion, compared to other leisure visitor markets. Destinations spend billions of dollars trying to attract high-spending visitors, yet the return on investment is questionable when compared to repeat visitors. For example, Meis, Joyal and Trites (1995) suggest that even though a frequent VFR visitor to Canada from the U.S. may spend less per trip than a first-time visitor, the total value of that one frequent visitor is far greater than the one new visitor, and that someone who has visited

Canada five times or more “spent up to 20 times more over the duration of the travel life cycle than One Trip Visitors” (p. 31). Simply put, a new visitor costs more to attract and is less likely to return, than a repeat visitor with personal connections to a community.

Word-of-mouth is perhaps the most sought after type of marketing, especially when selling an intangible tourism product, because of its influence on perceptions and behaviour, and the social networks that exist within a resident base are a fruitful and generally untapped resource. The word-of-mouth generated by VFR visitors and hosts, often within source countries that are also target markets for destinations, may carry more currency than the word-of-mouth of other tourists because of the perceived authentic nature of the experience (Hall, 2007) and is an invaluable resource for any destination that wants to be creative in their use of marketing funds. Furthermore, investing in the relationships that residents have with potential and actual visitors may provide a more stable and long term visitor base that avoids the dramatic peaks and troughs of pleasure tourism (Hu & Morrison, 2002; Lehto, et al., 2001; Seaton & Palmer, 1997; Seaton & Tagg, 1995; Young et al., 2007). The attribute of the personal relationships involved in VFR separate it from other forms of tourism in a distinctive and fundamental way. Finally, the impact of immigration on VFR flows can in turn impact on trade links and non-VFR tourism visitation between source and host communities. Dwyer, Seetaram, Forsyth and King (2014) suggest that migration and tourism flows are inextricably linked, not only in VFR travel, but in all forms of tourism, as business ties are established and exposure of the host community increases as a reasonable choice for pleasure vacations.

In summary, destinations often invest heavily in their tourism attractions and facilities, working to integrate them within the overall marketing plan to engage potential visitors on an emotional level, attempting to establish a relationship with people who have no existing links with

their community. Yet the largest entity that attracts tourism for many destinations, and inherently provides emotional links to the community as a place to visit, is repeatedly unengaged by destination marketers who are blinkered by the influence of their business community and desire for supposedly high-yield customers.

2.1.3. New VFR segmentation.

The fact that VFRs use paid accommodation and spend significantly, albeit less per diem than others, pulls the discussion back to the definitional issue first raised by Jackson (1990). The categories based on motivation alone imply an underlying yet flawed belief perpetuated in destination marketing discourse that those who visit friends and relatives are homogenous in their motivation, accommodation choice, and interest in the community as a destination, and are unreachable and unaffected by marketing. This issue has led to various authors exploring the heterogeneity of the VFR market to better reveal the complex influences on leisure travel overall. Moscardo et al. (2000) offer the most comprehensive segmentation of VFR travel, as depicted in Table 1, creating at least 48 different segments that involve visiting a friend or relative (or both) while on a trip. It is interesting to note that VFR here is included as an activity and accommodation, not just a trip motivation. This typology therefore includes leisure visitors who might state ‘vacation’ as their main motivation but spend any time with a friend or relative during their trip as ‘VFR’.

Table 1: An initial typology of VFR travel

Sector	Scope	Effort	Accommodation	Focus of Visit
Major motivation	Domestic	Long haul	Paid	Visit friend
				Visit relative
Activity	International	Short haul	Non-paid	Visit both

Adapted from Moscardo et al. (2000)

Ultimately each VFR visit is utterly unique, as the distinction between any of these classifications could easily be blurred or merged to some degree, particularly if multi-destination trips are included that involve varying levels of social obligation and vacation travel. McLeod and Busser (2014) even suggest that a trip to a holiday home owned by a friend or family member does not require the presence of the host (or owner of the holiday home) in order for a trip to be considered ‘VFR’. Although this form of travel arguably falls under the umbrella of VFR, it is nonetheless an illustration of the intrinsic nature that personal networks play in much tourism activity. These studies should offer source for reflection on the limitations of viewing VFR as a single category.

Backer (2011) offers a different take on VFR segmentation in order to easily demonstrate the undervaluation of the significance for destinations. She proposes four categories of leisure visitors based on trip motivation (VFR or pleasure) and use of accommodation (paid or unpaid (i.e. with a friend or relative)), creating three VFR segments (VFR motive and paid accommodation, VFR and unpaid, and pleasure and unpaid), and only one non-VFR segment (pleasure and paid) (Table 2).

Table 2: VFR travel definitional model

		Accommodation	
		Unpaid	Paid
Motive	VFR	Pure VFR	Commercial VFR
	Pleasure	Exploiting VFR	Non-VFR

Adapted from Backer (2011).

I adapted this framework and applied it to domestic visitors to the four largest urban destinations in Canada (Griffin, 2011). The volume of VFR defined by motive only was 71.5%, but this changed to 86.0% when the accommodation use was included. In other words almost 9 in 10 domestic leisure visitors to Canada’s main urban destinations had a personal relationship with a resident. The visitor spending and activities numbers also see substantial jumps when comparing the two definitions (see Table 3).

Table 3: Proportion of domestic leisure visitors to Canadian urban centres in 2007 that are VFR by motivation alone, and by motivation and accommodation combined

	Volume	Spend	Activities		
			Festivals	Historic Sites	Museum/Gallery
VFR Motive only	71.5%	52.1%	45.8%	48.4%	44.7%
VFR Motive & Acc ⁷	86.0%	70.7%	72.1%	67.8%	70.1%

Source: Griffin (2011)

For example, when reading the numbers using motivation only, as tourism practitioners typically do, less than half of visitors to festivals, historic sites, and museums or galleries were VFR, yet in actuality around 70% of visitors who did these activities were visiting Toronto and spending time with a resident friend or relative. I used the same framework with secondary data from 2010 on international (non-U.S.) visitors to Toronto (Griffin, 2013b). Using motive alone 54.7% of leisure

visitors were VFR, but with the inclusion of accommodation use this rose to 68.9%. Another trend was that in 2000 only 52.2% of all international leisure visitors to Toronto were VFR (including accommodation use), this proportion grew to 60.2% in 2005, and 68.9% in 2010; a larger portion of Toronto's international visitors know someone in the city. Regarding activities I found that between 66% and 74% of international leisure visitors to Toronto in 2010 who visited the zoo, festivals, cultural performances, and sporting events had a VFR component to their trip; in other words between two-thirds and three-quarters of all international leisure visitors who did these activities knew someone in the city (we cannot say whether the resident attended as well, but it seems reasonable to assume at least some did). In addition, 27.8% of all person nights in paid accommodation by this same group were by visitors reporting VFR as their main motive.

What these results strongly communicate is that a large number of leisure trips to many destinations, and Toronto specifically, involve a personal relationship between visitor and resident. The implications of reconceptualising VFR to include any trip that involves a visitor spending time with a resident with whom they knew prior to trip are substantial. Not only do residents influence a large number of trips to their community, but residents themselves are engaged in tourism in their own communities, both as cultural brokers and as consumers.

2.1.4. The state of VFR research to this point; a summary.

The literature review thus far reflects the interest of researchers who have written on the topic from a business viewpoint (Janta et al., 2015). VFR tourism has been shown to provide substantial economic gains for destinations, providing a more sustainable source of custom, and stimulating resident touristic activity. The promotion of VFR tourism could, for many destinations, enhance the positive economic impacts of tourism. These studies share a desire to present insights into the

conceptualisation and value of the VFR market, often using relatively unsophisticated statistical techniques with secondary datasets. Studies that discussed hosting, almost without exception, are concerned with the host's propensity to host and the frequency of receiving guests, their spending and participation in activities, and influence over guests' behaviour (Backer, 2007, 2008, 2010; Bischoff & Koenig-Lewis, 2007; Gitelson & Kerstetter, 1995; McDonald & Murphy, 2008; Michael et al., 2004; Min-En, 2006; Williams et al., 2000; Young et. al., 2007). These topics are all indicative of the marketing and economic development focus of the vast majority of VFR studies (Shani & Uriely, 2012) that view hosts as vehicles to increased tourism revenues.

However, these business-oriented arguments fail to truly capture what is unique about VFR tourism. Virtually all of these studies appear to have adopted a post-positivist approach. Post-positivism is useful and relevant in attempting to reveal the nature of VFR volumes and economic potential, but an acknowledgement of the impacts of VFR for host and guest, or more explicitly on the relationships among participants and the community as a place to live and visit is missing from the studies discussed.

2.1.5. The new-wave of VFR research.

The common use of the term VFR, to this point, is therefore dis-embedded from any idea or notion of friends or family and the significance and importance of the personal relationships are at most inferred. There have been, however, a handful of studies that have situated VFR within different contexts, beyond volumes and marketing, and towards an understanding of the VFR experience for participants and the host communities (Duval, 2003; Havitz, 2007; Hughes & Allen, 2010; Larsen 2008; Larsen et al., 2007; Mason, 2004; Shani & Uriely, 2012; Ziakas & Costa, 2010). These studies have responded to a methodological turn (Riley & Love, 2000) that engages in

“reflexive, critical and even more subjective forms of inquiry... search[ing] for more in-depth understandings surrounding the tourism phenomenon” (Stergiou & Airey, 2011, p. 312). These researchers have methodologically shifted the focus from measuring the generalised behaviour of a group to considering the experiences of individuals and communities and the associated meanings (Griffin, 2013d, 2014a).

Duval (2003), for example, conducted an ethnography of Caribbean immigrants in Toronto and their travel patterns back home. This methodological choice facilitated a subjective epistemology and allowed him to collect data in very natural settings, with context being fundamental to the quality of his findings. The discussion includes participants’ feelings of being a foreigner in both Canada and the Caribbean, and shares realities of differing connections to friends and family back home as well as with other immigrants in Toronto. Havitz (2007) presents an auto-ethnography based on visiting his Grandmother throughout his youth. The paper is predominantly about how his story was created through the collection of memories with other family members, and acknowledges various contextual matters, for example;

I recognize that both Grandma’s and my broader lives and personal interactions were largely framed by gender and that we responded to those roles with some degree of individual autonomy... [In addition] the experiences of me and my sisters were probably different from those of our cousins because of the spatial reality of our long distance separation from our grandparents. (Havitz, 2007, p. 136).

Constructionist ways of thinking emanate from Havitz’s (2007) paper, with clear acknowledgement of whose story is being told, and the contextualisation of the constructions offered.

Ziakas and Costa (2010) conducted an ethnographic study in a small Texan town about an annual event that drew large numbers of former residents. The researchers informally spoke with

organisers, local residents and visiting friends and relatives, and sought a “free dialogic flow” (p. 12) by asking three main questions: the respondents own thoughts about the event, what the event meant to them individually and for the community, and how they felt the event had contributed to the community. The nature of the questions demonstrates a constructionist approach that looked for shared meanings about a subject, and focuses on how the event facilitated a relationship between residents, both former and current, and the sense of place and community.

Hughes and Allen (2010) interviewed people of Irish descent living in the UK about their experiences of travelling to Ireland. They found that for each individual there were various factors that played into their relationship with Ireland and the meanings that were taken from their travel experiences that included their connection with Ireland as a first, second or third generation immigrant, the strength of social connections with people there, and also the importance of being Irish as an identity while living in the UK. The stories are unique and complex.

Finally, in a similar study on people of Pakistani origin living in the UK and their travel back home, Mason (2004) found that;

Visiting [Pakistan] was significant symbolically and practically in maintaining these transnational kin relationships... in two key ways. First, it facilitated the cultivation and demonstration of active kinship networks that were able to work across long distances. Visiting was a highly symbolic element in the process of keeping in touch and knowing one's kin. Secondly, it helped to confirm a sense of belonging or affinity in relation to Pakistan, even though for many England was home. (p. 427).

Elements of social capital, cultural identity, and relationship maintenance are addressed through the act of travel, with impacts sustained beyond the trip's conclusion.

These studies have a few commonalities. First, they are focussed on specific groups of people who are not primarily defined as either VFR visitors or hosts; they are immigrants,

grandchildren, community residents, and diaspora who have an element of VFR as part of their lived experiences; the VFR component is subsumed within a grander array of social meanings and understandings and is put in context with the specific relationships between people and place. The discussions offer a more insightful analysis into what sets VFR apart from other forms of tourism; indeed, the term ‘VFR’ is not routinely used, shifting the focus from motivations within a marketing friendly framework to the complexity and multiple layers of personal relationships. Larsen et al. (2007) suggest many tourism studies have “neglected issues of sociality and co-presence” (p. 245) and this re-positioning of VFR as a part of broader experiences offers a more holistic view. In this light, the experience of spending time with loved ones and old friends can be seen to have ramifications for host and guest during the trip in terms of what experiences are shared, but also on the relationships with each other post-trip, and with the place (whether as the destination or home) itself.

Larsen (2008) criticizes much tourism research for producing “fixed dualisms between the life of tourism and everyday life: extraordinary and ordinary, pleasure and boredom, liminality and rules, exotic others and significant others” (p. 21). A refreshing idea is introduced; that so much tourism activity is actually not an escape, but an opportunity to carry out social obligations within a value system that is embedded within the actors’ everyday routine. In a world of increasing immigration and interconnectedness tourism plays a more complex role than just satisfying motives of escapism and fun; it enables people to combine leisure experiences while fulfilling social duties from a distance as networks expand across the globe (Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Larsen et. al., 2007).

The increase of travel and communication technology means we can travel for mundane activities, and stay at home for new experiences at a far greater and exponentially rising rate than

ever before. Tourism related experiences are becoming more integrated into everyday, post-modern and transnational realities. A growing proportion of the population who have the access and freedom to travel see their personal networks become more complex, established through and maintained by technology that effortlessly and instantly shares information; the deconstruction of the binary differentiation between home and away is becoming an ever more common experience (Cohen & Cohen, 2012). The forces of globalisation “have led to an increase in the tempo of life, a collapse of time and space, a cultural pluralization, a de-differentiation of social domains, and a fragmentation of lifestyles” (Cohen & Cohen, 2012, pp. 2177-2178), and this has implications for the consumption and perception of tourism and leisure. VFR sits across these continua, as leisure and travel, with the act of visiting and hosting providing varying levels of enjoyment-frustration, obligation-freedom, and exotic-routine for many.

It is important to understand tourism as a form of leisure as well. A key distinction of tourism from leisure in general is the act of travel (Carr, 2002); otherwise all else is contextual as both can conceivably, although not necessarily, involve the experience of new and old places, people, skills, a sense of obligation, or freedom, aspects of education or reiteration of existing understandings, and more. The *staycation* is a phenomena that sees local people enjoying their communities as a place of vacation, festivals, waterparks, and more attractions within the local geography are increasingly used as destinations (e.g. Fox, 2009). Many elements of the tourism experience can now be consumed without leaving the house or community. Conversely the *obligation* describes travel that fails to offer the sense of freedom and exoticism expressed in many understandings of tourism (Backer & Schänzel, 2013). As Carr (2002) suggests, “not all tourists behave hedonistically to the same degree and... some actually exhibit behavior that is more restrained and less oriented towards overt pleasure seeking than in their place of origin” (p. 980).

Those who have begun to inform the individual and communal realities of VFR have accepted this leisure-tourism continuum (e.g. Duval, 2003; Havitz, 2007; Hughes & Allen, 2010; Mason, 2004; Shani & Uriely, 2012; Ziakas & Costa, 2010), and do not inherently disagree with the marketing orientated studies, but focus on the role and implications of VFR as a form of leisure in affecting and shaping communal and individual identity and well-being, rather than business opportunities for communities as destinations.

2.2. A summary of VFR research.

In summary, to understand why there has been little research on VFR, and why the research has been relatively unsophisticated, the context of VFR as a concept is fundamental. Crotty (1998) notes that as researchers we rarely “embark on a piece of social research with epistemology as our starting point” (p. 13), and the original issue for VFR researchers was to define and measure the actual activity included within VFR and to improve profitability.

Researchers interested in VFR first had to demonstrate its value within the ubiquitous four-grouped motivation framework (Seaton 1994), defining and separating high and low yield visitors, based on shallow metrics, for a business-oriented audience. This first wave of research, and those studies influenced by its volumetric goals, was (and still is) essential in establishing and communicating the value of VFR for destinations, organisations, and businesses that consume and seek research that explains opportunities for growth and development. It is an endeavour I have pursued myself, and will continue to do so in order to help shape the argument for VFR engagement. If the relevance and importance of VFR had not been established, then the potential of research that considers the construction of individual and shared meanings to influence practice would be diminished. As a comparatively nascent topic, VFR research is naturally going through

evolution and maturation, and methodological development is necessary and useful. The concept is now more inclusive, and instead of focussing on volumes and dollars alone, the interest includes the experience and impacts of co-presence between resident, visitor and place.

2.3. Immigration, Integration, and Leisure

The integration of immigrants has been widely studied under various disciplines. The role of leisure in forming, maintaining, and evolving individual and group identity among immigrants has also been considered. Broadly speaking, the literature demonstrates a positive relationship between leisure, the development of social capital, and integration. Horolets (2012) succinctly proposes that:

since migration has become an indiscernible feature of contemporary societies, a constant effort to study migrants' leisure is vital... [particularly] on how leisure functions as a mechanism of adaptation and identity building, on what the leisure constraints are that are reinforced or emerge as a result of migration, and on what the role of leisure is in developing a sense of belonging to a new place (p. 3).

The experience of hosting falls broadly under the leisure umbrella, and the role leisure plays in immigrants' lives deserves specific attention.

2.3.1. The fourfold model.

A common approach to understanding integration has been the *fourfold* model that “usually involves people in acculturation contexts answering Likert-scale questions about their cultural identities, or practices, as well as questions about distress, psychopathology, life satisfaction and other measures of adaption” (Rudmin, 2003, p. 4). Most acculturation theories suggest an individual can identify to varying degrees with both the host, dominant culture (D), and the immigrant's home, minority culture (M) (Rudmin, 2003). The possible outcomes therefore are i)

rejection of the home culture and acceptance of the dominant culture (-M +D) often referred to as *assimilation*, ii) strong links to the minority culture maintained, with rejection of the dominant culture (+M -D) or *separation*, iii) continuation with the minority culture and an acceptance of the dominant culture (+M +D) or *integration*, and iv) rejection of both cultures (-M -D) or *marginalization*. Integration (M+ D+) is generally considered the most successful model and is pursued by dominant host societies in the form of *multiculturalism* (Berry, 2001; Rudmin, 2003).

The fourfold model is useful to include here as it has conceptualised how much of society understands integration. However, it has also been critiqued as it presupposes “that the minority culture can be kept or abandoned, leading to theories that acculturation is a matter of adding and subtracting aspects of culture” (Rudmin, 2003, p. 12). Stodolska (2000), for example, conducted a mixed methods study on Polish immigrants in Edmonton, Alberta that looked at changes in leisure participation since arrival. She utilised a framework with theoretical similarities to the fourfold model to describe the following groups:

(1) *quitters*, those who had discontinued some activities but had not started any new ones; (2) *replacers*, those who both ceased and started some activities; (3) *adders*, those who had not ceased any activities but had started new ones; and (4) *continuers*, who had neither ceased nor started any activities. (p. 43).

However, the quotations from the qualitative interviews demonstrate that the application is not always simple; one respondent for example states:

In Poland I used to go skiing quite regularly... We usually stayed for 2 weeks... in a resort owned by my husband’s employer. Here [in Canada] I simply wouldn’t be able to afford it... Yes, we still go to the mountains... but only for 2, 3 days. (p. 50).

It is difficult to ascribe one of the four categories to this respondent, she did not *quit* skiing, she did not *replace* or *add* skiing, and although she has *continued* skiing the context and experience is

vastly different due to her socio-economic status and changes to her social capital. Labelling this woman a *continuer* strips the context and meaning from her story, where a constructivist approach would seek to place her reality, rather than the model, as central.

2.3.2. Different cultural perceptions of leisure.

Different cultures position leisure within their social lives in varying ways (Horolets, 2012); the diverse cultural associations with concepts such as recreation, play, and freedom (Chick, 1998) may mean immigrants find it initially awkward to interpret the host culture's concept of leisure and therefore experience constraints specific to them (Horolets, 2012). Leisure is manifested in different cultures in various ways (Stodolska & Livengood, 2006; Tirone & Pedlar, 2000). For example, Tirone and Shaw (1997) noted how women of Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi backgrounds in Nova Scotia found leisure in activities that many westerners might consider mundane chores; family and the home were central to all aspects of their lives, with the pursuit of individual freedoms considered as demonstration of selfishness. The authors continued to question the usefulness in some approaches in helping to understand some aspects of the immigrant experience:

Research on the leisure of women from diverse cultures cannot be based on the assumption that leisure meanings are the same as the North American conceptualization... Moreover, since leisure cannot be understood in isolation from the rest of social life, the application of... leisure related concepts to all aspects of life may be a useful way to explore the potential relevance of leisure in the lives of immigrant women. (p. 226).

Many authors have argued that the immigration and integration process is as multi-layered and divergent as the individuals who experience it (e.g. Horolets, 2012), and its impact “cannot be described only by figures” (Penninx, 2005, p. 138). Integration relies on several factors including those personal to the individual's character, experience and abilities, and the cultural and social

values of the individual's family and home community, as well as the capabilities, opportunities, and general acceptance provided by the host culture towards new arrivals. Consistent with other critiques, Tirone and Shaw (1997) continue to question post-positivist approaches that can miss the social settings of leisure experiences that produce results where "personal experience [has been] divorced from the contexts in which these phenomenon have occurred" (p. 227).

2.3.3. The benefits of leisure participation for immigrants and communities

Participation in leisure activities is a useful context for interaction and awareness. Horolets (2012) offers a summary of studies on leisure and migrants, and suggests benefits that include physical, psychological, emotional, prestige, inclusion, cognition, and aspects of identity. Stack and Iwasaki (2009) interviewed 11 Afghani refugees in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and found several key themes. Participants reported that their usual network of extended family had been disrupted, which had been their primary source of leisure experiences. The difficulty of overcoming the ruptured family ties, and their unfamiliarity with the local culture were barriers to interaction with other community members. Leisure settings provided the participants with opportunities to learn and improve skills such as language, increased awareness of the local culture, and helped establish a forum where they could share their own culture, leading to the development of personal connections. Similarly, in a study on participation in sport by immigrant youth in Ontario, Doherty and Taylor (2007) found that there was an overall positive impact on participants' sense of integration with the host culture. The participants reported feelings of social exclusion on some occasions, due primarily to language issues and other students' prejudice, but active teacher involvement served to alleviate these issues to some extent. The important point here is that interaction alone is not a panacea for immigrant integration; structured opportunities that help interpret events and meanings are

important if newcomers and natives are to reconcile, and leisure can often provide this appropriate context.

In a mixed methods study conducted on newcomer participation in park activities in Alberta, it was found that active engagement with newcomers through a targeted orientation program by the park authorities led to very positive results and outcomes (Lange, Vogels & Jamal, 2011). The process was a learning experience for both the newcomers and the parks' staff. The study found that the newcomers' usage of the parks was different to that associated with the dominant cultural groups of Canada, and this helped inform infrastructural and informational changes to aid their enjoyment of the facilities and connection with the environment. For example, "the use of parks by Newcomers will change the engagement patterns towards more socially-oriented, more sports-oriented, more multi-generational, and lower energy usage patterns that favour relaxation over adventure activities" (Lange et al., 2011, p. 104). In addition, the park authorities were able to educate both newcomers and other regular users of the parks on how different groups use the facilities, limiting the frustration that had been growing among some Euro-Canadians who were not accustomed to the large gatherings and social activities taking place in the parks. Understanding the different use patterns for these groups improved relations amongst all park users.

Furthermore, the newcomers that participated in the program gained higher levels of literacy around environmental knowledge and issues; "the conversational practice of English in an informal setting and the use of camping vocabulary *in situ* resulted in a rising sense of confidence, vocabulary use, and colloquial expression" (Lange et al., 2011, p. 108 [original emphasis]). The relations that newcomers established with the physical environment proved important not only in improving their sense of comfort in Canada, and appreciating their new home, but also in

remembering and reflecting on their own homeland and the landscapes that influenced their upbringing and identities. These studies suggest that interaction in a planned leisure context, that appreciates the cultural contexts of different stakeholder groups, can result in positive outcomes of varying levels in numerous areas of people's lives.

The literature on leisure and race provides some insight also. Although immigration and race are quite different concepts, there are certain overlaps regarding groups of different cultures and (often) ethnicity interacting to varying extents through participation in leisure. Leisure settings can be

ideal environments for interracial interaction to occur due to qualities of free choice and self-determination, which are important because they give individuals the opportunity to freely choose their companions without the restrictions that often exist in work and other formal settings. Thus, interracial interactions that occur in leisure settings have the potential to be more genuine and sincere. (Shinew, Glover & Parry, 2004, p. 338).

However, caution is taken before assigning the causality of participation in different expressions of leisure to race or ethnicity when it may in fact be integrated with issues of socio-economic status, religion, or other factors (Arnold & Shinew, 1998; Stodolska & Livengood, 2006). For example, Shinew, Floyd, McGuire & Noe (1995), in a study of leisure participation of white and black Americans of different socio-economic classes, found some correlation between race, gender and socio-demographics. The links between white and black men of middle to upper class were stronger than those between black men of different classes; however, black women of different classes did share greater similarities. Ultimately race, gender, socio-economic status and other contexts have the potential to constrain and direct an individual's leisure participation in various ways. It is also worth noting that most research on leisure participation and race or ethnicity in

North America has been conducted outside of the larger urban centres despite the fact that the largest non-white populations live in these areas (Gómez, 2008).

In summary, participation in leisure can help migrants both maintain their identities, and simultaneously evolve new attachments that can aid integration (Horolets, 2012), benefiting the community overall.

2.4. The Relevance of VFR for Communities with High Immigration

Canada, as many other nations, has many communities with high numbers of immigrants, and various government initiatives over the decades have encouraged and fostered immigration in some form or another. The ideologies of various immigration policies have been academically and publically critiqued in numerous forums (e.g. Black, 2013; Corbett, 1963; Koopmans, 2013; Li, 2003; Robertson, 2014), and it is acknowledged here that certain groups have been discriminated against for racial, political, financial and many other reasons, by various layers of government, including the present federal leadership. Not all immigrants have the capabilities and capitals required to host, and many do not have friends or relatives in their home countries who are able to visit for financial, political or other reasons. The critique of accessibility and equality in the treatment and experiences of different immigrant groups is an important one, and it is fully acknowledged here that the discussion of hosting for immigrants is only relevant for those with certain privileges that are not available to all. However, a full discussion on this topic falls beyond the boundaries of this thesis, and while the disparity between immigrant groups is acknowledged, it is also evident that, fairly or not, there are significant numbers of many immigrant groups who are able to host visiting friends and relatives, and it is from this point that this study continues.

The VFR experience links the (immigrant) resident, visitor, and place (Figure 3) with implications for the resident and community. This co-interaction of all three agents makes VFR experiences significantly distinct. Residents routinely engage with their community, visitors have tourism experiences in destinations, and residents and visitors often interact through the provision of tourism services, or even strangers on the street with directions. In VFR, however, this shared interaction between a resident and guest who know each other gives the participants a chance to see the place through different eyes: the visitor has some context of 'home' while in a destination, and conversely the resident sees their place of home in a context of vacation and novelty. The interaction between host and guest is familiar, yet unusual, and likely to enable the formation of memories because of the rarity of the experience, making attachments more acute and profound. For the immigrant resident host the interaction with the community and guest has the potential for additional meanings and knowledge associated with their relationships with both people and place to be constructed.

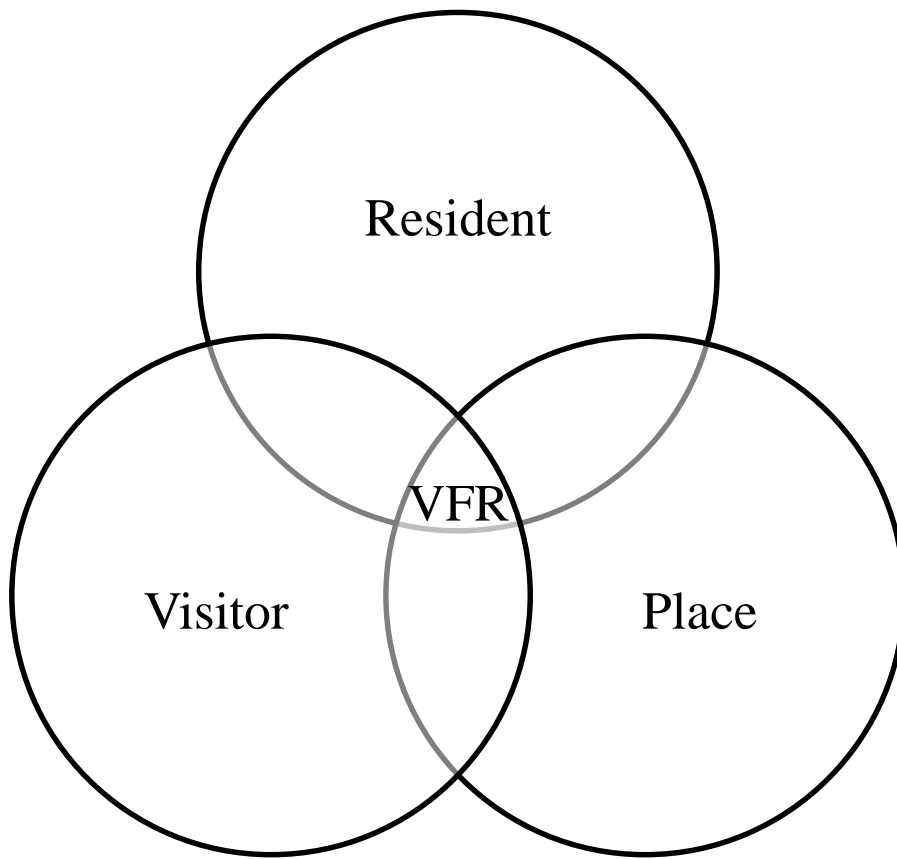


Figure 3: The interactional elements of VFR

The integration of immigrants is important for all of society to prosper, and the engagement of newcomers as potential and actual hosts has implications for our communities on two main levels: economic and socio-cultural impacts. Both are intertwined, but the main points of each are discussed below.

2.4.1. The business case for VFR for communities with high immigration.

Beyond the benefits of VFR in general, as discussed in section 2.1.2.1 *The economic argument for VFR*, there are some additional considerations particularly relevant to communities with high immigrant populations. Logistically and practically, immigration to Canada has provided, and will

continue to facilitate, a greater opportunity for increased VFR travel. Up until the 1970s immigration to Canada was predominantly from Western Europe. More recently however, other countries such as China, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, and South Korea have become the larger source countries (Statistics Canada, 2005) expanding and diversifying the relationships that the Canadian population has around the world. It is perhaps no coincidence that many of these places are also key markets for Canadian DMOs (e.g. see OTMPC (2012)).

The opportunities to maintain connections with those who are geographically distant are vastly different for contemporary migrants than ever before. Whereas a consequence of migration of years past was an expectation that families would forever be separated, enhancements in communication and travel technology mean that for many (but of course not all) migrants connections are more easily maintained and nurtured than ever before (Vertovec, 2001). In addition, the capability of Canadian immigrants to host is evident. In 2001 a Statistics Canada (2005) study found that 92% of immigrants had their own place of residence after 6 months, whether as owners or tenants, and 77% were living in accommodations of one person or less per room. Six months after arrival 93% of new immigrants said it was either important or very important for them to learn the values and traditions of Canada indicating an interest to participate in events such as festivals etc., and 83% stated a desire to retain their home culture, signifying a desire to retain personal links to their homeland. Many immigrants to Canada seem to have the accommodation to host, and an interest in both engaging with the new culture and maintaining links with their home culture; a positive foundation for encouraging participation in touristic activities while hosting friends and relatives.

Simply put, increased immigration equals more VFR, both in reasons to visit, as well as in the provision of infrastructure to accommodate visitors (Dwyer, Forsyth, King & Seetaram, 2010;

Seetaram, 2012). The increased ties between communities that lead from immigration from one to another can lead to additional economic and cultural benefits, for example in developing patterns for other non-VFR forms of travel (Dwyer et al., 2014). Seetaram (2012) makes the argument that “the relationship between tourism and immigration flows is not limited to tourists for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives... only but can positively influence short trips for business and leisure purposes as well” (p. 1535). In summary, Canadian communities have the social and built capital to develop what is an already vibrant and significant economic contributor that can increase the exposure of communities as destinations in many key markets for Canadian DMOs.

2.4.2. The socio-cultural implications of VFR for communities with high immigration.

VFR travel also has substantial socio-cultural implications for communities with immigrant populations. Although there have been several studies related to the social and cultural impacts of tourism on residents in general (e.g. Andereck, Valentine, Knopf & Vogt, 2005; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Gursoy, Chi & Dyer, 2009; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011a, 2011b), the inferences made are insufficient to begin to understand the impacts of VFR, as VFR requires the inclusion and consideration of residents as active consumers and co-producers of tourism development and experiences, not just as passive recipients (Shani & Uriely, 2012). Through their power to consume certain goods and services tourists influence and change communities, and encouraging VFR among immigrant communities diversifies tourism demand and the voices that influence development in a community. If a larger proportion of tourists are resident immigrant hosts and their visitors, then their political capital in their own community is extended to some degree, and development will reflect their interests to a greater extent (Griffin, 2013c).

There are, of course, implications for individuals too, and this forms a large part of the discussion and focus for this thesis. The transnational realities of immigrants create a far greater number of influences and pressures on their identity (Vertovec, 2001). Immigration can create internal tensions for individuals, and through interaction with their new community and its culture, immigrants can experience:

a clash, a culture shock, [and] are thrown out of their closed every day life-world... [which] cannot be underestimated in its far-reaching consequences. A person's life-world is a person's guarantee of survival in a particularly structured environment... [and w]hen this guarantee is taken away, the world may become a chaotic and threatening jungle (Mainil & Platenkamp, 2010, p. 64).

Immigration is often a tumultuous experience, and the role that hosting can play in settlement is of particular interest here.

From a psychological perspective, human interaction is foundational to feelings of belonging and attachment. On a basic level, people who receive regular interaction with friends and family are provided "psychological and material resources[, and] are in better health than those with fewer supportive social contacts" (Cohen & Wills, 1985, p. 310). Baumeister and Leary (1995) suggest that:

human beings have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships... First, there is a need for frequent, affectively pleasant interactions with a few other people, and, second, these interactions must take place in the context of a temporally stable and enduring framework of affective concern for each others' welfare (p. 497).

A perception of mutuality of care and frequency of interactions are vital. The discussion is positioned within an evolutionary discourse, and that if deprived of these interactions that foster a need to belong, distress will ensue. The effects of (a lack of) social support have been correlated

with mental and physical health, and even mortality (Cohen & Wills, 1985). The need for “belongingness can be almost as compelling a need as food and that human culture is significantly conditioned by the pressure to provide belongingness” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 498) with implications as foundational to human survival and opportunity for reproduction. However, when social support and interaction are experienced feelings of belonging, pleasure, stability, and positivity are generated, with long lasting impacts as the belief that others are available if needed raises the individual’s ability to cope with stressful situations (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Cohen & Wills, 1985).

The experience of face-to-face interaction can therefore be powerful. Co-presence, or simply *being* with others, “affords access to the eyes... [which] enables the establishment of intimacy and trust” (Urry, 2002, p. 259). Spending time with others illuminates our own behaviour, providing opportunity for self-reflection through the reactions we receive (Boden & Molotch, 1994). Identity development requires “the continual rearranging and reframing of one’s selves, testing and negotiating their interconnection” (Kraus, 2006, p. 104) through interaction. The context of the relationship within co-present interactions is important; co-presence with those with whom we have a long and shared history will have different affects than co-presence with strangers. Talk is the practice “in which our identities are constituted” (Taylor, 2006, p. 94), and interactions are part of a fluid ongoing rapport that is “‘thick’ with information... deliver[ing] far more context than any other form of human exchange” (Boden & Molotch, 1994, p. 259). Face-to-face interaction also allows for knowledge and understanding that was constructed by the actors during previous times to be relived and reapplied in new environments, as “information is not necessarily or inherently processed and stored in memory on a person-by-person basis, ...[but is] processed and stored on such a basis when it pertains to significant others” (Baumeister & Leary,

1995, p. 503). Spending additional time with others we have known well allows for understandings and knowledge formerly constructed to be accessed and reconsidered; an opportunity that may otherwise not have been available. Reminiscing about enjoyable times is a powerful act that can instil positivity and well-being (Neimeyer & Metzler, 1994), which hosting can facilitate for immigrants in foreign and disconnected environments.

The perceived frequency of co-presence demonstrates commitment, establishes and maintains interpersonal trust, and garners self-worth, corroborating the value of the relationship for those involved. As well, it provides a form of ceremony and rituals for relationships to be communicated (Janta et al., 2015). For example, Mason (2004) found that visits to Pakistan by UK residents of Pakistani origin were rich in kinship significance;

Although visiting (and being visited by) local and UK-based kin was both a routine and significant part of life, visits to kin in Pakistan needed to be more carefully engineered to ensure that the act of visiting took place. Visiting in this sense was a fundamental act of kinship in itself, and one that is tied up with cultural and religious understandings of social interaction and obligation and the ritual etiquette involved in being a guest of one's kin (p. 424).

In addition, Mason (2004) found that VFR trips acted as a focal point and stimulation for nourishing the relationship between host and guest between visits; “Evoking as well as experiencing visits, past and future, helped to sustain family narratives of kinship networks... [T]he life of the visit, in both experiential and symbolic terms, extended well beyond the temporal confines of the event itself” (p. 423). Indeed, the opportunity to witness the expressions and emotions experienced by distant family and friends on arrival, and when farewells are made, is a rich source of relationship validation and bonding in itself (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

As previously discussed, immigrants' leisure participation in general has been reviewed for its role in integration in terms of familiarising newcomers with the local culture, and enhancing

social capital (Juniu, 2000; Evenson, Sarmiento, & Ayala, 2004; Rublee & Shaw, 1991; Stodolska, 1998, 2000; Stodolska & Yi, 2003; Tirone & Shaw, 1997). If, as the previous discussion found, the family is central to the foundations of leisure for many cultures, then the temporary reunion with close family and friends might be expected to impact the immigrant host's experience in their new community in distinct ways. The relevance for this thesis is high; the opportunities that hosting brings, combining rich and highly contextual, yet likely infrequent, co-presence with guests, where leisure is often a component of expectations, has significant potential to affect the lived realities of those involved.

Immigrants' co-present interactions with their distant loved ones is inherently less frequent and available, and often enveloped in a leisure or out-of-the-ordinary context that makes that interaction more poignant than regular and routine time spent together (Havitz, 2007; Mason, 2004). Sharing both new and routine experiences with those who are close can affect the sense of quality and feelings of satisfaction (Hallman & Benpow, 2007), potentially leading to a changed relationship between immigrant host and their new environment, as well as providing a renewed source for memory and bonding between host and guest (Mason, 2004). The act of hosting a friend or relative and the conversation that occurs can transform the construction of meaning with routine places, as Shotter (1993) suggests:

...although our surroundings may stay materially the same at any one moment in time, how we make sense of them, what we select for attention or to act upon, how we connect those various events, dispersed in time and space, ...and attribute significance to them, very much depends upon our use of language (p. 2).

Experiencing a place with someone who uses the same language, both linguistic and cultural, can therefore influence the knowledge constructed during an experience. Conversation between people is built upon the history of their relationship, and the chance to link shared history with

present experience can build connections between old and new as the context of past is used to make sense of the present (Hollingsworth & Dybdahl, 2006; Shotter, 1993).

The leisure context of hosting can inspire new experiences through the obligation of guiding, and the desire to provide an enjoyable experience for guests. For example, Shani and Uriely (2012) found domestic migrant hosts in Israel appreciated the opportunity of “being with close significant others” (p. 431), experiencing the type of relationships that they had not established in their new communities. In addition they were inspired to find new places to visit and became more aware of their region, finding enjoyment in being both a tourist and guide. Interaction with physical environments can trigger memories of the past, and establish new connections, and become part of individual and group identity and culture (Crouch, 2000). The implications of hosting are significant; immigrants can experience the familiar interaction with their guest, re-establishing their links to their historical sense of place, but are also provided the inspiration to participate in activities that may lead to enhanced connections with their new surroundings (Gieryn, 2000), which in turn can form and shape a sense of home (Andrews, 2006).

There is support for the idea that the information co-constructed in interaction with those we know well is better retained and applied than the knowledge we gain in interaction with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Experiencing a place with a familiar person is likely to be more memorable and meaningful than if alone or with relative strangers, in part because the experience is relived through reminiscing after the event. Because of the depth of a familiar relationship a shared experience can lead to “more complex (and sometimes more biased) information processing” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 504). A trip to a park will be different for a lone newcomer than a trip to that same place with a close friend from the home culture, as “co-presence with people is imbued with *co-presence with and in a place*” (Mason, 2004, p. 427 [original

emphasis]). Attending a festival or shopping in a market for the first time may happen because of a visiting friend or relative, and may help construct additional meaning and attachment with that place, reducing its substitutability in the formation of our individual and communal identities (Milligan, 2003). Therefore, sharing experiences in a physical place with a close friend or relative will have additional meaning, reference points, and attachment.

Larsen (2008) talks of *home* as a base for everyday life “where families can be themselves” (p. 24), a fixed spatial point that is comfortable and safe. For immigrants the sense of home and attachment to new physical spaces needs re-establishing upon arrival, and the experience of hosting people who are close may help foster this feeling. As Larsen (2008) states, “we can understand home not solely as being rooted in one particular physical place, but also as something that involves, and can be mobilized through, social habits, small daily rituals, precious objects, mundane technologies and significant others” (p. 24). Taking a guest to a new space or place in a leisure context may help form attachments that bridge old and new worlds, linking and connecting past, present and future, strengthening and forming identity and integration (Carr, 2002; McClinchey, 2008).

Figure 4 depicts the complexities of the hosting experience, placing the immigrant host as central, with potential interactions with various others that may be encouraged. Hosting requires interaction with the visiting friend or relative, but can plausibly inspire interaction with a range of community groups, experiences, and institutions. The occurrence of hosting can therefore affect the relationship the immigrant host has with any of the other listed entities.

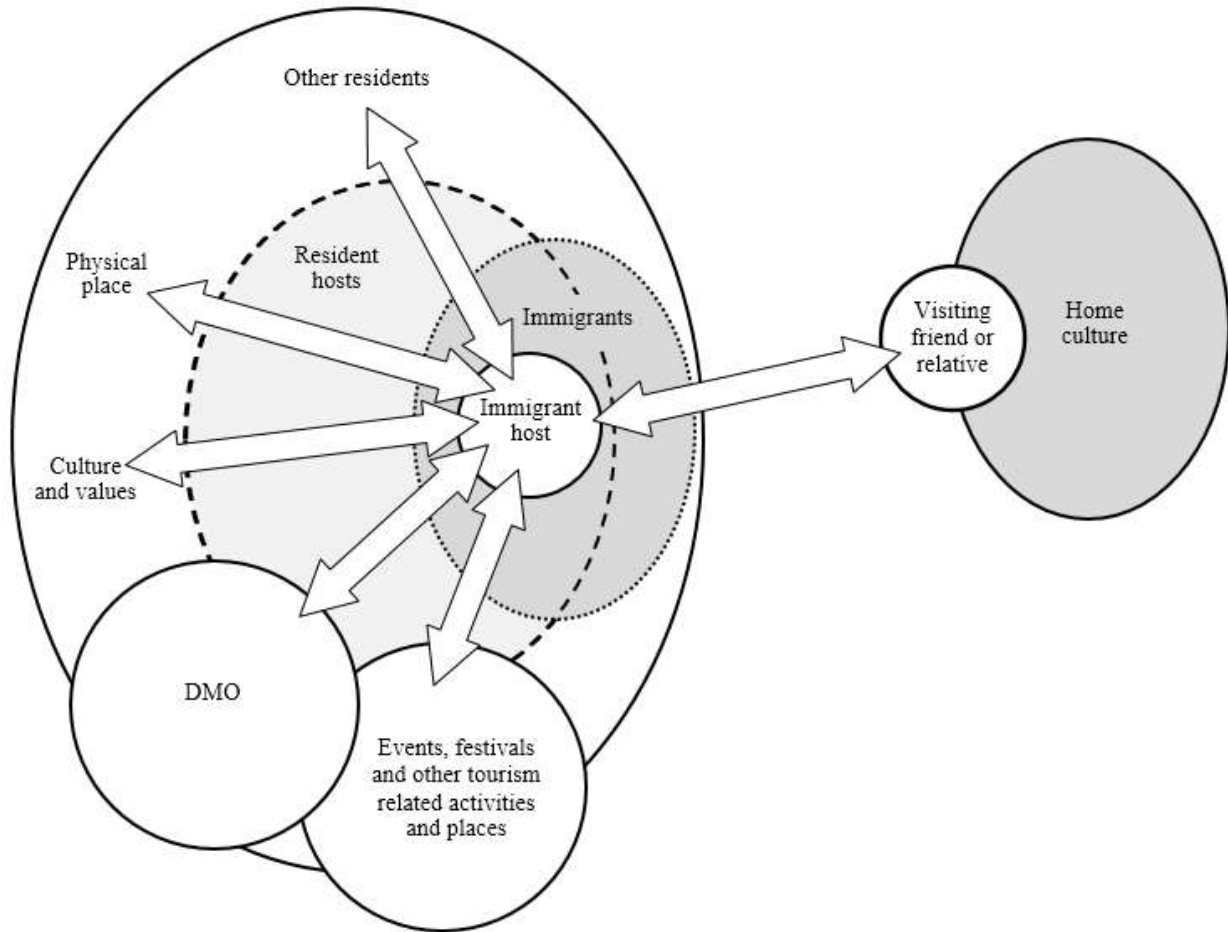


Figure 4: Possible interactions for an immigrant host

To summarise, immigrants have multiple cultural and geographical influences on their identity construction. The potential impacts of interaction with those from the home culture that takes place in the physical settings of the new community are of interest. Because the interaction is within a concentrated and leisure based context there is potential for important memories and attachments to be established. Experiencing new settings and sharing the routine within the comfort of known relationships may help form links and connections with the community at large as it is engaged with as an active element to the hosting experience.

2.4.3. Social capital.

The concept of *social capital* is useful in trying to identify, describe, and potentially conceptualise some of the benefits of hosting for immigrants and their communities. Where economic capital is found in bank accounts, and human capital refers to skillsets, social capital is found in our personal networks (Portes, 2000). Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (p. 248); in other words, social capital is forms of credit that individuals amass between themselves through the development of trust, obligations, societal expectations and more. Social capital is not a tangible source, but is the ties between people that lead to additional resources and the “collective possessions of those connected by social ties” (Glover & Hemingway, 2005, p. 379). To “possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is those others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage” (Portes, 2000, p. 48); social capital is therefore socially constructed between two individuals or more and is far more subtly acquired than economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Membership within a relationship or group requires acceptance and maintenance of social capital that can depend on a variety of traits, characteristics, and expectations of mutually beneficial interaction. Networks need to be invested in, maintained, and managed in order for resources to be exchanged.

Although the term ‘capital’ has been questioned for the implied acceptance of an economic framework of measurement applied to what is often subtle and immeasurable social interaction, it does help in explaining the value of sociality within societies where capitalism is the dominant discourse (Macbeth, Carson & Northcote, 2004). However, it is perhaps precisely because of capitalism’s discursive and societal dominance that the value of networks, and the exclusionary

nature of group membership, are positioned in terms of capital, as the opportunity for inclusion, and the beneficial outcomes of interaction, are not based on chance or pure merit, but depend on the availability of social networks, and the capability of individuals to meet those requirements to be welcomed. Membership to a group may be based on socio-economic status, race, gender, education, and a plethora of other strains of identity. The opportunities and barriers to take advantage from those resources held within networks are therefore open for critical analysis.

Immigration can significantly disrupt an individual's networks from which they would routinely draw from for financial help, advice, general social contact and well-being, and therefore the establishment and maintenance of new networks and ties deserves specific attention (Portes, 2000). All capital can provide access to resources that would be otherwise unavailable (Glover, Shinew & Parry, 2005; Moscardo, 2012) and the opportunity to establish and maintain social capital can influence the quality of life for an individual or group.

2.4.3.1. Leisure, tourism, and social capital.

Participation in leisure activities creates a unique environment when considering the acquisition and development of social capital. Leisure is “both structurally and motivationally [a social activity, and]... can therefore be a significant arena for the sociability on which social capital depends” (Glover & Hemingway, 2005, p. 397). The type of interaction that leisure facilitates is often richer, removed from many social structures and rules that other scenarios can impose on people (Glover & Hemingway, 2005).

Tourism has been found to improve social capital among friends and families who travel together (Minnaert, Maitland & Miller, 2009). Minnaert et al. (2009) found that families in the UK in receipt of benefits (welfare) that were provided with social assistance to go on a vacation

experienced an improvement in both family relations and social capital externally. Many families found they changed the way they spent time together for the months after the vacation, with improved relationships between parents and children. Spending quality leisure time with family members in new surroundings positively impacted bonding social capital and the quality of relationships. The confidence gained from new experiences and interactions was also found to spill over into the participants' home life (Minnaert et al., 2009). The authors found in interviews six months after the vacation experience that "gains in social capital had developed further... for about half of the [40] respondents... [who] were able to turn motivation into positive changes to their lives" (Minnaert et al., 2009, p. 327). The vacation provided an opportunity to forget about routine worries for a short period of time and had exposed some of the participants to the possibility of seeking that sensation and state of mind at home during times of stress, almost as a form of training to find relaxation and enjoyment in life. People's perspectives were altered, as the authors describe;

[Many] emphasized that the holiday changed their aspirations in life, and how things that seemed out of reach now seemed possible after all... Although these changes may seem small, for the participants they were often fundamental and a stepping stone for further development (Minnaert et al., 2009, pp. 328-329).

In terms of the opportunities for communal benefits, the investment in tourism for people who would otherwise not have the experience

can reduce certain costs society bears... [T]he holidays proved able to reduce problems such as low self-esteem and bad family relationships... [which] in turn helps address mental health problems like depression, or improves the chance of finding employment, thus making individuals more independent from state income support (Minnaert et al., 2009, p. 330).

The potential for hosting to facilitate the development of social capital within a family unit or friendship is therefore worthy of consideration.

2.4.3.2. Hosting and social capital.

Hosting establishes a leisure context (Havitz, 2007) with potential for social capital development and maintenance. The predominant source of social capital development and maintenance within the hosting experience will be found in the relationships between hosts and their guests. *Bonding* (or *horizontal*) social capital refers to the strengthening of ties among people of the same group, while *bridging* (or *vertical*) social capital is the establishment of links to external groups; a distinction that is subjective and dependent on a study's unit of analysis (Macbeth et al., 2004; Moscardo, 2012).

The hosting experience can refresh personal relationships that are traditional sources of social capital for the immigrant. Whether it is in the form of economic support (Janta et. al, 2015), or emotional support, help with home improvements, or advice on business and finance; the hosting experience provides that interaction that enables those exchanges to be maintained and nurtured. It is possible that resources can be exchanged through social capital during the trip, as well as providing the foundations for exchanges after the visit. In seeing their friend or family member's new home visitors are given some perspective of how their help may be used; actually visiting and establishing their own personal connection with the place that their friend or family now lives in might help contextualise the request for a loan to fix the roof, or a car to get them to work etc. Further, help such as childcare so often provided by grandparents and family at home may only be received by immigrants after travel has occurred. Hosting likely provides immigrants with valuable opportunities to maintain and draw upon social capital that would otherwise be out of reach and likely to wither to some extent.

It is important to note that although hosting is likely to provide positive and beneficial experiences, there may well be situations where the host could encounter difficulties and possible struggles. Shani and Uriely (2012) found that some hosts felt exploited by their guests, eaten out of house and home, and visited only because of the location of their accommodation rather than a desire to spend time with them. The intensity of these experiences, of short periods of time with people who are important but seldom seen, and the obligation and pressure of entertaining, of making the trip worth the time, money and emotion spent, has the potential to cause tensions as well as enjoyment. In this sense it is possible, therefore, that social capital could diminish as ties are more definitely damaged because of fallings out.

2.4.3.3. Cultural Capital

Cultural capital is the ability to distinguish oneself based on intrinsic culture, and symbols of cultural achievement and fluency, which ultimately enable access to resources through prestige and inclusion, as well as understanding how the exchange of capital within a society is done. According to Bourdieu (1986) there are three forms of cultural capital: *embodied*, which is “in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body”, *objectified*, which takes the “form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries... [etc.]”, and *institutionalized*, such as qualifications (p. 47). The embodied form of cultural capital is perhaps most pertinent to the discussion here. This type of capital is held within the individual, and helps form the values and understandings that they hold. It is the result of socialisation in certain environments that allow an understanding and appreciation of culture, and fluency in its use that can aid in symbolic cues pertaining to inclusion in certain social networks. Cultural capital in this form is typically inherent within the social class system, as it “costs time, time which must be invested personally by the investor... [l]ike the acquisition of a muscular physique or a suntan” (p. 48). However, not all of society has

the economic capital to afford the time to tend to these pursuits. Children born to certain classes are exposed to music lessons, travel experiences, and more, that are afforded through the free time provided by the economic capital of their parents. Children of families unable to afford these experiences therefore lack the cultural capital displayed by their peers from other social classes, and for Bourdieu, this is the connection between cultural and economic capital and explains the potential for increased access to further resources that it brings. Additionally *objectified* cultural capital could come in the form of photos and souvenirs from the hosting trip that serve as personal reminders and public displays of the experiences. The demonstration of cultural capital is a symbol of wealth that can be exchanged through the inclusion of certain groups. Cultural capital is not purely inherent, however, and can be acquired. It involves adding to a personal (or communal) heritage, which can be done slowly and unconsciously through interaction and exposure to a variety of cultural sources.

The concept of cultural capital has some interesting ramifications for individuals and communities who host. For immigrant hosts, particularly recent arrivals, their cultural capital with the new community may be limited. Hosting may give a reason to take time and interact and be engaged with their new local culture. Learning that happens in situ can be more effective than in-class situations (Lange et al., 2011), for example colloquial language, culture, values, and traditions of a community can be seen first hand by attending festivals, markets, and other such events. The accumulated knowledge and understanding constructed and acquired through these experiences can be cultivated into relevant cultural capital. The familiarisation and adoption of local practices and values, enhancing the sense of social responsibility, asserting membership in the host community, and becoming recognisable as a member of that community are arguably expressions of cultural capital that might distinguish the immigrant as a newcomer that is

knowledgeable and comfortable with Canadian culture and values (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). The physical presence of friends or relatives may alleviate some pressure on time and money, though the provision of free childcare for example.

The implications for a community at large are also subtly significant. The additional reasons hosting gives residents for engaging in cultural activities increases the variety of stakeholder input, arguably enhancing communal cultural capital and the reputation of the community as a destination.

2.4.3.4. Community capitals.

There are two levels of capital theory worth distinguishing. As already discussed, social capital can relate to individuals directly, but it can also refer to the aggregate of capitals within the communal network. The two levels are inextricably linked (Glover & Hemingway, 2005) as communities who foster trust, reciprocity, and cooperation among their citizens “are more likely to be in [a] position to take advantage of economic, community-building, and capacity enhancement opportunities” (McGhee, Lee, O'Bannon & Perdue, 2010, p. 487).

The *community capitals framework* provides a structure with which to analyse the capabilities and resources within a community (Flora, 2004; Flora & Flora, 2008). Flora and Flora (2008) identify seven separate capitals that communities possess: “natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial, and built” (p. 8). Social capital is therefore a resource that is linked to and positioned alongside other forms of capital that can be invested in to convert them into different resources and information. The active consideration of links between these communal capitals and individual engagement is a useful and fruitful way for “thinking about sociality as a strategic resource for sustainable tourism development” (Macbeth et al., 2004, p. 503). Each of the seven

capitals is interconnected with the others, making their development synergetic. For example, a financial investment in environmental capital (e.g. maintenance of natural areas) could result in increased skills among those who work to maintain it (human capital), may lead to improved and prolonged social interaction by groups who use it (social capital), and to more tourism activity (economic capital). However, an overly keen interest in growing financial capital may result in fewer community services, leading to reduced social capital, or fewer restrictions for corporations that may depreciate environmental capital (etc.).

This distinction between individual and community social capital is useful when discussing the potential and actual impacts of immigrants' hosting experiences. It is interesting to note that much of the literature on social capital, and community capitals in general, focus on rural communities (e.g. Flora, 2004; Flora & Flora, 2008; Macbeth et al., 2004; McGhee et al., 2010). It is possible that aspects of social capital and tourism are much more recognisable and measureable in smaller communities where mono-industries have dissipated and tourism has been pursued as a panacea to economic decline. However, there are implications for larger urban centres for both practitioners and academics alike. The larger a city, and the more diverse its population, economic activity, and tourism product, the harder it becomes to isolate areas and impacts of these capitals and links to tourism, especially in a VFR context. However, this does not diminish the need of further understanding these issues for communities like Toronto.

2.4.4. Summary

The topic of immigrants and hosting has ramifications in several spheres (Griffin, 2013c). Increased immigration leads to higher levels of VFR from those source countries, and immigrants to Canada appear to be capable of providing the basic infrastructures to host. The experience of

hosting has the potential to heavily impact the immigrant host's relationship with their visitors, as well as their sense of belonging and attachment to their new community. VFR tourism can increase the variety of stakeholder input into cultural activity in a community, raising its position as a destination, improving awareness in source countries, and improving opportunities and connections for all types of tourism.

3. Theoretical Discussion

It is important and worthwhile to return to the purpose of this research to consider theoretical implications before embarking on a methodological discussion. As stated in the introduction, the current research interest considers the broad experiences of immigrants who host visiting friends and relatives. The following discussion considers the epistemological and ontological underpinnings that will inform and guide this research as a foundation to the subsequent discussion on methodology.

3.1. Paradigmatic Considerations

The nature of reality and the generation of knowledge are widely debated topics across the social sciences. The answers related to these ontological and epistemological questions disclose a paradigm, a basic set of beliefs that guide both the conduct and scope of inquiry (Crotty, 1998; Guba, 1990; Hemingway, 1999). Ontology refers to “assumptions that underpin theories about what kind of entities can exist” (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner, 2006, p. 276), and epistemology is “the theory of how it is that people come to have knowledge of the external world” (Abercrombie et. al., 2006, p. 133); in other words, what *is* social reality, what is even possible to know of it, and how can we learn about it (Crotty, 1998)? Jamal and Everett (2004) succinctly describe this predicament by demanding that researchers ask themselves

what is the purpose of social (tourism) research? Is it to contribute to [the] prediction and control... of resources, places and populations, or to enhance understanding and meaning-making... of phenomena in the social world? Or... is it to change the world..? Or perhaps all of the above? (pp. 2-3).

Paradigmatic discussion is especially important for tourism studies (Ren et al., 2010) as researchers “have to consider the impacts of the influences of tourism upon a wide variety of different regional,

ethnic, religious, subcultural and other ‘special-interest’ sanctioning groups” (Hollinshead, 2004b, p. 64).

Tourism is an all encompassing phenomena and the paradigmatic approach of a study should reflect the scope and nature of its overall purpose. The population of interest in this thesis is at once quite distinct, and yet diverse. Immigrants in Toronto who host friends and relatives may have some common types of experiences, but they are also utterly unique as individuals in the combination of characteristics, experiences, and contexts that make them who they are: cultural background, reason for migration, religion, education, gender, sexuality, availability of family and friends, occupation, beliefs; the list is endless. Understanding how individuals experience hosting requires, in my view, an inductive approach that will generate knowledge through the interaction with participants. The distinction between an interest in experiences over behaviour has methodological implications as well, as behaviour

implies an outside observer describing someone else’s actions... [and] it also implies a standardised routine that one simply goes through. An experience is more personal, as it refers to an active self, to a human being who not only engages in but shapes an action” (Bruner, 1986, p. 5).

For this reason, post-positivism is deemed inappropriate, as despite its value and use of prediction and explanation in many areas of social sciences, and its achievements in seeking to substantiate the significant proportions VFR contributes to tourism, its benefits as an approach are not appropriate at this stage of this particular topic. A discussion of paradigmatic approaches now follows, concluding with an explanation for the adoption of constructionism as the most suitable approach for this thesis.

3.1.1. Constructivism and constructionism

Whereas post-positivism focuses on explanation and prediction, and critical theory on the unequal relations of power and transformation, *constructivism* is interested in understanding the individual meaning behind social phenomena (Schwandt, 1994). Meaning, and therefore reality, is not waiting to be discovered (Schwandt, 1994), but is actively *constructed*;

[A]ll knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context (Crotty, 1998, p. 42).

Ontologically constructivists are *relativists*, believing in the existence of multiple realities that are relative to the socio-historical context in which they are constructed (Guba, 1990; Hemingway, 1999; Pernecky, 2012). There is some divergence, however, in the complete rejection of the existence of an objective natural world. This ontological disagreement provides some basis for the distinction between *constructionism* and *constructivism*, which are often used interchangeably through much of the literature (Crotty, 1998; Pernecky, 2012). Constructionism considers “the collective generation [and transmission] of meaning” whereas constructivism focuses “exclusively on the meaning-making activity of the individual mind” (Crotty, 1998, p. 58). This distinction sees constructionism more concerned with how our culture and history shape our meanings, and is therefore more inclined to take a stronger critical stance than constructivism (Burr, 1995). Consequently constructionism is not necessarily inconsistent with realism (Burr, 1998; Crotty, 1998; Pernecky, 2012; Schwandt, 1994, 2000) as “[t]he existence of a world without a mind is conceivable... [but] [m]eaning without a mind is not” (Crotty, 1998, pp. 10-11). Although it may be impossible to reach into an objective social reality, it does not disprove its existence; therefore “constructionism is at once realist and relativist” (Crotty, 1998, p. 63).

What all constructivists and constructionists do agree on is that all we can attempt to understand are our social constructions, not the reality of the objects at hand. As soon as an object is considered in the social world, its meaning will “always involve a degree of indeterminacy and fuzziness, and thus present a definite degree of semantic elasticity... [that] provides a ground for differing or antagonistic perceptions and constructions” (Bourdieu, 1987, p. 13); the creation of multiple realities is therefore inevitable. The notion of *truth* is therefore negotiated between members of a community (Lincoln & Guba, 2000) and refers to “the best-informed and most sophisticated construction on which there is consensus” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 128). In considering the credibility of an inquiry, the constructions it offers are “evaluated for their ‘fit’ with the data and information they encompass... [and] the extent to which they ‘work’” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 129). Results are never absolute and reflect a situation at one point in time (Guba, 1990).

Placing the participant’s constructions as central is important and useful, as participation in leisure and tourism can “become ways of *making knowledge*: the individual comes to know about the world in new, more complex ways” (Crouch, 2000, p. 65). Because of the highly contextual nature of hosting experiences, and the lack of existing studies and consideration of the subject, the meanings of those who are directly involved with the phenomena are of particular interest. The value of approaching this subject without hypotheses or theoretical rigidity reflects the importance of generating knowledge directed by and strongly reflecting the experiences and voices of those involved.

3.1.2. Critical theory.

Although varied and distinct, the various schools of thought under the critical theory umbrella share some general characteristics. They are all interested in “issues of power and justice and the

ways that the economy, matters of race, class, and gender, ideologies, discourses, education, religion and other social institutions, and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p. 281). There are two main areas where being critical is important: in considering the role of history and values in science, and then the role that science plays in shaping society (Popkewitz, 1990). Science based on assumptions born in contexts of unequal relations of power produces knowledge presented as neutral and true, yet this can perpetuate policy, opinions and actions that preserve these unchallenged values (Popkewitz, 1990).

Instead of conserving social structures, critical theory aims to be “a self-reflexive enterprise intended to reveal contradictions in social practice that limit human development” (Hemingway, 1999, p. 489). Schooling is important, not just in terms of education, but in the socialising process that teaches us how the world, its institutions, and our individual roles should interact (Popkewitz, 1990). Critical theory seeks to expose the socio-historical contexts of social action, including science, that appear normal and natural (Hemingway, 1999). Critical theory compels us to ask how were our beliefs shaped, by whom, under what circumstances, and to what ends?

Critical theory provides a useful framework for many aspects of the current thesis, in particular the strong acknowledgement of the socio-historical context of immigrants, and the relationship between those with more power and those with less in representing and shaping their own communities for self-serving ends, along with the objective of transformation. The foundations of destination marketing as described previously were born from the desire to attract convention business for economic benefits (Ford & Peeper, 2008). The context of tourism marketing is therefore entrenched in a culture of economic development and profit. If, as Pizam (2010, cited in Wang, 2011) suggests, the DMO’s role is shifting from *convention chaser* to *community brand manager*, involved in evolving the overall community image through greater

participation in non-tourism related decision making, then the relationship between DMO and resident is vital. To review this relationship through a critical lens is not necessarily seeking to criticize it, but to reveal the power dynamics to those involved to act as a basis for change (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000).

The *public sphere* is “that social space occupied by individuals in their public roles as members of groups, secondary associations, and extended social relations” (Hemingway, 1999, p. 495); where the macro institutional world interacts with the private lives of individuals. The critical study of the public sphere can expose how an institution’s actions obstruct individuals’ potentials, centrally positioning the equal political and social rights of individuals at the heart of the research (Hemingway, 1999). The engagement between a DMO and residents is pertinent, especially if a community’s culture is developed as a marketable commodity rather than a tool of social development (Jamal & Everett, 2004; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). A community may be appealing as a destination due in part to immigration, but may also be promoted by the DMO with the primary goal of serving the accommodations sector, which is often controlled by multi-national corporations reporting to distant shareholders. The cultivation of communal capital also has a place in this discussion, as tourism presents both barriers and potential to affect community development. Certain groups, and powerful members within groups, may seek to restrict others’ opportunities for improving their social capital, maintaining advantage for themselves (Glover, 2006; Glover & Hemingway, 2005), and this description could be applied to the behaviour of the tourism sector. Bourdieu (1987) talks of the idea that through social practices we become aware of our boundaries and limits:

 this sense of one’s place, which in a situation of interaction, prompts those...
 ‘common folks’ ... to remain ‘humbly’ in their places, and which prompts the others

to ‘keep their distance’... these strategies may be totally unconscious and take the form of what we commonly call timidity and arrogance (p. 5).

Immigrant hosts are arguably kept ‘humbly in their place’, discursively obstructed from tourism resources and the potential opportunities that may arise from the experience. The processes of social capital allows certain groups to draw on immigrants’ culture to sell hotel rooms and tourism experiences, yet actually deny them the opportunity to shape and influence; but as hosts, immigrants become not just producers, but also consumers and participants in culture and tourism products.

Thoughtful and structured engagement can lead to improved relations between native and immigrant groups, and social institutions have role and responsibility to understand and evolve their own behaviour and policies in interaction with various groups in their communities, whether it be for political, employment, health or other purposes. Institutions that provide contexts for leisure, such as schools and park authorities are no different (e.g. Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Lange et al., 2011), and if DMOs acknowledge the influence immigrants have in contributing to the community’s culture as a destination, and engaged them in attracting and guiding visitors, there may be further benefits for all involved on various personal, societal, and economic levels; true potentials could be reached. Immigrants, and particularly their culture, are often used to market a destination (e.g. Tourism Toronto, 2012b), but they are also over-represented in the tourism related employment in jobs that are more likely to be part-time, seasonal, and low paid (Aytar & Rath, 2012; CTHRC, 2009), yet immigrants are denied significant input into the marketing and cultural development of their communities. This relationship is therefore ripe for critical analysis and reflection.

The foundations of critical theory seek to transform the lived realities of research participants, to expose opportunities and help participants reach their full potentials (Crotty, 1998; Freire & Macedo, 1998; Guba, 1990; Hemingway, 1999; Jamal & Everett, 2004; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000; Popkewitz, 1990). Participants of this thesis, as immigrants, “may have been deprived of certain advantages associated with [the lack of] early socialization in the host country and may lack sufficient friendship networks” (Stodolska, 1998, p. 522) and cultural capital, but with the encouragement to host, immigrants have the opportunity to play the alternative roles of guide and interpreter, rather than outsider and stranger. Bone and Mitchell (2003) describe how cultural planning can

improve the quality of life, bring stimulation and purpose to existence; enable people to give full rein to self-expression; bring people together and underpin communities; enhance communication and understanding; unlock creativity and problem-solving... [As well as] develop[...] self-confidence and capacity in individuals and communities; improve[e] identity and pride; promot[e] interest in the environment; provid[e] positive solutions to problems presented by social exclusion; [and] enable[e] people to imagine the future in positive and creative ways. (cited in Aitchison, 2003, p. 26).

Actively developing culture, as introduced in the above section on cultural capital, can be part of developing individual capacities for the broader good (Hemingway, 1999).

3.1.3. Relevance of constructionism.

Constructionism, I argue, provides a useful methodological framework for this thesis (Griffin, 2014a). It seems that critical theory is a useful framework for considering the relationship between the DMO and immigrant hosts, but may perhaps be too focussed restricting the research scope from broader issues. Constructivism, on the other hand, seems to offer a framework where the experiences of the participant are central and inclusive, but the lack of ambition to seek

transformation and links to broader contexts is somewhat limiting. In many ways constructionism appears to merge a critical viewpoint within a constructivist epistemological framework, providing a critical approach to the process of communal interaction (Burr, 1995; Heiner, 2002; Pernecky, 2012). Although constructionism recognizes some level of agency in the individual construction of reality, it also allows for a discussion on how shared realities are inter-subjectively created. If our individual constructions are a result of interaction, intentional interpretation, and realignment of our reality (Crotty, 1998), then considering the context of that interactive process is vital regarding the influence on our understandings. Knowledge is constructed and sustained through social processes, and constructionists believe that

all ways of understanding are historically and culturally relative... [They are] products of that culture and history, and are dependent upon the particular social and economic arrangements prevailing in that culture at that time (Burr, 1995, p. 4).

We are able to create our own interpretations, but we are more likely to share constructions with groups of people with whom we have common, overlapping context.

A critique of the power in language, or of *discourse*, is introduced. Discourse is a difficult term to define (Burr, 1995, 1998), but refers to the story of a version of a particular group, place, or belief etc.; “Discourses are not simply abstract ideas... [but] are intimately connected to the way that society is organised and run” (Burr, 1995, p. 54). A discourse is a story or description that inherently transmits values, but is often shared as neutral or common sense statements. Those who have the ability to define therefore create power over those described (Heiner, 2002). The constructionist view of power draws from Foucault, who saw power not as a possession, “but as an effect of discourse”; being able to “define the world or a person in a way that allows you to do the things you want is to exercise power” (Burr, 1995, p. 64). A strong critical component is

therefore easily integrated into constructionist inquiry that can emphasise “the role of elite interests in... the way social problems are constructed, conceived, and presented to the public” (Heiner, 2002, p. 9). When non-elites co-construct their own understandings through interaction with dominant discourses individual and group meanings are influenced by and can perpetuate certain shared understandings (Heiner, 2002).

Constructionist critique is appealing for those who wish to provide marginalised groups a voice in the shared construction of those public discourses that concern them (Gergen, 1998; Heiner, 2002), and the production of marginalised constructions can help adapt existing dominant narratives. In this sense constructionists recognize that “knowledge and social action go together” (Burr, 1995, p. 5); transformation is possible, and although not *emancipation* in a critical theory context, it can provide a greater level of input by different groups into the construction of discourses that directly represent and affect them. Constructionism offers immigrants in this thesis an opportunity to provide their own stories, giving shape and meaning to their own realities, and refreshes the stock of cultural resources on which public discourse can draw from. Collecting and sharing stories in a research context can help diversify knowledge creation, as “no story is ever anyone’s own, but is always borrowed in parts” (Frank, 2012, p. 36); narratives can deposit new understandings and meanings on existing sedimentary knowledge bases. As Stack and Iwasaki (2009) describe:

the use of a research method to give *voices* to immigrants is important so that research can reveal their lived experiences, providing valuable knowledge from the perspectives of people who have lived through stressful and demanding processes of adapting to a new host country. The rationale for using this [type of] approach is to avoid imposing the conventional western-oriented notion of leisure that often has a segmental view (e.g. leisure vs. work, free time vs. obligatory time) and to appreciate a unique cultural context in which leisure-like activities may take place from a culturally grounded perspective (p. 240 [original emphasis]).

It is important to also consider the pivotal terms of this research as constructions themselves. Bourdieu (1987) argues that realists

will attempt to determine empirically the properties and boundaries of the various classes, sometimes going as far as to count, to the person, the members of this or that class... [However,] classes are nothing but constructs of the scientist, with no foundation whatsoever in reality... [and] any attempt to demonstrate the existence of classes by the empirical measurement of objective indicators of social and economic position measurements will come up against the fact that it is impossible to find, in the real world, clear-cut discontinuities (p. 2)

Tourism and *immigration* are social constructs themselves on a continuum of human travel. As Cohen and Cohen (2012) suggest: “Tourism is seen as part of a sub-set of a vast and heterogeneous complex of global mobilities, which also includes migration, return migration, transnationalism, diasporas, and other obligatory as well as voluntary forms of travel” (p. 2181). Tourism and immigration are exemplified in daily life through “a passenger on a cruise ship, an eco-tourist, the portrayal and marketing of places as tourist destinations, and also one’s birth into a country with constructed geographic boundaries, language and a political ideology” (Pernecky, 2012, p. 1126). Indeed, much discussion exists as to what constitutes tourism (Tribe, 2004), with economic, sectorial, behavioural, psychological, and sociological approaches used to lay claims based on measures of distance, perceptions, origins and other factors (Smith, 2010). From a constructionist standpoint it is arguable that “without being meaningfully constructed and transmitted, [tourism itself] would cease to exist” (Pernecky, 2012, p. 1128). The construction of borders generates legal and cultural entities (Williams & Hall, 2000), providing a basis for the construction of an *immigrant* as someone born in another geographical boundary now living in a new one, no matter the distance travelled or cultural divide crossed.

The discourse on VFR is also worth exploring for contextual purposes to this thesis. Burr (1995) explains that “just because we think of some music as ‘classical’ and some as ‘pop’ does not mean we should assume that there is anything in the nature of the music itself that means it has to be divided up in that particular way” (p. 3), it is our interpretation of its characteristics that constructs the segments, and this approach can be applied to the segmentation of tourism into *VFR*, *pleasure*, *business* and *other*. By stripping the act of tourism to its most basic common form, the voluntary act of travel, it is possible to reconsider how different types of tourism can be considered without using self-reported motivation.

The concept of *sedimentation* within constructionism considers the historical context and influence over culture that asks how, as a community, we come to reach shared constructions of reality (Crotty, 1998). The construction of ‘pleasure’, ‘VFR’, and ‘business’ tourism and their actors are also open to this critique. Destination marketers and practitioners have been primarily concerned with filling hotel rooms and increasing tourism revenues, inspired by the desire for economic gains (Ford & Peeper, 2009), and it can be argued that the tourism sector, particularly hotels and their influence over DMO activities, has constructed traveller segments to suit its own short term needs. Promotional materials that are inherently built on a foundation of economic profitability, not social or cultural development, affect social constructions of what constitute tourism. This fails to encourage a public discussion on the impacts of tourism activity beyond usual metrics. Through marketing, public relations, and assumption of leadership the tourism sector have defined the discourse of *tourism* in the public and industry spheres to refer to certain groups more than others (Yu, Kim, Chen & Schwartz, 2012). VFR is not *real* tourism, and is therefore outside the scope of engagement; it happens on its own, does not impact (our) business, and is not of (our) concern; but by “building upon theoretical deposits already in place” we can

actually “become further and further removed from those realities” with which we engage (Crotty, 1998, p. 59).

This philosophy is reflected in many of the academic studies on VFR that attempt to demonstrate the economic value of the VFR market (Braunlich & Nadkarni, 1995; Jackson, 1990; Meis et al., 1995; Morrison, Hsieh, & Leary, 1995; Seaton & Palmer, 1997; Seaton & Tagg, 1995; Tideswell & Faulkner, 1999; Tsao-Fang, Fridgen, Hsieh & O’Leary, 1995). The construct of VFR is externalised by the tourism sector and serves to support its inferiority as a type of tourism. As a resident host I am not considered a *tourist*, and my guest is not welcomed and engaged as a *tourist*; yet except for the limited distance I travel, we both can play every part of the tourist role and contribute in numerous ways to the community’s economic activity and social construction as a destination.

Tourism destinations as well have been described not just as geographical places waiting to be discovered, but given meaning by the constructions of tourists who are fed marketing and motivational material from the industry and public discourse in general (Dann, 1996; Gieryn, 2000; Norton, 1996; Pernecky, 2012). This concept could be easily applied to immigrants who may not be very familiar with their new communities, and hosting may help construct and develop meaning for the place that surrounds them. Social constructionism also sits well with the concepts of social and cultural capitals. If, as Bourdieu (1986) posits, “[t]he social world is accumulated history” (p. 241), then the barriers and access to the networks that offer various levels of capital are themselves constructed through accumulated history and human interaction (Glover & Hemingway, 2005).

In summary, the opportunities that constructionism provides as a guiding epistemological framework are appealing. The experiences of interest, related to settlement and hosting, depend

in the interaction and co-construction of understanding between the participant and communities, cultures, and people from the past and present. Constructionism allows for individual distinctiveness of migrants to be considered (Janta et. al, 2015) within an understanding of context, with the potential for critique of the power relations that are inherent in the broader public sphere. Additionally, as a guide for learning about these experiences through the act of research, the strong acknowledgement of my own role in the co-construction and representation of these experiences is only beneficial in attempting to present credible and trustworthy forms of meaning.

3.2. Self-Reflection

In order to provide a useful discussion on a suggested methodological approach it is necessary to clearly define the topic, but it is also important to briefly acknowledge how this topic came to be formed. A potential criticism of the constructionist approach is that it must move beyond solipsistic description to provide relevant and insightful analysis. One way to help diminish the potential of critique is to ensure that there is a reasonable and sensible link between the researcher and the topic; some individuals are in a more appropriate position than others to explore topics relevant to their own lived experience (Shepherd, 2011). A brief explanation of how I came to arrive at this topic for my PhD thesis follows and is offered in the spirit of disclosure and context.

This thesis is, in reflection, a culmination of my own experiences and interests since adolescence. I am a white English male, in my mid-thirties, from a supportive middle class background. I arrived in Canada as a permanent resident in 2006, albeit without many of the economic and cultural barriers that many immigrants face, and now hold dual UK-Canadian citizenship. I have hosted visiting friends and family several times, and have visited landmarks, attractions, and neighbourhoods, and participated in activities in Toronto and beyond because I

wanted to show my guests an entertaining time and have new experiences myself. I know the real pleasure I experience of having someone visit, of reconnecting to my past, and showing someone my new home.

For example, when a friend visited a year after I arrived I arranged to rent a cottage in the Kawartha's, Ontario, over the Labour Day weekend to show him the great Canadian outdoors, of which I had not seen much myself. I asked a few friends in Toronto if they wanted to join us and soon we were a group of 14, some of whom I knew well, others I had only met briefly, and a few I did not know at all. The weekend was a success, and has since become an annual tradition for this group of friends. Every year we rent a different cottage, and we have an opportunity to reconnect as people have moved across Southern Ontario for jobs and family reasons. My original hosting experience, therefore, has positioned me in the centre of a tradition that I started, strengthening my connections with those who participate, and has expanded my knowledge of Ontarian towns and summer culture, which has facilitated further conversations with colleagues and acquaintances, helping to maintain my network. I appreciate the visitors I receive and acknowledge the benefits I have gained.

My professional experiences also led me to this topic. I worked for four years at Tourism Toronto, the regional DMO and RTO 5 discussed in previous sections of this thesis. During my time working in destination marketing in Toronto I was exposed to many people passionate about the city, and eager to see success for the destination overall. In an environment where Toronto was celebrated and sold no doubt influenced my own impressions and connections with the city. But I was sometimes surprised at the lack of interest in non-hotel related forms of tourism and became interested in pursuing a PhD in a subject that considered residents' participation in tourism activities and marketing. I had been interested in studying the VFR market, and discovered that

the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Commission (OTMPC) intended to launch a campaign targeting immigrants in Toronto from India and China (OTMPC, 2011). After further reading this led me to conceptualise my interests in resident participation in tourism around the VFR topic, incorporating aspects of personal and community identity, issues of power between the tourism sector and immigrants, and a subject that holds relevance for the practice of tourism in many communities in Ontario and beyond.

As I started to research methodologies and approaches I found this quote from Clandinin and Connelly (2000) that helped lead me to the narrative approach, which I shall describe in more detail in the following section: “Narrative inquiries are always strongly autobiographical. Our research interests come out of our own narratives of experience and shape our narrative inquiry plotlines” (p. 121). Therefore, as much as this research is about the experiences of the participants, it is also a reflection of my own story. This is a topic that reveals my character and interests, and although the results or discussion will not explicitly include my own story, I will influence them, and they will be told by me; instead of concealing this I am offering disclosure and embracing it.

4. Methodology

Methodology is defined by Crotty (1998) as “the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes” (p. 3). The following discussion will introduce *narrative inquiry* as an overarching methodology, with an explanation of why the structure and function of narratives, and their analysis, makes this an appropriate methodology choice, strategy, and process for this research. Further discussion will consider the specific procedures and epistemological considerations, sampling and recruitment, the collection and analysis of data, and finally knowledge transfer.

4.1. Narrative Analysis

Narrative research is as varied as the interpretations of the term itself. Further discussion is therefore required, as the literature

does not [specifically] tell us [the researchers] whether to look for stories in recorded everyday speech, interviews, diaries, photographs, TV programmes, newspaper articles or patterned activities of people’s everyday lives; whether to aim for objectivity or researcher and participant involvement; whether to analyse stories’ particularity or generality; or what epistemological or ontological significance to attach to narratives (Squire, Andrews & Tamboukou, 2013, p. 1).

A discussion of narratives and their study is therefore offered below to better establish the practical, as well as ontological and epistemological foundations of this thesis.

Initial discussion will consider the term *narrative*, the relation between tourism and narratives, the importance and function of narrative, the distinction between ‘small’ and ‘big’

stories, as well as the use and justification for the generation and subsequent analysis of narrative in a research context.

4.1.1. What is a narrative?

The term ‘narrative’ is multifaceted. Somers (1994) suggests that the study of narrative acknowledges its role as

an ontological condition of social life, ...that people construct identities (however multiple and changing) by locating themselves or being located within a repertoire of emplotted stories; that ‘experience’ is constituted through narratives; that people make sense of what has happened and is happening to them by attempting to assemble or in some way to integrate these happenings within one or more narratives; and that people are guided to act in certain ways, and not others, on the basis of the projections, expectations, and memories derived from a multiplicity but ultimately limited repertoire of available social, public, and cultural narratives (pp. 613-614).

A narrative is therefore a co-constructed representation of a social reality. Co-constructors can act on varied levels of social interaction, for example individuals, groups, institutions, and broader societal narratives interact between each other inter-subjectively shape and influence realities. An individual can co-construct a narrative with a friend, with representation of a sub-culture, with manifestations of a government policy, and with a societal narrative, for example the narrative of *charity* or *competition* within a culture. In return, the friend, sub-culture, government, and society have their realities influenced to varying degrees through co-construction with the individual; the level of influence affected by the number of others involved in the co-construction of a narrative reality, and the position of power and capital held by that individual. Somers (1994) conceptualises four “dimensions of narrativity” that give form to these levels: individuals produce *ontological narratives*, cultural institutions create *public narratives*, and the master or *metanarrative* is what we are “embedded in as contemporary actors in history” (p. 619). The fourth is the *conceptual*

narrative produced by researchers. A critical view of power is relevant here, as those who are able to narrate can define reality depending on their access to a varied and substantial audience (Spector-Mersel, 2010). In this sense the representation and treatment of VFR tourism as a disregarded and non-productive phenomenon can be viewed as a result of the public narratives produced by tourism institutions. For example, DMOs are positioned as an authority on tourism activity within a community, turned to for reactions to policy, external events, and performance reports related to tourism by local media and industry. A DMO, and those who influence its direction (i.e. hotels), can therefore give shape and meaning to an understanding of tourism within a community, whether that community be very local, regional, national, or even international. Tourism companies who promote and sell vacations also influence an understanding of tourism. Travel agency windows and websites, and TV travel shows display imagery that represents escape, exoticism, and difference, from the white beaches and self-indulgence of all-inclusives, to the jungle treks and tribal cultures of alternative travel; depictions of tourism rarely involve visiting or hosting friends and relatives.

The public narrative of VFR has been discussed in previous sections. This thesis is, however, particularly interested in the construction of ontological narratives in the pursuit of creating a conceptual narrative, with the intention of affecting the public narrative as an implication. A consideration of personal, or ontological, narratives is therefore required. A personal narrative refers to a representation in oral or written form, that can cover a specific (often minor) event, a significant aspect of one's life, or a complete biography (Chase 2005). Narratives often involve a sequential plot with background, an event and conclusion, and include central characters and an identifiable narrator. The components of a narrative as told in everyday life are

not “a strict linear presentation of events in temporal sequence”, but loosely follow a pattern that “the situation at the end is subsequent to what it was at the beginning” (Ong, 1982, p.19).

McCabe and Foster (2006), in a review of several narrative research authors, summarise an academic structural view of narratives as follows:

Abstract: What, in a nutshell, is this story about?

Orientation: Who, when, where?

Complicating action: What happened and then what happened?

Evaluation: So what? How or why is this interesting?

Result or resolution: What finally happened?

Coda: That’s it, I’ve finished and am ‘bridging’ back to our present situation.

(pp. 198-199).

The authors do, however, acknowledge that this structure is a guide only (McCabe & Foster, 2006). A person’s narrative does not have to follow this form rigidly, but can dip back and forth into and from the various elements, especially with the evaluation aspect where a narrator may interrupt their own storytelling to offer a piece of information to the listener in the present tense to provide a sense of what the story means to them (De Fina, 2003; Polkinghorne, 1995). As Burnell, Hunt and Coleman (2009) suggest, “[w]hilst important, structure alone is not enough to render a story coherent, there must also be emotional evaluation” (p. 94), a personal and interactional element.

4.1.2. Why do narratives matter?

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) use the example of a lathe to help explain the use and value of narrative.

A lathe is a tool useful to different people, at different times, in different contexts. It is useful to commercial woodworkers, to hobbyists, to woodworking tool manufacturers, to teachers, to students and so on; in factories, in small home hobby shops, in schools, and so on (p. 26).

For different people the experience of the same tool has diverse associations and meanings related to work, play, or childhood. The realities surrounding the lathe depend on context of interaction. Narrating our experiences helps us explain ourselves to others, and listening and engaging in others' helps us learn about the views of those we interact with. Narratives inherently infer meaning and values through setting context with descriptions of time and place, and assigning attributes to the people and places involved (Glover, 2003; Kyle & Chick, 2004; Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002).

The interactional nature of narratives mean that whenever we say something, we do so with the anticipation of a response, whether it be sympathy, anger, or another emotion; it affects how we speak and what we say (Frank, 2012; Neimeyer & Metzler, 1994; Wortham, 2001). Narratives are a process of socialisation and meaning construction that teaches what is important to share (Robson & Hawpe, 1986), providing confirmation of values, and conditioning as to what components of an event are interesting and respected (De Fina, 2003; Shotter, 1993). Our stories reveal and shape what surprised, pleased, or disgusted us, pulling together distinct events and happenings (Polkinghorne, 1995), helping us to make sense of the experience, and providing an acceptable form to share and receive communal reflection. The telling of an autobiographical tale “is better understood as a process of personal reconstruction than one of faithful reconstitution” (Neimeyer & Metzler, 1994, p. 105) as our identities are formed by our recounting of an experience and the reactions we receive; narratives do not mirror reality, but construct and illustrate the

meanings that are made by the narrator and audience (Atkinson & Delamont, 2006; Shotter, 1993; Sparkes & Smith, 2008).

As already discussed, co-presence is vital in developing a sense of well-being and attachment for individuals, and narratives are the glue in co-present interaction. The mundane and routine narratives that people tell, particularly with those people who are close, are necessary to form bonds and share values (Miller, 1994).

4.1.3. What do narratives tell us?

Telling stories is not just the recounting of facts about an event in a linear, chronological manner. Our stories demonstrate the selection of facts we choose to include, revealing what was important to, how it made us feel, and our opinions on the subject. Narratives are inherently selective as it is not possible to cover every detail; what we decide to include, exclude, emphasise, and embellish about an event in its retelling shapes and influences the meanings that are created (Ong, 1982). Recounting an event necessitates this selective process, leaving our personal and communal values of what is important exposed for interpretation (Neimeyer & Metzler, 1994; Ong, 1982). Narratives are social constructionism in action, with groups of varying sizes generating and negotiating what their reality is through continual interaction. Constructionists therefore view narratives as “a *vehicle* through which our world, lives, and selves are articulated” (Sparkes & Smith, 2008, p. 298).

Flick (2009) suggests that there are two forms of knowledge surrounding a narrative. *Episodic knowledge* centres on the actual event, the time, the place, the identifiable ‘facts’. Whereas *semantic knowledge* describes the assumptions and generalisations to broader areas of understanding influenced by the event. For example, I may see a friend at a bus stop on Wednesday

morning wearing a suit (episodic), and perceive him to look healthy, be happy, nervous, or maybe rude (semantic). In narratives we weave our semantic knowledge around and through the relatively fixed elements of episodic knowledge, positioning our stories in factual and contextual foundations, and linking together perceived factual elements of our story with judgements and values. The study and analysis of narratives can therefore provide insight into the lived experience of participants surrounding particular episodes that is constructed from the stories they tell.

4.1.4. Tourism and narratives

Tourism is a natural inspiration for personal narrative production that often feeds from and back into public and meta narratives of other cultures and places (e.g. Griffin, 2013a), as we are conditioned to share the tales of our travels with friends and colleagues, fuelling the co-construction of semantic knowledge pegged to the factual presentation of episodes (Mainil & Platenkamp, 2010; McCabe & Foster, 2006). Because of the “social nature of most leisure activities, narrative gives us a window into the roles others play in our leisure experiences” (Glover, 2003, p. 153), and tourism is no exception. Our stories of touristic experiences reveal our opinions of other people, cultures, and institutions with which we engage, are a normative source of conversation fodder. We are encouraged and socialised to share our experiences on return, and increasingly during our trips, through postcards to smartphones, via photos, stories, souvenirs, and more. The media with which travel experiences are shared has seen exponential growth and diversity over recent years. The original desire to connect our travel experiences and our personal networks remains, and develops; communication while on vacation feeds into a sense of identity creation, and accrual of objectified cultural capital remains. Social media’s instantaneity, wider audience, and opportunity for immediate feedback from home networks only increases the opportunity for co-construction between tourist, place, and home network.

Touristic experiences and representations of personal travels have been researched using narrative approaches before, both in how they shape identity and how information is socially transmitted and constructed about destinations and culture (e.g. Bosangit, McCabe & Hibbert, 2009; Griffin, 2013a; McCabe & Foster, 2006; Noy, 2004; Santos, Belhassen & Caton, 2008). Immigrant hosts are foreigners in a (relatively) permanent place, and the consideration of their experiences through narrative builds on and develops theoretical discussions on leisure, tourism, and integration within a particularly rich interactional context.

4.1.5. From ‘small’ to ‘big’ stories

Within narrative methodological literature there is a common distinction between ‘small’ and ‘big’ stories. As Gregg (2011) describes: “people create ‘little’ stories in shifting roles and situations that generate a large repertoire of self-conceptions...; people also author ‘big stories’ about their life-histories and world-views” (p. 320). The gradual and fluid accumulation and representation of the small stories revise, shape, and give form to the big stories.

Much early narrative inquiry, inspired by Labov, focussed on small stories; the specific words used, the order in which they were told, and a restructuring of them using a temporal template for comparison with others. The study of small stories requires “attention to the micro-linguistic and social structure of the everyday, small narrative phenomena that occur ‘naturally’ between people” (Squire et. al, 2013, p. 8). Researchers focussed on small stories alone can become “obsessed with the minutiae and blind to the bigger picture” (Bishop, 2012, p. 376). This approach can lead to analysis that recapitulates, or simply re-tells the told, rather than a reconstruction and furthering of understanding (Patterson, 2013).

A “second wave” (Phoenix, 2013, p. 72) of narrative inquiry has instead looked to a more fluid and holistic approaches that consider the ‘big’ stories and the wider societal and cultural implications, as well as the context of the narrative production (Spector-Mersel, 2010). Within a string of small narratives, it would be expected to see varying amounts of content repetition, with often inconsistent emotional positions and values; for example a relationship with a family member explained through the recounting of an episode, or series of episodes, may reveal feelings of comfort, frustration, joy, sadness, and more. These contradictions, and reflections, build to present the ‘big’ stories, the multifaceted and rich descriptions that provide a fuller, deeper, and more meaningful presentation of a person’s broader experience and understanding (Phoenix, 2013; Squire et. al, 2013). People’s identities, and ‘big’ stories, are built from the telling, reactions, reflections and juxtapositions of often contradictory ‘small’ stories. However, narrative methodology cannot offer a complete representation of an entirety (Kraus, 2006), but research should present at least some of the complex and often contradictory experiences and interpretations that are constructed through interaction with people and place and reiterated through narrative.

There is some overlap here with content analysis as a methodological tool. Content analysis is applied to texts in the broader sense of the term, to include print and imagery of various kinds, and can be both “empirical and subjective” (Smith, 2010, p. 201) in analysis. An interest in the smaller stories, of the syntax and vocabulary is aligned with what Smith (2010) describes as “manifest coding”, a quantitative approach that counts frequencies and types of language and images (Neuman & Robson, 2012). A focus on the bigger stories of narratives, of “the underlying, implicit meaning in the context of a text” (Neuman & Robson, 2012, p. 221) is concerned with latent coding techniques (Smith, 2010). A distinction between content and narrative analysis seems to be the latter’s interest and focus on an entirety of a text, with active effort to link different

elements together within context; latent content analysis does not seem to be inconsistent with this approach, but at the same time does not appear to require an active consideration of the whole, just the implications of specific elements potentially providing a thematic representation.

This broader consideration of the bigger stories, as accumulations of layered smaller stories, of how they reflect socio-cultural contexts (Andrews, 2006), is perhaps a more apt and reasonable way to interpret and suggest implications of narratives produced through interviews. Phoenix (2013) advocates a form of narrative analysis that “attempts to give equal importance to the individual and to social processes” (p. 74) where “it is possible simultaneously to examine canonical and personal narratives and so the ways in which narratives are simultaneously situated in both the local context of talk and the wider social context” (p. 75). In an effort to re-present the most useful presentation and interpretation of participants’ narratives in this thesis, a merger of these various approaches with a broad focus that includes chronology, themes, episodes, and interaction seems an appropriate approach to take (Phoenix, 2013).

4.1.6. Construction of narratives as a form of research

There are also important distinctions to be made concerning narratives as a form of routine knowledge generation in everyday life, and the construction of narrative as a form of research (Feldman, 2007; Squire, 2013; Taylor, 2006). Some narrative research considers the conversation between participants in natural settings; for example Marra and Holmes (2008) considered representations of race in the workplace. The co-construction of meaning generated in natural settings can give insight into the everyday process and knowledge around phenomena of interest. The present thesis differs in that the narratives under analysis are constructed because of the research, and are therefore not representative of the everyday process of meaning construction.

This thesis is therefore interested in the bigger stories of how the opportunity to partake in everyday, natural interaction with visiting friends and family affects and informs perceptions and identity on a broader scale.

4.1.7. Narrative analysis vs. analysis of narratives.

There are also differences in the way narratives can be analysed. Polkinghorne (1995) offers a distinction with the terms *analysis of narratives*, an approach that analyses narratives in a thematic process, and *narrative analysis*, where the analysis is of individual stories in their unique and relative entirety. Analysis of narratives, Polkinghorne (1995) argues, is *paradigmatic cognition*, or an attempt to categorise. In this process the unique aspects of whatever it is that is being analysed, are lost in the desire to classify (Spector-Mersel, 2010). Polkinghorne (1995) uses furniture to explain how an analysis of narratives would strip a chair of its individual identity as it is grouped on arbitrary classifications:

This kind of thinking focuses on what makes the item a member of a category. It does not focus on what makes it different from members of the category. Thus, the actual size, shade of red, or marks on the surface that make a particular item unique are not of primary concern (p. 10).

Most, if not all quantitative approaches adhere to this thematic form of knowing, as do many qualitative studies that seek to draw out themes, albeit connected and overlapping, from interview data.

Narrative cognition, on the other hand, seeks to present the multiplicity inherent in a representation of the unique and individual experience, attending to “the temporal context and complex interaction of the elements that make each situation remarkable... [whereas] paradigmatic knowledge is maintained in individual words that name a concept, narrative knowledge is

maintained in emplotted stories” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 11). Polkinghorne (1995) uses the following example to illustrate this point; “‘the king died; the prince cried.’ In isolation the two events are simply propositions describing two independent happenings. When composed into a story, a new level of relational significance appears” (p. 7). A single utterance may represent a specific object or piece of knowledge, but stripped from the other words that precede and follow it the connection, interaction, and intersection between the different utterances within the same passage are lost (Wortham, 2001). The contribution of a narrative inquiry is therefore

more often intended to be the creation of a new sense of meaning and significance with respect to the research topic than to yield a set of knowledge claims that might incrementally add to knowledge in the field... The narrative inquirer does not prescribe general applications and uses but rather creates texts that, when well done, offer readers a place to imagine their own uses and applications (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 42).

Narrative analysis is therefore an attempt to understand and present a whole story, not just parts of the story, and use the accumulated knowledge within the narrative to communicate the implications more powerfully and viscerally.

Because of its position in the boundaries of both the construction and analysis of meaning, narrative inquiry has the potential to affect substantial paradigmatic shifts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). It can reveal the significance, interpretation, and utilisation of a system, a body of knowledge, or social practice for the individuals concerned beyond the accepted social norms, and as a form of inquiry can be fed back into and question those larger meta-narratives that affect broader social constructions of the topic at hand. In addition it could also inspire personal reflection for the participant, potentially on their relationships with their friends and family, as well as with their settled community. This element of change is consistent with critical aspects found within social constructionism.

4.2. The narrative analysis research process.

The task of the narrative analysis researcher, therefore, is to capture and re-present a meaningful coherent story from the data collected. The outcome of a narrative analysis is a story (Polkinghorne, 1995). The principal undertaking is to recreate a text that captures the various elements of the narrator's stories, drawing together the various utterances and tales, into a whole. In speaking with participants it is important for the researcher to allow "the subject to orally create his or her fiction, knowing that it is an inductive invention or an intentional creation" (Larson, 1997, p. 464). It is then the narrative researcher's role to identify and capture the "ordered *transformation* from an initial situation to a terminal situation" (Glover, 2003, p. 147 [original emphasis]) that is shared in the participant's narrative, an attempt to present and identify the story within what has been shared and created.

Identification of the various narrative components and chronology can help guide the reconstruction of the narrative from an interview setting (Glover, 2003). Narrative analysis requires the synthesis of data, not the separation and categorisation of its elements; it is a hermeneutic process with the development of a thematic plot, and "the to-and-fro movements from parts to whole" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 16). The researcher must look for elements of the text that "reveal [the] uniqueness of the individual case... and provide an understanding of its idiosyncrasy and particular complexity" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 15). A narrative analysis should identify what is at the core of the story and appreciate that this may not be explicitly clear from the participant directly (Mishler, 1986).

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) propose three dimensions found within narratives: "*personal and social* (interaction); *past, present, and future* (continuity); combined with the notion

of *place* (situation)” (p. 50 [original emphasis and parentheses]). This provides a framework for analysing a narrative that allows for contextual consideration beyond temporal structure (De Fina, 2003). The researcher’s role is to then re-present the overall story considering context and broader implications involving societal pressures, cultural norms and values. McAdams (2012) suggests “the researcher needs to read the narrative passages with an open or discerning mind, searching for ideas that strike the ear as especially salient, recurrent, surprising, or potentially revealing of central psychological dynamics and issues” (p. 18). Narrative researchers need to be aware of *narrative fallacy*, “the tendency of people to impose a story on a series of observations to make sense of them” (Smith, 2010, p. 22). It is hard to consider the routine use of narratives for people in their everyday without some use of narrative fallacy, as links between what are often ostensibly disparate events or traits are tied together to form meaning where there is none. However, within a research context, in the production of a conceptual narrative, continual reflection and questioning of truths arrived at needs to be considered by the researcher.

The process I adopted is influenced by the discussion on ‘big’ stories that are apparent in the participants narratives co-constructed with myself in this research context. I am interested in the ‘semantics’ of the stories, not the syntax of their structure. A discussion on the research process for this thesis is now provided.

4.2.1. Sampling recruitment and response

After consultation with, and approval from the university board of ethics, I posted the following text in both my personal Facebook and LinkedIn accounts.

Friends and colleagues in the Toronto area,

Apologies for the mass email.

I'm looking for people to interview for my Phd. study, specifically immigrants in the Toronto area who will speak with me about their experiences of having friends or relatives come to stay with them.

It will mean spending 2 or 3 mornings or afternoons with me over the summer, having the interview video recorded, and talking about the times people have been to visit, what activities and places people went to, and the immigration experience in general. Interviews will be individual and at a place and time of the interviewee's choosing.

If you yourself are interested please let me know so we can arrange a time to meet, or if you can think of someone, please feel free to share. I am hoping to get a mixture of people from different places, so please don't be offended if I already have people from the same country!

For more info on what being a participant will involve you can visit <http://tomgriffinphd.blogspot.ca/p/information-for-participants.html>, and you can learn more about the study from that page too.

Please feel free to contact me at tgriffin@uwaterloo.ca, or we can arrange to talk in person or over the phone about any questions you or your contacts might have.

Thanks for your time,

Tom

This post resulted in nine participants agreeing to participate, five of whom I personally knew, and four who were introduced to me by a mutual acquaintance.

Although the sample might appear small the amount of data collected is considered appropriate for this type of study. Six of the nine participants met with me on two occasions, with a few interviews lasting an hour, but most lasting around two and a half hours, and a couple more than three. Because the purpose of narrative analysis is to explore the distinct and holistic representation, the notion of data saturation is redundant. Themes are not being sought, and every person's narrative will inherently provide a different set of contexts and reactions that are interwoven, and presented by them as their own story. Comparatively small samples are not

unusual for narrative studies or exploratory topics (Squire, 2013). For example, Williams, Chaban and Holland (2011) interviewed 24 people, meeting with each participant just once in their study of the impact of travel experiences on return migration. McCormack's (2004) narrative study includes meetings with 13 female postgraduate students. Glover's (2007) short story on a youth baseball league in an African-American community incorporated interviews with seven participants, and McCabe and Foster's (2006) paper draws on lengthy excerpts from interviews with just two participants.

The idea of random selection in qualitative studies of this nature is typically considered unnecessary, and even impossible because of the unknown nature of the population at large (Bryman, Teevan & Bell, 2009). The selection criteria was broad, but limited to those who were immigrants to Canada, living in the Toronto area, over 18 years of age, and who had some experience with hosting visiting friends or relatives from overseas on a temporary basis for broadly defined leisure purposes. I was not concerned with the amount of time since immigrating to Canada, or since their most recent hosting experience, as all experiences may provide useful and interesting insight; stricter inclusion criteria were therefore deemed arbitrary in the pursuit of interesting stories. Minnaert et al. (2009) found that the benefits of vacations for respondents receiving social assistance were often more marked some six months after the trip than after one month, as the impacts had become part of the routine that could be reflected upon more easily as a long-term force. I felt that whether the hosting experience had happened within the previous weeks, months, or even years, that participants would be able to share interesting and relevant stories as those who have been in Canada longer have had more time to host and reflect, whereas those more recent arrivals have experiences that are more fresh and immediately recollected. Although recall of specific details of an event may well decline after some time, I was not

particularly interested in the participant's ability to remember specific details correctly; rather, I was interested in how they positioned that experience within the construction of their own identity and attachment with their network and community.

Within the call for recruitment I suggested I wanted to meet with people who were willing and interested to talk about their hosting experiences, the participants who responded positively to this call therefore had some experiences they were willing to share. Beyond the limited criteria of being an immigrant in the Toronto region, I felt that anyone who self-recruited and had something to share would provide useful and interesting data.

Participants were approximately between 25 to 40 years of age, and had been in Canada for between 3 and 10 years (see Table 4). The participants all displayed a sense of permanence in their migration to Toronto, although this was not a specific inclusion criteria. Seven participants were female, two were male. I met with one couple (male and female) from Mauritius, who I had not previously known. They were interviewed together with their daughter of around 10 years of age, although she did not actively participate significantly in the conversation. This couple declined to be interviewed for a second time because of time constraints. All other participants were interviewed alone. I met with two sisters (interviewed separately) from Iran, one of whom I knew, and the other I did not know previously and who declined to meet with me for a second meeting because of time constraints. The other participants included a man from India, and two women from the UK, all of whom I knew previously, and a woman from China introduced through a mutual acquaintance. All participants were offered the choice of meeting at their own home, at my home, or a place of convenience such as their work or school. All names are pseudonyms.

Table 4: Participant information

Name	Country of origin	Approx. age	Years in Canada
Sarah	UK	Mid 30s	7
Ria and Rahul	Mauritius	Late 30s	3
Lucy	UK	Mid 30s	10
Bahar	Iran	Late 20s	4
Hiva	Iran	Mid 20s	4
Mary	China	Mid 30s	5
Anna	Latvia	Mid 30s	9

4.2.2. My researcher role

My role, as researcher, was to facilitate and participate in the creation of narratives relating to the hosting experiences of the participants. Constructionism suggests an *inter-subjectivist* epistemology, and constructionists acknowledge the researcher's involvement and influence in the research process, reasoning that the endeavour to understand and learn about social reality also constructs it (Guba, 1990; Hemingway, 1999; Pernecky, 2012). The knower and known are, and should be, inextricably linked (Lincoln, 1990; Schwandt, 1994). I am a co-constructor of these stories, and it was, and still is, important to consider and continually reflect on my position and interaction.

Some qualitative researchers adhere to an approach of focussing the entire process on extracting the story from the participant, and expect that requesting participants to 'tell me about your story' will provide enough facilitation for the continuous flow of personal insight (Glover, 2003). However, there are problems with this approach. The role of researcher in this process is assumed to be passive in an attempt to provide the participant with complete control and direction of the conversation. Yet this counteracts normal social conventions that are part of the creation of prosaic narratives in the everyday world. The risk is that without the prompts and probes that are part of everyday conversation that stories become stifled, awkward, and limited. To attempt to

ignore the influence of the researcher is not only naïve, but detrimental in the construction of interesting and meaningful stories (Glover, 2003). As Andrews (2006) exclaims, “[w]hy is it that we assume that social animals such as human beings make the most coherent or most meaningful sense of their lives when they are virtually stranded on their own with a stranger and a recording machine?” (p. 493). Larson (1997), herself an academic, writes of her own experience as an interviewee in a narrative analysis:

As I told these stories, Anne [the interviewer] listened attentively, nodded admiringly, and offered encouraging smiles. When I ended each story, Anne remained silent and patiently waited for me to go on. When I asked her questions, she responded politely, but briefly, and redirected the conversation back to my story. I was confused. Her reluctance to continue in a conversational mode surprised me... Anne’s focus had shifted from getting to know each other to getting ‘my story.’ However, *my* story was strongly influenced by *her* presence and also by her silence. (p. 457 [original emphasis]).

Instead of trying to minimise my influence as a researcher, I tried to embrace my role in the co-construction of the participant’s narrative by offering conversational cues and occasional stories and reflections of my own to create a context that I hoped would be perceived to be more akin to a good conversation than a formal research interview (Bishop, 2012).

The potential for cultural difference between participants and myself is also an element of the interaction process that needs to be acknowledged. Polkinghorne (1995) describes these contextual elements as the “embodied nature of the protagonist” (p. 17); the physique, abilities, and other physical attributes that shape individuals’ interactions with the world need to be acknowledged. Race, gender, and culture are clear examples here. This presented both challenges and opportunities. My interpretation of their stories is filtered through my own context, and this has no doubt impacted the ultimate output of the thesis.

In addition, the participants undoubtedly altered to some extent what they described to me due to my own limitations in knowledge and language, but also as what may be customary in their culture may need to have additional explanation for me to understand. I sometimes needed to be taught the values and practices of their culture related to their geographical and religious backgrounds, but also on the nature of their personal relationships with their friends and families.

I feel that on some occasions my own background produced some useful and interesting narratives that make this thesis distinct that might not have occurred had I been from another culture (Andrews, 2006). While my lack of experience with specific groups may have acted as a hindrance in some aspects, it may actually have provided the context for further explanation and reflection in others. On the other hand, the participants from the UK may have offered different types of explanations or observances because of the shared cultural contexts we have.

4.2.3. Actively co-constructing narratives

In our meetings I actively sought to build an initial relationship with those I had not met previously, or to re-establish a connection with those I did know but had not seen for some time: for example, I asked about their recent activities, vacations, their current jobs, and reviewed our relationships with our mutual friend. This allowed the conversation to drift in different directions, giving me an opportunity to share information about myself, referring to events in my own history, and, as any good conversation partner should, demonstrating my interest and investment in this experience. However, I was very conscious to balance how much the conversation was about me, and really used events from my own history to demonstrate and explain a subject I was trying to explore, or to reciprocate the trust that had been displayed to me in sharing a personal anecdote or

feeling. I actively aimed to provide every opportunity to the participant to share as much as they felt comfortable to do so.

There were some techniques that I tried to integrate to aid the flow of conversation and narrative construction. Prior to the first meeting I asked the participant to actively think about the times they had friends or relatives come to stay, to perhaps consider looking through old pictures, and perhaps to bring them to the meeting as well. This was not to specifically look at the pictures, but to try and trigger some memories to be revisited in preparation for our meeting. This allowed for a reference point if conversation was drifting off topic. Focussing on events and using an episodic interview approach, Flick (2009) suggests, makes “the processes of constructing realities more readily accessible than approaches which aim at abstract concepts and answers” (p. 186). The types of questions I asked initially focussed on these episodes (i.e. migration, settlement, hosting etc.). *Contextualization cues* provide some perspective as to how the utterance should be interpreted. It is up to the listener to decide which they are and feed off them and back into the narrator’s story (Wortham, 2001). My role as listener required some attention to understand these contextualization cues, and I had to select which ones seemed relevant to the study and worthy of development and further explanation, without minimizing or excluding areas that were important for the participant.

The idea of *emergence*, as described by Wortham (2001), details how interactions between two or more parties can lead to the development of new meanings and situations. For example, my response to a participant’s point within a story of an experience would impact what topics and meanings are shared further in the conversation; continual reflection on my part was attempted to help the conversation move in a positive and fruitful direction. It was noticeable that some participants appeared to assume that I was interested in a list and description of all the activities

and places they had experienced as a host, but I actively tried to push for links and meanings around them, taking into account their experiences of settlement that they had shared with me in earlier stages of the meeting. I tried to use the episodic knowledge to elicit the semantic knowledge that was really the interest of this thesis.

I did not form a strict interview guide, but through emails and then at the start of our face-to-face interaction I positioned the meeting as an opportunity to talk about the decision to immigrate, the settlement experience, and hosting. As Mishler (1986) suggests;

The form and content of a particular question appears to be less important in whether or not a story will be elicited than the general stance of an interviewer as an attentive listener and how the interviewer responds to the response. That is, if we allow respondents to continue in their own way until they indicate they have finished their answer, we are likely to find stories; if we cut them off with our next questions, if we do not appear to be listening to their stories, or if we record a check mark or a few words on our schedules after they have talked at length, then we are unlikely to find stories (p. 235).

The digressions of interview participants should not be viewed as irrelevant, but as insight into how someone makes sense of the questions and contextualises their responses (Glover, 2003). These diversions can create the context of an interactive conversation that is not purely focussed on extremely narrow interests, and can actually reveal the meanings understood by participants, even if they do not specifically answer initial questions.

4.2.4. Implications of video as method

All meetings with participants were video recorded with prior consent from the participants. The impact of a camera's presence is obviously a consideration to take into account regarding the influence on participants. However, many data collection techniques also put participants in unusual scenarios; being asked about your experiences by a stranger holding a clipboard and pen,

for example, is not a routine interaction for most. It is acknowledged that a camera no doubt affects the data collected, but in an age where cameras are in many peoples' pockets and part of our daily lives, and our photos are often shared routinely and immediately among our social networks, I feel comfortable that the quality of knowledge and stories generated in this thesis was not significantly diminished. In addition, the use of video brought with it numerous benefits in terms of creating the narratives, knowledge sharing, and analysis.

4.2.4.1. Video and data collection

It has been noted that although participants often acknowledge the camera during data collection, they can easily become immersed in the activity or conversation as well (Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010), and this was apparent with many of the participants in this thesis. Initial conversation was sometimes a bit staid, with some nerves apparent, but after a short time it appeared that participants were, for the most part, comfortable to share their stories.

Some techniques were followed to enhance the quality and diminish the drawbacks of using a video camera. For example, Rahn (2007) recommends never interviewing from behind the camera where it can be an obstruction, but to position it to the side, or behind the interviewer. Comfort with the technology is also important. I took a 12-week course in cinematography with the Toronto District School Board Adult Education Classes. This class introduced me to the basic mechanics of a camera, camera angles, lighting, editing software, and other elementary principles of creating a film. I also put together a few video projects for family members to provide some practice of using the camera and software. Rahn (2007) suggests that in video research "it is more important to maintain an authentic relationship with the participant than it is to upstage that

moment with stylized camera or editing work” (p. 303); my lack of substantial technical experience was therefore not a significant concern.

I did aim to strike a balance between the quality of the video, and imposition on the participants. The primary purpose of using video was for sharing and analysing the data, and not for the production of a documentary of professional standards. I did not make time consuming and intrusive arrangements to enhance the setting that was often in the home or place of work of the participant, and used the environment as best as I could regarding lighting and backdrop. This means that the quality of the video is (I feel) not professional, but more than adequate, and allowed the focus of the meeting to be on the conversation rather than the quality of production. I felt this was an important tone to strike with the participants to gain their comfort and demonstrate my priorities for this research. If I had arrived in their homes and started to rearrange furniture to catch the best lighting, or arrived with a lighting setup of my own, or asked participants to meet me in a studio, certain qualities would have been lost in the comfort and willingness of the participants which was more important to me in this thesis.

4.2.4.2. Video and creating a narrative

In a following section a discussion is offered on the actual construction of the narrative form and its elements, whereas this section focuses on the practical step-by-step process of creating the narrative considering the use of video.

The importance of providing participants the opportunity to review their own narratives is clearly evident in Larson’s (1997) account of being interviewed:

[Reviewing t]he stories of my life magically transported me to places where I relived life experiences and revisited the people who had shared them with me. These stories drew me in. This reading was pleasurable, yet in places, disconcerting

(p. 460)... [T]he enduring assumption that storytellers tell the stories they want to tell the first time is not true... [R]esearchers would be wise to simply ensure that story-givers have the opportunity to develop their texts until they are as they wish them to be (p. 463).

The use of video facilitated an engaging dialogic process in this pursuit. After the first meetings I edited each individual video into a 10-12 minute clip, re-positioning different smaller stories into an overall chronological narrative of episodes involving immigration, settlement, and hosting. I sent the participants a private link to their own video, asking them to review it and for their permission to share their video with other participants during the second round of face-to-face meetings. I suggested to each person that there might be parts of the video that they felt were not explained well enough, or did not represent how they felt, or that included elements of a narrative that were too personal for them to be shared. All participants provided permission via email for me to share their video.

I then arranged to meet with the participants for a second time. The couple from Mauritius, and one of the sisters from Iran declined to meet with me due to time constraints. I met with all the other six participants between six to nine months after our first meetings.

Each of the second meetings was also video recorded. At the second meeting the participant and myself reviewed the 10-12 minute video from our first meeting and we agreed that either of us could pause the video at any time, to either offer or ask for further information, clarification, or to retract or change any part of their story. It is possible that the opportunity for a participant to reflect on how they presented their original story, and my editing and re-presentation of it, meant that the instinctual and potentially more revealing constructions of the first meeting could be altered and shaped to present the participant in what they perceived to be a more favourable light. However, I feel this was superceded by the importance for participants to feel

that their narratives were presented and constructed in context of trust and ownership, and that any disagreements or editions arrived at in the second meetings were beneficial to the co-construction process, and presented a more holistic version of what the participant felt was important to them. I also asked participants to offer additions or new instalments to stories that had been in progress and had yet to be completed at the time of our first meeting. This process provided an opportunity for the participants to really feel comfortable with the way that their stories were being presented. Some of them asked for elements to be emphasised, downplayed, or removed. Some did not like the way they presented elements of their experience, and offered an alternative viewpoint that in reflection they felt more comfortable with.

Video is a comparatively easier media to consume for many people than written text, making the elicitation of responses a simpler task. Using video gave each person greater ownership and comfort over what was included in their story and how it was being presented as part of this thesis. Participants could discuss sections of the original dialogue after reflection, and had a greater opportunity for an appreciation of the entirety of what had been said.

After reviewing her or his own video, five participants also viewed one or more videos of other participants. Initially I gave the participant the choice of who they would like to watch, offering to answer a few basic questions about each person to inform their selection. I felt that there were relatively equal advantages and disadvantages to selecting which participants should see others, as my own pre-conceived ideas of who would find who more interesting might be unreasonable. Ultimately, I feel that all participants would have found some elements of interest in all others' videos, and providing some element of choice when it was available seemed justifiable. As a few meetings passed I limited the selection to ensure that each person's first video

was viewed by at least one other person, as I felt it was more important to have all videos with at least one other person's reflections included.

As we watched the other person's video both the viewing participant and myself paused to clarify and reflect on the stories we were watching. I was also interested in the viewing participant's reflections about their own experiences that were relevant to those in the video; I actively looked for situations within the other person's video that I felt had some relevance to the person viewing the video, and asked them to consider and comment. By asking for participants to view someone else's video there is a wider co-construction of meanings related to hosting. The multiple voices offer a more complex and nuanced presentation of different hosting elements. An advantage of the video in this case was that participants could view other peoples' stories without the potential awkwardness of engaging them face-to-face. It is perhaps easier to talk about a stranger without them present, as might happen in a focus group where others' presence can affect the information shared by individuals and constructed by the group. It also diminished the risk of being perceived to be self-absorbed to talk about oneself and the implications of someone else's story on their own experiences.

After the second meetings I integrated the new clips into the first videos. The first videos form the basis of the narratives, however edited clips from the second meetings add reflection, and occasional completion, of those initial shared stories, including some comments and reaction from at least one other participant.

I then emailed private links of the second round of videos back to the participants who were involved as primary narrator or secondary viewer, asked for final permission to share the

videos for this PhD submission, and offered a chance to discuss the video over email, phone, or in person in case there was anything that concerned them.

The advantages of video have been fundamental to the generation of knowledge in this thesis. As a data collection tool, and approach to knowledge construction, I feel that video has a variety of benefits to offer leisure and tourism scholars.

4.2.4.3. Video in analysis

Using video as a data source for analysis provides similar benefits as other media, but with additional advantages (Rahn, 2007; Squire, 2013). Primarily, it records more information than audio, including facial expressions and body language, which can all be reviewed after the fact (Marra & Holmes, 2008), allowing the researcher to focus on the conversation at hand rather than taking mental and physical notes.

The use of video in analysis also helps in attempting to remain close to the voices of the participants in the research outcomes. There are risks in narrative inquiry for the researcher to reduce the extensive field notes collected within a framework of their own memories rather than focussing on the texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). By creating a video it helps the participants' voices to remain central. The nuances of participants' statements are also more clearly captured on video for later analysis; sarcasm, ambiguity, uncertainty, and body language, are all more fully presented with the additional sensory information that video can provide, for both analytical and knowledge transfer purposes.

The video can be used not only by the first researcher, but provides a more holistic representation of the interaction with the participant for secondary non-present researchers at a later date, for both further analysis and increased transparency of the original interpretation (Heath

et al., 2010). The meanings of my own analysis can be easily considered, challenged, evolved, and engaged with by others both within and outside the original research process, and helps to create knowledge that is defensible and explainable.

4.2.4.4. Knowledge transfer

As previously discussed, there is a critical element that runs through social constructionism that seeks social change. A key component of narrative analysis is an endeavour to help unheard voices receive greater exposure within the public spheres that affect them (Mainil & Platenkamp, 2010). It is important, therefore, to share the information produced by this thesis with decision-makers, and the use of video helps here too.

While reflecting on a video she made about a specific graffiti artist, Rahn (2007) suggests that the output of the study, the film itself, served to breakdown barriers in interpretation allowing the participant's meanings to be transmitted more directly to the audience with fewer filters. In addition, "[b]ecause of its reproducibility and the channels of distribution, [video] can potentially access an audience of millions. Where academic journals are expensive and mainly circulate among other researchers, video has a populist appeal" (Rahn, 2007, p. 304). Another excellent example of the use of video in sharing knowledge to a wider group is the work by Prof. Christine Jonas-Simpson at the University of York, Toronto. Prof. Jonas-Simpson was a guest lecturer in a one of my graduate classes (Interplay of Behaviour, Resources & Policy in Leisure Studies, REC 700). She presented on her work about perinatal loss and shared some video clips of the

documentary that she had created¹. Beyond the impact of the content of the research, the reaction she said she had received from various conference audiences, and the reaction of those present in class to the video, including myself, were profound and inspiring. I found myself empathising and moved by the stories told, and in a subject with which I have natural interest, but no personal connection whatsoever, the method of video and its power struck me that day. In this thesis it is hoped that the use of video can help to bridge the knowledge and understanding gap between the tourism sector and residents to improve that relationship. I have the participants' permission to share these videos with the examiners of this thesis, as well as in conference presentations, in the classroom, and potential presentations to practitioners. At the time of writing (January 2015) I am involved in some conversations with practitioners that I hope will lead into possible partnerships and initiatives aimed at engaging the VFR experience, although nothing formal has yet to be agreed.

4.3. Narrative construction

In deciding what small stories to include from the meetings, and how to link them to reflect a bigger story, I tried to focus on including discussion that was a direct opinion, experience, or reflection of the participant or myself. I generally avoided discussion about second hand experiences of a participant's friend, family member or colleague that the participant was not a part of, or general conversation that I deemed not to advance an understanding of the topics at

¹ Please see www.youtube.com/watch?v=4OSrc4_Iuws and www.yorku.ca/hlln/continuing-education-tools.html for more information on Prof. Jonas-Simpson's research.

hand. For example, stories that were not pertinent to providing context to experiences related to immigration, settlement, and hosting were not avoided during the meeting, but were not included in the final narratives (e.g. the prolonged explanation of cultural differences, vacations without visiting friends or relatives, returning to the home community for a visit, encouraging children born in Canada to maintain and appreciate the ‘home’ culture etc.).

There was a general pattern that I attempted to follow: a comparatively brief description of the immigration decision and initial settlement experiences, and then a description and exploration of the first few hosting experiences. After this point the narratives become quite fluid, as depending on the conversation to this point discussion evolved in different directions. Within this broad and malleable narrative structure there were smaller stories that linked together: if the reason to immigrate was to find professional employment, this provided context for initial settlement experiences that involved difficult job searches, which in turn provided an understanding for stories about the experience of touring guests around workplaces, that altogether provided a backdrop to further discussion on a sense of pride, achievement, and attachment.

In transcribing the narratives I made the decision to avoid dialects. Paget (1983) suggests that all “natural speech is always produced in dialect” (p. 68) and must therefore be written phonetically to some extent. However, I feel that as a British white male to translate someone else’s spoken English into a text that phonetically fits with my interpretation of how English should sound holds some issues of power and representation with which I am not comfortable. Someone who speaks English as a second language may pronounce a word with a different accent or emphasis on a vowel or consonant than myself, but if asked to write their spoken words would likely spell them the same as me. (I imagine a North American could easily transcribe my own

British speech phonetically with different spellings as to how I would write my own words). The process recommended by Paget (1983) makes me uncomfortable and therefore was avoided.

I have, however, edited the text to some minimal extent. For example, excessive filler words and sounds such as ‘like’, ‘um’, and ‘you know’, have on several occasions been deleted. In addition, conversation that, in my interpretation, lost its meaning when stripped of intonation and body language due to transcription, has been adapted as minimally as possible in order to convey the meaning that I believe was meant. Most participants’ transcriptions, I believe at times, lost their ability to communicate what I felt was transmitted through the video and the additional communication cues it provides. In some occasions I have minimally adapted the actual words of the participants as little as possible in order for meaning to be conveyed (Ely, 2006).

Finally, in the pursuit of preparing a fluid written form of the narratives the edits that are visible in video that reveal where I have cut the original conversation are not apparent in the written text. However, in seeking to present a narrative that has been reviewed and shaped by the participants themselves I feel that indications of cuts would only interfere in the readers experience of being consumed by the story, and have therefore been omitted. The participants themselves have reviewed the videos with the cuts, and did not raise concern over my editing practices.

4.3.1. Impact on participants

It was apparent that during and after the co-construction of the narratives with some of the participants the act and process of the research itself instigated reflection. Although narratives are told and retold in everyday life as ways of forming identity (e.g. Phoenix, 2013), the stimulation and provocation of new narrative generation, on topics and linkages not yet put together, can influence the generation of new knowledge and meaning. This is consistent with critical

constructionism's desire for positive change, regarding both the implications of research on society, but also for participants (Spector-Mersel, 2010). For example, Lucy felt nostalgia as she watched herself recount fond memories, and Bahar made specific mentions of re-positioning the role and value of hosting in her settlement experience. Anna, in particular, was open in being cognisant of improving her appreciation for the role that hosting her family played in her settlement in Toronto. The day after our second meeting she sent me this email.

Hi Tom,

Just wanted to thank you again for coming over last night. For some reason, your visit - or maybe just re-watching myself speak - has raised my spirits quite a bit.

Now that I reflect on both interviews, I think they kind of helped me to put things in perspective, to acknowledge (or to remind myself) that there were many good times among the hard times. I've been able to get ahead immensely since I moved to Canada nine years ago - and looking at this time period as a "story" is, in a way, making me feel good.

Or maybe it just made me emotional. Just being able to talk about it probably acted as a sort of therapy :)

Anyhow, once again, good luck with the thesis! Looking forward to seeing the documentary, and to reading your conclusions.

Keep in touch.

There is potential here for being accused of encouraging participants to develop narrative fallacies, as I asked for specific reflections on hosting and settlement that were perhaps not made previously by participants. However, I would return to my epistemological stance, and acknowledgement of my own role in the co-construction of these stories. Knowledge here was inter-subjectively constructed, and although I did affect it, I hope that through my own reflection during the interview process and the way I conducted myself in our meetings, after in my analysis, as well as with follow up meetings and emails with participants to seek their input into the final narratives

presented, that any new links and understandings participants now hold and presented in this thesis are ones they are comfortable with. Being reminded of the importance and significance of relationships, and being asked to reflect on personal history since immigration seemed to be a pleasant and reinforcing experience for Anna and others. As Spector-Mersel (2010) points out: “Those stories were not previously there” (p. 216), and the creation of them appeared to have at least some positive affect on some participants.

5. Narrative analyses

An analysis of each participant's narrative is provided below. The full transcripts are included in the appendices and are referenced throughout this chapter. Readers are strongly encouraged to review the narratives in full themselves. Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional framework is used to give shape to the analysis. The ordering and inclusion of the components, however, is adapted depending on the usefulness for the different individuals.

5.1. Sarah

Sarah's full narrative is available as Appendix A. I met Sarah soon after my own arrival in Toronto through mutual friends, just a few months after her own immigration, around eight years ago. Sarah is from the UK, and in her mid-thirties.

5.1.1. Continuity and the past

Sarah's decision to move to Canada followed some time spent travelling Australia; an example of a lifestyle of mobility (Cohen, Duncan & Thulemark, 2015) that sees a growing number of people in temporary residence for extended but limited periods. She moved with a professional job in place and accommodation arranged for the first month. Her intention was not to necessarily stay in Canada, but around eight years later she has settled.

Her arrival in Toronto had a VFR component, as she initially stayed with friends in Toronto for a few days before her accommodation was available, and brought friends with her from the UK to help with the move;

I felt very apprehensive about what I was doing but I felt safe in the fact that I had friends with me for the first few days. It was definitely comforting having them come, and they helped me bring more stuff (lines 23-25).

The departure of her visiting friends, and the first night alone in her new apartment happened on the same day, and evoked a strong emotion of apprehension about her new life. The sense of seclusion continued in that first month as availability for social interaction drastically changed;

when I was in London, I had a massive social life. I was out every night doing something. I had friends to call up and chat with in the evening, or friends to go and visit, or go out to the pub with. I had a roommate who, if no one else wanted to go out, I can stay in and chat with her. And all of a sudden, I'm isolated. I know no one in this city (lines 42-46).

This shock affected her well-being, as face-to-face interaction in a mutuality of care context was not possible.

5.1.2. Social interaction: early visits

Sarah found significant comfort in her friends' visits. Her arrival to Canada, with the security of friends, helped her move both emotionally, and practically. As the first few months passed, and the sense of isolation grew, hosting provided Sarah with important opportunities to spend time with people she cared about, and who cared about her, creating and supporting a sense of belonging. The first few visitors especially provided respite;

So the first couple of friends who visited, I've known them since I was two, they're childhood friends, we've grown up together... There's lots of natural connections there, whereas everything, every friend you've met here is new. So, it's just that comfort factor, I think, more than anything. It's more relaxing, and whether you reminisce, you're just relaxed in their company because you're used to being with them (lines 83-89).

These initial interactions with visitors were significant in helping Sarah settle. The chance to reminisce about past times gave her strength to continue through those difficult early days before

she felt integrated and had built up a local network. The comfort of these visits continued after their departure, and helped her feel more accepting and excited about her new home.

5.1.3. Place and social interaction

Sarah's hosting was tied into her own interaction with Toronto and the region as place. Sarah was somewhat different from most other participants in that she seemed keen to take people to places she knew, rather than risk unknown neighbourhoods, restaurants and attractions. The first few hosting experiences were, she acknowledges, "kind of weird because I hadn't been there [in Toronto] that long, so I didn't know what to do or where to take them" (lines 55-57). She seemed to feel a responsibility to make sure that the experiences she provided her guests were of a good quality, and the only way to truly ensure quality was to have experienced it herself previously. This seemed to be linked to two reasons: the first was her acknowledgement of the costs endured by her visitors, and her desire to make them feel that their trip was worth it. Secondly, she wanted her guests to like her new home:

When you've moved somewhere, you want to almost show off your life to that person, partly to reinforce your decision and partly to show them a different experience. So you never want that experience to be bad. They've come here looking to see you and spend time with you and enjoy stuff, so you want to do the stuff you know is enjoyable (lines 65-68).

Toronto is hers to show; she feels a sense of ownership demonstrating an attachment as a reflection of her own judgment to move there.

As time has passed Sarah's relationship with Toronto and Ontario as a place has expanded and her attachment deepened. Her description about camping and house boating, and the special combination of interaction with visiting friends, local friends, and an extraordinary environment, illustrated the influence these experiences had on her connection and pride in her new community:

I've got a big group of friends in Toronto now and we all do a big camping trip each year. A couple of different friends in the UK have come on those camping trips and they're always overwhelmed by the experience, because it's interior camping with portaging on these lakes and it's just a completely unique experience to Canada, and I get a lot of momentum and encouragement from them and excitement when I do trips like that. I was talking to my friend in the UK and saying, 'you should come out for this particular long weekend because I'm going house boating and it's a unique experience' and explaining the whole thing. And she's like, 'Oh my God, that sounds amazing. I loved it when we went camping. I'd love to do a trip like that again, let me see'... But it's just that point of if I've got something going on here I'll invite people from home to come over as well (lines 112-121).

Likewise, her friend Shaun extended his business trip to Toronto to stay with Sarah, and she used local festivals as a lure, and her own passion in introducing and interpreting what she finds special about her new home to people from her past. I asked her why she was excited to see Shaun who was visiting in the days following our first meeting:

Just seeing him, and him experiencing something different in Toronto like the Beach's Jazz Fest, is a very local event. It's just a very Canadian local thing to do. So, I love showing people that event, and I love it, it's one of my favourite festivals. Beer Fest, again, is another fun unique event that you're not going to experience in the southern U.S. where he lives (lines 140-143).

Sharing the experience of place with a visitor ostensibly strengthens her own attachment to it, and their responses affect her well-being beyond the visit itself. For example, she described her brother's reaction to Toronto: "he loved it so much that he wanted to move here. It's a nice reinforcement, again" (lines 233-234). Conversely, she feels that her parents' ambivalence to Toronto as a destination makes it more difficult for her to spend time with them in her new home: "my parents don't love Toronto, and because they don't like it they don't make an effort to come. It was always like an effort for them to come out and visit just because they don't love it here"

(from Monty, lines 201-205). The perception that her visitors have of Toronto is very important for Sarah, she wants people to like it, and when they do, she takes continued satisfaction from it.

5.1.4. Continuity and the present

Sarah noted that visitation has slowed since her arrival as her friends have settled and started families:

I think at the beginning it was a novelty and I was here and you have a stronger connection with people when you've recently been hanging out with them. But over time, the longer I've been here- it's not that I don't have a connection- I still go home and I see friends and it's great to see them and reminisce and talk about what they've been up to. But the connection is not the same. You're not talking to them on a day-to-day basis, it's a different type of connection. So, at the beginning people always came to see me because they miss me, and they wanted to see where I was now living, and the excitement of going to visit me abroad. Whereas now, it's old news, so you don't get that same wave of visitors (lines 95-103).

However, she noted that a recent trip back to the UK had instilled renewed interest in previous visitors considering a return visit. In fact her near future appeared to be pretty booked up already:

My friend Shaun is coming next weekend for five days, I've got my mum and dad coming at the end of the year and I've got my brother and his girlfriend coming next year. And then I've spoken to my friend Kim about potentially coming out this year. And then my friend Molly wants to come out next year... When I went home and reconnected with them we're talking about them coming out to see me again (lines 106-111).

Hosting friends was important to her in the beginning of her settlement, but still remains an important part of life as she actively recruits and promotes her home as a place to visit. The need for co-presence for a sense of belonging is less urgent, but still pervasive.

5.1.5. Social interaction: with parents

Sarah's parents are regular visitors, and the experience generates many emotions associated with family relationships, but experienced in a short period: "It's enjoyable but there's this underlying pressure of entertainment" (lines 160-161). Comfort, frustration, guilt, and more, were all evident in her narrative. Her parents' desire to simply spend time with Sarah and not enjoy what Toronto has to offer as a place of leisure bothered her, both as an imposition to her own active routine ("sometimes I feel trapped in the house. And I'm like, 'you've come all the way to visit me and you're just sitting watching TV?'" (lines 165-166)), but also their ambivalence to Toronto was perceived to be a constraint to their frequency and length of visits, limiting her opportunity for face-to-face interaction.

Her parents' visits, although frustrating at times, were also comforting, and facilitated interactions and exchanges that demonstrated and maintained their relationship. For example, her parents help around the house:

[they] want to help me with stuff, so if I need to buy a piece of furniture, my dad will come with me and help me build it or whatever. They like to potter in the garden so if they come in the right season, I've gone to work, and they've done my gardening for me in the daytime. I try to limit it because I don't want to feel like they're coming over and just working, but it does help. They feel better because parents always want to help their kids and they don't get to help me because I live so far away, so I think- like my mum always wants to do my washing when she comes over. I don't know why but she'd set on doing my washing (lines 196-202).

Not only do Sarah's parents get to feel like they are helping as parents should, Sarah actually receives help that would otherwise not be available to her. The exchange perhaps has stronger implications for their relationship maintenance rather than the actual economic or temporal benefits shared, but is nonetheless significant.

Sarah's parents' visits also provide an opportunity for her to mix her old and new worlds, as she regularly has parties or barbecues so her parents and friends can interact. As Sarah explains, her parents' increased understanding of her life in Toronto helps her feel more at home:

I host a barbecue or drinks evening [when my parents are here] and then I get my friends around to meet them and see them, because my parents don't know my life here. Like, when you live in England, especially when you're living at home and you're growing up, they know your friends and once you've got a group of friends from school, you're always friends with them. And then when I come home, I always stay with my family. So, my friends come to visit. So, they know all my UK friends. Whereas here, they don't know my life. So by bringing some close friends around and having drinks or a barbecue or taking them to a party, they get to meet these people. When I say, 'oh, I'm going out and doing something with so and so', they're like, 'which one is that again?'" So, it's nice for them to be able to put a face to the name as well (lines 212-221).

As her most frequent visitors, her parents also have shown tiredness towards Toronto as a destination, and as discussed already this causes Sarah concern that the opportunity for face-to-face interaction is limited. Although hosting did not seem to lead Sarah to share new experiences with her guests in Toronto, her parents' ennui inspired her to take them to Quebec City, a place that she herself had not been to. This hosting context expands her familiarity with her new home country, not just region, and constructs an additional memorable resource for reminiscing after the trip.

5.1.6. Social interaction: with sister

An important element to Sarah's narrative was the *lack* of interaction with her sister in a hosting context. Despite Sarah's frequent trips back to the UK, her sister has not reciprocated the effort, and this has caused Sarah to feel some upset:

She's only been here once in seven years and she came out as part of a business trip. So she literally came out for like two days and one night. So, she hardly saw anything.

Do you wish your sister would come and visit?

One hundred per cent.

Have you asked her?

Multiple times. It's a touchy subject sometimes. She's now with two kids, so it's not going to happen anytime soon. My brother-in-law has never been out to visit me. My sister hasn't been out in so long, she hasn't even seen this house and I've been here five and a half years.

Right, right, and that's a bit upsetting?

Yeah, very upsetting. Why doesn't she want to come out and see where I live? And there's always been an excuse. And now, the excuse is, 'well, my daughter is three and I've got to pay for a seat for her on the plane. Now, I've got a baby too. So, now, there's four of us coming out, where are we going to stay?' There's always going to be an excuse...

So, it would be nice to see them.

Yeah, but it's not happening (lines 236-256).

Sarah clearly ascribes strong meaning to her sister's lack of action, and takes offence that someone who appears to have the means to travel has not displayed the intent to visit, and to learn about how Sarah lives her life, and experience her environment which is now a part of who she is. It is not just a lack of interaction, as Sarah makes relatively frequent visits to the UK, but the lack of reciprocal effort, and evident disinterest in her life that communicates to Sarah that her sister does not value their relationship to the extent that Sarah would expect. By not visiting Sarah feels her sister does not know, or wishes to know, who she truly is.

5.1.7. Summary

Sarah's narrative started with a move to Toronto inspired by the adventure of a new place to live, yet despite the relative stability of a job and initial accommodation the lack of available meaningful interaction caused her emotional distress. Hosting provides her with the chance to enjoy those relationships that enhanced her sense of belonging, and gave her the motivation and momentum that helped her continue in her new life. Sarah takes great joy in hosting her friends, and enthusiastically encourages visits, and is keen to show them positive and distinct experiences that justify their visit, and her decision to move to Toronto. Her continued hosting experiences with her parents come with challenges, as they view the experience primarily as an opportunity for interaction rather than vacation, and emit a sense of obligation that Sarah tries hard to overcome with appropriate activities and side trips. The importance of her new community as a part of her identity is revealed in her frustration of her sister's lack of visits, and a sense that by not seeing her home and place she lives her sister does not know, or want to know who she really is.

5.2. Ria and Rahul

Ria and Rahul's full narrative is available as Appendix B. I met Ria and Rahul just once after we were introduced by a mutual friend, although we have communicated several times via email about the video narrative. Their daughter, who was approximately 10 years old, was also present, but participated minimally. They have lived in Canada for around three years, and moved from Mauritius.

5.2.1. Continuity and the past

Ria and Rahul's reasons for migrating were to provide better opportunities for their daughter. Their immigration process was relatively straightforward. They applied for residency based on

their qualifications, which were in high demand, and in less than 15 months they were approved and ready to move from Mauritius. Although they had never visited Canada before they received advice and descriptions of what to expect from several friends who had already migrated. They were able to stay temporarily with some Mauritian friends while they settled and found employment. They worked hard at looking for employment, and made frugal choices while they established themselves, but presented this as a process and experience in line with their expectations. In sharing their experiences Ria and Rahul would often speak together, naturally taking over each others' sentences, without appearing to offend the other:

Ria: When we come here, you have to be prepared-

Rahul: Mentally, right-

Ria: Mentally prepared that you're starting-

Rahul: From scratch.

Ria: Right, from scratch, so don't be- because there are so many people, they come here-

Rahul: With high expectations-

Ria: -with high expectations- and they get disappointed, right. (lines 19-23).

They presented their settlement experience as requiring hard work and patience, but without significant turmoil or difficulty.

5.2.2. Place and social interaction

A significant affect that hosting had on Ria and Rahul was on their choice of accommodation. Once they were ready to buy their own home around two years after arrival, the decision as to which house they pursued was heavily influenced by their desired capability to host:

Rahul: So, my parents were planning to visit, right, so we have to get something bigger.

Tom: So when you started looking for a house, you wanted to get a house that was big enough to have people come and stay with you?

Rahul: Yeah, because I was planning to call my parents, my mom and my dad. So, we need to have space for them, right. The room was too small (lines 47-51).

For a house to become their home the opportunity to have those interactions with visiting family was essential in their decision.

One month after they bought their house, at the earliest possible moment, Rahul's parents came to visit for six months. During this trip they all travelled together to Montreal, which was everybody's first time to the city, and where they stayed with friends from Mauritius who now live in Quebec. They shared an interesting anecdote about their daughter:

Rahul: our daughter, she liked the university.

(The daughter looks up from her smart phone and gives a shy smile)

Ria: She went to McGill [to look around].

Rahul: We went to McGill, we went to visit the university. She says she wants to study there. I said, 'you have to work hard for that!' (lines 125-129).

The sharing of this experience by their daughter with her parents and grandparents has interesting implication for her sense of identity, in appreciating what her family views as desirable and attainable; she knows that this is the type of expectation and possibility for her future. The fact this experience was shared with so many, including the grandparents and family friends who hosted them in Montreal, adds significance to the co-construction of this understanding for all involved: the daughter knows this is the type of future expected and open to her, and the family and friends now associate the daughter with a desire for going to McGill. She will likely be asked

about her plans to apply during future interactions with grandparents and the friends in Montreal for time to come yet. Although the specific impacts are not possible to measure here, this context of hosting co-constructs meaning from experiences with a greater number of important people, adding significance and potentially influence on identity formation.

An activity that brought obvious joy to Ria and Rahul was fruit picking. It is an activity with which they were familiar with in their home country, but they are now able to pick exotic fruits they had only ever seen packaged.

Ria: And every time we go for fruit picking, right, whenever any friends coming.

Rahul: Fruit picking! Strawberry picking, apple.

Tom: Why do you do that? Why do you take people fruit picking?

Ria: We like that!

Rahul: We love that!

Ria: We just love that moment.

Rahul: It's so fun, so fun.

Tom: Why? What about it do you enjoy?

(Rahul looks at me as if I'm crazy!)

Rahul: You pick the fruit, right? Like the apple, the first time we went, we went to pick apple- so, first to see the apple in the tree and then to pick the apple.

Ria: Yeah, because we don't have apple trees... Back home we have our own garden, all big mango trees, whatever trees, all fruit trees, not apple. So we used to pick, right, so we miss that here. So, okay, we have to wait for that moment, when something will come out, we're going to pick that!

Rahul: Right, so now, we're waiting for the apple, right, to come out.

Ria: Yeah, in September.

Rahul: But we just went for the strawberry picking.

Tom: Did you take your parents fruit picking?

Rahul: Yeah.

Ria: Strawberry.

Rahul: Strawberry, yeah, apple also. They liked it! They didn't believe! We said 'see!'

Ria: Yeah, they didn't believe it, then they find strawberries everywhere, 'oh wow!'

Rahul: And the size of the strawberries, huge, right? 'Oh wow!'

Ria: And they were really- they're very excited (lines 141-169).

This experience helped link and interpret their past and current homes, for them and their visitors. It gave them a rich source of material on which to draw from in constructing stories between themselves that links a social activity from back home, to one in Ontario, helping to generate a sense of home here.

5.2.3. Social interaction

Ria and Rahul's hosting, much like their everyday life, revolved around spending as much time as possible with people from their community. As Rahul explained:

I think seeing people is important, because we are people who like to socialize, right. And this is the culture of Mauritius. This is how we live in Mauritius, right. So, otherwise it could be very boring. It could be very boring because, like the whole week we're just like work and work. Otherwise, we'll just really be stressed out (lines 230-233).

Face-to-face interaction is a great source of leisure and well-being, and their existence in Canada relies on their capability to spend time with Mauritian friends who live in the Toronto area, and with their visiting family. This desire to spend time with people was exemplified by their trip to

Montreal when Rahul's parents visited. The whole family travelled to see other Mauritian friends who are settled in Montreal; a VFR trip to Toronto snowballed into a larger VFR trip to Montreal and a great opportunity for their family and friends to reconnect en masse.

5.2.4. Continuity and the present

A difficulty for Ria in her current situation was negotiating her employers' restricted vacation policy, as the knowledge of visitors' plans was not always available at the times she had to book her time off:

Ria: If I have to take vacation for next year, I have to bid for my vacation, right... For example, I've said 'okay, we're not expecting anyone next year, so I'll take this, this, and this'. And if someone suddenly comes by... I'll say, 'I'll maximize in weekend because I didn't know you are coming, so I didn't plan my vacation as such, so I've taken my vacation. I cannot change'... If it can be done, it can be done. If it cannot be done, we'll just say, 'okay you can come over a long weekend or you can come over weekends' (lines 189-197).

This dilemma suggests Ria feels an obligation to take time off when people visit, to demonstrate the value she places on their visits, and to spend time interacting with them.

5.2.5. Continuity and the future

Ria and Rahul anticipate more extended visits from his parents, although nothing was definitely planned at the time we met. Their friend from Montreal has been trying to book a visit for some time now, and the difficulty they have had in arranging a time and agreeing an itinerary that suits everyone has started to frustrate Ria and Rahul:

Ria: Last time he said that he will be coming- what he said, he'll be leaving on Saturday, so it's seven hours drive, right, seven hours with kids and so on. So, he said he'll come here in the afternoon, he'll just come here for sleepover and he leave tomorrow morning. I said, 'no! That's not the plan if you have to come!' And he has two kids. It will be- like they will be getting tired, right. I said, 'No, if you

have to come here, plan something good. You have to be here for two days, all day. Don't just come here for sleepover'.

Rahul: He wants to go to Niagara, so it's impossible, right. (lines 206-213)

Their expectation from this visit is to be able to spend reasonable time to interact with him and his children, and to have the opportunity to show them around their own region, and reciprocate the hospitality they received. In this way hosting can be viewed a form of reciprocating the requirements of friendship:

Ria: I keep on saying that 'you should come, please come- kids will be on vacation, please come over- this and that', keep on convincing, 'please come, we'll enjoy'. They never- they are here in Montreal- I think it's going to be three years, four years, right. They've never been to Niagara Falls, so I said, 'okay, it's a good opportunity, we can go together, summer, we can bring the kids', right, since we've gone there so many times but they'll enjoy. 'So, do come over.' If this summer is gone, now it will be next year!

Rahul: Now we'll have to wait for next year! (lines 240-247)

Spending time with friends and family, and the opportunity to play host, is an integral part to Ria and Rahul's identity, relationships, and leisure activities.

5.2.6. Summary

Ria and Rahul moved for their daughter and the opportunities Canada can offer. After finding employment they bought a house with enough room so their family members could visit for periods of time. Spending time and interacting with people from their home culture is an important part of their leisure, and when they have visitors they integrate into these patterns without significant change to their habits. However, visits from Rahul's parents resulted in a trip to Montreal, and a shared experience of fruit picking, making strong connections between their family and Canada as a place to live and enjoy, and ultimately to provide a future for them. Being able to show people

around their new region and facilitate an enjoyable experience means that interaction alone is not enough to satisfy them, but interaction in a leisure context that provides new and enjoyable experiences for them and their guests is desirable.

5.3. Lucy

Lucy's full narrative is available as Appendix C. I have known Lucy for a number of years since we met in Toronto through mutual friends soon after my own arrival. She is from the UK, in her mid-thirties, and has a young family with her Canadian husband.

5.3.1. Continuity and the past

Lucy's reasons for immigrating revolved around a desire for adventure. She felt she missed the travel opportunities that many of her peers had in their late teens and early twenties, and when given the chance to apply for positions with her company in North America she jumped at the chance. She had spent some time working with Ontarians in England, who themselves were 'travelling' and working in temporary jobs, and this swayed her decision to come to Toronto over other North American cities as she already knew some people in the city from this previous experience.

On arrival, however, her expectations of a city full of opportunities to socialise were disappointingly not met:

I think I'd made it in my head that it was going to be this fun-party-have-a-good-time-city. I mean I've always found it easy to speak to people and I like meeting people, I like going out and drinking and having a good time, and everybody said to me [before I left], 'oh don't worry, you'll meet people, everyone's going to love you, they're going to love the accent', but it wasn't like that at all (lines 14-18).

Those first few months were lonely, and she often questioned her decision to move. She recalled one night in particular where she went to her local pub- a regular leisure activity for her in the UK based on social interaction- alone:

That [night] was probably my lowest because- I think I actually did shots with the bartender. I think he felt sorry for me- ‘oh god, this girl doesn’t know anyone’. You know, I was never afraid of saying ‘I’m new to the country, fresh off the boat type of thing’, but then I was like, ‘God, this is like- this is bad’ (lines 24-27).

In our second meeting Lucy felt a bit embarrassed at her recounting of her settlement experience, occasionally cringing at what she perceived to be her melodramatic presentation from our first meeting: “I don’t really like it [watching myself]. Because I think it sounds so depressing. There are a lot of really good things as well and I think I made it sound really bad. Especially past the first winter” (lines 30-33). In reflection the difficulties she experienced at the start of her experience were far outweighed by the positive experiences she has in Toronto, and this was the more important focus for her in our second meeting. However, her difficult first few months, albeit “not that bad” (line 34), set the context for the importance and significance of hosting.

5.3.2. Social interaction: with friends

Lucy’s initial sense of loneliness after her arrival was a common combination of the loss of significant relationships from home and a lack of substitutes in the new community. The first friend of Lucy’s to come and visit was Michelle, just a couple of months after she arrived, and who helped celebrate Lucy’s first Canadian birthday in “the depths of winter” (line 38). Lucy’s birthday was important to her; an event that back home would have triggered a big gathering of friends and informal ceremony. After just a few months in Toronto the event was less extravagant, but still very meaningful for her:

On the day of my birthday it was minus forty with wind chill here, my first year in Canada. But I was determined to go out, and wear heels! It was a work night, like it was, you know, a school night I call it, and we went out on College St.

How was it?

Yeah. It was okay, right. It wasn't like a birthday at home. There was nobody in the bar, like nobody. We were the only ones in the bar. It's freezing. When I got out the cab, I couldn't walk because there was thick ice on the floor, and my stilettos- I was wearing red stilettos- I couldn't walk in them, so Andy took one side of me and Paul took the other and basically carried me into the bar. Because I was determined to wear my nice outfit! (lines 38-47).

Lucy and Michelle went to Niagara Falls, the first visit for both.

I had to buy some socks along the way because I was in pink ballet flats and it was minus something, and I was like, 'God, it's really cold' and Michelle said, 'Yeah, you might want to buy yourself some socks Luce! Not really prepared are you?! You're in Canada!' I was like, 'oh God, she's right' (lines 60-63).

Lucy's recounting of their interaction during this side trip illustrated the roles in their friendship, and to some extent demonstrated the reification of Lucy's realisation that this was not just a vacation, but something more permanent. The reaction of her good friend about her footwear decisions comically positioned Lucy as the unprepared resident, and Michelle as the sage visitor.

A few friends of Lucy have visited her several times each, and this was very meaningful for her, especially in light of her parent's limited visits:

How important was it to have... [Michelle] come out in the beginning?

Very. Because my parents didn't, so that's the next closest person to me. And Kelly as well... She came out like three times and she's also been a constant person that will do it too. Laura's come out a few times too, she's been three times. It is really important. It is nice to have a slice of home here. To bring me a bit down to earth again. It is nice to have a bit of English humour, to have that culture around you again. Yeah, it is important. I like that (lines 115-226).

Through the turbulence, isolation and unpredictable nature of settlement, the constant of familiar interaction and the reminder of those relationships that provide belonging create comfort and stability.

5.3.3. Place and social interaction

On Michelle's first visit Lucy took her friend to Niagara Falls, the first time for them both. Lucy's reaction was mixed, even contradictory, and show how she was at times disappointed and yet impressed:

We were going to go Niagara Falls, which was obviously the biggest destination because, you know- 'wonder of the world'. Everybody wants to see that. I'd never been so it was the first time for me too. But I had this vision in my head that Niagara Falls was going to be in the middle of a forest, and it was going to be this beautiful landscape... Again, I didn't have internet, didn't look at pictures, didn't have any concept of how it looked until I got there. And God, was I disappointed. Most places were shut up, like nothing was really open, but it was tacky, it was like being in Blackpool or somewhere like that in England and I was so disappointed. We were so- we were like, 'God, this is bad!'... And so we got down there, and you know what, it was impressive once you got up to the wall part. The wall was actually- I'll never forget it- the wall was covered in ice, which is actually quite pretty. Like, I didn't really want to stand there for too long. But there's a good picture of us- Michelle and I standing next to Niagara Falls (lines 51-67).

Lucy's reactions here reflect a few points. First, it shows her pre-conceived notion of what a natural wonder of the world in Canada should look like, that the place she moved to was not the place she was thinking about prior to her arrival; Toronto would be social, and Niagara Falls a wonder of the world in natural surroundings, and neither delivered. Second, she is making connections to places she knows from home, attributing characteristics from Blackpool to Niagara Falls, albeit presented as negative ones. The experience actively constructs an understanding of her new home (regionally speaking) that is built on a cultural understanding of her old home. Finally, despite the apparent disappointment and frustration with many elements of the experience,

it was impressive to see, and provides an enjoyable source of nostalgia, with photos of friends happy and smiling together, braving the cold and ice; for Lucy this is a rich source of bonding with her good friend in a new, yet now familiar place.

Lucy used some places in and around Toronto as a way to demonstrate to her friends the symbolic and practical cultural differences from her home culture. Lucy's suggestion to spend an evening with her guests at Hooters was particularly memorable². Hooters helped Lucy and her guests define what they found comical, and different from their home culture:

I took them to Hooters because-

To Hooters?!

Yes, because they'd never heard of it and they thought it was hysterical, right. Michelle bought a T-shirt at Hooters

Is that a Hooters T-shirt in the photo?

It is. 'Hooters main squeeze juice bar' it says.

(Lucy laughs at her friend posing in the picture).

They thought it was hysterical that I lived near a Hooters. And I thought it was funny, and I told them, 'the wings are great and the beer is great, we should go', and they were like, 'let's go!' (lines 70-78).

² For those unfamiliar with Hooters here is an article about the chain's expansion plans that helps describe what you might expect as a customer www.theglobeandmail.com/life/the-hot-button/hooters-busting-out-new-look-in-bid-to-attract-women/article4459748/

The leisure-based focus of her friends' early visits meant, "it was all about going out... in the evenings" (line 79). The opportunity to party with good friends from England meant Lucy sought out alluring and distinct places that she herself was not always very familiar with:

We went to The Drake a couple of times and along Queen St there, and went out for dinner, on College St actually.

Would you normally go to The Drake if your friends weren't here?

I would, but not very often. It's a bit far for me to go. But it's just because The Drake at that point was very new and the cool place to go, and it had a rooftop patio. I actually had only been once before and so I thought 'well why not go?' (lines 79-84).

A strong part of Lucy's narrative was her experience, and subsequent attachment to, the cottage life in Ontario. A group of Lucy's friends (of which I myself am included) have rented a cottage over Labour Day weekend since 2007³. Lucy's friends visited in September 2008 and joined her and her Toronto friends at the cottage:

The cottage was fantastic. The weather was beautiful. It was a clear lake, and the boys did badminton, they built fires, and it sounds very manly, but that's basically what they did. Then we just sat and read magazines, and got drunk, and swam in the lake, and it was perfect. Put music on during the day and it was great. That was my second experience of a cottage I think. And that was when I was like, 'I want to do this'. It's so much fun and then it continued on every year.

³One year after my own arrival a friend from England came to visit. Keen to show him a distinctly Canadian experience I rented a cottage on Lake Simcoe. A group of around 14 friends joined us, and our Labour Day cottage has remained a tradition ever since. On many occasions various Toronto based friends, including Lucy, have invited people from out of town to join us. A VFR trip in 2007 has given me a tradition at which I am central, and a chance to maintain connections with a variety of people who attend most years.

Did the fact that Michelle and Sam came over that weekend, was that in part because you knew you were going to go to the cottage?

That's exactly why, because I wanted them to experience the cottage life because I knew they would love it, because they like the outdoors. And they had a really good time. I think they saw Canada in a completely different light.

Do you think you saw Canada in a different light?

Yes.

How?

Well, I never really experienced cottage life before. For me, cottage life is about lots of people and having fun and people can go into their own worlds, whatever they want to do. And relaxing, and just enjoying the scenery, and I don't know, having a bit of a break (lines 88-104).

Having friends come to visit was a big influence in shaping Lucy's connection and enjoyment to cottage life, and by extension it established her connection to a routine event which gives structure to her ongoing life in Canada. Being able to share that experience with her visiting friends strengthened the enjoyment of the experience, as they could appreciate the differences and benefits in comparison with routine weekend break experiences in England; through showing her friends Canada in a different light, she also showed it to herself. It also enabled her friends from England to socialise with her friends from Canada, linking her networks and merging her different worlds.

As time has passed, Lucy has settled, and youthful hedonism has been usurped by parenthood for both Lucy and many of her friends. The importance of place as a source of leisure has dissipated in her experience of hosting:

In all honesty, it was very important to me at one point that they liked where I came, and they liked my friends and they enjoyed their time here. Now, it's not important to me, and that's not me being mean, it's just me saying this is how it is. It's much more about them coming to see my kids I think, and Andy and me, than really seeing the city (lines 131-135).

Toronto, and Ontario, as a place for leisure was important to Lucy in the beginning. She sought interaction from close friends and could use the excitement and distinctiveness of her new community as a destination to entice people to visit, and use the occasion as an opportunity herself to explore. In addition, their reactions to her new home helped validate her reasoning for living here, and strengthened her resolve to stay and settle. Now, the place of importance is her home and family, as her senses of belonging and attachment have evolved and shifted as parenthood and relationships in Toronto become entrenched.

5.3.4. Social interaction: with parents

Lucy's experience with her parents, in terms of them visiting her in Toronto, has been relatively tumultuous. To begin with, their lack of visiting was conspicuous in Lucy's narrative so far.

So my parents didn't come until I had my daughter, which is two years ago now.

Because that visit was quite a big deal, wasn't it?

Big deal, big deal, a very, very big deal.

They hadn't been here previously?

Never.

And you've been about ten years or so?

Yeah.

And had that bothered you that they'd never been?

Yeah, big time, yeah.

Why?

Because why wouldn't you go and see your daughter, where she lives and where she grew up, you know? But, you know something, in their eyes, it was me that moved (lines 148-159).

She is angry and then accepting, frustrated at their apparent disinterest in how she lives her life, but almost immediately appreciative of their viewpoint. Her parents' arrival was then shocking, not just for its occurrence, but for the manner in which it happened:

So I saw a taxi pulling up and I looked at the window, I thought, 'that looks like dad', and then I saw my mum getting out and I said, 'Andy! Mum and dad are here!' I mean, it's a pretty stressful time, eight days after you've given birth to a baby and like everything is new and then your parents turn up. But I wouldn't change it (lines 160-163).

The absence of communication (Lucy's husband was also unaware of his inlaws' impending visit) was intended to provide a surprise, and their arrival did comfort Lucy to a great extent; she understood and appreciated the effort and investment that was required by her parents to make the trip. But the shock of their visit: the lack of opportunity to plan, the timing of two weeks after childbirth, and the perceived pressure to entertain, did cause Lucy some understandable stress. In addition, Lucy's parents had planned the trip with the help of her brother in England who had no experience of Toronto, and had booked themselves into a downtown hotel around a twenty-five minute drive away; although they did not invade their home to sleep, their discomfort in taking transit meant that Lucy's husband often drove them back and forth.

Lucy initially felt a responsibility and some pressure to look after her parents and give them a proper vacation in exchange for their effort and evident discomfort with many of the strange ways that a foreign land brings:

I would have liked to have been a bit more prepared, and I didn't know what to do with them. Then I realized after two days, I didn't have to do anything. They were just interested in staying with me. They would spend the days with me and we'd cook a jacket potato, which was so English you know, like, with beans and cheese (lines 176-180).

Although Lucy took comfort in sharing old usual experiences with her parents, like the foods they used to eat, her parents limited interest and unfavourable reception to different foods and experiences, their lack of experience of international travel and navigating a foreign city, and their dismissive reactions and interaction with Lucy's now usual cultural and social environment, lead to a series of what can best be described as awkward situations:

Andy's parents invited them over for dinner, the one night, for a barbecue and- God, this was awful...

Was this is the first time [your parents] met [your husband's parents]?

First time. Then they talked about Jack Layton's funeral, and Andy's mum said, 'Oh, I bet it was a lovely procession', and my dad said, 'oh, it's not like England,' and I was cringing. And Andy's mum said, 'well, didn't they have all the Mounties there?' My dad said, 'Well, the horses weren't up to scratch.' My mum said, 'Oh yeah, the stallions, they weren't that good, in England they do a much better procession than that. I thought it was actually a bit rubbish.'

(Lucy screws her eyes shut and covers her face with her hands for a couple of seconds).

I don't think they realized quite what they were saying. I was a bit embarrassed. Then my mum started to not feel well... So, I took her to the toilet and she fainted at Andy's parents' house. Yeah, drama! And she fainted and was sick and she had a bad migraine so they had to just go... and they didn't have any dinner there, and I felt so bad because his mum got a cake and she really made an effort because that's the type of person she is, and that was it. They didn't see them again because they left, not the next day, but the day after.

How long had they been to the house for?

An hour, if that, if that. Andy's parents had got a nice bottle of champagne in- oh God. They made sure the pool looked really nice and laid the table- oh God. In a way, it was a bit of a relief for me really because it would have just got even more awkward.

(As she watches herself tell the story from our first meeting Lucy is smiling).

It is funny though. As embarrassing as it was it really made me laugh (lines 181-210).

This meeting of the in-laws, an event that had evaded a wedding and an eight-year relationship thus far, was suddenly thrust upon everyone without notice and opportunity to consider how it might actually pass. The behaviour of her parents was a clear reminder of her home culture, of how she had grown up, and then an equally as clear manifestation of how she has changed and evolved. Despite the at times awkward and potentially rude behaviour of her parents, this experience was quite clearly significant for Lucy. She understood the effort and financial cost for her parents given their context, and their endeavour to arrive as a surprise added to the ceremony.

However, Lucy's parents' lack of visit since she gave birth to her twins, although not surprising, was exacerbated by a conversation Lucy had with her parents on the morning of our second meeting. They told Lucy she would not be able to stay with them on her intended visit to the UK in the following months because of their concern about space and calm within their own home being disrupted by the young family of five. The importance Lucy placed on enabling interaction between her children and her parents, and the financial and temporal investment she and her husband were willing to make in this effort, were not being reciprocated within the capabilities she believed her parents had to help. She seemed to understand that a long haul flight for her parents was a lot to ask of them, but had hoped that a temporary discomfort within their own home to facilitate interaction between disparate family members would be a reasonable and reciprocal offer, but much to her chagrin, one that was refused.

5.3.5. Summary

Lucy's experience of settlement, and her initial disappointment and subsequent feeling of loneliness, was compounded because of her initial motivations for adventure and socialisation. At

a time when she needed celebration and interaction over her first birthday in her new community, her visiting friend helped make the experience meaningful and helped generate positive memories that helped Lucy feel belonging within Toronto. Friends' initial visits were based on leisure and vacations, and Lucy enjoyed taking people around Toronto and beyond, sharing experiences that were contextually interesting and amusing for her and her guests, and expanding her own familiarity with the values of her community. As time passed visits from friends slowed as Lucy and her regular guests settled into family life, making visits less frequent and contextually driven by a desire to interact, and less to experience the community as a destination. Her parents' visit was full of contextual cues that described her relationship with them, and the clash of her old and new worlds providing strong reminders of how different her life is today. The gesture of her parents' visit, however, was substantial given their financial and cultural context towards international travel, and was important, as Lucy was able to share her world and identity with them.

5.4. Bahar

Bahar's full narrative is available as Appendix D. I have known Bahar for around two years. We met for this project twice, around six months apart. She is in her mid-twenties, and moved to Canada from Iran around four years ago.

5.4.1. Continuity and the past

Bahar's immigration was due to her parents' desire, and the decision was ultimately theirs. Her mother in particular wanted to move, as she has many family members in the Toronto area. When the process to emigrate from Iran started Bahar was around 17 years old, by the time the process had been complete and she actually moved with her family she was 25 years old. The uncertainty of not knowing when immigration would happen had a big impact on her as she entered adulthood:

Immigration was something that we were always talking about in our family and it really made me uncomfortable because it made me think that things are not stable. I couldn't just have a long-term plan for myself, but I remember when it got really serious and my mom says she was going to apply for Canada was when I was 16 or 17, but I don't know, I just tried to make short-term plans for myself (lines 12-16).

Before she left Iran Bahar had established a long-term relationship, and its temporary break down due to her immigration caused significant discomfort:

I mean the first year [in Toronto] was really tough and especially I think for me because my husband, who was my boyfriend at the time, was back home and when I moved here we were kind of in the process of breaking up because I wanted- actually, I didn't want to move here but my mom wanted us to move here- and I couldn't say 'I can't, I'm not moving here', because in Iran it's not really common when you're not married to live on your own. So, I couldn't really say, 'okay, you guys go, I'll just stay here'. And so, the only way for us to be together was by getting married and we were not really ready for that phase (lines 47-54).

Bahar and her boyfriend did ultimately marry, and he now lives permanently in Canada, but the stress induced by this situation, and socially enforced because of the expectations of Iranian culture, added to Bahar's sense of isolation and loss.

Just a month after arrival her mother returned to Iran for around a year to tie up loose ends, and just six weeks later her father left as well, leaving Bahar and her younger sister Hiva (also a participant in this thesis) living with their uncle in Toronto. This additional loss, combined with the loss of her boyfriend and social network in general, created a sense of great insecurity and solitude for Bahar.

5.4.2. Social interaction: early visits

Bahar's first hosting experience was with an Iranian friend and her sisters who themselves immigrated to Vancouver some time previously. These visitors came from Vancouver just three weeks after Bahar's own arrival in Canada. The guests shared several lived experiences with

Bahar and her sister: they grew up in the same city, their immigration was out of their control, and their parents too had left them with relatives while they returned to Iran for an extended period.

This act of friendship demonstrated through the visit was significant for Bahar:

I had a lot of relatives and family around me, but I really needed some friends. I was really feeling that I have a lack of friends in my life... I was so emotional. I wanted someone who I could share my emotions with, not someone who would lecture me on why it is good that you just moved here (lines 78-85).

The interaction her family offered failed to appreciate the sense of loss she was experiencing; her friends were able to provide co-presence that was not just culturally familiar, but that acknowledged the experience from a position much closer to her own.

Their empathy was soothing and helped establish Bahar's sense of a new normal: "whenever I was making comments about the things that were here, my friend and her sister were like 'we were like that too, you'll just get used to it'" (lines 87-88). Bahar was unable to provide accommodation and perform her role of host as she wanted due to a lack of space and furnishing. This inability to host within cultural norms made Bahar feel guilt at the lack of hospitality she was able to offer.

I just kept saying 'sorry that we don't have things to provide you with and make you comfortable here', and they were laughing at me saying that 'this is how people are living here, they're not really going to have luxury and stuff', so that was something I got used to after a while (lines 109-112).

The reactions of her friends who knew and appreciated the culture she was coming from helped her understand the new cultural norms, not just of hosting, but of many aspects of life in her new community.

5.4.3. Place and social interaction

Bahar's friend helped introduce her to Toronto by her friends from Vancouver through her desire to be a tourist in the city: "They had a checklist of the places they wanted to go or someone else had told them 'you should visit there when you're going to Toronto', and they were just dragging me here and there" (from Sarah, lines 75-79). Her visiting friend was interested in architecture:

She told me she wanted to take a lot of pictures, and the first thing that comes to my mind when I think of her visiting me is the ROM, the Royal Ontario Museum. And I remember that was the first time I was really seeing things. Because I think one of the things that is really different here versus Iran is the architecture. Looking at the ROM, it's an old building, right, so the way they renovated it is not the way people would renovate things in Iran if you renovate something like that, because it's modernity and tradition at the same time, the building is like a glass triangle. So, if you renovate something like that in Iran, there would be a lot drawbacks and complaints about it because we're trying to conserve the things the way they are and even if you're trying to renovate them, you're trying to renovate it similar to the original building. So, that was something that was really- that looked really weird to me, but after a while, I really got used to it (lines 117-127).

Because of her friend's presence and motivations Bahar shared experiences with Toronto that helped illustrate not just physical differences in landscape and architecture, but the culture of the community she had moved to. Her friend's approach to engaging the city was inspiring and uplifting for Bahar, who was feeling somewhat overwhelmed by her recent move, mother's departure, and overall sense of instability:

I was really afraid of going to places on my own. I was not afraid of getting lost but I was not really feeling comfortable. It was not like my home and my comfort zone. But after they just came and we just got on the buses and streetcars and subway and everything, I think it really helped me knowing which station I should go for what. And that was really helpful. And that was the first time they've been to Toronto. But like the way they approached it made it really easier for me, like thinking that it's doable to do things on your own in a place that you don't know (lines 140-146).

Her friends' interests and aptitude gave Bahar a reason to see places in her new home, and allowed interpretation and meaning construction to be done in a shared cultural context. The knowledge that they had been through a similar experience gave Bahar strength and hope that she could live a meaningful and enjoyable life. The meanings and understandings constructed by Bahar in interaction with place and people is rich in cultural cues, both old and new, and exemplify how hosting for immigrants can inspire and strengthen understanding and attachment.

5.4.4. Continuity and the present

The sense of emotional precariousness that the immigration experience instilled in Bahar was evident in our meetings. In our first meeting she suggested that; "it's only been a couple of months that things are really- I think, like things are really settling in on my end and I can say I'm feeling comfortable and calm" (lines 58-60), as her professional life began to fall into place, her husband had settled, and she felt some sense of progress. But as she watched herself say this five months later she jumped to her first video:

No! I'm not feeling comfortable and calm, no, no. I was lying, through my teeth!... The thing is when I was talking to you five months ago, I was feeling calm. I was not lying about that. But I don't think my life is like a straight line right now, and everything is 'I'm calm and I don't have any problems with immigration'. I think I'm up and down (lines 62-69).

As Bahar evidently still struggles with aspects of settlement, she was keen to acknowledge the legacy of her hosting and how it strengthened her awareness and attachment to Toronto, but also the acknowledgement of the effort of her guest who visited her at an important and pivotal time in her settlement: "I will never forget the time that she visited me here. Whenever I talk to her, I just tell her that I do really appreciate what she did during that time of my life because it was really

hard” (lines 147-148). The gesture of visiting displayed to Bahar an act of kindness and care that was vital, and still generates gratitude and a sense of value in that relationship.

Her hosting experiences have given her sources for bonding with her visiting friends that help fuel connections in the present. Her recounting of her cheesecake tour of Toronto with her friend from Vancouver, that gave them reason to visit different cafes and neighbourhoods, constructed memories and attachments upon which she actively draws on when re-connecting:

Wherever in Toronto that they have good cheesecakes, I think we visited there also. Yeah, so whenever we’re talking or sending each other messages on Facebook or emails she said, ‘okay, let’s have a slice of cheesecake’ (Bahar laughs at the story as she tells) (lines 132-135).

5.4.5. Personal interaction and reflection

As Bahar watched her sister’s video, she extended a train of thought about the desire to spend time with people from the past, and the impact actual co-presence can have. Hiva, her sister, had suggested her interest and motivation in seeing people from her past was to remember those times and feelings of the past more than just maintaining the relationship with the individual. Bahar continued this train of thought:

I have to keep reminding myself of that, that everything, like life, goes on, and that things move on, like nothing stays the same. But then when I think about back home, I’m thinking about those people with those relationships in those places, some of them they don’t even exist anymore (in Hiva lines 118-125).

Having friends come to visit help demonstrate for Bahar that those times reminisces about and yearns for in times of insecurity are actually no longer truly the same. All people and places change. Friends move, neighbourhoods alter, restaurants close, and so on. The people and places missed are often not in existence in the way imagined, and interacting with friends from those past times can often demonstrate that those changes have indeed occurred.

5.4.6. Summary

Bahar's settlement was emotionally draining for her; after several years of insecurity about her future as immigration was discussed and planned she struggled to deal with the loss of friendships, what at the time was considered the end of her relationship with her then boyfriend, the departure of her parents back to Iran soon after arrival, and the issues of adapting to a new culture and society in general. The first hosting experience was significant for her in many ways, providing a sense of belonging, a demonstration of the possible progress of someone in a similar situation, the increased interaction and familiarity with the practicalities of her new community, and an in-situ education of the values of her new home inspired by the interests of her guests. Bahar still struggles to some extent with her settlement, but these hosting experiences act as markers of security and comfort in her recent history.

5.5. Hiva

Hiva's full narrative is available as Appendix E. I was introduced to Hiva by her sister, Bahar another participant in this project. We have met her face-to-face only once, although we have communicated via email about her video on a few occasions. Hiva moved to Toronto in her early twenties from Iran around four years ago.

5.5.1. Continuity and the past

Hiva's immigration was her parents' decision, and she moved to Toronto with her family as a young adult. Her first impressions of Toronto were pretty bleak and unpromising:

I remember it was like minus sixteen, without wind chill, so probably twenty- minus twenty-five or something. And the whole city was dead. My uncle came to pick us up and then he drove from the airport and then there was no one on the street, so

like it was just kind of weird and really cold, and we were tired. Like a lot of things just added up to have this, I guess, not good image of Toronto (lines 4-9).

After her arrival Hiva found herself reminiscing about parts of her life that she left, friends for example, but she also found reminders and differences in unexpected parts of daily life that led to a protective emotion towards her home country:

When I came here [to Toronto], what I remember from those moments [back in Iran] in the traffic was that we used to play songs and we used to sing and shout and dance in the car, and we enjoyed our time there. We used to wear hijab. I didn't like it, I don't like it at all, but I don't know why, you just like everything about your country. Whenever someone here says that 'Iran is that and this' you just go crazy and you want to say that it's not. You become more, I guess, nationalist somehow (lines 40-44).

But as she engaged with her new community, finding employment, and making some friends, she discovered areas and activities in the music and art scenes, and saw the season change to summer:

things got better. I was happy because I've never really thought I would have stayed in Iran for my whole life, because I wanted to do things, and I wanted to be more free and just wanted to do anything I want (lines 25-27).

She slowly became more attached and comfortable in Toronto, and feels at home, despite missing parts of her past life still.

5.5.2. Social interaction: with friends

Although friends had visited Hiva and her sister in the first few weeks after their arrival, the hosting experience that was most significant for Hiva was with an Iranian friend who herself had emigrated from Iran to London in the UK some years previously. Hosting afforded Hiva and her friend the chance to truly connect and bond in a different more concentrated way than they had done at high school in Iran:

We actually had the time to talk to each other when she visited Toronto. Because when I was in Iran, in high school, she left [to live in London]. And every year, maybe for two or three weeks, she used to come to Iran. And we were in a group of friends doing stuff so we never really had that time to sit and talk, like me and her, about life and experiences we have and share things. So, this time we spent most of the time actually talking (lines 76-80).

Hosting not only provided the opportunity for co-presence with a familiar person, but the nature of that co-presence allowed for more in depth interaction than Hiva had experienced before.

5.5.3. Place and social interaction

The reaction of Hiva's friend from London towards Toronto was, however, unenthusiastic:

She hated it here.

Oh yeah?

Yeah, she was looking for- she was telling me that in London downtown, you see a lot of theatres, a lot of arts, and you don't see them here. She didn't like how big and massive everything here is, like the streets, like the food, and everything. I guess it's a personal taste. She came, I guess, in 2010 and even though she had time to visit me again afterwards, she never really suggested that she wanted to see me here. She always suggests that maybe we can see each other at some other places (lines 60-68).

The negative reaction of Hiva's friend to the community she had become attached to and now called home demanded some critical reflection from Hiva on Toronto as a place that represented her character and values:

I guess that made me think that maybe she's right because I'm into art and stuff too. But I don't know. I just told her that I'm really comfortable here. I don't know, maybe you have to stay longer to see, maybe you have to work, and like you have to- I don't know- use healthcare systems or things like that to see how the living is here, how the life is here (lines 70-73).

Hiva was forced to agree with her friend, or decide to defend Toronto as a place to live. Her friend's response provoked Hiva to actively consider the attributes of Toronto as a place to live, and she chose to align herself with the city, strengthening her attachment to the community as a place where she feels comfortable.

Hiva seemed to have many acquaintances visiting Toronto for various reasons, for example former high school friends visiting their own families in the region, or considering Toronto as a place to move to themselves. Hiva's attachment to Toronto is alluded to as she describes her feeling of obligation to help guide and interpret the city for different visiting friends:

Everyone who comes here, I just wanted to- for some reason, I feel responsible to take care of them or take them anywhere they wanted to go see. I just want them to see the beauty of the city and not that coldness or craziness and just competing that they see and they're going to- because they see that anyways, right. But you want to show them some beauty and some things that they'll fall in love with (lines 131-135).

Aware of her own feelings on arrival, and perhaps influenced by her visiting friend who disparagingly compared Toronto with London, Hiva wants to make sure that visitors see what she sees, in defence of the city, but also of her own values and interests as they become increasingly intertwined and influenced by the community around her. She implies that what Toronto has to offer that is special and engaging requires some help to find, and she wants to provide that interpretation and guidance for visitors.

With a different visitor, Hiva went to a theme park in the Toronto area:

I guess we've been Wonderland once too.

Why Wonderland?

To have some excitement I guess. Yeah, and it was my first time too. I've never been to Wonderland before that. So we really had some fun time. And I guess she

enjoyed that because there was this Luna Park, or something like that, in Iran... As a child, we used to go there. It was in the middle of the city and- well, it reminded both of us of that kind of excitement and fear and the feelings that we had back there, back home, I guess (lines 87-94).

The experience of hosting inspired a first visit to a regional attraction that consequently led to shared reflections of childhood and remembered emotions. Not only was this experience presupposed by a visiting guest, but because Hiva was with someone from her past additional meaning was co-constructed that meshed old and new worlds.

5.5.4. Personal interaction and reflection

The desire to keep in touch with old friends from Iran, not necessarily close friends but classmates and acquaintances, caused Hiva to think about what she seeks from these friendships:

Friends from school after a while they just become- I just want to know them for some reason. They're holding something from the past. Back then everything was so pure so I just want that pureness to be with me somehow. Maybe that's why I just keep that friendship. I always keep it somehow. I guess subconsciously you want everything to stay the same, the friends, the places, the people, and when you don't see them for a while you don't want to ruin that image that you have made of them. But many times in reality, like when you see someone after a couple of years and when you grew up apart, somehow, you can't see the connection anymore. So, you prefer some people who've been around you for a while here, or like you want to do stuff with them, you want them to be physically available (lines 106-116).

Spending time with people who Hiva shared her youth with provides her with a sense of being young and innocent, it is the reconnection with the past she enjoys perhaps more than the actual relationship. Hiva perhaps did not have the chance to form those relationships that truly last a lifetime, as the opportunity to co-construct a shared history that includes more than high school was not available to her. Ultimately she is looking for availability in friendships, for regular

contact and opportunities to have shared experiences, and friends from the past cannot satisfy that need.

5.5.5. Summary

Hiva's relationship with Toronto slowly evolved after her arrival, as she began to find cultures and places that she enjoyed and felt comfortable with. Her friend's visit from London was a mixed experience, providing valuable co-presence with an old friend without the distractions of group dynamics, but her reaction caused Hiva to really question and consider whether Toronto was a place that could provide opportunities for her own personal identity construction. Ultimately this active consideration inspired Hiva to strengthen and accept her sense of attachment to Toronto. More recent visitors have provided Hiva with experiences that have made her realise her past is gone, and her home and future are in Toronto, as her desire for nostalgia is with places and contexts that no longer exist.

5.6. Mary

Mary's full narrative is available as Appendix F. Mary was introduced to me by a mutual acquaintance and we met for the first time at our first meeting. We met twice, six months apart, at her place of work. Mary moved to Toronto from China in 2008, and is now married to a fellow immigrant (of Chinese heritage, but not from China), and they have a young family.

5.6.1. Continuity and the past

Mary's reasons for immigration were opportunity based. She wanted a "new adventure" (lines 5-6), but felt restricted to English speaking countries, and at the time she saw Canada as the most promising option. The bureaucratic process was relatively straightforward for her:

I applied, then I almost forgot. I started to enjoy my life there in China, and suddenly I got that notice that ‘you’re granted. And I thought, ‘that’s nice, I almost forgot!’ It was a long time, but I didn’t suffer (lines 151-153).

She moved alone in 2008, her boyfriend followed, and they are now married with a young family.

Her comical description of buying a coffee for the first time demonstrates not just a difference in language, but also of certain cultural colloquialisms:

I still remember the second day [in Canada], I went to Tim Hortons⁴ and I wanted a cup of coffee. So, I asked the lady there, I said, ‘coffee please?’ And she said, ‘how would you like it?’. And I thought, ‘what do you mean? I don’t know what are you talking about!?’

(We both laugh at the story, as I remember my own confusion of ordering coffee in Canada for the first time).

And the guy next to me said something about ‘double double’, and I picked that word up and I said, ‘that’s an easy word, ‘double double!’”

You didn’t know what you’re asking for?

I kind of get a sense that the double double probably means something double, something good, okay, then ‘double double!’ (lines 22-32).

Mary presented her settlement as relatively comfortable, without significant issues, and showed strong respect and attachment to Canadian society and culture throughout our meetings.

⁴ If you are unfamiliar with Tim Hortons, the pervasive and encompassing nature of this coffee shop in Canadian culture is anecdotally evident by many, and well explained in this Toronto Star article.

www.thestar.com/news/insight/2014/08/29/tim_hortons_the_iron_grip_of_a_gentle_brand.html

A ‘double double’ is a coffee with double cream and two sugars.

5.6.2. Social interaction: with family

The opportunity to host her family from China, due to her new desirable location and her parents retirement status, has had a drastic change on the quantity of face-to-face time she has had with them:

When I was in the university, I went home twice a year. And when I started to work, probably three times a year. And every time I just spend a few days. Actually, now I spend more time with my family than when I was in China (lines 43-45).

The first time her parents visited was for an extended stay after the birth of her first child, and their visit had mixed success:

They were surprised about by how nice the country is, but they also felt lonely here because they don't speak the language. They can drive back in China, but here they can't because either they don't have the driver's license here or they can't read the signs and they don't know the rules so it's hard for them to go around. So, they just stay at home or they ask me to take them out. It's really hard. They describe it as a prison. It's a nice prison (lines 48-52).

On the following occasion her father stayed for 18 months, took his driving test that provided him more freedom and became involved with a local Chinese community group, which reduced the dependence on Mary and her husband, and diminished stress in the household.

Hosting her family has shifted the context for interaction between Mary and her family. The opportunity for her to host her family for the Middle Moon Festival meant she was able to provide and contribute, rather than just be catered to as she would have been in China:

So, back in China, my family was in a city close to Macao and I was alone outside. Always I went back home and they host things for me. And here in Canada, because I was the pioneer, I have the chance to host things for them, which makes me really happy (lines 111-114).

Mary's sister has visited twice as well, and is, by Mary's account, a great help in the household during her stays. Mary's sister's presence enables Mary to have additional free time with her own family:

If she's in my house the house is nice and clean. Which is nice, and she cooks, and she would never let me in the kitchen to do anything, to do any work. Every time I'm going to try to work to help her and she will be like, 'get out, get out! Play the game, play with the kids, don't do anything!' Yeah, she's so helpful (lines 64-67).

Mary made a distinction between hosting her own family and her husband's family. I was curious about the potential loss of privacy she might feel because of the extended periods many of her relatives stayed for:

Is there any tension or sense of- that you've lost your privacy?

With my own family? No. Because I grew up in the family. But with my mother-in-law, yes. Because we're basically from different families, our habits don't match, so yeah.

Yeah, can it be a bit awkward sometimes?

Sometimes, I want to say something-

(Mary mimes zipping her mouth closed)

-I shut up.

(And we both laugh) (lines 148-155).

Hosting provides Mary with different contexts in which to interact with her family. First of all the quantity of interaction has increased, and secondly the roles have altered. Mary is now the host, the matriarch, accommodating people, and being relied upon for support and interpretation.

5.6.3. Place and social interaction

An activity that Mary and her sister have enjoyed during her visits is attending garage sales:

One thing my sister loves is the garage sale. We don't have that in China... it's not like something we needed, it's just something you don't see in stores. We got the wooden statue from Europe. Back in the 1950s the lady's father when he was travelling in Europe bought those statues, it's perfect, from Spain. It's beautiful and only five bucks. It's a piece of art actually.

And is that something you would do on your own or really only when your sister- ?

Only when my family comes (lines 69-77).

The presence of her sister provides a reason to explore and engage the local community with her sister, someone who shares her cultural cues and context, enabling her to acquire physical items that bridge her old and new worlds. This wooden statue is a physical link between her sister and her new community, an item that can be displayed and viewed on a daily basis that helps create a sense of home.

Mary's attachment to Prince Edward County, a destination around two hours east of Toronto, was quite clear through her narrative, and strongly linked to hosting family. First, she went with her husband and visiting mother-in-law:

My husband's mother is here with us now, and back in June it was her birthday. We decided to celebrate her birthday over there so we went there, spent a weekend and it was nice, it was a very, very nice place. People there are so kind. We couldn't help ourselves, so we spent a lot of money there! (lines 105-108).

Then, between our meetings, she went with her own family for the Middle Moon Festival, which cemented her attachment to the region. The family serendipitously happened across a town where there was a salmon run.

On the way back [from Prince Edward County] we stopped by Port Hope and watched the salmon. At that time were swimming back to lay eggs... That is the time that we saw tons of salmon in the river. We ate salmon a lot [in P.E.C.], but that was actually the first time we saw live salmon. I saw that people don't try to capture or take away all the salmon, they let those salmon go back and lay their eggs and reproduce. Well, that won't happen in China probably (lines 130-140).

The experience helped Mary construct a fuller understanding of the differences between her home culture and new community, enhanced by the presence and reactions of her visiting family to what they were witnessing. Her family's further reaction to her community provided insight into how Mary viewed her own home culture in China, and how experiencing her new community with her family made her feel towards both place and people:

My family were amazed that everybody can go to such amazing facilities here, the community centre, and spend a few bucks and enjoy the nicest pool- indoor pool, and the gym, and the free library. Both of my parents used to work for Chinese government, but I have to say here in Canada is a lot better. I guess it's because here in Canada, people can vote. We have the right to vote. If you don't serve people well, we can vote you off. People are more kind and tolerant, and we're living with love here. It's not a perfect world, we can still see some people being not very polite, but in China, it's different.

So, I guess when you moved here, you must have learned to love those things, right?

Yes.

But then, when you can see somebody else learning those things, is that something you enjoy watching? Does it give you some pride, that now I'm living in a safer, more respectful country?

Yes, but actually, that's a very edgy question. Because here in Canada I have some Chinese friends and we can share a lot of things. Because we're in the same environment and we understand the things pretty much at the same level. But in comparing with the people back in China, I am very careful to what I say, because what I say might be a show off, and people might feel uncomfortable. So, I'm very sensitive, careful.

So it's not something you would point out to your visiting family? You wouldn't say, 'look at- ?'

I can't. I will show them, and let them experience by themselves, but I can't tell them that.

(She sings like a teasing child)

'See, I'm in the better place than you are'. I really can't say that (lines 180-199).

Sharing these experiences with her visiting family is a corporeal and demonstrative way of explaining why she moved without the need to verbally brag, and risk questioning the political nature of their home country. The careful phrasing, presentation and interpretation of these places by Mary to her family is respectful of their context, but helps affirm her decision to settle in Canada.

5.6.4. Summary

Mary's immigration has significantly altered the context for interaction with her family. They now spend more time with each other than before, and Mary is the host, the guide, and interpreter. The presence of visiting family inspires her to visit regional destinations, particularly Prince Edward County, and the experiences that she shares with her family help demonstrate the benefits of her immigration decision. These shared experiences have also illustrated the difference in values and social system that Mary finds more appealing in her new community, without actually explaining and appearing to boast her family can see, learn and understand her decision.

5.7. Monty

Monty's full narrative is available as Appendix G. I have known Monty for around five years. We met twice for this project, with the meetings five months apart. Monty is in his mid-thirties, and he moved to Canada from India in 2008. He is now married to a fellow immigrant from India.

5.7.1. Continuity and the past

Monty's decision to move to Canada was built on several years of international travel, or more aptly described as a lifestyle of mobility (Cohen et. al, 2015), a continuation of temporary residence

in Australia and the middle east where he studied and worked. He wanted to come to Canada for the opportunities and to expand his career. His arrival, in February was:

brutal actually. I mean I knew that Canada is cold, but this was *way* cold. I remember I came out of the airport and was looking for a cab. I was just wearing a jacket. And within like, not even two or three seconds, I could not feel my ear actually, and my hands were shaking, It was something- I can't explain it. But it was that kind of cold, I never felt that kind of cold before (lines 16-20).

Monty's settlement was not easy, as he struggled to find an opportunity in his field of work:

I always say that when I came to Toronto, I came with two suitcases and one of the suitcases had my clothes and everything, the other suitcase was full of dreams and ambitions, and I lost my first suitcase, within few days, I couldn't find it. And it took me two years to find that suitcase.

You mean your dreams and ambitions?

Yeah. The first two years were really, really hard (lines 21-26).

After failing to find employment in Toronto he took the bus to Edmonton after being advised work was plentiful: "I traveled for four days, four and a half days on a Greyhound, and reached Edmonton just to find there's no job there!" (He laughs at his own misfortune) (lines 28-31).

Although he found work in the service sector, it was Public Relations experience he was seeking. He found himself in a dilemma as to whether to return to India where he felt confident he could find professional work, but he was driven by the anticipated reception as a failure should he go back:

Because people would say 'ok, fine, you know I told you so'. Because when I was going to Toronto in the first place, people are asking me, 'do you have a job there?' I said, 'no, I don't have a job'. 'How can you go to a place where- have you been to Toronto?' I said 'never'. 'So how are you going to a place- do you know anybody?' 'No'. 'So, you're going to a place where you don't have a job, you have never been there, you don't know anybody, what are you going to do? You know, how is it that you're going to survive?' (lines 39-49).

He decided to return to Toronto. He fortuitously reconnected with a compatriot he had studied with in Australia, and ended up sharing an apartment with him.

When I moved to Toronto at the start I didn't know anybody. And luckily, I met a friend of mine who actually, I didn't know before coming, he was here. I met him in Australia, we were in the same university, and he was here in Toronto... and he was looking for a roommate (lines 59-62).

This connection and interaction meant he was able to explore and interpret Toronto with the roommate, and also with his friend's visitors from overseas who came to stay with them. Monty found work in a call centre, and then finally an internship with a magazine that led to a string of relevant professional opportunities, albeit temporary contracts, where he was working when we met for this thesis.

5.7.2. Place and social interaction

Monty's first hosting experiences were with his roommate's friends from India. Monty explained how they would:

ask where to go and which places to visit. They always wanted to go to nightclubs, because of what they see in movies in India, that nightclubs in the U.S. and Canada are really great, so they just want to explore. And probably they were very disappointed, not because nightclubs are bad but because they had a different impression of nightclubs- that girls would come running towards you as soon as you enter! (lines 70-75).

Even these initial, somewhat amusing experiences, would help Monty appreciate his own understanding of Canadian culture, and demonstrate to him the level of his integration in comparison to those who had just arrived.

On one occasion he rented a car with his roommate and visitors: "and we thought 'where should we go? Let's go to Muskoka!'" (lines 76-77). Although they did not stay overnight Monty

was exposed to Ontario beyond the big city. This daytrip gave him inspiration to take his wife there a few years later, and he has strong intentions to take his parents to the same area on their next visit.

A few weeks before our first meeting Monty's mother had visited for the first time:

I had actually planned her itinerary because my mother has very specific tastes. She wouldn't like nightclubs (a joking reference to his roommate's friends). She would like to eat and go to restaurants. She's not that much of a fan of museums, so a museum was out of the question. She loved the CN Tower. We took her up at the lookout tower. She really liked the whole view. And we took her to the Toronto Islands.

Right, what did she like about the islands?

That it's so beautiful and it's so clean. And there are so many people but it's still so clean, and the parks, the gardens that the way they've kept it, and the view from the ferry, she really loved it (lines 104-112).

The different interests of Monty's mother influenced their experiences. He wanted to find activities that she would enjoy, resulting in his engagement with places he may not have chosen without the obligation to host. For example, Monty took his mother to a Hindu temple just north of Toronto:

I've never been there, and I would have never gone there if my mother was not here. My mother wanted so see that place, I knew she will be interested in seeing this place, the architecture and everything. She really liked it... I mean of course it's always good to see all these things, because you've been brought up with all these cultures- whether you believe it or not, that's a different thing- but you know when you're a kid you've seen your parents doing puja and things like that. I was not born in Toronto. I just came here. You know, it's a foreign land for me. And something which you have seen when you're a kid and being appreciated here, it's always nice to see (lines 125-136).

Because of his mother's presence Monty made an active cultural connection between his new and old homes, and built a stronger sense of Toronto as home. I asked Monty whether he felt that his hosting had broadened the variety of his own experiences:

When I moved to Toronto my main focus was to get a job. Once I get a job I can, you know, explore things. But when you have somebody who is in Toronto to look and to move around, or just to visit, you say 'why not? Let's accompany them'. There's so many places in Toronto I wouldn't have gone if my relatives wouldn't have come here (lines 95-102).

Hosting gave him an excuse and justification to take a break from the economical and structural aspects of integration and settlement, and gave him reasons to connect socially, culturally, and emotionally with his new community.

The opportunity to explore Toronto, and present and interpret his new community for his family enhanced Monty's sense of attachment and belonging to the city. He described how seeing their positive reactions as they experience his new home community.

[It's] a good feeling, because somehow, subconsciously it becomes your city. Though you're not born here, you've been living here for five years or six years, and you know that in the next X number of years you would be staying here. Somehow, subconsciously it becomes your city... so it makes you feel happy that you got to choose that part of the city to live in. Imagine somebody tells you that, 'I don't like the city, this city sucks man...!' You would feel bad, as if it's because of you. You take it personally, I think. Just subconsciously, it happens to you (lines 192-198).

The understandings and meaning Monty co-constructs through interactions with his visitors and the place he lives have a substantial impact on his relationship with his new surroundings, his familiarity, and attachment. Their reactions are important in validating his decision to live there, and help give him reason and motivation to stay and pursue his professional goals.

5.7.3. Social interaction: with family

Monty and his wife married in India while he returned for a short trip from Toronto. She followed him to Toronto soon after. Prior to his mother's recent visit Monty was a little anxious about the potential for tension between his mother and wife:

We are from different religions- my wife is a Christian and I'm Hindu. So, when we got married it was quite a scene.

You mean like people weren't happy about it?

No. Both the families were not happy. They didn't want us to get married. But when my mother was coming here for the first time, I really wanted them to, you know, gel, and just everything should be okay. And luckily, everything went fine, and they just hit it off. But I'm also feeling nice and happy that things went well. She stayed for two weeks, that went ahead without any drama. I'm really happy for that. Now I can see that she can stay for a month or more and nothing will happen (lines 172-180).

Removed from the cultural and entrenched contexts of home, Monty's home and community in Toronto are stripped of many cues that would draw focus to previous tensions, and have many more distractions with places to visit and new experiences to share, and it is possible this facilitated a more positive experience than if it had happened in India.

Monty's sister lives in the U.S., and his arrival in Toronto enabled more frequent interactions for the siblings.

To be very frank, the first time my sister visited Toronto- I think it was in 2011- I was seeing her after seven years.

Seven years? Wow, that's a long time.

Yeah, but from 2011 till today, I have met her maybe about six times, because of the proximity as she now lives in the U.S. To be very frank, when I first- like after a very long time, and I met my sister, I was kind of nervous about what I'm going to talk to her about. It's been seven years! Because the last time we met was on

her marriage, and then she moved. So, I was just wondering what I'm going to say? We used to talk on the phone, it's not that, but how would I go ahead with the conversation? How? And then she came, and it went pretty fine (lines 181-189).

Hosting, facilitated by relative proximity, has allowed Monty to reconnect with his sister. He suggested that despite regular communication by phone, that face-to-face interaction was different, and unsurprisingly caused minor nerves before their first meeting since he arrived.

5.7.4. Personal interaction and reflection

Monty was clearly motivated to succeed professionally, and overcame- and is still overcoming- many obstacles and setbacks to his desired professional goal. But his drive seemed steadfast as he strove towards achieving his professional goals and fulfilling the potential that his continuing efforts have been working towards:

I'm not saying working in a call center or working in an Office Depot or anything is bad because at least you're working, you're earning money, that's the best part. But if we study for something and then you have worked for half of your life in a certain area, and then you don't get it, then that's very frustrating. And the only reason of my coming to Canada was to work in the line which I love (lines 54-58).

A strong part of Monty's narrative was the impact that showing his mother around had on his own sense of achievement, and corresponds to his professional drive. During his mother's recent visit they toured his past and present places of work.

All this while before I got a job, all she heard from me is that 'I'm not getting a job, I don't have a job'. She wanted to know where I work. It's very important for me to show her where I work because its- I don't know, I can't explain it, but it's kind of a pride to show her, because I not only showed her this place where I work now, I showed her the first place I worked in Toronto which was a call center. But it's not that because I got a job, or because I got a job in this line that's why I'm showing her. But I just want to give her how I started and how I came here. So, I was telling her- when we were in downtown, I was showing her- 'see this is the call centre where I started my work'. And then I showed her the building where I worked in

tourism PR and then I took her to the festival headquarters where I used to work, and actually went all the way inside where we used to sit and speak to the media, so I just showed her everything.

Right, and how was that for you?

That was really good, because for me I was kind of living at it again. So, very exciting for me and for her also, I could see that she really liked it too (lines 140-152).

By taking his mother to these places he could more vividly explain, and co-construct an understanding for his mother, of his struggles and successes. His mother's interest in his lived history gave him an opportunity to reflect on his achievements in the context of parental praise and admiration, helping to solidify his sense of achievement and progress. Shared experience with place is vital, even when the place is historic and not current, and serves to strengthen bonds between mother and son. Additionally, the experience gave him reason to reflect on the progress he has made; gradual changes are accumulated and presented in a relatively short period of time, and an appreciation of how far he has come gave Monty an opportunity to feel a sense of pride and achievement, enhanced by his mother's reactions.

5.7.5. Summary

Monty's narrative is strongly tied to his desire for professional success. It provided his motivation for immigration, and consumed his early settlement experience. The relative difficulty he found in securing professional employment fed into his hosting experiences. Initially he felt he could not justify participation in tourism activities, as his priority must be to find employment, and his roommate's visitors gave reason to explore and enjoy. His mother's visit included the tour of his workplaces, that helped communicate his recent history, and gave him an opportunity to reflect on

his achievements. In addition, the foreign context and lack of cues gave his mother and wife an opportunity to interact and connect.

5.8. Anna

Anna's full narrative is available as Appendix H. I've known Anna for around six years, primarily in a professional setting. We met twice, with a nine month gap between our meetings. She is Latvian, has lived in Canada for around nine years, and is married with a young family.

5.8.1. Continuity and the past

Anna moved to Canada primarily because of her Canadian boyfriend, now husband. "I had no intention to ever come to Canada, because why would I move from one cold climate to another cold climate or even worse?" (lines 2-3). After meeting on cruise liners Anna and her boyfriend lived and worked in South America, and then moved to Halifax in Nova Scotia, his home town:

I couldn't find a job in Halifax because well, it was just a very small place altogether, right. I mean it's beautiful to go there for a weekend and the ocean and what not- but it's not the place that I ever envisioned living in (lines 16-18).

Soon after they moved to Toronto. Anna enjoyed the big city lifestyle, enjoying the festivals, and exploring the neighbourhoods. She and her husband married, and have a young family.

Overall Anna presented her settlement experience without significant issues, but the lack of a social network, particularly family, was missed especially at pertinent times:

When things are not going well or they are- like you know, when I was pregnant or when the kids were just born. I mean it's really difficult, it's really difficult in any environment and it's very difficult in an environment where you don't have anybody with you, right? (lines 84-86).

Anna clearly has strong ties to her family, emotionally and culturally, and her visits back to Latvia and her hosting were important and valued experiences.

5.8.2. Social interaction: with mother

Anna's mother has visited several times. Her mother's first visit to Canada was focussed on leisure activities, a real vacation for both mother and daughter, and this helped provide a positive context for interaction between the two:

I'm looking at the pictures, she was so happy, and I looked so happy.... I think this was the time when she looked happiest.

You mean happiest of all the times she's visited you or happiest-?

Definitely happiest for all the times that she's visited us, and probably just happiest that I kind of, remember her, you know, for like a concentrated period of time. I mean yes, of course I remember her being happy like from my childhood and stuff, but here just being kind of happy and carefree. Not just being happy and then running to work, or happy and then doing something else. Just happy and carefree and relaxed, and not rushing anywhere, not worrying about things. So, that was a great experience (lines 39-48).

This hosting experience allowed mother and daughter to enjoy the benefits often associated with tourism; the available free time and unusual environments facilitating bonding, the chance to reconnect and be stimulated by new and shared experiences. This was a vacation that might have been more difficult to justify had they been living in the same community; to have any form of face-to-face interaction travel had to be incurred by at least one of them, and on this early occasion the travel was used as a touristic experience even though it was now Anna's usual place of residence. The touristic nature of the experience allowed for relaxed and carefree interaction that clearly holds a special place in Anna's memories of her mother, and positions the places and activities experienced in her new home as the backdrop to these positive recollections.

The significance of that first trip and the opportunity it gave for bonding and exploration of her new home are made all the more distinct, as the focus of her mother's subsequent visits shifted to child care, and the duration prolonged from a vacation to temporary co-habitation:

We used to be really close, and... you know, that first year [after my arrival] was just difficult, like finding a job and finding the apartment, and doing everything, and then we had kind of settled down, and I can actually show her that I've achieved something [on that first visit], I don't know, something like that. So, she has probably visited us at least, I'd say, five times [altogether]. And having kids pretty much changed the whole life around. The carefree attitude has totally disappeared... the first time [after my daughter was born] she stayed for the six months, and as great as the full plan theoretically sounded in the beginning, you know, that it would be so great that she would come and help us with everything, I mean it actually, at the end, I'm pretty sure that all parties couldn't wait for the time to end (lines 78-90).

There were advantages of her mother's visit: the establishment of a relationship between grandmother and granddaughter, the cultural contexts that her mother could provide within the home that helped Anna feel her daughter was becoming connected to her heritage, and the economical benefit of child care. These were balanced, however, by difficulties all parties seemed to have in the changing nature of their roles, the unusual cultural contexts in which they were being played out (a Latvian, non-English speaking grandmother living in her daughter's home in Canada), and the disruption to regular routines and personal space:

Me and John would go to work every morning and mom would have a fantastic day with my daughter. Then, I would come home in the evening and mom would feel that, you know, like her job is done kind of thing. And in the beginning we actually had some fights about it because I was coming home and I wanted to get the full attention, like my fifteen minutes before dinner, right? And then I would just see with my back eyes that I would try to read to my daughter and mom would still try to entertain her going behind my back with finger puppets or something like that. As well, effectively, she and John cannot communicate, right. So, the dinners are pretty quiet.

(Anna laughs as she considers the awkwardness of what she's about to describe).

They can't even like tell each other to pass bread or something, they just point to it. Like, one points, the other gives and nods, that's how ridiculous communication has become. I mean yes, for something little, I can translate it, without interrupting my conversation with mom or with him, but if there is a bigger more interesting story, something happening in politics, I don't know, like whatever, I mean no, you can't translate simultaneously and still have that meaningful conversation. The first time, when it was the more carefree time, then I probably tried more, and then with all the following times and the work and the kids, it's just totally dropped off the priority list. So, unfortunately, as great as my mother and husband are by themselves, they can't share. And things like that, after some time, sour the experience, and then kind of everybody wishes that well, it's better that six months ends soon- as helpful as it is when she comes. So that long visit was a stark contrast to her first visit (lines 94-112).

In our second meeting Anna was keen to draw on her mother's most recent visit that occurred after our first meeting, and pointed out that as the children have grown and developed their own language skills the awkward silences have been drowned out by the general noise and chaos that youngsters bring, and this has given everyone a focus beyond forced small talk. This most recent visit purposefully coincided with Anna and her family moving house:

All the moving and packing, and the beginning of the cold winter was just so difficult that one day I just told John 'let's ask mum to come and help us' and he said 'sure, why didn't we think of that before!?'

And did it go more smoothly than at other times?

Yes it did, it did, and perhaps because we were busy, and she was busy in her way- just to drop the kids at school and to bring them home and she was tired already (lines 128-138).

It was noticeable that Anna was more positive about her mother's last visit. Her mother had found a role that seemed to have worked for all involved, and there was a real sense of appreciation in how Anna described these experiences.

5.8.3. Social interaction: with the sisters

Anna is the youngest of three sisters. A few days after our first meeting Anna's eldest sister was visiting her in Toronto for the first time:

I've been asking her to come for the longest time, and they are not very well off so I've been offering to her that I will pay for the trip, and she, I don't think, has ever taken me seriously, because again I am the baby sister (lines 149-151).

After some unsolicited intervention from the middle sister, Anna received her elder sister's request to accept the offer: "Well, I was just surprised to say the least, that I had been asking her for years to come and she had never listened to me because I can't be taken seriously!" (lines 157-159). This exchange was significant for Anna; always the baby sister, she is now able to and willing to offer her elder sibling a trip to a destination she would otherwise not be able to visit, a chance for sisters and nieces to interact, but with Anna's relative financial success implicitly reified. Anna was frustrated that the offer might have been declined because of the perception that it was hollow, that her elder sister might have actually imagined Anna would make the offer because she wanted to position herself in a certain light, instead of being received as the genuine and sincere gesture that was meant. She was sure, however, that her desire to provide her sister with a positive experience would cover any ill-will she might have felt.

So do you feel like any kind of-?

Resentment?

That she didn't believe you were serious with your offer?

I mean yes and no. Yes, but I'm willing to forget about it and bury it.

Are you nervous that it's going come up when she's here?

No, I'm going to let it go, and really when she comes, I do want them to have a great time (lines 153-158).

Anna signified the importance of her sister's visit by taking vacation days herself, along with her husband, for the whole two-week trip, which Anna felt helped her sister understand the sincere intentions of the offer. Anna's time off was also intended to help her sister have an action packed schedule. The "jam-packed" itinerary, however, meant that opportunities to have personal conversations were limited, and time had to be purposefully carved out for one-on-one interaction, as she explained in our second meeting after her sister's visit:

Before she came I was really looking forward to- I was thinking that we will talk about- well, just talk about how we live, how the parents are doing and so on, and really, that wasn't happening during the day at all. And then once everyone would be in bed, at like eleven thirty, only then I could sit down with my sister, have a cup of tea, and talk about things. And we did that for a few nights, so we sat until two o'clock in the morning, and the next morning started at six again. But those night conversations with my sister added to the experience (lines 232-243).

In the nine months between our two meetings Anna's middle sister also visited with her twin girls. The trip was stressful at times for Anna because of her sister's parenting, and how this communicated a perceived disregard for the routine and space of Anna's family:

So my sister's four year olds, they didn't want to play with my two year old, and so my four year old also kind of went with them saying 'well, she's just a little thing, and we're not playing with her, we're playing in this tent, and she's not allowed!' And I would become more and more angry, and like looking at my sister, like, you know, 'you go tell them something, you go and talk to your children! Right now! And tell them this is not acceptable behaviour!' And she would look, oh, you know, relaxed, and my two year old would start screaming right? And running around the tent. And the kids were so loud, and we were sick, like one of my kids was sick, and I was thinking 'be quiet for once! I understand you're on vacation, but I have a sick child here, I understand that you want to run around the house and then scream and yell, but we have tenants downstairs, like, please!' And of course something like that would make me very angry, and, you know, like that night I would feel no desire to bond with my sister (lines 245-265).

The interaction hosting enabled in this incident was not positive overall; the perceived demonstration of a lack of respect for her family through the parenting of her sister acted to drive a wedge between them. The concentrated periods of interaction that hosting enables are often emotional, as the anticipation of co-presence is anti-climatic, and even negative because of the lack of expectation of one party to fall into the routines of the other.

5.8.4. Place and social interaction

Her mother's visit was very much focussed on leisure activities, and this affected the context for interaction with different places in and around Toronto:

I basically grew up on the sea. Water is kind of important to me and she likes water too so I think the very first thing is we went to the Beaches for a day. And then we went to China Town for a day, which was really different for her- which was really different for me, right, so that was kind of exciting, so I wanted to show her things, like the really unusual things (lines 26-29).

The first place Anna shared with her mother was the waterfront, a type of environment that was foundational to their relationship in Latvia. This familiar type of backdrop could help re-establish their bonding, as a place to reminisce about the old, while simultaneously introducing the new. Building on from this familiar yet new experience, Anna and her mother then shared places that differentiated Toronto from her home. This first trip involved many leisure activities as any typical vacation might:

We went to the CN Tower, we had a fancy dinner at the top of the CN Tower and turning around. We went to Niagara Falls, which was great. It was really nice to spend that one on one with my mom and we had a fabulous, most fabulous time in Niagara Falls. It was my first time as well. We did like every single activity that was there. I mean it was just very nice, kind of not needing to think about the money so much, or the time. I mean we went there for two days, we stayed there overnight so we had two days to do all those things and that was just great (lines 33-39).

The hosting experience gave Anna the opportunity and reason to enjoy her new home in ways she had not done before.

Niagara Falls was also on the agenda during her elder sister's trip, a continuation of the experience she had with her mother several years before:

I'm really looking forward to going to Niagara Falls as well. You know, I mean it's exciting for everybody, my sister, and my own kids. Like, I talked about it with some people at work and they were like 'Niagara Falls, it's so like cliché, what is Niagara Falls?! There's the wax museum, like why would anybody go to Niagara Falls?' And I'm not going to Niagara Falls for the wax museum or for anything like that; I'm going to Niagara Falls because it's a natural wonder! Like whatever, it's beautiful! Isn't it? The waterfall is beautiful! You walk around there, it's beautiful, like you can walk there for three hours just along the boardwalk. That's why I'm going to Niagara Falls, and it impresses me and I like it, and I'm sure it will impress my sister and she'll like it, and she'll go home and say that she has been to Niagara Falls" (lines 196-204).

Anna's attachment to Niagara Falls appears to be heavily embedded with sharing the destination with visitors and enjoying their reactions, which in turn co-construct meanings and further links for Anna herself.

As her own familiarity with Toronto increased as time passed, Anna found enjoyment in planning places for her sister to engage with, as she became a guide and interpreter of her community:

The schedule already looks like jam-packed. There are so many things to do that I'm having, I guess, a difficult time crossing some activities out. Should I cross out China Town? Or should I cross off like the Science Center or something? Because I guess it is exciting to plan the whole thing, and to think of everything that we can do, and once I'm through that stage, I guess I am having a difficult time to eliminate some of the experiences (lines 175-180).

The obligation of making sure her sister saw as much as possible and enjoyed herself forced Anna to consider places and activities available, she actively reminds and refreshes herself with all the options her community has to offer a visitor. Hosting refreshed the availability of the variety of opportunities, whether she visited them on this particular trip or not.

Anna described an impact that her mother's presence had on her most recent visit in co-constructing positive feelings towards her new house amidst the frantic experience of moving:

She also kept us positive about the new house- for instance, I would call her from work and she'd say 'oh the house is so nice and sunny, the house is so bright!' I didn't notice anyway, you know, I was so tired, we were so done with the move, that would probably be the last thing I would think about- that the house is sunny (lines 138-146).

Beyond the physical and economical support that her mother's presence offered in childcare and domestic help, the opportunity to construct meanings about her new house through her mother's impressions and reactions during a time of stress helped Anna form a sense of attachment to her home; valuable confirmation that the temporary chaos was worth it.

5.8.5. Personal interaction and reflection

In our second meeting I asked Anna about how her elder sister's first visit to Toronto had gone:

She was actually really upbeat about things, it was a very positive trip for her, which was very pleasing to see, it was all good. You know, like I asked her to come, and she comes, and finally they come, and oh! She's impressed, and she likes it, it was nice (lines 207-212).

Her elder sister's reactions to Toronto led Anna to self-reflect about her situation and integration with Toronto, and how the city has influenced her own identity and reality:

The thing that she seemed to be most impressed about was actually the diversity of the city. So all different skin colours, nationalities, you know, sitting on the same bus, which is something you never see in Latvia.

Everybody's the same?

Everybody's the same, yes. Just, she was so genuinely interested in it, and I guess I'm so used to it- I don't sit on the bus and try to figure where everybody's from, or what language do they speak...

Did you feel, I don't know if proud is the right word, but just showing your sister 'this is my life now, I live in this big multicultural place'?

Yeah, I'd say so, yeah. But also that I'm totally comfortable with it, you know, it's not that still I'm surprised with things, no, I'm totally used to the things, and I now treat it as totally normal and given, that I am part of it (lines 212-231).

In a conversation inspired while watching Lucy's narrative, Anna discusses the nature of interaction with family who live so far away, and the opportunity for self-reflection and appreciation for change that it provides:

Every time I see my parents- the first thought in my head when I see them in the airport is like 'my God, how much older have they become?' So it is definitely not like we meet every time and it's just back where we stopped, it's not. You know, I've moved on, for sure, I've become maybe much less patient, much more opinionated, I don't know. And they've become slower and less interested. Like the emotions are, dulling off, I don't know.

Perhaps because you see your parents in infrequent, short, and sharp bursts the contrast is much greater than if you lived back home in Latvia.

Yeah. Absolutely, and then of course they would be more involved in my life in general. So now when I come up with this big story you know, it's kind of just a little snapshot of time and unless they know all the context around it, well yeah, maybe it's not that interesting (from Lucy, lines 225-247).

The realities of sporadic face-to-face interaction with geographically distant family (and friends) include the conspicuousness of change: day-to-day the aging and evolution of the body and personality is subtle, however year-to-year these changes accumulate at varying and more

recognisable degrees. Additionally Anna notes that this sporadic interaction means the integration of lived realities on a daily basis, of those things that consume us for much of lives- office politics, decorating the house, the friendships of a child at school- are lost and lack meaning. The sporadic nature of interaction serves at once both to reconnect, but also demonstrate the natural disconnect from relationships that were at one time integral to personal lived reality.

5.8.6. Summary

Anna's narrative saw the evolution of hosting, with her mother's first trip driven by leisure and helped form attachments to areas in her new community through the creation of memories. Later visits focussed on child-care and routine, and presented challenges of shifting roles between Anna and her mother. The changing contexts had effects on the nature of interaction. However, the help her mother provided in the form of child-care, but also emotional support during the move, demonstrated the value and importance of hosting for Anna and helped connect her, and her daughters, to their Latvian heritage. Her sisters' visits both had strong implications for Anna's relationships with them, demonstrating her capabilities and sincerity as an adult, not just a baby sister, and the frustration and disrespect perceived through parenting and lack of discipline; both experiences affected her relationships with her siblings through the distinct context of having them stay in her home.

6. Discussion

I feel it would be beneficial to share my own reflections on the participants' stories, considering the content of the literature review in this thesis, and particularly for implications for academe and practice. Some of the key points I feel worth raising are acknowledged and explored below.

6.1. The shock of immigration

The experience of immigration, and the specific episode of arrival, was an important event for many participants. Experiencing, understanding, and adapting to new cultures can be a turbulent experience, a "culture shock" (Mainil & Platenkamp, 2010, p. 64). An individual is forced to query the meaning, morals, and logic of the new culture, which in turn can lead to a critical reflection and questioning of their own, cultivating feelings of identity loss and existential crises (Mainlin & Platenkamp, 2010).

The physical shock of the cold weather for Monty, the visual shock of the greyness for Bahar and Hiva, the emotional shock of loneliness for Lucy and Sarah, provided bases for substantial semantic knowledge construction.

For many, the immigration experience appeared to be a difficult and tumultuous time, especially in the early period. For Bahar, the shock was the culmination of several years of anticipation. The likelihood of immigration lingered over her, and created a sense of instability that continues into settlement. As she fluctuates and struggles at times to feel settled and comfortable. Sarah's immigration was experienced in quite a different context to Bahar, and although she arrived to the stability of a full time job and apartment, the loss of her friendship network and inability to navigate the cultural cues in her workplace left her feeling lost and lonely.

Even simple tasks such as ordering a coffee, as Mary explained, and Lucy corroborated, can prove to be confusing and disorienting.

Hiva communicated a desire to attach herself to manifestations of her own culture soon after arrival, a feeling substantiated by Bahar. This desire for some relative normalcy, and defense of what is known reflects the need to belong. These contexts meant for many of the participants those first initial hosting experiences were particularly important and memorable.

6.2. Importance of initial hosting

A recurrent theme was of the stability and comfort that hosting close friends and family provided during times of turmoil and unease, particularly soon after arrival. To feel a sense of belonging as humans we need frequent and pleasant interactions with people with whom we share a mutual sense of care (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Interaction with familiar people in a familiar language, both culturally and linguistically, is also important (Shotter, 1993). Physical distance diminishes the opportunity to encounter these types of interactions, and after immigration the gradual establishment of new meaningful relationships that incorporate a mutual sense of care takes time. The unavailability of interaction within the context of arrival can therefore lead to a sense of isolation.

Deprivation of interaction in a context of mutual care can lead to a “variety of ill effects” related to “behaviour, emotion and thought” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 497) and ultimately strong feelings of loneliness, depression, and effects on physical illness. Hosting in those first months, or even years, after arrival can provide those co-present interactions that not only remind immigrants that they do belong to someone, somewhere, but also provides a boost to confidence and a “buffer against stress” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 508) that can endure after that

interaction has ended. Burnell et al. (2009) state “people make meaning of difficult or threatening experiences by creating coherent stories... which leads to the reconciliation of the event within the greater life story and the ability to grow from these events” (p. 92). This suggests that not only is the experience of interaction itself a prevention of stress, but generating positive experiences creates a resource for uplifting narratives that can change the way difficult experiences are remembered and recounted in the future.

For many participants, the first experiences of hosting seem to hold special significance, and are recalled with fondness and comfort. The experiences are bound in connotations of settlement, establishing roots, creating memories, and attachments. Anna’s mother’s first visit to Toronto was particularly memorable and enjoyable. Spending quality one-on-one time with each other, in exciting new surroundings, on a vacation, was one of the happiest times she could recall. The physical locations of this trip surround Anna in her new community, and are now tied into memories of her mother and their shared experiences. For Sarah, the first few hosting experiences were incredibly important for her, as she craved and treasured the chance to be in familiar relationships, to feel the comfort and warmth that they offered; interaction that her new friends in Canada were simply unable to provide. The presence of friends even as she moved from the UK to Toronto provided physical and emotional support that comforted and aided her. Sarah’s need to belong was clear. These visitors were friends with whom she had shared life changing and fundamental experiences, and those bonds continued to provide her a sense of personal belonging during their visits to Toronto. Lucy’s initial hosting experience, when Michelle visited over her birthday, was clearly a major source of comfort and enjoyment. Someone from her past who knew how important her birthday was for her, to celebrate with her, and to go through the ceremony of going out to the cold and empty bar, appreciating and demonstrating the link and continuation of

birthday celebrations past. Her birthday is a time orientation device (De Fina, 2003), generating an easy and memorable reason to recall that specific evening, made all the more significant by her friend's presence. This linking of old and new worlds seemed to help stabilise and connect those worlds for Lucy.

Bahar's first hosting experience, just three months after her uneasy arrival, was significant in many ways. Initially, it gave her the type of interaction and co-presence she was yearning for; as she said, "I wanted someone who I could share my emotions with, not someone who would lecture me on why it is good that you just moved here" (lines 82-85). Despite being surrounded by members of her family, this interaction with her friend was important. The friends who visited Bahar had shared a similar immigration story in similar cultural contexts, and their interpretation of her experiences and emotions helped explain and share her concerns and reactions to her new situation, ultimately showing her it was possible and it was likely things would improve.

These initial hosting experiences often happened in a time of uncertainty, culture shock, and total change, and acted as an anchor to more familiar and stable times, places, and relationships. The impacts of these initial hosting experiences can generate interpretations, explanations, and attachments that last far beyond the actual hosting experience and seep into the everyday understandings of the hosts.

6.3. Bridging old and new through interaction with people and place

Hosting has a remarkable quality in that it is able to bridge old and new worlds, merging them into a new present, and forging a future. Immigration can be an isolating and shocking experience, and hosting can help in building attachments, and establish lasting connections to new places and activities because the experience is co-constructed between the new place, the resident immigrant,

and foreign visitor. Many narratives described how concurrent experience with a place and familiar person can lead to enhanced positive attachments (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Hallman & Benpow, 2007; Mason, 2004). There are several examples of positive interaction with place that helped participants form a sense of home and belonging (Larsen, 2008).

Anna described her mother's first visit with a combination of relatively familiar activities and new experiences. Anna instinctively took her mother to the waterfront in Toronto, a recognition that their shared past is important and part of who she is today, that their relationship used to involve this type of landscape and forms part of their relationship, and can still continue to do so despite the new location. De Fina (2003) talks about space orientation devices within narratives, how a place can provide the foundation of a narrative and context for interaction, and the use of a familiar type of landscape as an initial setting for familiar co-presence but in a new context makes sense for Anna. It helps as a starting point of interpretation for the place she has moved to. Toronto can be her home in this familiar way, it provides a similar enough landscape to enjoy and create those types of memories that she and her mother hold close to their hearts. Visiting the water before other areas built a foundation for the experience overall, as a comparatively familiar landscape and activity over which Anna and her mother could reconnect on a basic and memorable level, which then led to different experiences, constructing new memories in China Town, Niagara Falls, and more. Sarah loved to show her friends her favourite places and festivals in Toronto and around Ontario. The combination of good friendships and interesting places was clearly an important part of her attachment to her new home; sharing these experiences gave her momentum, to continue enjoying her new community, establishing new memories with old friends, and enhancing her sense of belonging to both people and places.

Monty's attachment with Muskoka is heavily connected with his hosting experiences. His initial interaction with the region was because of a spontaneous trip with his roommate and his visitors from India. A couple of years later he returned to Muskoka with his wife, and stated his intention to return when both his parents visit on their next trip. Just as Mary formed an attachment to Prince Edward County through interaction with her family, hosting for Monty and others can give meaning and significance to specific geographic locations. Hosting turns spaces into places (Gieryn, 2000), from empty insignificant locations to an area with meanings of enjoyment, and symbolism of importance and ceremony, constructed through leisure activities, sharing family occasions, participating in cultural festivals, and celebrating a rare but special visit.

Mary and her sister visited garage sales, an activity they only do when they are together in Canada. It helps Mary in learning Canadian culture, and constructing memories to be shared with her sister that link old and new. The creation of new memories, and accumulation of material items, are emotional and physical links between old and new. That wooden statue is more than a piece of art, it is a memory, a story, and a home builder, a reminder of an activity that is peculiar to her sister visiting in her new community. Mary was also able to host her family for a festival; a familiar ritual, with familiar people, in an unusual place, that generated special memories and connections in the somewhat unusual context and role performance within an important cultural ceremony.

Lucy and Sarah both hosted parties in their homes to connect their visiting friends and family with their Toronto network. Sarah's barbeques allowed her parents to interact and engage with her new friends. Not only does it allow her family and friends to connect, it also means Sarah can communicate with both parties about the other group, continuing that merger of worlds after the visit.

Hiva went to an amusement park, a first experience that also created links to memories of her childhood. She was able to relive the excitement of her childhood, with someone who knew the same experiences, and connect her past and present. When Rahul's parents came to visit, it inspired them to all visit Montreal, not only a new experience in terms of exploring Canada, but providing a chance to reconnect with friends from Mauritius who immigrated themselves. Hosting broadened their experience of Canada, and strengthened connections to place and people from the home culture.

On a more routine but equally meaningful level Anna also spoke about her mother's most recent visit to assist while they moved house. Her mother's presence afforded some collected time for reflection, and helped them see their new home in a more positive light. Anna and her husband lacked the time to engage with their new home, but her mother was able to convey and transfer her own excitement and positivity, helping them appreciate that despite the apparent chaos, that they had indeed made the right decision, and that the upheaval was going to be worth it. The combination of old connections with a new place has powerful impacts on merging and linking past and present to create a new sense of home and possibility of a future.

6.4. Hosting inspires activity and attachment to place

The context that hosting often creates has distinct implications for encouraging people to behave in non-routine ways, and this was apparent in participants' narratives both with new places and activities, as well as the desire to share regular experiences that they know their visitors will find appealing in some way.

Monty explicitly noted that during his first months in Toronto that his efforts and concerns were focussed predominantly on finding employment, but that the visitors his housemate received

gave him reason to explore and become familiar with his new community. In this sense, hosting gave him the justification to create time to participate in leisurely activities, generating cultural capital, and enhancing his familiarity and understanding of the new world around him.

Many participants went to Niagara with their visitors, and for many it was their first time to the destination themselves. For example, Lucy's first visit to Niagara Falls was with a guest, and although the experience was somewhat mixed in terms of meeting her touristic expectations the trip was an education in culture and climate. Lucy also went to some nightspots and neighbourhoods in Toronto she had not explored well, and strengthened her limited attachment to the cottage experience, which she has continued since. The opportunity to share this new and distinctly Canadian activity and landscape with her good friends from England not only gave reason for the visit in the first place (she invited them for that specific weekend), but helped forge a connection with cottage life overall, enhancing her enjoyment and attachment to Ontario in general. This is not to say that these experiences and attachments would have happened without hosting, but it seems that the shared experiences did enhance and augment the pre-trip inspiration and post-trip memory construction.

Likewise, Mary initially visited Prince Edward County with her visiting mother-in-law, and then with her own parents and family. The desire to discover, explore and share with visitors has created a clear attachment to this place. For Sarah, after several visits from her parents, and their limited interest in many activities, they chose to explore Quebec City, a place that was new for all of them, and that would not have been experienced without hosting.

Additionally, because there is often some sense of pressure to tailor the experiences to a visitor's tastes, the host might find themselves experiencing new places and activities within their

community that they would not typically look for. Monty, for example, took his mother to a Hindu temple just outside of Toronto, somewhere he had not been before, or would likely have been if his mother had not visited. Yet this experience helped demonstrate to him the acceptance of his home culture within Canada, and had implications for his sense of belonging and attachment to his new community.

However, not only can hosting inspire people to try new things, the hosting experience can also provoke a refreshing review of activities and experiences that are on offer that match the interests of visitor. For example, Anna actually enjoyed the planning process, reflecting and considering what would excite both her own family and her visitors. In a similar way, Hiva wants to show people what makes her city special, beyond the surface gray and coldness, the “beauty and some things that they’ll fall in love with”, the things that she fell in love with herself. This active consideration surely promotes a sense of attachment in feeling the pride of being in a place with so many opportunities to offer.

Hosting also provides an opportunity for reflection on how a community has influenced identity and understandings. Hiva hosted a friend who shared her dislike of Toronto, and continues to refuse to meet Hiva in her home city. Although this initially caused Hiva to question her new home as somewhere she could be proud to live and reflect her identity, it seems that her friend’s reaction forced her to deliberate Toronto as a new home, and that in reflection she realised she does indeed like the city she is living in and actively considered her new home as somewhere that represents her values and interests. Despite her friend’s negative reaction to Toronto as a place to visit, Hiva seems to have used the experience to feel more comfortable about Toronto as a place to live. Anna’s reflection of her sister’s reactions on the bus, of all the races and languages being unusual and exciting, gave Anna that sense of who she has become; she is Torontonian now, it is

normal, and even preferential. The hosting experience reminds Anna of where she came from, and clearly demonstrates how she has gradually changed in an abrupt way as she views her sister's reactions, that were once normal for her.

6.5. Learning and interpreting culture and values

Hosting, as a form of leisure, not only generates the reason to find new and interesting experiences, but also has the potential to provide in-situ education of culture and values for immigrants, with the distinct and powerful context that hosting entails, of sharing the experience with a close friend or relative who can help direct interpretation and understanding. A hosting experience allows newcomers to build on past relationships, to share new experiences with conversations that have often been decades in the making, enriching and embellishing the meanings created in shared moments, providing rich context in which substantial developments in understanding can be constructed upon.

The shared experiences of Bahar's visitors helped her feel more comforted, and helped her appreciate what was expected in Canada concerning social norms. Her visitor's interest in architecture led her to experience and engage with the Royal Ontario Museum, and its relatively new and controversial extension (commonly known as the Crystal⁵). This experience and reflection helped her construct an understanding of the values of the community she had moved to, and how they differ from those of back home, embracing change and modernity. Being able to interpret this experience with her friend, who was actively interested in architecture, created a

⁵ For example, see www.cbc.ca/news/arts/critics-divided-over-toronto-s-rom-crystal-1.634216.

distinct context in which Bahar could construct an understanding about her new community, an experience that have happened because of her friends' visit. According to Miller (1994) socialisation requires three agents: "an institution, a member of that institution, and a novice" (p. 159). In this narrative we see an example of how hosting facilitates socialisation, as Bahar (the novice) is exposed and introduced to Canadian culture (the institution) through her friend (the member). Of course, Bahar's experience here positions her as the novice despite being the host; for many hosts they will be the 'member', and their guest the 'novice'. However, socialisation still occurs through the enacting of the activities and social norms required to demonstrate membership, as Sarah demonstrated in her desire to show her guests what Toronto and Ontario meant culturally, she reinforced those cues for herself in front of her visiting audience, reinforcing her own identity.

For Mary, the serendipitous experience of being able to view the salmon swimming up stream with her family made connections for her in a few different spheres. Initially, she could see the source of the food she was eating, a connection to the environment and landscape particular to the region and her experience of it. Additionally, she perceived the experience to explain some core differences in the culture of her new community with that of her home. This perhaps helped emphasise and solidify some perceptions she had already developed, but the context of sharing that experience with her family, and their reaction to it, could also help co-construct additional meaning and context.

6.6. Overcoming constraints

Related to the discussion on learning and interpretation is the idea of overcoming constraints. Horolets (2012) describes how the lack of knowledge about ways of life in the new culture can be

a barrier for immigrants' integration, and hosting seems to offer opportunities to help overcome some of these difficulties. There are several examples within the narratives of participants learning about the local culture through hosting activities. For example, Mary's experience with the salmon run and Bahar's architectural reflections helped them ascribe values and attitudes to their new home. Bahar's hosting experience also helped her overcome constraints regarding her own confidence in exploring and approaching her new city. Through her visitors' assurance and touristic desires Bahar became more familiar and acquainted with the physical layout of Toronto, how to navigate and traverse the city, and the values of the community.

Because of the initial need to find quick employment, and the possibility of working long and irregular timed shifts, immigrants often experience constraints on their economic capabilities, leisure activities, and free time, that could aid integration and accumulation of various capitals (Horolets, 2012). This was particularly apparent in Monty's story, as the experience of hosting his roommates' friends provided him with a strong enough reason to participate in leisure activities that he otherwise would have felt too guilty to consume. These initial hosting experiences helped him sow the seeds for an attachment that he otherwise would not have made. In addition, the availability of guests to help in routine activities, particularly child care as Anna and Mary described, helped provide additional time and income for other activities that would otherwise be unavailable (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

6.7. Social and cultural capital

The generation of social capital relates in many ways to overcoming certain constraints associated with immigration, with the provision of childcare an obvious and important example. Other instances include Sarah's descriptions of her parents' help in gardening and housework. These

acts are both helpful, in terms of enabling some additional free time while her parents are visiting, but also heavily symbolic of the roles of parent and child, allowing them to demonstrate, build and exchange capital, and to embody their relational roles. Additionally, hosting provided Sarah the opportunity to return the acts of friendship to people in her Toronto network who had hosted and invited her into their families. Through hosting barbeques and events, which her mother helped prepare, Sarah could reciprocate those acts, investing in her network in Toronto.

It is not possible to make causal links, but it is interesting to note that Monty, Sarah and Mary work in public relations and marketing respectively. The acquisition of cultural capital in this way may help distinguish them to potential and actual employers as people who can connect the culture and values of both their home and adopted countries.

In Anna's narrative her early hosting of her mother gave the opportunity to "remember" each other, to bond, to construct memories, and to develop their interpersonal relationship in isolation from other usual contexts or pressures. This can be viewed as the development of social capital between mother and daughter that helped facilitate the future trips and the provision of child care and emotional support; it was perhaps not necessary, but helped pave the way for this exchange.

Another important aspect of cultural capital, and the distinguishing nature of its accrual was in the way that some participants were able to present themselves in a positive way to their visitors, which would help in their identity and positioning in their home countries. For example, Monty was able to show his mother his efforts and eventual successes, and help extinguish perceptions of potential failure within his home network in India, that disseminate that his risk of moving to Toronto had paid off. Hosting can facilitate the accrual and exchange of social and

cultural capitals, with immigrants encouraged to interact with visitors, place, culture, and occasionally local residents as well. The broadening of their horizons, and inspiration to increase interaction with a variety of people and places can help expand and develop networks in this sense.

6.8. Instils pride and achievement

The generation of pride was an important element of some participants' narratives, particularly in terms of personal achievement, as well as the quality of Toronto as a place to visit and live as a reflection of participants' judgement. For Sarah there was a strong sense of pride in showing people around her new community; she wanted others to enjoy Ontario, and validate her choosing to live there. This desire manifested itself with Sarah focussing on showing her visitors the places and activities she knew would be enjoyable without taking the risk on new places; it was her responsibility that they have a good time. This process ultimately resulted in Sarah's brother suggesting he would like to move to Toronto, providing a valuable endorsement of her decision to migrate to the city.

Monty, too, also found pride in showing his mother around, and this was particularly apparent in the tour he gave of his places of work. The chance to show his mother his progress, from working in a call centre, to working with media at a major international festival in a glitzy neighbourhood, stimulated pride for both as Monty witnessed his mother's reaction to his achievements, facilitating a rich context for self-reflection and appraisal. Hosting facilitates reminiscing for times past (Neimeyer & Metzger, 1994), not just in the home country, but for those who have lived in Canada for a number of years to early days of settlement reinforcing a sense of progress. For Monty, touring his mother around was an embodied narrative of self-progress intensified by sharing it with those who matter most, and whose opinions he values deeply. Monty

also talked about the personal feelings associated with his adopted home that are exaggerated because of hosting, and that his judgment of moving to and remaining in Toronto, despite his difficulties in securing regular employment, is reflected in the quality of the place as a community to settle in. Toronto represents his choices and values, and he wants his judgement to be appreciated and validated by his guests.

6.9. Connection with the home culture

Through hosting many participants spoke about a reconnection with their home culture, and typically found this a source of comfort and reaffirmation of identity. For example, Lucy said that her friends' visits were "really important. It is nice to have a slice of home here. To bring me a bit down to earth again. It is nice to have a bit of English humour, to have that culture around you again" (lines 123-124). Lucy's desire for her children to know their grandparents was also clear, and the connection with the home culture is facilitated by interaction with those who are embedded in it. Anna too spoke of the benefits of having guests visit for her children to become more familiar with her culture, language, and heritage. For Mary, hosting her family for the Middle Moon festival gave her an opportunity to connect with her home culture in a more involved manner than she had ever done in China, allowing her to be the host rather than guest because of the changing roles. These significant cultural events draw disparate friends and relatives together (Janta et. al, 2015), inspired by tradition that morphs into new customs that forge links to the new homeland.

Hiva and Bahar shared some feelings around romanticising the past in the home country. They were both appreciative that their memories of their childhood and adolescence were important and comforting, but at the same time represented an era that has passed. Hosting is a reminder of these times, but also prompts the realisation that these yearned for memories no longer

exist in that same way. The hosting of old friends allows for these memories to be reignited and relived, and reconnects the participant to their past in a unique way. Certain recollections of specific times can only really be relived and cherished with those people who shared those experiences. Co-presence with these people enables these memories to be brought to life, and refreshed, creating a context for the co-construction of distinct and multi-layered meanings and understandings of new places. Hiva's trip to the theme park with an old high school friend, for example, generated shared reflection on their memories of the now non-existent theme park in Tehran; without the co-presence and nostalgic stimulation with this friend at the theme park Hiva's memories and reflections may have been more limiting and less developed. Hosting can help participants appreciate that those places and times are just memories, that what is remembered no longer exists in that same way, that what is being missed is not possible to experience whether we live in Canada or back home. Nostalgia can keep us focussed on the place we called home, at the time it was home, and visitors from that place and time can provide links and a source for reminiscing, but are also embodied symbols of the changes. In this sense hosting can help with settlement into the new community, a reminder that what times and places we covet, to some extent do not exist; that friendship groups have changed, neighbourhood hangouts disappeared, people are married and moved, and other subtle yet significant evolutions have passed. Hosting is a reminder that perhaps it does not matter where we live, as what we miss is not contentedly continuing without us, the networks and contexts that we knew are nevertheless gone.

6.10. New environment and relationships

The new environments that tourism experiences provide and the impacts this can have on personal perceptions, behaviour, and relationships have been widely considered in various contexts. For example, the changing bonds between family members (e.g. Minnaert et al. (2009)), the

transformation of volunteer tourists values (e.g. Alexander (2012)), and the likelihood of tourists participating in illicit activities (e.g. Ryan & Kinder, (1996)); a temporary variation in geographical and cultural context can enable shifts in how people interact with each other, with varying degrees of lasting change.

Hosting provides a slightly unusual and modified context in this sense. In many respects, especially in the first visits, the host's home and new community may be just as new and different as any tourism destination, and this can facilitate the evolution of personal relationships between host and guest. However, because the physical place in hosting is comparatively fixed, it is arguable that the changes that do occur are likely more permanent, as opportunity for continued interaction through repeat visits and communication see these changes reiterated, reinforced, and integrated into participants' narratives.

As outsiders in a foreign land immigrants can overlook differences that in their places of origin would signify much greater and meaningful divisions (Horolets, 2012). When Monty talked about his mother's visit he demonstrated his concern over the relationship between his (Hindu) mother and his (Christian) wife, a concern that developed after family tension during their wedding in India. Canada is absent of those cues and contexts that provoke these divisions, and the leisure context in which the relationship between his wife and mother evolved helped in smoothing over conflict that may have been prolonged in India.

The pure leisure context of Anna's mother's first trip was clearly very important in providing an opportunity for them to bond in a new way. They both were happy and without the usual routines of work and errands, meaning mother and daughter could remember each other as people outside their prescriptive roles and enjoy themselves isolated from the usualness and

expectations that their home community. For Hiva, although her guest did not particularly enjoy Toronto as a destination, they had the opportunity to spend one on one time together which appeared to strengthen their relationship, as they were able to interact together without the distractions and dynamics of a group.

Interaction within a familiar relationship is provoked and influenced by the absence of routine places and contexts, and the engagement of what are often new and leisure based spaces that offer distractions and fresh cultural stimulus for new shared meanings to be co-constructed and used as the source for continued narrative beyond the trip.

6.11. Solidification of relationships

The commitment shown by some visitors, particularly frequent ones, demonstrates the value that hosts and guests place on their relationships, and solidifies the non-substitutional nature of that particular personal bond. The visit becomes an occasion, an act that expresses and reinforces the commitment, becoming a necessary and “institutionalized mechanism” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 506) to communicate and carry out these roles. The first initial trip, particularly for friends, was often driven by a significant leisure context; an opportunity for the visitor to both reconnect with the host, but also to experience what is likely a new destination. However, as time passes from this initial visit, the often significant cost of time and money spent on visits becomes an even greater investment and stronger demonstration of the value of that relationship. Repeat visits emphasise the value of the relationship for the host (Janta et. al, 2015).

Lucy appreciated the commitment shown by her friends’ who visited on a more than one occasion. She clearly felt a sense of belonging demonstrated by the repeated visits. For Bahar, the commitment and generosity shown by her visiting friend was particularly important for her,

and holds greater significance because Bahar knew her guest came to help her emotionally, not just to have a vacation. Just as Mason (2004) found, these hosting experiences construct memories and feed narratives that maintain relationships between visits.

Anna's sisters' visits had an impact on their relationships. Finally, Anna's elder sister came to visit, acknowledging her capabilities and sincerity as an adult, not just a baby sister. Additionally, the importance of reconnecting with this sister was obvious, as they would talk till the early hours despite a six o'clock wakeup call from the children; the need to connect and re-establish bonds was evident. Anna's story shows that it is the effort within the visitors' means that is important, because as will be mentioned in more detail later, when it is apparent that friends or family have the means and ability to travel but seemingly choose not to visit relationships can become strained.

6.12. Changing relationships

As time passes the nature of hosting means the relationships between hosts and frequent guests changes and evolves. Anna's explanation of how she sees the changes in her parents more dramatically because of the infrequent face-to-face interaction with them is noteworthy. The transformations we witness are more profound, as memories become out-dated and deprived of fresh input. This scarcity of co-presence also has an impact on the depth of interaction. The presupposition of hosting is that some physical distance exists in that relationship, and that lack of an ongoing and routine connection can make interaction with those who were once so close less instinctive and fused. Anna described how the lack of context makes her stories more difficult to explain, and less meaningful to share, as the background politics of the workplace, or changes in the community, or other routine narratives that build between people over an ongoing period. Her

sister's visit also challenged the usual roles of younger and older siblings. Anna was the baby sister who could not be believed to follow through with an offer to pay for flights, yet now she is able to prove her accomplishments as a successful immigrant, established and comfortable enough to be sincere in her gesture.

Narratives of role reversal were also apparent, with participant's being able to host their parents, and look after them, and interpret new experiences for them. Mary hosted her family for a festival for example, after a lifetime of being the returning daughter back for a brief weekend. For Mary, the opportunities for interaction back in China were still relatively infrequent, and short in duration. Now she lives in Canada she sees her family more than before; not only is this more time, but they spend the time performing different roles. She is the host, the provider, and the explainer. Hosting can also re-establish withered relationships. Monty talked about the lack of co-present interaction with his sister prior to her visit in 2011, and his anxiety about what he could say. The lack of face-to-face interaction had caused him some discomfort in his relationship, despite regular phone calls.

Distance is a significant context in personal relationships, and hosting is a natural and substantial element in shaping how these relationships evolve over time.

6.13. The waning bonds of friendship

Typically there is a distinction between the bonds held with friends from those with family members. Friendship does not typically hold the same expectations of permanence and ongoing investment that family relations do. When distance causes the frequency of interaction to decrease, the mutuality of care between two people may not dissipate, but the sense of belonging that one partner in a relationship may have with the other will likely fade. New relationships can be

established, and substitutes found (Baumesiter & Leary, 1995), and although it is possible to replace the types of relationships often found among family members, it is more likely with friendships. After settlement new friendships are gradually established, and the need for frequent interactions with many friends from home slows.

Sarah and Lucy both noted how the frequency of visits from friends has slowed down, partly due to the evolving life stages of their friends, but also because of the fading connections that inspire and foster visits. Hiva's description of wishing to spend time with former high school friends is also noteworthy here, as perhaps it is a bond with her memories and sense of place, and of those "pure" times, that she misses and yearns for rather than the specific personal relationships. Ultimately she acknowledged that she wants people to be available physically, that she needs interaction to have current and meaningful relationships, and although it is a pleasurable experience to fall back into old times, that on a day to day basis she seeks belonging and attachment with those people around her.

6.14. Evolution of the hosting experience and expectations

Linked to the idea of waning social bonds between friends are the expectations of hosts and the demands they put on themselves. Those initial trips after settlement are often very leisure based. As time passes however, the new community becomes normal, and less able to provide an exotic environment as the immigrant becomes more settled, integrated and used to their surroundings, as the likelihood of guests being repeat visitors increases. The importance of showing off the place, and of vacationing in the traditional sense, becomes less important as priorities change. Not only can a place lose its sense of difference that facilitates liminal behaviour and experiences, but the

arrival of children and expected evolutions in life can also affect motivations and capabilities of travel.

For Lucy, she clearly felt a difference between early and more recent trips: “It’s much more about them coming to see my kids I think, and Andy and me, than really seeing the city” (lines 133-134). Her visitors’ reaction to the place where she lives is not as important as it used to be, as she herself is now more comfortable and established. She does not need that same reinforcement and confirmation that she has made the right decision, as it is not open for review anymore. And as her parents’ visit demonstrated, the trip motivation was all about family connections, not about Toronto as a place for vacation. Lucy’s parents’ relatively disinterested reactions to Toronto and general dismissal of Canadian culture may well have been an unsettling experience soon after her arrival, but served more as a source of nostalgia, storytelling and perhaps an embodied explanation to others of the culture she grew up in.

Anna’s narrative of her mother’s visit clearly evolved. Her mother’s first visit shared many characteristics of a vacation; interaction over a relatively short period of time, filled with leisure activities and new experiences, facilitating Anna’s own exploration of the region, reinforcing her decision to live in such an interesting place, and bridging emotional links amongst her homeland, her mother, and her new city of residence. Subsequent visits shifted from vacation to chores, from exploration to maintenance. The shift from vacation to childcare means that instead of seeing her mother on infrequent, short, leisure based trips, and instead of frequent but short periods of co-presence that would occur if they lived in the same city or region that would allow for regular childcare and occasional meals and activities to be shared, the co-presence occurs with little interruption over a long period within Anna’s home. Interaction is continuous, and the opportunity for testing scenarios to occur is exacerbated as privacy is encroached. From leaving home as an

independent and ambitious young woman, spending limited time with her family after settling and becoming established personally and professionally in a foreign land, Anna is now living with her mother, or rather her mother is living with her, in a stark evolution of roles.

As participants settled, and hosting becomes the normal context of interaction, rather than unusual and exotic, personal relationships evolve based on the nature of the possible and available ongoing interaction.

6.15. The strain of hosting

Hosting friends and family is not necessarily a straightforward and purely positive experience. As already mentioned, the intensity and infrequency of the interactions, combined with the heightened expectations of the experience, can create a context of high emotions, challenging values and attitudes as people have grown and changed at different paces, and been influenced by varied contexts. For example, Lucy's narrative included the noticeable awkwardness in her parents' visit, particularly with meeting her in-laws, and the apparent cultural clash and varied expectations of what such an occasion should involve. The infrequent opportunities to engage can mean the visitors do not always appreciate the values and practices that have been adopted and integrated into their host's new life, as they fail to respect or even realise that the host may be accustomed to new behaviours and values. In addition, many important encounters and ceremonies must take place within a limited timeframe, and can add pressure on a situation that requires isolated and unacquainted parties to interact and bond. There is pressure to enjoy and connect, and that in itself can be reason for discomfort and frustration.

Sarah found hosting her parents harder than hosting friends. The obligation she felt to find activities that met everybody's interests within their limits was at times stressful. She suggested

she felt a bit trapped at times, that her parents' lack of interest in doing many things limited her ability to do what she wanted. This is magnified by her own sense of responsibility to give her visitors a good time, of justifying her guests' expenditures in time and money are exaggerated because of their frequent visits.

For Mary, the loss of the ability to be herself when her mother-in-law stayed was evident, and the tension caused by the interaction between her mother and mother-in-law was also noticeable. For Anna, her mother's first extended stay caused several points of contention between Anna, her mother, and husband. Language was a key barrier for Anna and her family. Dinner times and the lack of interaction between her mother and husband meant that an activity traditionally associated with family bonding was conspicuously quiet and strained.

As Anna's own family expanded, and her sister arrived with her four-year-old twin girls, the distinctions between the sisters were exhibited through their parenting practices. Managing expectations of different family styles under one roof highlighted disparities in values, and were interpreted by Anna as disrespect, ultimately spoiling the relationship between the sisters to some extent. Although Anna did not indicate lasting animosity with her sister in any way, this is an example of how tensions raised during a hosting experience could nurture ongoing resentments between family members. Without frequent opportunities for face-to-face interaction these acrimonious memories cannot be easily refreshed and replaced with positive experiences.

Hosting is not simply an opportunity to construct positive bonds and experiences, but has the possibility of allowing tensions to fester, due in part because of the intensity of having people used to distance living in very close proximity with diverse family behaviours and values. Because of the lack of opportunity to have face-to-face interaction with relatives who live far away it is

possible that these tensions linger without the opportunity to clear the air and create new more recent memories.

6.16. Lack of visiting is a problem

There were several instances of participants displaying frustration and feelings of neglect at the lack of visits by certain family members. For Sarah, the fact that her sister had not been to visit, except for a quick business trip, was an obvious point of upset. Lucy also displayed frustration at her parents' lack of visits, questioning the lack of desire to see the place where she "grew up" as a way of knowing what environments and people have shaped their own daughter's personality and identity.

Ria and Rahul were obviously frustrated with their friend from Montreal, and his intention to visit for just one night. There was an expectation on their part that he should have visited already, and that he needs to visit for enough time so that they can interact with each other, allow the children to connect, and for them all to visit Niagara Falls. Lucy and her parents, Anna and Sarah with their sisters, and to some extent Hiva and her friend who refuses to re-visit Toronto, all displayed some negative emotions surrounding these relationships and the lack of visits as a source of discomfort for them. As Baumeister and Leary (1995) suggest, "[s]imply knowing that a bond exists may be emotionally reassuring, yet it would not provide full belongingness if one does not interact with the other person" (pp. 500-501); face-to-face co-presence is a fundamental aspect of a relationship. Technology enables some level of interaction, and was well used by many participants, but co-presence is expected, particularly if the other in the relationship is assumed to have the means and capability to visit. Hosting enables interaction in the immigrant's new community, a place that has literally changed their world and naturally affected them, and without

sharing that place with people it is difficult for an immigrant to demonstrate and explain who they have really become.

6.17. Hosting affects life choices

Hosting has implications for certain life choices and decisions. Rahul and Ria specifically chose a house that was big enough to host his parents, and others, for extended visits. Monty too also talked about the decision to buy a house that had the potential to be big enough for extended visits from family.

Rahul and Ria shared another interesting example of a potential future impact due to hosting about their trip to Montreal. A key part of the story about that trip was the connection made to McGill University and their daughter. Although it is not possible to make any sort of definitive claims about the impact of this trip on their daughter, it is an interesting implication to consider. Their daughter's experience of seeing McGill, of having her parents' expectations communicated to her, and the possibilities that her future holds could have important effects on her life choices. The added component of being on vacation adds to the potential that her experience of McGill may become a strong memory. Additionally, the combination of vacation with the presence of her grandparents and family friends, adds to the co-construction of meaning surrounding the daughter's expectations and potential choices. Future interactions with grandparents and the friends from Montreal may well include inquiries into her intent and interest of attending McGill, which may well reinforce this idea through its repetition. Of course, Ria, Rahul, and their daughter could have had the same experience without his visiting parents, or without staying with their friends in Montreal; travel is a well-known source of education and inspiration. But this trip happened, and took place because of the desire to show visitors around,

and spend time with friends in another city. Although it is impossible to really measure this particular instance, this story is presented to illuminate the additional potential that hosting may have in shaping identity and attachment through the co-construction of meanings. In the absence of people to host or visit it is possible that fewer experiences beyond the routine are sought, and an understanding of the possibilities that Canada offers may be less understood or accessible.

7. Implications

This thesis has potential implications for destination and tourism marketers, integration service providers, and academics. The following sections consider each of these three fields in more detail, using the participant narratives to build on the literature.

7.1. Implications for destination and tourism marketers

As discussed in more detail throughout the literature review, VFR activity is a sorely missed opportunity on a variety of levels for destinations. Promoting VFR as a link between resident engagement and tourism activity would appear to make economic, cultural, and social sense. A greater appreciation for and understanding of the hosting experience could improve awareness of the community as a destination in the immigrants' home countries, enhance visitor satisfaction, and influence behaviour, as well as foster a sense of cosmopolitanism that in itself can create a more socially inclusive community and add to its appeal as a destination. Economically speaking, engaging residents to invite and host visitors is an efficient and powerful medium to communicate with potential visitors. Culturally, a more diverse population engaged in producing and consuming culture can add complexity and depth to festivals and neighbourhoods that are significant tourism products; and socially, a population that has stronger links with their loved ones and their local community should be, simply speaking, happier and more fulfilled.

The following discussion draws on the literature review and elements of the participants' narratives to illustrate and clarify these points.

7.1.1. Active hosts

Many of the participants listed off numerous activities they participated in, and regional destinations they visited, as part of their hosting experiences. Hosting forces people to actively consider their community as a destination, and to spend their own time and money in their community. This is particularly pertinent for a regional community, such as Ontario, whose immigrants are likely tempted to spend their own vacation time and spending to visit their friends and relatives back home instead of within their new home region.

Anna perhaps most clearly demonstrated the cost to her own time, and implied financial costs, when hosting. Anna and her husband took two weeks each of their own vacation to host her sister and her family. Anna not only brought in additional visitors and their associated spending into the Toronto region, but also spent her vacation time and money in the region rather than elsewhere. Ria also described her sincere attempts to use her vacation to spend with visitors, and how she tried to encourage her friend from Montreal to commit to a date so she could take the time. This form of vacation and spending, of hosts within their own communities, is routinely excluded and disregarded by almost every tourism economic impact study. It is evident, however, that if a resident treats a period of time in their own community as a vacation, and forfeits the opportunity to travel outside of their region because of hosting, then this should be considered a gain to local economies and tourism service providers, and is an additional benefit of VFR travel to the region. Not only do local businesses and destinations benefit at the time, but attachments are formed by the new residents that convert them into repeat visitors: Mary with Prince Edward Country, Monty with Muskoka, Anna with Niagara Falls, Lucy with cottage country; they all returned to these destinations that they experienced with their visiting friends and relatives. This type of activity needs to be included in tourism impact studies, as VFR visitors on their own are clearly worth

more to a local economy than their own spending and activity would suggest. This is very important considering the routine public narratives that present VFR as a comparatively low yield market.

7.1.2. Immigrants influence visitors, and know their guests

As many of the participant narratives demonstrated, immigrant residents influence their friends and relatives to visit Toronto and the region. They promote events and experiences that they know their potential and actual visitors will enjoy, and have far greater authority than traditional marketing channels. Hibbert, Dickinson and Curtin (2013) found that the security and familiarity of having a friend or relative in a new destination can give courage to a potential visitor in selecting a community to visit, positioning relationships with residents as an important component of tourism destination choice. Immigrants convert potential visitors into customers.

A major barrier for many destinations is the challenge of convincing potential visitors to move from a state of mind where they view the destination favourably, and will visit *someday*, to a state of mind where that day is identifiable, that there is a reason to actually book those tickets and come. Immigrants can help disperse and communicate what those trigger experiences are that will convert potential visitors to actual visitors, and their messaging carries the authenticity and authority that much marketing efforts strive for, but often fail to provide. Sarah, Lucy, and Ria and Rahul all mentioned using specific events and activities to try and convince people to visit at particular times. Sarah's friend Shaun turned a routine business trip into a festival weekend; she took pride in showing him something unique and typically Canadian and acted as a local guide, that no doubt generated photos and stories for him to share within his own network. Sarah also

took great pleasure in taking people camping and house boating, knowing that her friends would find it particularly impressive because she knows their context. As she explained:

I was talking to my friend in the UK and saying, ‘you should come out for this particular long weekend because I’m going house boating and it’s a unique experience’ and explaining the whole thing. And she’s like, ‘Oh my God, that sounds amazing. I loved it when we went camping. I’d love to do a trip like that again, let me see’ (lines 117-121).

Sarah actively wants to show people what is different, quintessential, and exciting about the place where she lives.

The narrative arcs around hosting, as demonstrated in this thesis, could be creatively reflected by DMO campaigns. For immigrants there is a risk of their bonds with friends and family members being weakened by distance, and many participants actively sought to facilitate visits from their personal networks. This can be linked to the idea of belongingness and the “resistance to the threatened dissolution” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 502) of these important relationships. This is an aspect that, if used ethically, could provide emotional hooks for campaigns seeking to leverage personal connections of immigrants as potential visitors and ambassadors around the globe. Presenting narratives that show the renewing of social bonds with those from the past in exciting and memorable environments in the new region could be used to engage the desire for belongingness

Beyond finding reasons for people to actually visit, immigrant hosts also have a better idea of what their guests will find memorable once they are here. The relative absurdity of Hooters for Lucy and her friends, the amazement of apple picking for Ria and Rahul’s family, the impressive waterfront for Anna and her mother, the quality of local swimming pools for Mary and her parents, are all somewhat routine or ordinary for many in Toronto and around, but are experiences that can

help define what a community means for someone from a specific culture and personal background by drawing on contextual similarities and differences. People know their friends and relatives, and could be encouraged and given resources to become more engaged and creative as cultural brokers, increasing the likelihood that visitor expectations of a destination be exceeded.

For the visitor, spending time with a friend or relative who lives in the destination can provide an experience perceived to be more authentic and distinct, not available to those visitors without personal connections, generating trustworthy word-of-mouth marketing (Hall, 2007; Meis et al., 1995; Yu et al., 2012). Word-of-mouth is perhaps the most sought after type of marketing, and the social networks that exist within a resident base are a fruitful and generally untapped resource. The word-of-mouth generated by VFR visitors, often within countries that are also target markets, can carry more capital and influence than paid promotions and pure pleasure tourists because of the perceived authentic nature of the experience (Hall, 2007), and should be viewed as invaluable resource for any destination that must be creative in their use of marketing funds. This should be of substantial interest to DMOs.

There are implications for regional tourism destinations who can provide opportunities for short breaks for immigrant hosts in large cities like Toronto. There were several examples of such trips within the participants' narratives (almost everybody to Niagara Falls, Mary to Prince Edward County, Monty to Muskoka, Sarah to Quebec City, Ria and Rahul to Montreal etc.). There is significant potential to tap into the immigrant communities in Toronto and provide secondary trip ideas for visiting friends and relatives as a fresh reason to visit. Regional DMOs could use the pressure of finding new things to do for repeat visitors as a hook, as Sarah described with her satisfaction in visiting Quebec City with her parents. VFR visitors and their hosts in Toronto are actual and potential hotel visitors in regional destinations (Griffin, 2014b).

Finally, an interesting idea is to encourage immigrants who return home for a visit to act as ambassadors and encourage people to visit them; Sarah had re-invigorated the desire to re-visit Toronto in some of her friends after a recent trip back to the UK, and this has potential for DMOs targeting specific immigrant groups as ambassadorial messengers.

7.1.3. Increased engagement means more cultural development

Engaging residents, both immigrants and others, to participate in tourism related activities will benefit the community in terms of the variety and volume of engagement and input into the cultural development and representation of the place as a destination. The cumulative effect of a more engaged (immigrant) resident base is likely to lead to a richer local culture. A community that more readily draws from the diverse pool of people residing in the area will forge new cultural identities form a stronger sense of place. As Gieryn (2000) proposes;

Places are endlessly made, not just when the powerful pursue their ambition through brick and mortar, not just when design professional[s] give form to function, but also when ordinary people extract from continuous and abstract space a bounded, identified, meaningful, named, and significant place (p. 471).

An urban community needs the attractions and hotels to become a tourism destination, but it also needs its residents to participate and be engaged to create that cultural demand and ambiance that establishes a sense of place that can be communicated to attract visitors. For communities with high immigrant populations this is a task that maybe more complex than for regions with a more homogenous resident base, but the results will be so much more distinctive and galvanizing, adding to the appeal of the destination for all types of visitors.

With a more engaged, fulfilled and integrated immigrant base, opportunities for collective cultural capital could lead to additional social, human, and financial capital opportunities as the

community becomes a more interesting and appealing place for all tourists (Flora & Flora, 2008; Griffin, 2013d). Some authors have commented on the role of festivals on the integration and identity of individual residents and communities at large (Moscardo, 2012; Ziakas & Costa, 2010), including Arcodia and Whitford (2006) who argue that festivals

encourage a more effective use of community resources by giving... participants the opportunity to explore local resources that previously may have remained anonymous, perhaps protected by individual gatekeepers or ethnic social boundaries or otherwise lost within the complex social web of community structures and not generally available for everyone's use (p. 11).

This principle, if taken more broadly, could be applied to engagement in other tourism related activities also (Gieryn, 2000). A more integrated community is a more vibrant and interesting place to visit as more people are presented an opportunity to draw on varied stimulus to construct identity, meaning, and memories (Derrett, 2003; Dwyer et al., 2010; Ziakas & Costa, 2010). The impact is cyclical, as described by Derrett (2003);

[Residents] share their special space and favourite places with visiting friends and relatives [and this] assists in healing, awareness raising, and... understanding issues of [local] sustainability... [T]he values, interests, and aspirations of individuals are influenced by their biophysical environment (space and place)→ which leads to a sense of community→ that influences how the community celebrates→ that affects the community's well-being→ that in turn informs the environment in which individuals and groups define their values and beliefs (p. 52)

A concerted effort to engage VFR and encourage hosting could be easily positioned as a sincere endeavour of destination sustainability. A requirement of sustainable tourism development is for the industry to acknowledge the relationships and impacts it has on those outside of the business directly, and “accept contributory responsibilities in the regions in which they ‘live’” (Macbeth et al., 2004, p. 503). The benefits of a VFR campaign could result in a richer, more

hospitable community culture, which would encourage characteristics of a community that is better to live in, and therefore visit. As Macbeth et al. (2004) suggest

[m]anifestations of culture in material form are popular tourism products while non-material forms of culture, such as ideology, are important in contributing to the nature of a location/destination/product that helps to make a place somewhere that visitors come to enjoy. Tourism both uses and helps create culture and cultures (Macbeth et al., 2004, p. 117).

If, as Pizam (2010, cited in Wang, 2011) suggests, the destination marketing organization's (DMO) role is shifting from *convention chaser* to *community brand manager*, becoming involved and invested in the overall community image, a VFR engagement program holds strong potential in nurturing the relationship between DMO and resident.

From the personal narratives there are examples of engaged immigrants participating in festivals and activities that merge personal interests and entertaining visitors. Sarah and Hiva especially talked about their own personal interest in festivals and culture, and their desire to show their own experiences and interpretations of what their community means to their visiting guests. An innovative approach for a DMO would be to identify those residents who are active hosts, and engage them, and help them participate and interpret their destination for their guests. Arguably Toronto has struggled to some extent in understanding and communicating what its culture is beyond a generic 'multiculturalism'⁶. The cultural associations of its protestant past of British social conservatism have been confronted head on by the waves of immigration from diverse

⁶ For an entertaining and reflective exploration into Toronto's image watch the 2007 documentary 'Let's all hate Toronto' available on the Hot Docs online library here <http://hotdocslibrary.ca/en/detail.cfm?filmId=11571>.

cultures over the last half century or so. This emerging new cultural form has still yet to truly mature and flourish, and this dilemma has been challenging for destination marketers and is evident when Toronto's image is considered in comparison with other North American cities with much clearer and established identities (Montreal, San Francisco, New York City etc.). A VFR campaign might help inspire residents to actively consider their community as a place to enjoy and produce culture, and stimulate a stronger discussion and construction of what the collective sense of identity is, and could be.

7.1.4. Summary

This thesis has provided a thorough exploration into the benefits of VFR tourism for a community, particularly in terms of social, cultural and economic impacts. The narratives have helped illuminate and embody these arguments, and have also provided an overview of the rich and emotional contexts that hosting incorporates, both in terms of highlighting the potential to engage this group, but also in the types of themes that could be used to draw people to interact and respond to related marketing efforts. Leveraging the extant relationships within residents' networks is an intriguing and potentially radically innovative direction for a destination marketing organization to take. It is an approach that would require a DMO to acknowledge the fundamental flaw in the common binary view of tourism, to accept that traditional tourism marketing that only targets potential visitors as pure vacation travellers influenced only by entertainment and accommodations is a narrow approach that speaks only to a small portion of actual and potential visitors.

7.2. Implications for integration services

Doherty and Taylor (2007) found that structure was important to enhancing the benefits of interaction between immigrant and local students in a sporting context, and Lange et al. (2011)

found in Alberta parks that stakeholder engagement of newcomers, park staff, and existing parks users, led to the interests and needs of different groups being integrated and adapted into action resulting in enhanced benefits for all. There is clearly a role for organisations to help provide informational and physical infrastructure to help immigrants enjoy the activities and benefits of their new community. As well, there are clear advantages for organisations and local community members to also actively adapt and engage their new neighbours.

Immigrants will view touristic experiences differently to native-born Canadians. A trip to Niagara Falls, or China Town, or fruit picking, for a Canadian born Torontonion may inspire memories of school trips, mundane and routine experiences, and a sense of the familiar. However, for a new immigrant all of these experiences have the potential to establish attachment, to communicate what it means to be Canadian, to demonstrate the values of the society, and to provide a background for shaping and presenting an identity. In addition, it was apparent that for many of the participants they had not considered the impact that hosting had on their settlement; the links between hosting and settlement were not explicitly clear for most. Promoting this link and facilitating a communal discussion around hosting and the integrative benefits, and encouraging immigrants to take the opportunity to go and enjoy themselves and experience their new home with guests, if done in a culturally appropriate way, might have traction to bridge connections. Appreciating these links, and working with immigrants to enhance these experiences has real potential in raising the attachment and familiarity of immigrants with their new surroundings.

Lange et al. (2011) found that Alberta Parks' programs directed at newcomers improved their human capital and cultural understanding. Tourism service providers could engage immigrants and their visiting friends and relatives to provide experiences that could specifically

demonstrate the culture of Toronto, Ontario, or Canada. Destinations and attractions could have communication strategies specifically engaging immigrants who host, drawing on the emotional ties that these visits bring, the desire to impress and show off, to build memories, and feel accepted and integrated, can all help in the integration and education of both newcomers to Toronto and Canada, as well as those native born Canadians who interact and serve. Providing information and guides about visiting Ottawa on Canada Day, camping in Algonquin, and other iconic Canadian experiences, as well as activities that are contextual to specific immigrant groups (fruit picking, visiting cultural and religious areas), as well as activities specific to individuals (a tour of places of personal importance etc.), are all potential ideas that could draw on and influence a desire to integrate.

From the personal narratives there were many examples of hosting aiding integration and settlement. Bahar, for example, became more familiar with the workings and values of Toronto as a place to live through her hosting, and several participants experienced activities and places for the first time because of their guiding obligations. Monty, Sarah and Mary all work in the broad marketing field, and it is interesting to think about how their increased exposure to Canadian life and values through their hosting experiences might add to their cultural capital as immigrants who can bridge and communicate with the local culture, as well as with their home cultures.

Additionally, promoting VFR may help in encouraging repeat visits, that can aid a sense of belonging and attachment between resident and guest. Helping to inspire repeat visits with new ideas on things to do and see could see a more settled immigrant population. There is a circular effect: promotion of the community as a place to invite and host friends and relatives requires the education and engagement of residents, which should lead to an improved awareness and diversified input of voices in the construction of what the local culture means, which should make

it a more appealing place for all types of visitors to travel to, which makes it easier for residents to invite and host those important people for repeat visits to participate in new activities, which could help in individuals' sense of belonging and attachment to both their friends and family, and their new community.

An appreciation of the potential impact of hosting by practitioners in integration services could lead to partnerships with tourism services and a sharing of information on related activities to be distributed among immigrant networks. Likewise, an established communication channel between those who interact regularly with immigrants and tourism service providers should improve the ways in which different groups are communicated with. Both tourism and integration practitioners work with newcomers to their communities, and although much of the context is different, there is significant overlap that could see beneficial partnerships for both.

7.3. Methodological and theoretical implications

I believe that this research is of value to the academic field, addressing gaps in literature content, development of theory, as well as applying relevant and new methodologies with limited previous application to tourism studies.

7.3.1. Methodological

Methodologically the use of video in data collection and knowledge production is a relatively innovative way of co-constructing narratives between participants and the researcher. Video provided the opportunity for participants to reflect on what they said, challenge their own representations, as well as the researcher's shaping of the narrative. It also allowed for reemphasis, clarification, and probing of stories and meanings in a more engaging manner than asking participants to read texts. As well there is a safe opportunity to consider other people's

experiences, and use them to help shape and form further narrative constructions and reflections to explain and understand the experience. Video also allows for the voices of the participants to remain strong within the presentation of results and discussion of implications.

7.3.2. Theoretical

A significant contribution of this thesis has been to give voices to participants of a phenomenon that is miss-understood and represented by those organisations and public discourses that have the power to influence and shape the experience. Research on VFR and related topics has predominantly been post-positivistic in nature. This, in itself, is not an issue; post-positivism is able to reveal significant and fundamental knowledge of a phenomenon. In addition the industry is more familiar with the type of research output post-positivist studies produce making them useful in disseminating results and highlighting trends of opportunity and concern. However, the extremely personal context of hosting and its impacts on the sense of integration have been missed by these approaches, and it is this area of reconnecting with personal relationships that arguably sets the experiences within VFR apart from all other forms of tourism.

The use of qualitative methodologies is useful in exploratory subjects and can help lay foundations for future research in related areas (Decrop, 2004). As Cohen (1988) suggests:

...the most significant and lasting contributions [to tourism]... have been made by researchers who employed an often loose qualitative methodology... [T]heir often acute insights and the theoretical frameworks in which these have been embodied, provided the point of departure for several 'traditions' in the sociological study of tourism (p. 30).

The positioning of the experience and implications within a constructionist framework gives weight to the notion that understandings are co-constructed by individuals with others, in a context of place. The particular context of knowledge construction around hosting is a powerful and

important area of understanding for those who participate. VFR is not just a trip motive, or a type of tourist, but is a powerful experience that influences understandings and attachments to people and place.

Specific theoretical implications have been discussed in detail, and include the role hosting can play in helping in the settlement process, in co-constructing meaning and attachment to the new community, maintaining relationships with friends and family, and affecting personal identity. Ultimately it is hoped that this thesis may influence further research into the role that tourism can play in residents' lives, not merely as recipients of indirect benefits and infringements that tourism development and activity may or may not deliver them as passive bystanders, but as active participants and influencers of much tourism related economic and cultural behaviour.

7.4. Limitations and future research

As a qualitative piece of research this thesis has laid the foundations for research into tourism as an activity that crosses multiple spheres in everyday environments. Issues of place attachment, immigrant integration, personal relationships, identity construction, cultural development, place marketing, and more, have all been teased out a little more than before. It is hoped, however, that these subjects can be built on further and in more detail to advance the appreciation for this type of tourism in contemporary societies, not just for business development, but for community cohesion and well-being. As Capistrano (2013) rightly points out, VFR travel research has predominantly focussed on the experiences or behaviour of either the host or the visitor, but not the interactions between the two and the impacts on the relationships of the actors involved. This current thesis fails to offer specific insight into this interesting area of the VFR travel experience, but in its findings it is hoped that there is sufficient background and leads to offer a basis from

which to develop a research agenda in this important aspect of VFR. This thesis also fails to answer questions that many practitioners will have about the measurable value of this phenomenon, and sizes and potentials of different markets and campaigns. The answers to these questions were beyond the scope of this thesis, but deserve particular attention, likely involving quantitative approaches to complement this qualitative work.

It is also critical to point out that the immigrant population is vastly heterogeneous. The nature of sampling in this thesis means that most, if not all participants were from situations of relative privilege that many immigrants to Canada struggle to access. All had some level of English; many had transferable professional qualifications or pre-arranged employment, and many had a decent education and access to continued schooling on arrival. A different sampling approach with groups of varying cultures and socio-economic statuses would produce different narratives and implications.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis has incorporated a number of arguments and discussions to provide and justify the importance of the research subject, the choice of a particular paradigm, methodology, and methods in considering the original aims and research questions. VFR as a phenomenon has received limited attention in academia and in practice guided by the general disregard of the segment, influenced by the values of the hotel driven destination marketing sector. This thesis highlighted and explored alternative viewpoints of the actual significance and potential of the VFR market overall, linking business interests to issues of community and individual socio-cultural development. The relevance of immigration to potential marketing efforts of VFR, and implications for community integration were also discussed and illustrated throughout the narratives.

A discussion on paradigmatic issues resulted in the justification for adopting constructionism as a guiding framework of knowledge generation. The experience of hosting for immigrants is layered with interactions with both people and place, new and old, of challenge and comfort, facilitating ripe conditions for meaning construction related to personal identities and relationships with past, present, and future selves. A narrative inquiry approach enabled the research process to construct and collect stories from participants and to represent them in a storied form, centred on the hosting experience. It is hoped that the use of narrative analysis should help “professionals to adapt their touristic products” by giving volume to the “silent voices” that emerge from “the mundane and commonplace” (Mainil & Platenkamp, 2010, p. 67). At the time of writing (January 2015) I have presented on related topics at various conferences to both academics and practitioners in Canada and the UK, and have had initial conversations with several organisations including local government and DMOs on topics covered in this thesis. I intend to continue

offering my insights to local organisations, as I truly believe that an ongoing VFR campaign could meet the business needs of the industry with social and cultural development improvements of local communities and individuals.

The experience of hosting can positively affect the immigrant host, providing them with the motivation to experience and exhibit their new home as their own. A host who has little experience of their own community is obliged to entertain (Shani & Uriely, 2012), no longer the newcomer, but the expert, encouraged to interact with their new community and help interpret it for their guests. The more exposed a resident is to their community the higher the possibility that they will become more engaged with their fellow residents, enhancing their own and communal networks and social capital, ultimately fostering a greater sense of cosmopolitanism that may improve the desirability of the community as a destination.

The tourism industry needs to acknowledge the limitations of the dichotomous view of tourism. Viewing tourism as something that is consumed by outsiders is, for most communities, limited to the extreme, and viewing tourism as the activity of non-locals in a community without consideration to their personal connections is limiting to the potential benefits that could be accrued for communities and businesses alike. Viewing VFR as non-tourism is, at best, a missed opportunity of extraordinary magnitude for economic, social, and cultural community development, and at worst is an (un)intentional exclusion of those residents who construct the cultural capital upon which a destination is sold to participate in the construction of their own community as a commodity in tourism activity and place marketing.

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Appendices: Full Narratives

Appendix A: Sarah

Our first meeting for this study was in July 2013, and our conversation from this time forms the bulk of this narrative. My questions and comments are shown in italics. Our second meeting was ten months later. The comments from this second meeting are shown in narrow, central paragraphs. Bahar also watched Sarah's first video, and our conversation while we watched Sarah's video are shown in paragraphs on the right of the page.

1 So, I had been travelling around Australia in 2001, and I'd loved it and I moved back to the UK
2 because my travelling visa ran out. And I always thought I wanted to go back to Australia. So, I
3 came back to England, worked back in the industry of advertising where I was always working,
4 and then I achieved some big milestones in my career in England, and thought "I want to move
5 now. I've been there and done that in London for five years, it's time to try something new".

6 So, I was looking in Australia and New Zealand, applying for jobs, and reaching out and
7 networking and I'd actually been out there for interviews, and the new business director at my
8 company in the UK had just moved to Canada, and I had friends here. So, I'd actually been out
9 here to Canada visiting a few times. I'd been to Mississauga and I've been to Muskoka a couple
10 of times but I hadn't spent any time in Toronto, and I just knew Canada as this mystical place that
11 has many lakes, and people just hang out by the lakes all the time. So Jane, this guy's wife, and I
12 ended up talking, he ended up flying me out here for interviews, and offering me the job.

13 So, I had a really tough decision because I was looking to move to Australia and not Canada. And
14 then basically, I made a decision that if I went to Australia, I had to fund myself there, find myself

15 a job, and stay there of my own financial backing until I found something. Whereas the job here-
16 they were offering me a visa, a place to live for the first month, a job, the whole thing. And so I
17 thought I'd do it because I thought it was better to try it and regret it than not try it because I was
18 too scared, and then regret it years later because I haven't done it.

19 *Did you have somewhere to stay right away?*

20 Yes, so I stayed with friends for the first five days, and what actually happened is some other
21 friends from the UK came out with me that were mutual friends with the friends that were here.
22 They brought out some extra bags for me so I could carry extra stuff. It felt like I was going
23 somewhere exciting. I felt very apprehensive about what I was doing but I felt safe in the fact that
24 I had friends with me for the first few days. It was definitely comforting having them come, and
25 they helped me bring more stuff. So, yeah, definitely- I definitely felt comforted.

26 **I ask Bahar whether she sees any**
27 **similarities in Sarah's story to her own.**

28 Yeah, it's interesting to see how she's feeling
29 kind of the same thing as me, having the
30 support of her friends.

31

32 So, reality didn't really hit until the Monday night when my friends went to the airport, and I was
33 sent off to my little studio apartment, that reality set in on what the hell I was really doing.

34 *And how was that evening?*

35 Horrible. Very lonely. Very lonely, yeah. I would say the first month was definitely the hardest
36 and a couple of times I did burst into tears and think, “what the hell have I done? Why am I here?”
37 It’s an overwhelming experience. You’re moving to a new city, you’re starting a new job, a new
38 job that threw me in the deep end with projects, and driving on the highways on the wrong side of
39 the road, and clients, and not appreciating the experience I was going through. And then, at the
40 same time the pressure of having to find somewhere to live, it was a lot to take in.

41 And the other thing is that when you’re in your home country, when I was in London, I had a
42 massive social life. I was out every night doing something. I had friends to call up and chat with
43 in the evening, or friends to go and visit, or go out to the pub with. I had a roommate who, if no
44 one else wanted to go out, I can stay in and chat with her. And all of a sudden, I’m isolated. I
45 know no one in this city.

46 **Bahar interrupts:** I can relate to that
47 completely because I was the same when I
48 was back home. I was out every night doing
49 something, exactly the words that she uses.
50 Yeah, I don’t know what I was doing when I
51 was here in Canada in the evening. Nothing.
52 Browsing the net I think.

53
54 I remember visitors in the first house I lived in, but I don’t remember who was first. It was kind
55 of weird because I hadn’t been there that long, so I didn’t know what to do or where to take them.
56 All you know is what you know, what you’ve tried and experienced. You’re just very limited.

57 Like, we'd go for walks down in the Beach and do the beach thing. I would maybe go and do
58 Niagara and all of that, or go up to Muskoka. I knew Muskoka, that was the first thing I knew, so
59 I'd try and do day trips up to Muskoka because I just loved it up there. I tended to try and show
60 them the stuff I knew.

61 *Why just the stuff you knew?*

62 That's a good question. I don't know why. I guess just the comfort, I want to show them what I
63 know about. "Let's go out for brunch, I know a great spot in Yorkville, because I've been taken
64 there, let's go there". When you've moved somewhere, you want to almost show off your life to
65 that person, partly to reinforce your decision and partly to show them a different experience. So
66 you never want that experience to be bad. They've come here looking to see you and spend time
67 with you and enjoy stuff, so you want to do the stuff you know is enjoyable.

68 **Bahar notes a difference between Sarah**
69 **and herself.** It's interesting. She was the one
70 who's showing them around, like she's
71 showing them the things that she knew and
72 the places she knew. But with my experience
73 it was the other way around. They had a
74 checklist of the places they wanted to go or
75 someone else had told them "you should visit
76 there when you're going to Toronto", and
77 they were just dragging me here and there.

78

79 *Do you remember how you felt about having those first friends come to stay?*

80 Oh, very comforting. Yeah, it's just familiar, right? Everything here is new, brand new. The
81 friends are new, no one knows you. So the first couple of friends who visited, I've known them
82 since I was two, they're childhood friends, we've grown up together. One of the friends who came
83 to visit I traveled around Australia and New Zealand with, so we'd have all these other experiences.
84 There's lots of natural connections there, whereas everything, every friend you've met here is new.
85 So, it's just that comfort factor, I think, more than anything. It's more relaxing, and whether you
86 reminisce, you're just relaxed in their company because you're used to being with them.

87 *Yeah, you're just looking for familiar faces*

88 **Bahar empathises.**

89

90 But over seven years, especially during my age group, a lot has changed with them too. Like, most
91 of the friends that have come to visit have got married and had kids since I moved here. So, it's
92 not easy coming out here anymore. I think at the beginning it was a novelty and I was here and
93 you have a stronger connection with people when you've recently been hanging out with them.
94 But over time, the longer I've been here- it's not that I don't have a connection- I still go home
95 and I see friends and it's great to see them and reminisce and talk about what they've been up to.
96 But the connection is not the same. You're not talking to them on a day-to-day basis, it's a different
97 type of connection. So, at the beginning people always came to see me because they miss me, and
98 they wanted to see where I was now living, and the excitement of going to visit me abroad.
99 Whereas now, it's old news, so you don't get that same wave of visitors.

100 There has been a definite lull, and also I hadn't been home for eighteen months until recently, so
101 you don't have that same connection. So, you get home and you reconnect with people and then
102 it's easier to plan for people come out and visit. I've got quite a few coming soon. My friend
103 Shaun is coming next weekend for five days, I've got my mum and dad coming at the end of the
104 year and I've got my brother and his girlfriend coming next year. And then I've spoken to my
105 friend Kim about potentially coming out this year. And then my friend Molly wants to come out
106 next year. So people haven't been for a while, and when I went home and reconnected with them
107 we're talking about them coming out to see me again.

108 I've got a big group of friends in Toronto now and we all do a big camping trip each year. A
109 couple of different friends in the UK have come on those camping trips and they're always
110 overwhelmed by the experience, because it's interior camping with portaging on these lakes and
111 it's just a completely unique experience to Canada, and I get a lot of momentum and
112 encouragement from them and excitement when I do trips like that. I was talking to my friend in
113 the UK and saying, "you should come out for this particular long weekend because I'm going
114 house boating and it's a unique experience" and explaining the whole thing. And she's like, "Oh
115 my God, that sounds amazing. I loved it when we went camping. I'd love to do a trip like that
116 again, let me see". And actually I need to chase her up. But it's just that point of if I've got
117 something going on here I'll invite people from home to come over as well.

118 *So, your friend Shaun is coming for the Beaches Jazz Festival, did you use that as a reason to*
119 *invite him?*

120 Well, he's one of the people that's coming on business. He comes in once a quarter and he usually
121 will come in and see me for one night while he's here. So he's here for two nights, I'll see him

122 one night, and he does the work thing for one night. And I've always said to him "you need to
123 stay for the weekend", because every time he comes, there's always something big coming in the
124 weekend 'cause I've always got a lot on. So, we were planning, he said he wanted to come in July
125 and I said to him, "we've got Jazz Fest and Beer Fest happening this weekend, it's an amazing
126 weekend, you should come". And then originally the dates weren't going to work out, but then he
127 said, "okay I'm coming, book me tickets".

128 **Bahar's impressed.** She really knows
129 what's going on around the city!

130

131 So, he's coming in for work on a Wednesday, staying in a hotel till Friday, and then coming to
132 stay with me Friday to Sunday, and then he leaves on Sunday.

133 *And so you're looking forward to that?*

134 Yeah.

135 *What particularly are you looking forward to?*

136 Just seeing him, and him experiencing something different in Toronto like the Beach's Jazz Fest,
137 is a very local event. It's just a very Canadian local thing to do. So, I love showing people that
138 event, and I love it, it's one of my favourite festivals. Beer Fest, again, is another fun unique event
139 that you're not going to experience in the southern U.S. where he lives. Like, we're just going to
140 spend time together. It's just fun. We get on well. I've known him since I was 16.

141 *So, you've spoken a little bit about having friends coming over. How is it having your family*
142 *coming over?*

143 It's harder. My parents are very different. They're older, they tire more easily, they find the whole
144 jetlag harder. And they just- they don't want to do the tourist thing. They don't care about
145 museums and the CN Tower.

146 *How often do they visit?*

147 Once a year.

148 *And how long do they stay for when they're here?*

149 A weekend.

150 *Oh, just a weekend, okay. And do they normally come the same weekend every year?*

151 No, it really varies. But they struggle; they don't want to come midsummer because they can't
152 handle the heat and the humidity. They don't want to come in winter because they can't handle
153 the snow and the coldness. So, there are very limited windows. Obviously, I love seeing them
154 and having them here but it puts a pressure on me. It's different from having a friend here or even
155 my brother here. Having a visitor is always pressure because you've always got to entertain them.
156 It's like- it's a houseguest, a houseguest is always pressure. It's enjoyable but there's this
157 underlying pressure of entertainment. And I worry because they're sitting watching TV all day
158 and I'm like, "come on, let's go do something", and they're like "no, we're fine watching TV,
159 what do you want to do?" And I'm like, "I don't know, let's get for a walk on the beach". "Oh,
160 we're too tired for a walk in the beach". So, it's hard to even get them out of the house and
161 motivated to do anything. So, then sometimes I feel trapped in the house. And I'm like, "you've
162 come all the way to visit me and you're just sitting watching TV?" And they're like, "well, we've
163 come to see you anyway, we've not come to see Toronto, we've come to see you".

164 **Nine months later, I mention to Sarah that I saw**
165 **pictures of her and her parents on Facebook in**
166 **Quebec City.**

167 *How was that?*

168 That was good. They always come to Toronto and
169 they're bit bored of Toronto I've been here eight
170 years and so it's like "we keep going back to the same
171 place can we try something new?" My parents
172 always wanted to go to Quebec the province so we
173 arranged to go to Quebec City for the weekend. So
174 when you talk about new experiences, that was a total
175 new experience, because I'd never been to Quebec
176 City, and neither had they.

177 **We start to talk about her parents' upcoming visit**
178 **in a few weeks.**

179 So they haven't really had a nice warm, summer
180 weekend in Toronto, so I am intrigued to know
181 whether that will make a difference this year.

182 *Is it important to you that it makes a difference, or*
183 *are you just kind of interested?*

184 Yes, because they don't like Toronto, so they don't
185 make an effort to come. I'm interested to see how the
186 experience is going to be this time now when I've got
187 like five days with them in warm weather and stuff
188 to do. I am hoping that they might have a different
189 experience.

190

191 My parents also, when they come, want to help me with stuff, so if I need to buy a piece of
192 furniture, my dad will come with me and help me build it or whatever. They like to potter in the
193 garden so if they come in the right season, I've gone to work, and they've done my gardening for
194 me in the daytime. I try to limit it because I don't want to feel like they're coming over and just
195 working, but it does help. They feel better because parents always want to help their kids and they
196 don't get to help me because I live so far away, so I think- like my mum always wants to do my
197 washing when she comes over. I don't know why but she'd set on doing my washing.

198 **Knowing that her parents are visiting again soon**
199 **after our second meeting I ask Sarah about her**
200 **plans.**

201 *So you've got a list of jobs you gonna have them do?*

202 The gardening!

203 (She bursts out in laughter)

204 The garden's a mess! It's so true!

205

206 I've actually hosted parties here for them. So, I host a barbecue or drinks evening and then I get
207 my friends around to meet them and see them, because my parents don't know my life here. Like,
208 when you live in England, especially when you're living at home and you're growing up, they
209 know your friends and once you've got a group of friends from school, you're always friends with
210 them. And then when I come home, I always stay with my family. So, my friends come to visit.
211 So, they know all my UK friends. Whereas here, they don't know my life. So by bringing some
212 close friends around and having drinks or a barbecue or taking them to a party, they get to meet
213 these people. When I say, "oh, I'm going out and doing something with so and so", they're like,
214 "which one is that again?" So, it's nice for them to be able to put a face to the name as well.

215 My mum likes hosting and organizing and cooking, so to have some friends over and do a barbecue
216 in the garden in the sunshine is nice. A lot of my friends- I know their families as well, because I
217 get like the English-girl-adoption on special family days, you know, like Thanksgiving or Easter,
218 and I am invited to one of my friends' families so I've met a lot of my friends' families so it is nice
219 for them to meet mine too.

220 My brother came out once for a week and he loved it. It was easy to entertain him, super easy. I
221 gave him baseball tickets and football tickets, and I'll take him down the beach to play volleyball,
222 and then took him down the beach to throw a frisbee around, like it doesn't take much. I take him
223 to the pub and have beers and we had a barbecue here with all my friends and he got to be social,
224 like it really is easy.

225 *And was that fun having him?*

226 Yeah, a lot of fun, a lot of fun. And he loved it so much that he wanted to move here. It's a nice
227 reinforcement, again.

228 *How about your sister?*

229 She's only been here once in seven years and she came out as part of a business trip. So she
230 literally came out for like two days and one night. So, she hardly saw anything.

231 *Do you wish your sister would come and visit?*

232 One hundred per cent.

233 *Have you asked her?*

234 Multiple times. It's a touchy subject sometimes. She's now with two kids, so it's not going to
235 happen anytime soon. My brother-in-law has never been out to visit me. My sister hasn't been
236 out in so long, she hasn't even seen this house and I've been here five and a half years.

237 *Right, right, and that's a bit upsetting?*

238 Yeah, very upsetting. Why doesn't she want to come out and see where I live? And there's always
239 been an excuse. And now, the excuse is, "well, my daughter is three and I've got to pay for a seat
240 for her on the plane. Now, I've got a baby too. So, now, there's four of us coming out, where are
241 we going to stay?" There's always going to be an excuse. I don't bring it up as much as I used to
242 because I've given up on it a bit.

243 My brother-in-law, the last time I was home said, "so what is it like, blah, blah, blah". And I said,
244 "if you came out to visit, you'd find out Paul". So, I'm very sarcastic with it. And then, I get the
245 whole thing in the ear from my mum going, "well, they've got two kids", "but they haven't had
246 two kids for seven years. They've had two kids for nine months, one kid for three years", "well
247 she was pregnant before that", "that's still four, I've still been out for seven".

248 *So, it would be nice to see them.*

249 Yeah, but it's not happening.

250 **Nine months later I ask her:**

251 *Are you okay with watching that?*

252 Yeah! It is so true! I'm like, "Well said!"

Appendix B: Ria and Rahul

I met Ria and Rahul just once after we were introduced by a mutual friend, although we have communicated several times via email about the video. We met in July 2013, and I spoke with both of them together. Their daughter, who was approximately ten years old, was also present, but participated minimally. My questions and comments are shown in italics. Bahar and Monty also watched the video, and their comments are shown in italic paragraphs on the right and left of the page.

1 Rahul: We decided to move to Canada because of our daughter's education.

2 Ria: So, we started in March 2009. Then in August 2010, less than one and a half year right-
3 one year and three months, we got everything for our visas done. And there were so many
4 people from our home doing applications, but we were the fastest ones.

5 **Bahar's surprised by their experience with**
6 **visas.** The whole process took them a year
7 and three months? Good for them. It took us
8 about six years.

9

10 Rahul: In October, I left Mauritius. Reached here the next day, had a nice stay with my friend's
11 place two blocks over, and then Ria and our daughter came five weeks later, same year.

12 Tom: *Had you been to Canada before?*

13 Ria: No.

14 Tom: *So, what did you expect?*

15 Rahul: Well, my friends were here before me, two years before us, but they had been guiding us
16 and advising about the paper work and what we should expect and what not.

17 Ria: When we come here, you have to be prepared-

18 Rahul: Mentally, right-

19 Ria: Mentally prepared that you're starting-

20 Rahul: From scratch.

21 Ria: Right, from scratch, so don't be- because there are so many people, they come here-

22 Rahul: With high expectations-

23 Ria: -with high expectations- and they get disappointed, right. Because he was highly qualified
24 back home, I was also in a good job, so we say, "okay, first time we're coming here we
25 don't expect to get the same fare", right? Whatever we'll get, we'll take it, then we'll start
26 growing from there.

27 Rahul: And then right from the first day, I started working on my job application. I applied for
28 like over 250 jobs, got a few interviews, four interviews, but not successful, right. And
29 then I went for the first interview where I'm working right now, and that was it, I got the
30 position. I started in the same year, in middle of December. Since then I'm still working
31 in that.

32 Tom: *Okay, that's great.*

33 Ria: I didn't take a job straight away because our daughter was still small, right. She was still
34 like eight. So, I said "no, it's better I look after her for one year or two years, then decide
35 if I have to take a job or not". Then last year, I said, "okay, she's now grown up", so I
36 found someone to look after her after school. So, I say, "okay, it's better I look for a job",
37 so I look for it. The first job I applied for, I got interview for that. First job, I got the first
38 interview, and I was recruited.

39 We stayed at my friend's place, I think for almost two months.

40 Rahul: More- three months.

41 Ria: Yeah, for two month, for three months, like that. So, we stayed there. Then Rahul got the
42 job, then after one month, we said, "okay, we have to move". So, we moved to a condo.

43 Rahul: Just across the street, just the high-rise building over there.

44 Ria: We moved there, we rented for one year. And then when I got the job, I said, "Okay, it's
45 better that we have to move ahead now. Let's buy a house now."

46 Rahul: So, my parents were planning to visit, right, so we have to get something bigger.

47 Tom: *So when you started looking for a house, you wanted to get a house that was big enough to*
48 *have people come and stay with you?*

49 Rahul: Yeah, because I was planning to call my parents, my mom and my dad. So, we need to
50 have space for them, right. The room was too small.

51 Ria: Too small, two bedrooms.

52 Rahul: Eight-hundred or nine-hundred square feet, so it was too small to have all of them

53 *Tom: Was that for them to visit for a vacation?*

54 Rahul: Yeah. They were here for six months.

55 *Tom: Okay.*

56 **Monty can empathise.**

57 This is why exactly my wife and I had
58 so much argument before buying this
59 house, because I wanted a three
60 bedroom house, and she said “no, let's
61 start with small, we can do whatever
62 we want later”. I mean, we wanted a
63 three-bedroom house of course, but
64 with our budget we could get only two
65 but thankfully the basement is there so
66 we were just thinking that in the long
67 run we could work on the basement, so
68 parents could stay there. But again
69 probably- I don't know whether Ria
70 and Rahul would find the same thing-
71 my wife doesn't want my parents or
72 her parents to stay in the basement. I
73 don't know why, but she has this whole
74 concept of “no, I can't tell them to go

75 to the basement!” I tell her “it would
76 be better than sleeping upstairs,
77 because they’ll have their own
78 washroom, they won’t have to share
79 with us, it’s not that you are asking
80 them to stay in the basement forever,
81 you know?!”

82

83 *Tom: So, how soon after you arrived did your parents come? When did they come?*

84 Rahul: After one year, as soon as we moved to this house. We move here at the end of April last
85 year, and they came in May. We did everything here for their visit. I sent all the paperwork,
86 I called the travel agency back home. I called the lady to make the booking, do the visa
87 application. Everything was done over here.

88 Ria: At the same time, I’m having the new job, and we’re buying the house, we’re doing all the
89 closing. But in two weeks’ time they got their visa. Everything was ready.

90 I get jealous when they’re talking about the
91 timelines. They got their visa in two weeks
92 and like their application got processed in, I
93 don’t know, 15 months? **Bahar is surprised**
94 **by the difference of her own experience.**

95 *Yeah, so their visa application got processed*
96 *in 15 months, and his parent's tourist visa in*
97 *two weeks.*

98 I'm jealous, yeah, because that will be way
99 different if someone is from Iran for a tourist
100 visa. I think that would be at least two
101 months, at least. Being a tourist to visit your
102 family is really difficult if you're not holding
103 a dual citizenship as an Iranian who lives in
104 Iran, you have to go through a lot.

105

106 *Tom: And so, how was it when your parents came?*

107 Rahul: It was like- it's very exciting. We went to so many places. We went to Niagara, we went
108 to Montreal.

109 *Tom: You went to Montreal?*

110 Rahul: Yeah, by car. Seven hours!

111 *Tom: Tell me about Montreal.*

112 Rahul: We stayed over there for three days-

113 Ria: -three nights.

114 Rahul: Yeah, and then we visited friends and family members.

115 Tom: *In Montreal?*

116 Ria: Yes.

117 Tom: *And that was the first time you've been to Montreal?*

118 Rahul: Yeah, first time.

119 Tom: *Yeah, okay, and what time of the year was it?*

120 Ria: It was in August.

121 Tom: *That's a lovely time, the summer.*

122 Ria: We visited so many places in Montreal, so many places you have to visit.

123 Rahul: And our daughter, she liked the university.

124 (The daughter looks up from her smart phone and gives a shy smile)

125 Ria: She went to McGill.

126 Rahul: We went to McGill, we went to visit the university. She says she wants to study there. I

127 said, "you have to work hard for that!"

128 Tom: *So, were there any other things, interesting things you did with your parents when they*

129 *were here?*

130 Rahul: Shopping. For sure, shopping, and went for- we would try a new restaurant every time,

131 every weekend.

132 Ria: And we went to Blue Mountain, right?

133 Rahul: Yes, Blue Mountain, because I wanted to show them snow before they left but
134 unfortunately-

135 Ria: Unfortunately, it was not there.

136 Rahul: We went to Barrie, we went to Collingwood, went to Blue Mountain.

137 Ria: Parry Sound

138 Rahul: Yeah, Parry Sound, nothing, no snow.

139 Ria: And every time we go for fruit picking, right, whenever any friends coming.

140 Rahul: Fruit picking! Strawberry picking, apple.

141 *Tom: Why do you do that? Why do you take people fruit picking?*

142 Ria: We like that!

143 Rahul: We love that!

144 Ria: We just love that moment.

145 Rahul: It's so fun, so fun.

146 *Tom: Why? What about it do you enjoy?*

147 Rahul: You pick the fruit, right? Like the apple, the first time we went we went to pick apple- so,
148 first to see the apple in the tree and then to pick the apple.

149 Ria: Yeah, because we don't have apple trees.

150 Oh really? They don't have apples in
151 Mauritius? **Bahar shares my own surprise**
152 **when I heard this the first time.**

153

154 Ria: Because we got used to that because back home we have our own garden, all big mango
155 trees, whatever trees, all fruit trees, not apple. So we used to pick, right, so we miss that
156 here. So, okay, we have to wait for that moment, when something will come out, we're
157 going to pick that!

158 Rahul: Right, so now, we're waiting for the apple, right, to come out.

159 Ria: Yeah, in September.

160 Rahul: But we just went for the strawberry picking.

161 *Tom: Did you take your parents fruit picking?*

162 Rahul: Yeah.

163 Ria: Strawberry.

164 Rahul: Strawberry, yeah, apple also. They liked it! They didn't believe. We said "see!"

165 Ria: Yeah, they didn't believe it, then they find strawberries everywhere, "oh wow!"

166 Rahul: And the size of the strawberries, huge, right? "Oh wow."

167 Ria: And they were really- they're very excited.

168 That's interesting. **This story has sparked a**
169 **link for Bahar.** Because my father-in-law,
170 he has a big garden. So, my husband is
171 always saying that he wants to- if his parents
172 come over, he wants to take him to the
173 farmers' market or to any farmers' market
174 because his dad really likes these kinds of
175 things.

176

177 Rahul: Even when my parents were here, right, it was as if they were not here, so we continue the
178 same way. If we're having friends over or friends would invite us together with my parents
179 we would go and visit, so it was fun. My mom, she miss Canada so much.

180 Ria: She wants to come back.

181 Rahul: She wants to come back, but my dad, he doesn't want to that much. He prefers to be home
182 with his friends. He's retired, right, so every afternoon he always walk with his friends,
183 have a chitchat. But he is by himself here. But my mom, if I tell her tomorrow, she will
184 just jump on the plane, comeback.

185 **We start to talk about the problems with taking vacation from work, and the limitations this**
186 **brings.**

187 Ria: Because of my present job here, if I have to take vacation for next year, I have to bid for
188 my vacation, right. So, I've taken my vacation, for example, I've said "okay, we're not

189 expecting anyone next year, so I'll take this, this, and this". And if someone suddenly
190 comes by, right, I said, "okay, I have to manage my time", right? So, I'll say, "I'll
191 maximize in weekend because I didn't know you are coming, so I didn't plan my vacation
192 as such, so I've taken my vacation. I cannot change, also because it's difficult you cannot
193 change, you won't have it", right. If it can be done, it can be done. If it cannot be done,
194 we'll just say, "okay you can come over a long weekend or you can come over weekends,
195 or even if you come during the day, we'll be in the morning, in the evening, but not during
196 the day". We have a friend, he might be coming- I don't know- from Montreal.

197 *Tom: The one you went to visit?*

198 Ria: Yeah, he might be coming in August. So, he was planning from last year, he's coming,
199 then he said no.

200 Rahul: Ria wasn't getting vacation, and now our friend's parents are visiting him in Montreal.

201 Ria: Yeah, and I said, "okay, whenever you're free, you're free to come."

202 Rahul: "But please come during summer, when it's good to go out", right.

203 Ria: Because last time he said that he will be coming- what he said, he'll be leaving on Saturday,
204 so it's seven hours drive, right, seven hours with kids and so on. So, he said he'll come
205 here in the afternoon, he'll just come here for sleepover and he leave tomorrow morning.
206 I said, "no! That's not the plan if you have to come". And he has two kids. It will be-
207 like they will be getting tired, right. I said, "No, if you have to come here, plan something
208 good. You have to be here for two days, all day. Don't just come here for sleepover."

209 Rahul: He wants to go to Niagara, so it's impossible, right.

210 Ria: “Plan something like in a long weekend, whenever you’re free just let us know, we’ll make
211 it, we’ll be available for you, but just come for two days. Don’t just come for the night,
212 no”.

213 Tom: *That’s a long way to come.*

214 Rahul: Yeah.

215 Ria: That’s long way and you have just to sleep and you go back

216 Rahul: We won’t be able to go anywhere.

217 **Monty agrees with this logic.** If
218 you’re coming to visit, if you're a
219 good friend you shouldn’t come for a
220 day. Like this kind of action actually
221 would offend them, and they would
222 be like “no, you have to come at least
223 for two days” like she said, or more
224 than two days.

225

226 Rahul: I think seeing people is important, because we are people who like to socialize, right. And
227 this is the culture of Mauritius. This is how we live in Mauritius, right. So, otherwise it
228 could be very boring. It could be very boring because, like the whole week we’re just like
229 work and work. Otherwise, we’ll just really be stressed out.

230 Ria: We enjoy people coming.

231 Rahul: Yeah, coming or visiting people.

232 Tom: *Right, do you ever try and convince people to come? Like on the phone or on Facebook,*
233 *“you should come, you should come”.*

234 Rahul: Like my parents, right. Yeah, like my mom, every time I call her, I say, “mom, you have
235 to come, you have to come by”. “Yeah, I want to come but you know how your dad is”.

236 Ria: Even my friend in Montreal, I keep on saying that “you should come, please come, kids
237 will be on vacation, please come over- this and that, keep on convincing, please come, we’ll
238 enjoy”. They never- they are here in Montreal- I think it’s going to be three years, four
239 years, right. They’ve never been to Niagara Falls, so I said, “okay, it’s a good opportunity,
240 we can go together, summer, we can bring the kids”, right, since we’ve gone there so many
241 times but they’ll enjoy. “So, do come over.” If this summer is gone, now it will be next
242 year!

243 Rahul: Now we’ll have to wait for next year

Appendix C: Lucy

Our first meeting was in July 2013. My questions and comments are shown in italics. Our second meeting was in March 2014, nine months later. The comments from this second meeting are shown in narrow central paragraphs. Anna also watched Lucy's first video, and her comments are shown in italic paragraphs on the right of the page.

1 So, I never really got an opportunity to travel, because I never really had the money to go and do
2 the year off to Aus or New Zealand or wherever everybody else did. I couldn't really afford it
3 and I was bored. I was in London working at a big international company in London and I'd
4 worked there for a couple- like three or four years or something, and I obviously knew there was
5 a lot of options with the company throughout the world. So, I applied to loads of places, like San
6 Diego and Toronto.

7 *But mostly North America?*

8 Yes. But then I had to come to a decision, was it San Diego, or is it Toronto? So, I ended up going
9 with Toronto because I figured that I had worked with Canadians, in the pub that I worked at down
10 the street in England, and I thought, "Canada is a better option".

11 And then you know what I decided? I decided, "oh screw it, let's just go, it'll be alright. Like, it
12 can't be that bad. It's going to be fun!" I thought it's going to be really fun and all the rest of it.
13 But hmmm... it wasn't quite like that.

14 Because I think I'd made it in my head that it was going to be this fun-party-have-a-good-time-
15 city. I mean I've always found it easy to speak to people and I like meeting people, I like going
16 out and drinking and having a good time, and everybody said to me, "oh don't worry, you'll meet

17 people, everyone's going to love you, they're going to love the accent", but it wasn't like that at
18 all.

19 Well, actually, the first week or so was not that miserable because it was all new and exciting. I'd
20 told myself I could not cry for the first three months. It was a no no, like "you just can't cry
21 because if you do, you'll go home". I don't give up easily at stuff so I said to myself, "you have
22 to do this". But it was pretty lonely. And I would go out to the pub.

23 *On your own?*

24 Yeah. And there was one night- that was probably my lowest because- I think I actually did shots
25 with the bartender. I think he felt sorry for me- "oh god, this girl doesn't know anyone". You
26 know, I was never afraid of saying "I'm new to the country, fresh off the boat type of thing", but
27 then I was like, "God, this is like- this is bad".

28 **Nine months later, I ask Lucy:**

29 *How do you feel watching that?*

30 Yeah, I don't really like it. Because I think it sounds
31 so depressing. There are a lot of really good things
32 as well and I think I made it sound really bad.
33 Especially past the first winter. When summer hit,
34 things changed a lot. It's not that bad everybody (she
35 says to an absent audience) ...

36

37 So the first visit was from my friend Michelle, who's one of my best friends in London. She came
38 for my birthday, and my birthday is in the depths of winter. On the day of my birthday it was
39 minus forty with wind chill here, my first year in Canada. But I was determined to go out, and
40 wear heels! It was a work night, like it was, you know, a school night I call it, and we went out on
41 College St to Lava Lounge, I think it was called at the time.

42 *How was it?*

43 Yeah. It was okay, right. It wasn't like a birthday at home. There was nobody in the bar, like
44 nobody. We were the only ones in the bar. It's freezing. When I got out the cab, I couldn't walk
45 because there was thick ice on the floor, and my stilettos- I was wearing red stilettos- I couldn't
46 walk in them, so Andy took one side of me and John took the other and basically carried me into
47 the bar. Because I was determined to wear my nice outfit.

48 *That's funny. So, was Michelle there for that night?*

49 She was here for my birthday. She came a couple of days prior to that. I was still working actually,
50 because I couldn't take any time off that first time that she came over so I arranged a couple of
51 things for her. We were going to go Niagara Falls, which was obviously the biggest destination
52 because, you know- "wonder of the world". Everybody wants to see that. I'd never been so it was
53 the first time for me too.

54 But I had this vision in my head that Niagara Falls was going to be in the middle of a forest, and
55 it was going to be this beautiful landscape and, you know, obviously the big falls. Again, I didn't
56 have internet, didn't look at pictures, didn't have any concept of how it looked until I got there.
57 And God, was I disappointed. Most places were shut up, like nothing was really open, but it was

58 tacky, it was like being in Blackpool or somewhere like that in England and I was so disappointed.

59 We were so- we were like, “God, this is bad!”

60 I had to buy some socks along the way because I was in pink ballet flats and it was minus

61 something, and I was like, “God, it’s really cold” and Michelle said, “Yeah, you might want to buy

62 yourself some socks Luce! Not really prepared are you, you’re in Canada!” I was like, “oh God,

63 she’s right.”

64 And so we got down there, and you know what, it was impressive once you got up to the wall part.

65 The wall was actually- I’ll never forget it- the wall was covered in ice, which is actually quite

66 pretty. Like, I didn’t really want to stand there for too long. But there’s a good picture of us-

67 Michelle and I standing next to Niagara Falls.

68 The third time that Michelle came to visit was the second time that Sam, her boyfriend, had come,

69 so they knew their way around by then. They were really happy and it was a really gorgeous

70 summer. I took them to Hooters because-

71 *To Hooters?!*

72 Yes, because they’d never heard of it and they thought it was hysterical, right. Michelle bought a

73 T-shirt at Hooters.

74 *Is that a Hooters T-shirt in the photo?*

75 It is. “Hooters main squeeze juice bar” it says.

76 (Lucy laughs at her friend posing in the picture)

77 They thought it was hysterical that I lived near a Hooters. And I thought it was funny, and I told

78 them, “the wings are great and the beer is great, we should go”, and they were like, “let’s go!” I

79 mean it was all about going out, right, like in the evenings. We went to The Drake a couple of
80 times and along Queen St there, and went out for dinner, on College St actually.

81 *Would you normally go to The Drake if your friends weren't here?*

82 I would, but not very often. It's a bit far for me to go. But it's just because The Drake at that point
83 was very new and the cool place to go, and it had a rooftop patio. I actually had only been once
84 before and so I thought "well why not go?"

85 I think we had one night where we had everybody over and said "we're going to have a party at
86 ours". They also went around on bikes for at least three days, and I think that was just before the
87 cottage.

88 The cottage was fantastic. The weather was beautiful. It was a clear lake, and the boys did
89 badminton, they built fires, and it sounds very manly, but that's basically what they did. Then we
90 just sat and read magazines, and got drunk, and swam in the lake, and it was perfect. Put music
91 on during the day and it was great. That was my second experience of a cottage I think. And that
92 was when I was like, "I want to do this." It's so much fun and then it continued on every year.

93 *Did the fact that Michelle and Sam came over that weekend, was that in part because you knew
94 you were going to go to the cottage?*

95 That's exactly why, because I wanted them to experience the cottage life because I knew they
96 would love it, because they like the outdoors. And they had a really good time. I think they saw
97 Canada in a completely different light.

98 *Do you think you saw Canada in a different light?*

99 Yes.

100 *How?*

101 Well, I never really experienced cottage life before. For me, cottage life is about lots of people and
102 having fun and people can go into their own worlds, whatever they want to do. And relaxing, and
103 just enjoying the scenery, and I don't know, having a bit of a break.

104 It is nice to hear that, because that is a good memory.

105 It is nice to hear good memories. It was a fun time.

106 **Lucy feels nostalgic as she listens to herself talk**
107 **about her friends visiting and the cottage trip.**

108 Michelle was a really a close friend. We are still
109 really, really close.

110 *Because even just after a couple of years of you*
111 *being here she visited a couple of times, right?*

112 Yeah. Michelle is amazing, she always comes.

113 *How important was it to have her come out in the*
114 *beginning?*

115 Very. Because my parents didn't, so that's the next
116 closest person to me. And Kelly as well. Kelly
117 came a few times. She came out like three times and
118 she's also been a constant person that will do it too.

119 Laura's come out a few times too, she's been three
120 times. It is really important. It is nice to have a slice

121 of home here. To bring me a bit down to earth
122 again. It is nice to have a bit of English humour, to
123 have that culture around you again. Yeah, it is
124 important. I like that.

125

126 *Is there any kind of enjoyment for you seeing your friends go, “wow, this is kind of cool where you*
127 *live”?*

128 Yeah, of course it is, because I mean this is where I am and this is where probably I’m going to
129 stay. Like, this is what they get to see. But in all honesty, it was very important to me at one point
130 that they liked where I came, and they liked my friends and they enjoyed their time here. Now, it’s
131 not important to me, and that’s not me being mean, it’s just me saying this is how it is. It’s much
132 more about them coming to see my kids I think, and Andy and me, than really seeing the city. I
133 think the longer you’ve been somewhere, I think the less people come as well and I also think with
134 age, people have kids and it becomes a lot harder. Since Michelle had a baby- I mean obviously
135 she hasn’t been here and probably won’t for a long time.

136 **Anna wants some clarification about**
137 **Lucy’s home life.**

138 So what’s her family situation?

139 *She’s married.*

140 With a baby?

141 *Yes. So she actually has one 2 year old, and*
142 *two 1 year olds right now.*

143 **Wow. Busy.**

144 *Yep.*

145

146 So my parents didn't come until I had my daughter, which is two years ago now.

147 *Because that visit was quite a big deal, wasn't it?*

148 Big deal, big deal, a very, very big deal.

149 *They hadn't been here previously?*

150 Never.

151 *And you've been about ten years or so?*

152 Yeah.

153 *And had that bothered you that they'd never been?*

154 Yeah, big time, yeah.

155 *Why?*

156 Because why wouldn't you go and see your daughter, where she lives and where she grew up, you
157 know? But, you know something, in their eyes, it was me that moved.

158 So I saw a taxi pulling up and I looked at the window, I thought, "that looks like dad", and then I
159 saw my mum getting out and I said, "Andy! Mum and dad are here!" I mean, it's a pretty stressful

160 time, eight days after you've given birth to a baby and like everything is new and then your parents
161 turn up. But I wouldn't change it.

162 **I want to make sure that Anna truly**
163 **understands what Lucy is saying.**

164 *So her parents showed up*
165 *unexpectedly- unannounced.*

166 Oh they did?! I wouldn't be impressed at all
167 if I would have just given birth and my
168 parents would arrive. Especially after giving
169 birth the first time, and somebody comes to
170 visit you? I wouldn't be happy.

171
172 *So, how was your parents' visit for you?*

173 Good, but a bit stressful because I didn't have everything. I would have liked to have been a bit
174 more prepared, and I didn't know what to do with them. Then I realized after two days, I didn't
175 have to do anything. They were just interested in staying with me. They would spend the days
176 with me and we'd cook a jacket potato, which was so English you know, like, with beans and
177 cheese.

178 And then Andy's parents invited them over for dinner, the one night, for a barbecue and- God, this
179 was awful. Andy's mum bought out 'the loon'. She has this 'loon'. This stuffed 'loon', that you
180 press and it makes a loon noise. At the time I think I was in with my baby feeding her and then

181 Andy came down to the basement and said, “Oh my God, my mum is going crazy. She brought
182 the loon out!” I said, “Oh, my God! What did my parents do?!”

183 ‘Cause I could just imagine my parents being like- “what are you doing?!” They couldn’t be more
184 opposite parents, right.

185 *And was this is the first time they’ve met?*

186 First time. Then they talked about Jack Layton’s funeral, and Andy’s mum said, “Oh, I bet it was
187 a lovely procession.” And my dad said, “oh, it’s not like England.” And I was cringing. And
188 Andy’s mum said, “well, didn’t they have all the Mounties there?” My dad said, “Well, the horses
189 weren’t up to scratch.” My mum said, “Oh yeah, the stallions, they weren’t that good, in England
190 they do a much better procession than that. I thought it was actually a bit rubbish.”

191 (Lucy screws her eyes and covers her face with her hands for a couple of seconds).

192 I don’t think they realized quite what they were saying. I was a bit embarrassed. Then my mum
193 started to not feel well. So she said, “where’s the toilet?” So, I took her to the toilet and she fainted
194 at Andy’s parents’ house. Yeah, drama! And she fainted and was sick and she had a bad migraine
195 so they had to just go.

196 So Andy had to drive them back to the hotel, and they didn’t have any dinner there, and I felt so
197 bad because his mum got a cake and she really made an effort because that’s the type of person
198 she is, and that was it. They didn’t see them again because they left, not the next day, but the day
199 after.

200 *How long had they been to the house for?*

201 An hour, if that, if that. Andy's parents had got a nice bottle of champagne in- oh God. They
202 made sure the pool looked really nice and laid the table- oh God. In a way, it was a bit of a relief
203 for me really because it would have just got even more awkward.

204 **As she watches herself tell the story Lucy is**
205 **smiling.**

206 It is funny though. As embarrassing as it was it
207 really made me laugh.

208 *You mean during or after?*

209 In reflection. It's just so typical them. I don't know,
210 I've just got to love it. I'm not angry with them, I'm
211 just like, "Okay, that's just them".

212

213 *So, apart from the stressful awkwardness of it all, what enjoyment did you get with your parents?*

214 Well, it was so nice to see my parents and for them to- you know, the good old days, right? And
215 just to chat about anything and everything. It's the same thing, they put on the BBC channel and
216 there's Antiques Roadshow, they're just like that at home

217 **Anna explains how seeing her parents is**
218 **different.**

219 It's interesting that Lucy says, you know, that
220 she can talk to her parents about anything and
221 everything, and everything's the same. I don't

222 think I feel at all that way. Every time I see
223 my parents- the first thought in my head when
224 I see them in the airport is like “my God, how
225 much older have they become?” So it is
226 definitely not like we meet every time and it's
227 just back where we stopped, it's not. You
228 know, I've moved on, for sure, I've
229 become maybe much less patient, much more
230 opinionated, I don't know. And they've
231 become slower and less interested. Like the
232 emotions are, dulling off, I don't know.

233 *Perhaps because you see your parents*
234 *in infrequent, short, and sharp bursts the*
235 *contrast is much greater than if you lived*
236 *back home in Latvia.*

237 Yeah. Absolutely, and then of course
238 they would be more involved in my life in
239 general. So now when I come up with this
240 big story you know, it's kind of just a little
241 snapshot of time and unless they know all
242 the context around it, well yeah, maybe it's
243 not that interesting.

244

245 *Do you feel more at ease that your parents met your daughter?*

246 Yeah, I mean I think it's important for them too. Like- that's their granddaughter. I think it's nice
247 that they met her but I think it'd be nice if they came again because it's harder for us to travel now
248 we have the twins as well. I do appreciate it's not easy for them either. It's a big deal for them to
249 do it, and I know it is. Like, I know them coming here is a lot for them and I do appreciate that.
250 So, I'm not going to be upset if they can't come to see the boys. I'd really like them too, but it's
251 not the end of the world, because we're going to go to England next year.

252 **In the morning of our second meeting Lucy's**
253 **parents had told her that they could not**
254 **accommodate her and her family in their home on**
255 **her planned trip to the UK in the coming summer.**

256 Well, to add to that, I think I am upset they haven't
257 come. But I think I am more upset that they couldn't
258 accommodate us back in England, because I am
259 willing to travel. I'll do anything. I'm ok with
260 travelling. I've never done it with the kids, so I might
261 take that back, but I am prepared to do it. I said I
262 would be okay with them not coming, but I don't
263 think I am okay. I think I am irritated because I feel
264 that I don't think I could ever do that to my kids. No-
265 I don't think I won't, I just won't. I've learned a lot.

266 But we'll still go to England, whatever happens, we'll
267 go. And my kids can at least know their
268 grandparents. And I'll just bite my lip when I get
269 irritated.

Appendix D: Bahar

Our first meeting was in July 2013. My questions and comments are shown in italics. Our second meeting was in December 2013, five months later. The comments from this second meeting are shown in narrow central paragraphs. Lucy also watched Bahar's first video, and her comments are shown in paragraphs on the right of the page.

1 We actually moved here, to Canada, like four years and a half ago. So it was back in 2009, it was
2 March. But the thing is, when my mom started the process, it was back in 2003. But when we
3 moved here I was 24 or 25.

4 *Okay, and you were 18 or 19 when the process started?*

5 Yeah. And my mom has four sisters and a brother, so right now three of them- three of her sisters
6 are living in Toronto and her other sister is living in the States, and her brother has moved to
7 Canada 36 years ago. So, they just moved here in different stages and my mom was the only
8 member living in Iran. So, she was not really happy being alone. Of course, she has so many
9 friends out there but she needs the support of her family. So, my mom was the main applicant on
10 our application and she was also the person who wanted us to move. She was the one who made
11 the decision.

12 When I think about it, immigration was something that we were always talking about in our family
13 and it really made me uncomfortable because it made me think that things are not stable. I couldn't
14 just have a long-term plan for myself, but I remember when it got really serious and my mom says
15 she was going to apply for Canada was when I was 16 or 17, but I don't know, I just tried to make
16 short-term plans for myself. And I was not really happy moving here because I had a lot of good
17 friends there. I was really settled and I was really doing good out there.

18 So, we got landed here and after four weeks or so, my mom went back home.

19 *And left you here?*

20 Yes, and my dad was here for about two months and a half and he also went back home. Because
21 the thing is, we still had things out there so we just locked the door of our apartment and left. I've
22 never seen my dad crying, except for two times. Once is when my grandmother died. And the
23 second time was when my mom was leaving for Iran in the airport. So, I would say that was- I
24 mean I could tell that it was really hard on the whole family.

25 **At our second meeting, I'm intrigued by this**
26 **story.**

27 *I've got a question about that. That's quite a big part*
28 *of the story to me, that you were apparently not*
29 *terribly excited about leaving.*

30 Iran? No, not at all.

31 *And your mom brought you all to this cold foreign*
32 *country, and four weeks later she goes back.*

33 Yeah.

34 *Did that, for lack of a better term, piss you off?*

35 It did piss me off, but to be honest, this is my mom,
36 and that was the plan, that my mom wanted us to get

37 landed and she wanted to go back. We all knew that
38 prior to our arrival.

39

40 At the time, my uncle was in the process of getting divorced from his wife so he just moved to an
41 apartment.

42 *And he's in Toronto?*

43 He's in Toronto, yeah. So, he said that we can stay with him while our parents are away. So my
44 sister and I stayed with him and I think we lived with him for a year, or maybe more than a year,
45 after my parents came back here.

46 *Okay, so you didn't actually live with your parents?*

47 No, they were not here for a year or so. And I think it was really tough. I mean the first year was
48 really tough and especially I think for me because my husband, who was my boyfriend at the time,
49 was back home and when I moved here we were kind of in the process of breaking up because I
50 wanted- actually, I didn't want to move here but my mom wanted us to move here- and I couldn't
51 say "I can't, I'm not moving here", because in Iran it's not really common when you're not married
52 to live on your own. So, I couldn't really say, "okay, you guys go, I'll just stay here". And so, the
53 only way for us to be together was by getting married and we were not really ready for that phase.
54 And when I was here we were talking every day and I didn't know where we're standing, because
55 emotionally we were really attached to each other and we were really happy together. So, after a
56 year that I was here, I just went back home and we got married and I just came back here and so
57 the last four years of my life, things were not really stable.

58 I was thinking about it actually last night, that it's only been a couple of months that things are
59 really- I think, like things are really settling in on my end and I can say I'm feeling comfortable
60 and calm. And that's why I'm thinking, like immigration is not something that everyone could
61 handle really well.

62 No. I'm not feeling comfortable and calm, no, no.

63 I was lying, through my teeth! **Five months later**

64 **Bahar jumps in.** The thing is when I was talking to

65 you five months ago, I was feeling calm. I was not

66 lying about that. But I don't think my life is like a

67 straight line right now, and everything is "I'm calm

68 and I don't have any problems with immigration". I

69 think I'm up and down.

70 **Lucy is impressed.** I'm surprised she didn't

71 go off the rails. She's probably a strong

72 woman. Wow.

73

74 The first person who came to visit us was a friend that I have from Iran, who lived in Vancouver

75 at the time with her sisters. Her parents were still back home in Iran. So, she just came to visit

76 me- I think it was the third week- yeah, it was the third week after we got landed here.

77 *Wow, really soon.*

78 Yes, it was right after my mom left. Because you know, I had a lot of relatives and family around

79 me, but I really needed some friends. I was really feeling that I have a lack of friends in my life.

80 **At our second meeting Bahar explains further.**

81 Do you know why I needed friends? I was so emotional. I
82 wanted someone who I could share my emotions with, not
83 someone who would lecture me on why it is good that you
84 just moved here. I don't know, I needed some support.

85

86 It was funny because whenever I was making comments about the things that were here, my friend
87 and her sister were like "we were like that too, you'll just get used to it". I knew how stressful is
88 the process of immigration. Because she had kind of the same experience as I had. She stayed
89 with her uncle and his family for a year. And she told how hard it was for her and for her uncle
90 and his family to have her. It was kind of hard for both of them.

91 They didn't stay at our place. I remember they were staying in a hotel in Chinatown, because I
92 was not really feeling comfortable because it was not my place where I was staying, and I felt I
93 don't have much to offer to them, you know? We lived for the first year with the very basics. I
94 mean we didn't buy furniture and stuff. You know, coming from an Iranian culture we're really-
95 it's not that we feel uncomfortable when we're having guests over, but we're really doing our best
96 to welcome the guests we have and just provide them with all the good things we have. So if
97 you're not doing that, it's kind of offensive, it means that you don't want those people to be over.

98 Maybe I shouldn't use the word "uncomfortable".

99 **Bahar felt the need to clarify.** We

100 are not uncomfortable when we're having guests. I

101 mean, I shouldn't even put it out there. Like coming

102 from an Iranian culture having guests over is
103 something really good, most of the families like. I
104 just wanted to say like the word uncomfortable was
105 not the best choice of word.

106

107 I just kept saying “sorry that we don’t have things to provide you with and make you comfortable
108 here”, and they were laughing at me saying that “this is how people are living here. They’re not
109 really going to have luxury and stuff”, so that was something I got used to after a while.

110 *So, it kind of helped you understand what was normal in Canada?*

111 Yeah.

112 We spent all the time that we’re in Toronto together. So we had them a couple of times over for
113 lunch or dinner and then we used to hang out together. She was really interested in architecture
114 herself and she told me she wanted to take a lot of pictures, and the first thing that comes to my
115 mind when I think of her visiting me is the ROM, the Royal Ontario Museum. And I remember
116 that was the first time I was really seeing things. Because I think one of the things that is really
117 different here versus Iran is the architecture. Looking at the ROM, it’s an old building, right, so
118 the way they renovated it is not the way people would renovate things in Iran if you renovate
119 something like that, because it’s modernity and tradition at the same time, the building is like a
120 glass triangle. So, if you renovate something like that in Iran, there would be a lot drawbacks and
121 complaints about it because we’re trying to conserve the things the way they are and even if you’re
122 trying to renovate them, you’re trying to renovate it similar to the original building. So, that was
123 something that was really- that looked really weird to me, but after a while, I really got used to it.

124 So, we visited Harbourfront.

125 *The Harbourfront Centre?*

126 Yes, Harbourfront Centre, and I remember they really liked that coffee shop right by the shore.

127 And I remember that we had this joke that we had an overdose of cheesecake while we're there. I

128 think we had like three slices of cheesecake a day. So, wherever in Toronto that they have good

129 cheesecakes, I think we visited there also. Yeah, so whenever we're talking or sending each other

130 messages on Facebook or emails she said, "okay, let's have a slice of cheesecake".

131 (Bahar laughs at the story).

132 *Still now, you talk about having cheesecake in Toronto?*

133 Yeah.

134 *So, would you say that that first experience of having someone come to stay helped you settle in*

135 *Toronto in that immediate time?*

136 I would say so, because I was really afraid of going to places on my own. I was not afraid of

137 getting lost but I was not really feeling comfortable. It was not like my home and my comfort

138 zone. But after they just came and we just got on the buses and streetcars and subway and

139 everything, I think it really helped me knowing which station I should go for what. And that was

140 really helpful. And that was the first time they've been to Toronto. But like the way they

141 approached it made it really easier for me, like thinking that it's doable to do things on your own

142 in a place that you don't know.

143 I will never forget the time that she visited me here. Whenever I talk to her, I just tell her that I do

144 really appreciate what she did during that time of my life because it was really hard.

145 **Five months later, after watching and reflecting**
146 **on her first video, Bahar starts to think about the**
147 **times she’s had friends come to stay in a different**
148 **way.**

149 I was not really looking at it the way that you made
150 me look at it. Like I was not thinking that seeing
151 things, as you said “through fresh eyes” would really
152 be that different to make a difference. And then the
153 fact that having them over made me more
154 comfortable doing things, it was not something that I
155 was thinking about. I was thinking “okay, it was nice
156 to see her and have her over” but I was not really
157 looking beyond that, like that trip that they made here
158 helped me settling in. That was not how I was
159 looking at it.

160 **Lucy feels that she’s gained some**
161 **perspective.**

162 That is a really interesting story. It’s just such
163 polar opposite from mine. Do you know what
164 I mean? Mine is more like a choice- hers
165 wasn't a choice. I think I’m doing a big move

166

but that was nothing, it's nothing compared

167

to what she went through.

Appendix E: Hiva

She was introduced to me by her sister, Bahar, who I also met for this project. My questions and comments are shown in italics. Bahar also watched Hiva's video, and her comments are shown in italic paragraphs on the right of the page.

1 Well, I'm from Iran, Middle East, in the middle of the Middle East and we actually immigrated
2 from there four years ago, I guess.

3 *So, with your parents?*

4 Yeah, with my parents and my sister. When we arrived in Toronto, it was really cold. I remember
5 it was like minus sixteen, without wind chill, so probably twenty- minus twenty-five or something.
6 And the whole city was dead. My uncle came to pick us up and then he drove from the airport and
7 then there was no one on the street, so like it was just kind of weird and really cold, and we were
8 tired. Like a lot of things just added up to have this, I guess, not good image of Toronto.

9 **Bahar agrees and adds her memories of**
10 **the event.**

11 You know, I had the same feeling but I think
12 part of that was because we're driving
13 through the highway and everywhere was
14 gray, and I was like "what the hell?! This is
15 ugly! This is gray, why is it like that? Why is
16 it so cold?" And out in Iran, when we were
17 leaving, I think it was about fifteen degrees.

18 *You should never move to Canada during the*
19 *winter.*

20 No!

21

22 But I guess through time- like afterwards it was summer and I had to get a job, and then made
23 some friends, and things got better. I was happy because I've never really thought I would have
24 stayed in Iran for my whole life, because I wanted to do things, and I wanted to be more free and
25 just wanted to do anything I want. But on the other hand, well, I had a lot of friends back there
26 and I knew everyone. Like there was a big group of friends from high school and we used to
27 hangout, and were very close friends. So I was sad that I was going to lose them.

28 *And you said that you started to miss everything, even the bad stuff?*

29 Even the bad stuff.

30 *Like, what types of things?*

31 Crazy traffic.

32 *Right?*

33 There's crazy people out there, and like they swear and shout.

34 She means back home right? **Bahar's**
35 **amused.**

36 She misses crazy people?! That's funny.

37

38 Well, when I came here, what I remember from those moments in the traffic was that we used to
39 play songs and we used to sing and shout and dance in the car, and we we enjoyed our time there.
40 We used to wear hijab. I didn't like it, I don't like it at all, but I don't know why, you just like
41 everything about your country. Whenever someone here says that "Iran is that and this" you just
42 go crazy and you want to say that it's not. You become more, I guess, nationalist somehow, yeah,
43 when you move somewhere else.

44 **Bahar found the same thing.** You'll notice
45 after a while that when you get out of Iran
46 you'll get even more Iranian. Like it seems
47 like you're just trying to be proud, you're
48 trying to find something that is representing
49 you and your culture as an Iranian, and as
50 she said, you're getting nationalist.

51

52 I started to discover the little places in Toronto though and I love that.

53 *What did you find that you like?*

54 Like, in downtown, every corner there's this café, there's this band playing. I'm into music so I'm
55 always looking for some little places where people play jazz, this kind of stuff, galleries. So, I
56 kind of discovered Toronto downtown. I really love it. One of my friends, she came from London,
57 England, and she stayed for, I guess, three days or something with me. And she hated it here.

58 *Oh yeah?*

59 Yeah, she was looking for- she was telling me that in London downtown, you see a lot of theatres,
60 a lot of arts, and you don't see them here. She didn't like how big and massive everything here is,
61 like the streets, like the food, and everything. I guess it's a personal taste. She came, I guess, in
62 2010 and even though she had time to visit me again afterwards, she never really suggested that
63 she wanted to see me here. She always suggests that maybe we can see each other at some other
64 places.

65 *How did that make you feel, having someone to come to visit you and not liking where you live?*

66 Well, I guess that made me think that maybe she's right because I'm into art and stuff too. But I
67 don't know. I just told her that I'm really comfortable here. I don't know, maybe you have to stay
68 longer to see, maybe you have to work, and like you have to- I don't know- use healthcare systems
69 or things like that to see how the living is here, how the life is here.

70 *Was your relationship while she was here- did you get on okay? Did you stay friends?*

71 Yeah, we were best friends, like best high school friends from back home, and we still are. But
72 we actually had the time to talk to each other when she visited Toronto. Because when I was in
73 Iran, in high school, she left. And every year, maybe for two or three weeks, she used to come to
74 Iran. And we were in a group of friends doing stuff so we never really had that time to sit and talk,
75 like me and her, about life and experiences we have and share things. So, this time we spent most
76 of the time actually talking.

77 One of my other friends she came from Iran last year I guess. Like after thirteen years or so, I saw
78 her here. And there was this connection, we could talk and we could go out, and everything was

79 weird, but it's connected, there was something. I was really excited because I wanted to show her
80 everything, just took her everywhere, I guess. So I took her to some little places like downtown,
81 to galleries and some stuff, some music events.

82 *Things that you're particularly fond of?*

83 Yes. I guess we've been Wonderland once too.

84 *Why Wonderland?*

85 To have some excitement I guess. Yeah, and it was my first time too. I've never been to
86 Wonderland before that. So we really had some fun time. And I guess she enjoyed that because
87 there was this Luna Park, or something like that, in Iran and then they had to destroy it. I guess
88 they destroyed it a couple of years ago and we used to go. As a child, we used to go there. It was
89 in the middle of the city and- well, it reminded both of us of that kind of excitement and fear and
90 the feelings that we had back there, back home, I guess.

91 It's interesting because I never looked at it
92 that way. **Bahar remembers Luna Park**
93 **too.** I mean if she doesn't mention it I
94 wouldn't even be thinking about it, now that
95 she said, I remember like there were two
96 amusement parks. They used to be both in
97 the city. So they just closed them down and
98 they're making highways. So, I don't think
99 we've been to many amusement parks ever
100 since.

101

102 *And how close were you and this friend back home? Is she a really good friend?*

103 No, just a friend I guess. But I know that people from school- friends from school after a while
104 they just become- I just want to know them for some reason. They're holding something from the
105 past. Back then everything was so pure so I just want that pureness to be with me somehow.
106 Maybe that's why I just keep that friendship. I always keep it somehow. I guess subconsciously
107 you want everything to stay the same, the friends, the places, the people, and when you don't see
108 them for a while you don't want to ruin that image that you have made of them. But many times
109 in reality, like when you see someone after a couple of years and when you grew up apart,
110 somehow, you can't see the connection anymore. So, you prefer some people who've been around
111 you for a while here, or like you want to do stuff with them, you want them to be physically
112 available.

113 **This nostalgic view of the past stirs Bahar**
114 **to comment.** I have to keep reminding
115 myself of that, that everything, like life, goes
116 on, and that things move on, like nothing
117 stays the same. But then when I think about
118 back home, I'm thinking about those people
119 with those relationships in those places, some
120 of them they don't even exist anymore.

121

122 *But having someone come from your Iranian past to visit you, it's-?*

123 It's a nice feeling, it's a nice thing, yeah. But after a while sometimes you realized that everything
124 is just-

125 *You've spread apart?*

126 Yeah, somehow. I don't know, but everyone who comes here, I just wanted to- for some reason,
127 I feel responsible to take care of them or take them anywhere they wanted to go see. I just want
128 them to see the beauty of the city and not that coldness or craziness and just competing that they
129 see and they're going to- because they see that anyways, right. But you want to show them some
130 beauty and some things that they'll fall in love with.

Appendix F: Mary

Our first meeting was in August 2013. My questions and comments are shown in italics. Our second meeting was in February 2014, six months later. The comments from this second meeting are shown in narrow central paragraphs. Lucy also watched Mary's first video, and her comments are shown in italic paragraphs on the right of the page.

1 I came to Canada in May, in 2008. So, that's basically five years and three months.

2 *Okay, did you arrive in Toronto?*

3 Yeah, Toronto only. I didn't go anywhere else. From 2003 to 2008, five years, I worked for a big
4 online company in China. After five years working for the same company, I said, "it's time to
5 move". And I applied for immigration here in Canada. I said, "it's time to start a new adventure".
6 With my background, I didn't think I can go to any countries with a different language, so probably
7 English-speaking country is the only option. And New Zealand? No. Australia? No. America,
8 U.S? I don't think the door was open at the time. Canada- the door was open. And with my
9 background, it was really easy actually to apply.

10 I applied, then I almost forgot. I started to enjoy my life there in China, and suddenly I got that
11 notice that "you're granted". And I thought, "that's nice, I almost forgot!" It was a long time, but
12 I didn't suffer.

13 *Okay, and so did you move with your partner? Or with any family? Or did you come alone?*

14 I came alone. Actually, back to the time, my boyfriend- now he's my husband- he was living in
15 New Zealand, and we started to chat online and we decided to develop the relationship. But he

16 was in New Zealand and I was in China. When I decided to come to Canada, he came along. And
17 he's now in Canada as well, and we're married.

18 *Right, congratulations.*

19 Thank you.

20 *And now you're settled and you have a family?*

21 Yes, we have a family here. We have two lovely kids, and actually, we both love this country.

22 My language was very, very poor when I came here, I can guarantee that. I still remember the
23 second day, I went to Tim Hortons' and I wanted a cup of coffee. So, I asked the lady there, I said,
24 "coffee please?", and she said, "how would you like it?" And I thought, "what do you mean? I
25 don't know what are you talking about!?"

26 (We both laugh at the story, as I remember the confusion of my own first coffee order in Canada
27 for the first time).

28 And the guy next to me said something about "double double", and I picked that word up and I
29 said, "that's an easy word, 'double double!'"

30 *You didn't know what you're asking for?*

31 I kind of get a sense that the double double probably means something double, something good,
32 okay, then "double double!"

33 **Lucy too enjoys the humour.** She didn't go
34 to Second Cup, she didn't go to Starbucks,
35 she went to Tim Hortons', I love it, I love it,

36 it's brilliant! But it is really foreign, like
37 "double double"? I even remember thinking
38 "double double? What's double double?" So
39 I can't imagine, being Chinese and doing
40 that! I don't blame her.

41
42 I went to university when I was 18 or 17, and that was 1996. And since then I barely spent much
43 time at home with my parents. So, when I was in the university, I went home twice a year. And
44 when I started to work, probably three times a year. And every time I just spend a few days.
45 Actually, now I spend more time with my family than when I was in China.

46 My family- it's not very big family. I have a sister, and both of my parents have come here for a
47 couple of times. And when I had the first baby, they came over to help. The first time they came
48 here, they were surprised about by how nice the country is, but they also felt lonely here because
49 they don't speak the language. They can drive back in China, but here they can't because either
50 they don't have the driver's license here or they can't read the signs and they don't know the rules
51 so it's hard for them to go around. So, they just stay at home or they ask me to take them out. It's
52 really hard. They describe it as a prison. It's a nice prison.

53 And the second time, they were well mentally prepared, so they started to look into the good side
54 of this country, so they started to enjoy the environment. Actually, my father is a very open-
55 minded person, and he actually got a driver's license here. They also find some Chinese
56 community in Ajax. So he goes there every week, once a week, and he has friends there. But my
57 mother, she's still having problems in here and I guess at some level she still thinks it's kind of a

58 prison. They stayed here for six months. And second time, when I had my second baby, they
59 came over again. And then my mom went back in six months, my dad stayed for eighteen months.

60 *Eighteen months? Wow.*

61 Eighteen months, yeah, and he's coming again next month. Besides from my parents, my sister
62 and brother-in-law came over twice as well. And my sister- she never stops working- housework.
63 So if she's in my house the house is nice and clean. Which is nice, and she cooks, and she would
64 never let me in the kitchen to do anything, to do any work. Every time I'm going to try to work to
65 help her and she will be like, "get out, get out! Play the game, play with the kids, don't do
66 anything!" Yeah, she's so helpful.

67 She loves all kinds of food as well, and we tried different foods here. So, there's Mucho Burrito,
68 a nice place, and a lot of local restaurants and we're trying and we love it. And one thing my sister
69 loves is the garage sale. We don't have that in China.

70 *Right, so when your sister comes you go to garage sales?*

71 We go to garage sales, and it's not like something we needed, it's just something you don't see in
72 stores. We got the wooden statue from Europe. Back in the 1950s the lady's father when he was
73 travelling in Europe bought those statues, it's perfect, from Spain. It's beautiful and only five
74 bucks. It's a piece of art actually.

75 *And is that something you would do on your own or really only when your sister- ?*

76 Only when my family comes.

77 **I explain my curiosity with this story to Lucy.**

78 *I just found that really interesting as well, how*
79 *immigrants have people stay with them, and use that*
80 *opportunity to build that sense of home. So Mary has*
81 *gone out shopping with her sister and she bought this*
82 *random wooden statue and now it's in her home.*
83 *That gives a link between her old home and the new*
84 *home. And now she sees it every day and it kind of*
85 *connects the two.*

86 That's really an interesting point. You need to talk to
87 Andy about my pineapple ice cube holder that
88 Michelle gave me, and I can't get rid of it, and he
89 hates it and wants it to go and I'm like, "no, it's never
90 going!" She gave that to me and I can't get rid of it.
91 I think she bought it here in Toronto and gave it to
92 me. Yeah, I'm positive she bought it here and gave
93 to me. Like, it's a bucket, with a lid on it, like a
94 pineapple. It's gorgeous!

95

96 The first time my sister came here for four months, the second time, just stayed with us for a few
97 months. And they both like here and actually next month when my dad comes, my sister and
98 brother-in-law will come along, and we'll spend Thanksgiving together. But we have the Middle
99 Moon festival, which is same meaning, to celebrate the harvest in fall. So, pretty much the same

100 thing, and pretty much at the same time. It's in early October. And in this summer, we discovered
101 a very good place here in Ontario, is the Prince Edward County, we're going there.

102 *Oh, lovely, for that holiday?*

103 Probably not right on that day, but we will pick a day during that time, spend a weekend out there.

104 Actually, my husband's mother is here with us now, and back in June it was her birthday.

105 We decided to celebrate her birthday over there so we went there, spent a weekend and it was nice,

106 it was a very, very nice place. People there are so kind. We couldn't help ourselves, so we spent

107 a lot of money there!

108 *And so how do you feel that you now have the opportunity to host your whole family? Is that*

109 *important for you?*

110 Yeah, actually that is. And here in Canada I have the opportunity. So, back in China, my family

111 was in a city close to Macao and I was alone outside. Always I went back home and they host

112 things for me. And here in Canada, because I was the pioneer, I have the chance to host things for

113 them, which makes me really happy.

114 **A few months later we follow up about the Middle**

115 **Moon festival in Prince Edward County.**

116 *So did you go back to Prince Edward County?*

117 Yes, we did.

118 *How was it?*

119 This time it was a little bit different. The first time

120 we went there, we stayed in a hotel. The second we

121 went there, we stayed in a cottage because we had a
122 lot of people, so we rent a big cottage.

123 *So who is there with you?*

124 My sister, her husband, their kid, my husband, both
125 of my kids, my father, and one of my in-law's friend.

126 We drove around, we've been to the vineyard and
127 tasted all the wines, and it was really, really nice.

128 And on the way back we stopped by Port Hope and
129 watched the salmon. At that time were swimming
130 back to lay eggs.

131 *Oh, that's cool.*

132 That is the time that we saw tons of salmon in the
133 river. We ate salmon a lot, but that was actually the
134 first time we saw live salmon. I saw that people don't
135 try to capture or take away all the salmon, they let
136 those salmon go back and lay their eggs and
137 reproduce. Well, that won't happen in China
138 probably.

139

140 *It sounds like when your guests come to stay they come to stay for quite a long time?*

141 Yeah usually.

142 *At least a month?*

143 That's right.

144 *Is it something you look forward to?*

145 Yeah. Yeah.

146 *Is there any tension or sense of- that you've lost your privacy?*

147 With my own family? No. Because I grew up in the family. But with my mother-in-law, yes.

148 Because we're basically from different families, our habits don't match, so yeah.

149 *Yeah, can it be a bit awkward sometimes?*

150 Sometimes, I want to say something...

151 (Mary mimes zipping her mouth closed)

152 ...I shut up.

153 (And we both laugh).

154 *And do you ever have his family and your family at the same time?*

155 Oh, just a couple of days.

156 *And how is that?*

157 I personally, I think it's fine, it's just a couple of days. That's nice, and everybody is not arguing,

158 so it was fine. But my mother-in-law was not happy. My mom is really an aggressive woman.

159 She can be very demanding. So, my mother-in-law was a bit vulnerable and my mother-in-law
160 insists that she would never spend any time with my mother again.

161 *Oh dear. Wow.*

162 Yeah, but I don't blame her. So, I personally don't like to spend too much time with my mother
163 either!

164 **Mary provides an update.**

165 Actually, right after that my dad, sister and brother-
166 in-law, they were coming shortly, probably in a
167 month, and my mother-in-law asked my husband that
168 she has to leave two days before they come or one
169 week before the come. Definitely no overlap, and we
170 managed to let her leave three days prior their
171 coming.

172 *Is that a problem for you? Does that make you feel- ?*

173 Well, I completely understand that is awkward, but
174 if it makes everybody happy, I'm happy. I think it is
175 fine. They don't have to do that and we have ways to
176 manage in a way.

177

178 My family were amazed that everybody can go to such amazing facilities here, the community
179 centre, and spend a few bucks and enjoy the nicest pool- indoor pool, and the gym, and the free

180 library. Both of my parents used to work for Chinese government, but I have to say here in Canada
181 is a lot better. I guess it's because here in Canada, people can vote. We have the right to vote. If
182 you don't serve people well, we can vote you off. People are more kind and tolerant, and we're
183 living with love here. It's not a perfect world, we can still see some people being not very polite,
184 but in China, it's different.

185 *So, I guess when you moved here, you must have learned to love those things, right?*

186 Yes.

187 *But then, when you can see somebody else learning those things, is that something you enjoy*
188 *watching? Does it give you some pride, that now I'm living in a safer, more respectful country?*

189 Yes, but actually, that's a very edgy question. Because here in Canada I have some Chinese friends
190 and we can share a lot of things. Because we're in the same environment and we understand the
191 things pretty much at the same level. But in comparing with the people back in China, I am very
192 careful to what I say, because what I say might be a show off, and people might feel uncomfortable.
193 So, I'm very sensitive, careful.

194 *So it's not something you would point out to your visiting family? You wouldn't say, look at how-*
195 *?*

196 I can't. I will show them, and let them experience by themselves, but I can't tell them that, (She
197 sings like a teasing child) "see, I'm in the better place than you are". I really can't say that.

198 **We continue the conversation a few months later.**

199 *When my friends and family come over, I almost want*
200 *to show them the best bits, I want to say, "look how*

201 *cool this is! This is such a cool place I've chosen to*
202 *live".*

203 And your parents, or your friends, they have the same
204 kind of option, if they like enough they can choose to
205 come here. If it is possible by choice and people all
206 have the same option and you are doing that and
207 people are not doing that, probably, that is fine. You
208 didn't choose it. But that's not the situation with me,
209 they didn't have the option.

210 **Lucy reflects on Mary's story.**

211 But you can tell she's so proud of her family.

212 Yeah, it was very interesting.

Appendix G: Monty

Our first meeting for this project was in July 2013, and our conversation from this time forms most of this narrative. My questions and comments are shown in italics. Our second meeting was in December 2013, five months later. The comments from this second meeting are shown in narrow central paragraphs. Sarah also watched Monty's first video, and her comments are shown in paragraphs on the right of the page.

1 Well, before coming to Canada, I was in India, I was working in a PR firm- public relations firm-
2 and I was the image manager there. I had applied for Canada when I was in Australia, and I was
3 doing my masters in journalism and mass communication there. So it took me a year and a half to
4 get my PR. By that time I had finished my education, and I was back in India working for a PR
5 firm. And then I got my PR, I said "it's time to go".

6 *So, when you say you got your PR, is that a qualification?*

7 No, I got my permanent residence.

8 *Okay, PR, and public relations, I got confused.*

9 No, not public relations, it's two different things, yeah. I got my permanent residency and so I
10 moved to Canada, to Toronto.

11 *So when did you arrive in Toronto?*

12 February 2008.

13 *Okay, so in the middle of winter?*

14 Yes.

15 *And how was arriving in winter?*

16 It was brutal actually. I mean I knew that Canada is cold, but this was *way* cold. I remember I
17 came out of the airport and was looking for a cab. I was just wearing a jacket. And within like,
18 not even two or three seconds, I could not feel my ear actually, and my hands were shaking, It was
19 something- I can't explain it. But it was that kind of cold, I never felt that kind of cold before.

20 But I always say that when I came to Toronto, I came with two suitcases and one of the suitcases
21 had my clothes and everything, the other suitcase was full of dreams and ambitions, and I lost my
22 first suitcase, within few days, I couldn't find it. And it took me two years to find that suitcase.

23 *You mean your dreams and ambitions?*

24 Yeah. The first two years were really, really hard, because I couldn't predict there was a recession.
25 Somebody told me Edmonton is a really great place to work, "why don't you go there, there are is
26 lot of work". So, I just thought "let's go" and I took a Greyhound. And I traveled for four days,
27 four and a half days on a Greyhound, and reached Edmonton just to find there's no job there!

28 (He laughs at his own misfortune)

29 So, I thought about whether I should go back to India, because I had a job there. It's easy to get a
30 job. So, I thought about whether I should go back or I should move to Toronto. And I thought,
31 "so since I'm here, I don't want to go back. People might say, 'okay, and you went, you didn't
32 get a job?' So, I won't go back, so I'll get a job, and then I'll think whether I want to go back or
33 not".

34 **A few months later, Monty further explains why**
35 **he didn't want to return to India.**

36 Because people would say “ok, fine, you know I told
37 you so”. Because when I was going to Toronto in the
38 first place, people are asking me, "do you have a job
39 there?" I said, "no, I don't have a job". “How can you
40 go to a place where- have you been to Toronto?” I
41 said “never”. “So how are you going to a place- do
42 you know anybody?” “No”. “So, you're going to a
43 place where you don't have a job, you have never
44 been there, you don't know anybody, what are you
45 going to do? You know, how is it that you're going
46 to survive?” Well, I survived in Australia I will
47 probably survive here.

48
49 And even after returning to Toronto from Edmonton I worked in a call center for about nine and a
50 half months. And then I got a break as an intern with a magazine, and that’s how it started. I’m
51 not saying working in a call center or working in an Office Depot or anything is bad because at
52 least you’re working, you’re earning money, that’s the best part. But if we study for something
53 and then you have worked for half of your life in a certain area, and then you don’t get it, then
54 that’s very frustrating. And the only reason of my coming to Canada was to work in the line which
55 I love, which is public relations.

56 When I moved to Toronto at the start I didn’t know anybody. And luckily, I met a friend of mine
57 who actually, I didn’t know before coming, he was here. I met him in Australia, we were in the

58 same university, and he was here in Toronto, I met him in George Brown College, he was a student
59 there, and he was looking for a roommate.

60 You understand? **Monty wants to make sure it's**
61 **clear.** This friend was with me in Australia, we were
62 in the same college. So I moved to India and he too
63 moved to India. Then from there he moved to
64 Canada, to Toronto, and I didn't know. That's what
65 I meant to say.

66

67 So, my roommate's friends used to come and visit from India, then they used to ask where to go
68 and which places to visit. They always wanted to go to nightclubs, because of what they see in
69 movies in India, that nightclubs in the U.S. and Canada are really great, so they just want to
70 explore. And probably they were very disappointed, not because nightclubs are bad but because
71 they had a different impression of nightclubs- that girls would come running towards you as soon
72 as you enter!

73 We rented a car once and we thought "where should we go? Let's go to Muskoka!" So, we were
74 like four guys and we just drove there. We didn't stay. We just went there, and in the evening,
75 we returned back.

76 *Okay, so how was that?*

77 It was nice because I've never been there, and I was driving, it was a nice drive. And it was not at
78 all busy. It's not like Toronto, which is like so many people. It was very quiet, and it was very
79 beautiful.

80 *Have you ever been back to places like that?*

81 Yeah, I've been to Muskoka with my wife, because I believe it was better to go with your wife
82 than your friends. So, I've been to Muskoka with my wife and we stayed in one of the hotels there.
83 We went for a weekend to stay.

84 *Just the one time?*

85 Just one time. We were planning to go when my mother was here, then my wife suggested it was
86 better when my dad should be here, that makes more sense.

87 **I'm curious to hear Monty's thoughts on the**
88 **impact of his first hosting experiences.**

89 *Is it fair to say that some of your early experiences of*
90 *exploring the city and beyond were with the people*
91 *that were visiting your roommate?*

92 Yeah. Because when I moved to Toronto my main
93 focus was to get a job. Once I get a job I can, you
94 know, explore things. But when you have somebody
95 who is in Toronto to look and to move around, or just
96 to visit, you say "why not? Let's accompany them".

97 There's so many places in Toronto I wouldn't have
98 gone if my relatives wouldn't have come here.

99

100 A few weeks back my mother was here from India. I had actually planned her itinerary because
101 my mother has very specific tastes. She wouldn't like nightclubs. She would like to eat and go to
102 restaurants. She's not that much of a fan of museums, so a museum was out of the question. She
103 loved the CN Tower. We took her up at the lookout tower. She really liked the whole view. And
104 we took her to the Toronto Islands.

105 *Right, what did she like about the islands?*

106 That it's so beautiful and it's so clean. And there are so many people but it's still so clean, and the
107 parks, the gardens that the way they've kept it, and the view from the ferry, she really loved it.

108 **Sarah is inspired about her upcoming visit**
109 **from her parents.** The Toronto Islands is a
110 good idea, I've never taken my parents there.
111 That's a good one!

112

113 And then with my mother we went to Niagara Falls, and she loved every part of it. This time we
114 took a bus actually, so it took us to the Butterfly Conservatory and it took us to the Botanical
115 Gardens and then Niagara, and then it took us to Niagara on the Lake, and to the winery. The other
116 thing I forgot to mention was I've never been to BAPS.

117 *Where?*

118 It's a temple. It's on the way to Brampton.

119 *And what religion is that?*

120 Hindu. So, I've never been there, and I would have never gone there if my mother was not here.

121 My mother wanted so see that place, I knew she will be interested in seeing this place, the
122 architecture and everything. She really liked it.

123 **Monty continues a few months later.**

124 I mean of course it's always good to see all these things,
125 because you've been brought up with all these cultures-
126 whether you believe it or not, that's a different thing- but you
127 know when you're a kid you've seen your parents doing puja
128 and things like that. I was not born in Toronto. I just came
129 here. You know, it's a foreign land for me. And something
130 which you have seen when you're a kid and being appreciated
131 here, it's always nice to see.

132

133 And I got her here too, to my place of work now.

134 *Right, and was that important for you to show her where you work?*

135 True, because all this while before I got a job, all she heard from me is that "I'm not getting a job,
136 I don't have a job". She wanted to know where I work. It's very important for me to show her
137 where I work because its- I don't know, I can't explain it, but it's kind of a pride to show her,
138 because I not only showed her this place where I work now, I showed her the first place I worked
139 in Toronto which was a call center. But it's not that because I got a job, or because I got a job in

140 this line that's why I'm showing her. But I just want to give her how I started and how I came
141 here. So, I was telling her- when we were in downtown, I was showing her- "see this is the call
142 centre where I started my work". And then I showed her the building where I worked in tourism
143 PR and then I took her to the festival headquarters where I used to work, and actually went all the
144 way inside where we used to sit and speak to the media, so I just showed her everything.

145 *Right, and how was that for you?*

146 That was really good, because for me I was kind of living at it again. So, very exciting for me and
147 for her also, I could see that she really liked it too.

148 **I ask Sarah if she can relate to Monty's**
149 **story.**

150 *Have you ever taken your friends and family*
151 *on a tour of your Toronto? Like offices you've*
152 *worked in or?*

153 Yeah, they have actually been to most of the
154 offices I've worked at now I think about it.
155 I've either taken them in the office, or I've just
156 pointed out where I work. The place I worked
157 at two years ago they actually stayed at a hotel
158 next door to the office because they were only
159 here for a couple of days in the week so it
160 made more sense for them to stay near the

161 office so I could meet them for lunch after
162 work and stuff like that.

163 *And did they come into the office, and meet*
164 *your team?*

165 Yeah. Yeah. They did the whole bit.

166

167 We are from different religions- my wife is a Christian and I'm Hindu. So, when we got married
168 it was quite a scene.

169 *You mean like people weren't happy about it?*

170 No. Both the families were not happy. They didn't want us to get married. But when my mother
171 was coming here for the first time, I really wanted them to, you know, gel, and just everything
172 should be okay. And luckily, everything went fine, and they just hit it off. But I'm also feeling
173 nice and happy that things went well. She stayed for two weeks, that went ahead without any
174 drama. I'm really happy for that. Now I can see that she can stay for a month or more and nothing
175 will happen.

176 My sister and brother in law actually came here. To be very frank, the first time my sister visited
177 Toronto- I think it was in 2011- I was seeing her after seven years.

178 *Seven years? Wow, that's a long time.*

179 Yeah, but from 2011 till today, I have met her maybe about six times, because of the proximity as
180 she now lives in the U.S. To be very frank, when I first- like after a very long time, and I met my
181 sister, I was kind of nervous about what I'm going to talk to her about. It's been seven years!

182 Because the last time we met was on her marriage, and then she moved. So, I was just wondering
183 what I'm going to say? We used to talk on the phone, it's not that, but how would I go ahead with
184 the conversation? How? And then she came, and it went pretty fine.

185 *How do you feel when your family comes to Toronto and seem to love it, and are really impressed*
186 *by it, and the place that you've chosen to live? Is that a good feeling?*

187 Well, it's a good feeling, because somehow, subconsciously it becomes your city. Though you're
188 not born here, you've been living here for five years or six years, and you know that in the next X
189 number of years you would be staying here. Somehow, subconsciously it becomes your city. And
190 somebody says, "oh, it's a nice city", so it makes you feel happy that you got to choose that part
191 of the city to live in. Imagine somebody tells you that, "I don't like the city, this city sucks man,
192 this is so bad, and law and order is not good!" You would feel bad, as if it's because of you. You
193 take it personally, I think. Just subconsciously, it happens to you.

194 **Sarah feels a connection to this point.**

195 It is interesting what he said about people not
196 liking it here. Like my parents don't love
197 Toronto, and because they don't like it they
198 don't make an effort to come. It was always
199 like an effort for them to come out and visit
200 just because they don't love it here.

201

202 *Finally, do you think that having your parents or other people come to visit is going to trigger you*
203 *to see more of Ontario?*

204 Yes, definitely because that's how you find out, because there are certain things you don't even
205 see because they are closer to your place. So, you take it for granted. But when people come and
206 they want to visit that place and you say, "oh yes, that's a nice place, let's go there".

Appendix H: Anna

Our first meeting for this project was in July 2013. My questions and comments are shown in italics. Our second meeting was in March 2014, nine months later. The comments from this second meeting are show in narrow central paragraphs. Monty also watched Anna's first video, and his comments are shown in italic paragraphs on the right of the page.

1 I came to Canada for a Canadian. I was really hoping that we would settle down somewhere in
2 Europe. I had no intention to ever come to Canada, because why would I move from one cold
3 climate to another cold climate or even worse? And we had lived in Argentina for a while so both
4 of us spoke Spanish quite well. So I was more than sure that we will settle down somewhere in
5 the south of Europe.

6 **Monty's curious:**

7 She's from where?

8 *Latvia.*

9
10 My husband- well boyfriend at the time- was telling me that things will be so much better and so
11 much easier in Canada because, well, I spoke the language and he spoke the language and it would
12 be so easy to find a job. The reason why I went to Halifax first was because John is originally
13 from the east coast and we hadn't decided where to settle exactly. So, we had worked in the States,
14 then we lived in Argentina for a while and then we were kind of trying to settle down, and I was
15 doing my masters really quickly, and he returned to Canada. And so his mom lives in Halifax. I
16 couldn't find a job in Halifax because well, it was just a very small place altogether, right. I mean

17 it's beautiful to go there for a weekend and the ocean and what not- but it's not the place that I
18 ever envisioned living in.

19 When I moved to Toronto, I did like Toronto, I definitely like big cities. We decided right away
20 that we are definitely living somewhere in the downtown core. We got an apartment at Broadview
21 and Danforth for a couple of years, which was great. Danforth was great, all the festivals were
22 great, like a lot of things impressed me really well.

23 My mom came to visit us the next spring then. It was a wonderful visit. She came in May, the
24 weather was fabulous, it was like 25 degrees, like really nice. She came for a couple of weeks,
25 probably two or three weeks.

26 I basically grew up on the sea. Water is kind of important to me and she likes water too so I think
27 the very first thing is we went to the Beaches for a day. And then we went to China Town for a
28 day, which was really different for her- which was really different for me, right, so that was kind
29 of exciting, so I wanted to show her things, like the really unusual things.

30 *Right, so stuff that surprised you when you just arrived?*

31 Yeah.

32 (As Anna flicks through a photo album she recalls some stories)

33 So the waterfront was just nice. We went to the CN Tower, we had a fancy dinner at the top of
34 the CN Tower and turning around. We went to Niagara Falls, which was great. It was really nice
35 to spend that one on one with my mom and we had a fabulous, most fabulous time in Niagara
36 Falls. It was my first time as well. We did like every single activity that was there. I mean it was
37 just very nice, kind of not needing to think about the money so much, or the time. I mean we went

38 there for two days, we stayed there overnight so we had two days to do all those things and that
39 was just great. Like I'm looking at the pictures, she was so happy, and I looked so happy. Like, I
40 never looked so happy in the next albums from this one. I think this was the time when she looked
41 happiest.

42 *You mean happiest of all the times she's visited you or happiest-?*

43 Definitely happiest for all the times that she's visited us, and probably just happiest that I kind of,
44 remember her, you know, for like a concentrated period of time. I mean yes, of course I remember
45 her being happy like from my childhood and stuff, but here just being kind of happy and carefree.
46 Not just being happy and then running to work, or happy and then doing something else. Just
47 happy and carefree and relaxed, and not rushing anywhere, not worrying about things. So, that
48 was a great experience, yeah.

49 **Monty seeks some clarification.**

50 I didn't understand when she said "happy to
51 remember her"?

52 *I think she meant she just really got to know
53 her mother again.*

54 Ok.

55 *I wondered what you thought about that
56 because you've just had a similar experience
57 I guess, in the summer when your mum was
58 here for two weeks?*

59 Two weeks. Yeah, a little less than two
60 weeks. But yeah, I won't say it was similar
61 like Anna was saying, because we just moved
62 house and there's so much other things to do,
63 you know. Everything was so chock-a-block
64 that we didn't have time for ourselves to sit
65 down and discuss and know what's going on
66 in her life, and later on the last day we just sat
67 down, discuss, and everything. My mom was
68 seeing, and looking at things around the city,
69 but we didn't sit down and ask each other
70 "what's going on? How's your life going?"
71 and all those things. We didn't have that time.
72 Only the last day we just discussed.

73 **Anna continues.**

74 That was the most exciting visit yet, I would say. She was really excited about coming, I was
75 really excited about her coming.

76 *Why were you excited about her coming?*

77 We used to be really close, and by "used to be" I guess- now as the time goes it kind of lessens as
78 I get more used to living here, and also you know that first year was just difficult, like finding a
79 job and finding the apartment, and doing everything, and then we had kind of settled down, and I
80 can actually show her that I've achieved something, I don't know, something like that. So, she

81 has probably visited us at least, I'd say, five times. And having kids pretty much changed the
82 whole life around. The carefree attitude has totally disappeared.

83 When things are not going well or they are- like you know, when I was pregnant or when the kids
84 were just born. I mean it's really difficult, it's really difficult in any environment and it's very
85 difficult in an environment where you don't have anybody with you, right? So she stayed a couple
86 of times for a couple of months. And actually the first time she stayed for the six months, as great
87 as the full plan theoretically sounded in the beginning, you know, that it would be so great that she
88 would come and help us with everything. I mean it actually at the end, I'm pretty sure that all
89 parties couldn't wait for the time to end.

90 I mean I think the most benefit in that particular visit was actually for my daughter. Ok, so mom
91 did spend a lot of time with her and just that one on one, and the Russian and Latvian language.
92 My daughter didn't need to start daycare as well, basically not until she was almost three. But me
93 and John would go to work every morning and mom would have a fantastic day with my daughter.
94 Then, I would come home in the evening and mom would feel that, you know, like her job is done
95 kind of thing. And in the beginning we actually had some fights about it because I was coming
96 home and I wanted to get the full attention, like my fifteen minutes before dinner, right? And then
97 I would just see with my back eyes that I would try to read to my daughter and mom would still
98 try to entertain her going behind my back with finger puppets or something like that.

99 As well, effectively, she and John cannot communicate, right. So, the dinners are pretty quiet.

100 (Anna laughs as she considers the awkwardness of what she's about to describe)

101 They can't even like tell each other to pass bread or something, they just point to it. Like, one
102 points, the other gives and nods, that's how ridiculous communication has become. I mean yes,

103 for something little, I can translate it, without interrupting my conversation with mom or with him,
104 but if there is a bigger more interesting story, something happening in politics, I don't know, like
105 whatever, I mean no, you can't translate simultaneously and still have that meaningful
106 conversation. The first time, when it was the more carefree time, then I probably tried more, and
107 then with all the following times and the work and the kids, it's just totally dropped off the priority
108 list. So, unfortunately, as great as my mother and husband are by themselves, they can't share.
109 And things like that, after some time, sour the experience, and then kind of everybody wishes that
110 well, it's better that six months ends soon- as helpful as it is when she comes. So that long visit
111 was a stark contrast to her first visit.

112 **Anna reflects on her story, and feels it's**
113 **improved to some extent.**

114 That is definitely still the case, but it's changed now that we
115 have kids who are actually talking, because the kids are just
116 going on about something without shutting up, so it's not
117 quiet anymore. I mean it's still the case that mom and John
118 don't communicate, but at the dinnertime it's stopped being
119 quiet.

120 *Am I right that your mum's been back since the last time we*
121 *met?*

122 Yes, well we asked her to come basically for the time when
123 we moved house, during the move and then like a month
124 where we settled down. All the moving and packing, and the
125 beginning of the cold winter was just so difficult that one day

126 I just told John "let's ask mum to come and help us" and he
127 said "sure, why didn't we think of that before!?"

128 *And did it go more smoothly than at other times?*

129 Yes it did, it did, and perhaps because we were busy, and she
130 was busy in her way- just to drop the kids at school and to
131 bring them home and she was tired already. She also kept us
132 positive about the new house- for instance, I would call her
133 from work and she'd say "oh the house is so nice and sunny,
134 the house is so bright!" I didn't notice anyway, you know, I
135 was so tired, we were so done with the move, that would
136 probably be the last thing I would think about- that the house
137 is sunny.

138

139 **One of Anna's sisters is arriving a few days after our first meeting.**

140 So, this is my sister's first time in North America. I've been asking her to come for the longest
141 time, and they are not very well off so I've been offering to her that I will pay for the trip, and she,
142 I don't think, has ever taken me seriously, because again I am the baby sister. So this summer
143 we're staying here in Toronto, not planning to travel anywhere far, not planning to go for a cottage
144 nowhere, I was asking her again, "please come?"

145 So one day, actually in Easter I think, I was talking to my other sister, just casually on the phone,
146 and then I started complaining to her that I keep asking my older sister for so long, that they should
147 come. So, my other sister then told me something like, "let me talk to her". So, the next morning,

148 my older sister then texted me to ask if they can come. Well, I was just surprised to say the least,
149 that I had been asking her for years to come and she had never listened to me because I can't be
150 taken seriously!

151 *So do you feel like any kind of-*

152 Resentment?

153 *That she didn't believe you were serious with your offer?*

154 I mean yes and no. Yes, but I'm willing to forget about it and bury it.

155 *Are you nervous that it's going come up when she's here?*

156 No, I'm going to let it go, and really when she comes, I do want them to have a great time. So,
157 she was surprised that I would be taking time off from work, and of course I am, I couldn't possibly
158 not take time off, because as well I'm pretty sure that money would be an issue so they would try
159 to skip some sort of activities that I would suggest not to skip, right. So to prevent that all, I'm
160 taking the time off so we'll be doing everything together. John is taking time off too so we'll be
161 doing everything together. The kids won't be going to daycare so all of us will be- we'll just spend
162 that time together. I'm actually very much looking forward to them coming, specifically also for
163 my daughters to see that I'm not the only person in the world who speaks Latvian.

164 So we have the whole thing planned out, and even though, like on the one hand I'm just thinking
165 that I could just use some time to rest a little bit, the schedule already looks like jam-packed. There
166 are so many things to do that I'm having, I guess, a difficult time crossing some activities out.
167 Should I cross out China Town? Or should I cross off like the Science Center or something?
168 Because I guess it is exciting to plan the whole thing, and to think of everything that we can do,

169 and once I'm through that stage, I guess I am having a difficult time to eliminate some of the
170 experiences. If something would go off that list first would be the places that, you know, I would
171 think aren't that much fun for me and therefore maybe it wouldn't be so much fun for them.

172 **Monty interrupts.**

173 That's funny. It's like, normally, you think
174 the other round, say you want to cross off
175 certain places you always consider whether it
176 will be fun for them- I'm not trying to talk
177 about Anna personally of course. For
178 example, I love museums. From a history
179 point of view, I love museums. But, you
180 know, I don't want to take my mom to
181 museums because she don't like it, what's the
182 use? I can go to museums any time I want.

183
184 I'm really looking forward to going to Niagara Falls as well. You know, I mean it's exciting for
185 everybody, my sister, and my own kids. Like, I talked about it with some people at work and they
186 were like "Niagara Falls, it's so like cliché, what is Niagara Falls?! There's the wax museum, like
187 why would anybody go to Niagara Falls?" And I'm not going to Niagara Falls for the wax museum
188 or for anything like that; I'm going to Niagara Falls because it's a natural wonder! Like whatever,
189 it's beautiful! Isn't it? The waterfall is beautiful! You walk around there, it's beautiful, like you
190 can walk there for three hours just along the boardwalk. That's why I'm going to Niagara Falls,

191 and it impresses me and I like it, and I'm sure it will impress my sister and she'll like it, and she'll
192 go home and say that she has been to Niagara Falls.

193 **A few months later I ask Anna how her sister's**
194 **visit went.**

195 She was actually really upbeat about things, it was a
196 very positive trip for her, which was very pleasing to
197 see, it was all good. You know, like I asked her to
198 come, and she comes, and finally they come, and oh!
199 She's impressed, and she likes it, it was nice. The
200 thing that she seemed to be most impressed about
201 was actually the diversity of the city. So all different
202 skin colours, nationalities, you know, sitting on the
203 same bus, which is something you never see in
204 Latvia.

205 *Everybody's the same?*

206 Everybody's the same, yes. Just, she was so
207 genuinely interested in it, and I guess I'm so used to
208 it- I don't sit on the bus and try to figure where
209 everybody's from, or what language do they speak. I
210 think that was actually her biggest like, the people
211 were her biggest attraction.

212 *Did you feel, I don't know if proud is the right word,*
213 *but just showing your sister "this is my life now, I live*
214 *in this big multicultural place"?*

215 Yeah, I'd say so, yeah. But also that I'm totally
216 comfortable with it, you know, it's not that still I'm
217 surprised with things, no, I'm totally used to the
218 things, and I now treat it as totally normal and given,
219 that I am part of it.

220 You know before she came I was really looking
221 forward to- I was thinking that we will talk about-
222 well, just talk about how we live, how the parents are
223 doing and so on, and really, that wasn't happening
224 during the day at all. And then once everyone would
225 be in bed, at like eleven thirty, only then I could sit
226 down with my sister, have a cup of tea, and talk about
227 things. And we did that for a few nights, so we sat
228 until two o'clock in the morning, and the next
229 morning started at six again. But those night
230 conversations with my sister added to the experience.

231 Then actually my other sister came for a short visit,
232 with her two twin girls. So my sister's four year olds,
233 they didn't want to play with my two year old, and so

234 my four year old also kind of went with them saying
235 "well, she's just a little thing, and we're not playing
236 with her, we're playing in this tent, and she's not
237 allowed!" And I would become more and more
238 angry, and like looking at my sister, like, you know,
239 "you go tell them something, you go and talk to your
240 children! Right now! And tell them this is not
241 acceptable behaviour!" And she would look, oh, you
242 know, relaxed, and the two year old would start
243 screaming right? And running around the tent. And
244 the kids were so loud, and we were sick, like one of
245 my kids was sick, and I was thinking "be quiet for
246 once! I understand you're on vacation, but I have a
247 sick child here, I understand that you want to run
248 around the house and then scream and yell, but we
249 have tenants downstairs, like, please!" And of course
250 something like that would make me very angry, and,
251 you know, like that night I would feel no desire to
252 bond with my sister.

253

254 *Having family visit, does it make you feel-?*

255 Make me feel happy? For a little while yes.

256 *Yeah? Does it satisfy an itch kind of thing, of getting that experience?*

257 Yes, it does. So that six-month example was a bad example of that. That was just way too long
258 and it went kind of the bad way. But all the other times when we had visitors for a shorter time,
259 those had always worked great. All the other short stays have been very enjoyable. I mean yes, I
260 see my family once every couple of years. So, it's definitely good- just nice to be able to play
261 board games together, make dinner together and sit and eat and then talk, and just really go see
262 places and be excited about them.

263