

Understanding The Lived Experiences of Local Residents in Muskoka, Ontario: A Case Study on Cottaging

by

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AUTHORS 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.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

Muskoka, Ontario, Canada has been recognized as an environment that is appealing for tourism visitation, but more specially cottaging, due to its attractive natural landscape and amenities that are “normally associated with larger cities, while maintaining the lifestyle of a small community” (The District Municipality of Muskoka, 2014). Specifically, for four months of the year, 83, 203 seasonal residents outnumber their 59, 220 permanent counterparts, cultivating a variety of opportunities and challenges in the destination. This particular study, aims to look at tourism in Muskoka in regard to its enhancement of social, economic, and political assets in the destination, and how cottaging impacts the local community from the viewpoint of the permanent resident. Current issues and tensions that exist in Muskoka are drawn upon through secondary data analysis of media articles, government documents, opinion pieces, and 16 semi-structured interviews with local residents during the peak summer season, being July and August, of 2016. Through the methodological lens of critical theory, identifying binaries (Jaakson, 1986), the representation of place and place attachment (MacCannell, 1973; Buckley, 2005; Harrison, 2014), rural tourism advantages and disadvantages (Smith, 1989; Frederick, 1993; Marcouillier, 1997; Mitchell, 2013) and the environmental protection of amenity rich destinations (Jaakson, 1986; Buckley, 2005; Lagerqvist, 2014) are examined and discussed. Results from this study express that varying tensions exist in the destination around land use values, poverty, and class conflicts. However, a contrasting view also exists that acknowledges the economic importance of hosting such tourism in Muskoka, as well as the social benefits and positive influence of cottaging for the wellness for both local and visiting populations.

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I would like to dedicate this thesis to Kenneth Black, a "Champion of Muskoka", who passed away on Monday, August 29th, 2016 in his 85th year of life.

"Permanent and seasonal Muskoka residents do not have to sit back and watch this area become the Hamptons of the North or another Cote d'Azur or St Tropez. Without being anti-development, they can insist that development with its economic benefits and the jobs it creates, is well-planned and responsibly- controlled." (Kenneth Black, personal communication, 2015)

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Second-homes, in tourism literature, can refer to a broad variety of dwellings and housing types, such as holiday homes, hobby farms, retirement homes, recreational holdings, and even tents and caravans (Coppock, 1977). While these property types all differ, they all fall within Pardoe's (1974) definition of second-homes, as "a static property which is the alternative residence of a household, the principal domicile of which is situated elsewhere and which is used primarily by members of that household for their recreation and leisure". The cottage, second home, or vacation home, has been explained by Coppock (1977) as an aspect of the leisure, recreation, and tourism field that is growing in political and academic importance. Paris (2009) explains that the majority of second home literature is situated within the disciplines of geography, sociology, planning, or leisure, tourism, or rural studies. The impacts of second homes has yielded a research field, dominated by a focus on the increasing interest in outdoor recreation in the western world which has benefitted the economy, an awareness of an environmental revolution threatened by second-homes, and conflicts between second home-owners and others (Coppock, 1977). Amenity migration, a similar concept is defined as "the migration to places that people perceive as having greater environmental quality and cultural differentiation" (Moss, 2004). Often these amenity migrants move to these destinations on a permanent basis, or use the location for their second homes. It appears that in tourism literature, second-home ownership and amenity migration research tend to overlap and have similar, if not the same research focus'. While second-home research appeared to be more popular in the 1970s-1980s, amenity migration research appears to be more current and thus more widely accepted by researchers in the field. For the purpose of this study, the terminology of second-home owners, cottagers, and amenity migrants will be used synonymously, to incorporate

research that refers all of the phenomena. Specifically, the terms “cottage” and “cottagers” dominate discussions of second-homes in the context of this case study in Muskoka, Ontario, and therefore this will be used most often. The purpose of this case study is to understand local people’s perceptions of cottagers, and the tourism industry in the District Municipality of Muskoka. Specifically, their various political, social, economic, and environmental impacts will be examined in order to give a voice to those in the rural community who have been affected by amenity migration. The research questions are as follows:

1. How do cottagers and locals in Muskoka interact?
2. What are the perceptions of Muskokan cottagers from the perspective of locals?
3. What meanings do local people ascribe to cottaging and tourism in Muskoka?
4. How do local people perceive their community in comparison to the contrived Muskoka brand?

The District Municipality of Muskoka, or Muskoka, is a landscape that has been recognized as an attractive environment for cottaging due to its many lakes and forested areas. Muskoka has a longstanding tradition of tourism and cottaging, with the first recorded tourist exploration occurring in 1861 by James Bain Jr, and John Campbell (Mason, 1974), two employees from a publishing firm in Toronto, Ontario, seeking adventure and recreation. By 1964, Bain and Campbell organized the Muskoka Club, made up of 86 members and guests, with a fee of a one-dollar per annum membership fee, attracting individuals to Muskoka whom enjoyed the outdoors (Mason, 1974). In 1865, Alexander Cockburn viewed the Muskoka Lakes as an economic opportunity, to build a steamship connecting the “big three” lakes, Lake Joseph, Lake Rosseau, and Lake Muskoka, to develop the lumber, agricultural, and tourism industry in Muskoka (Schifflett, 2012). The investment in steamships and respective advertising paid off, and soon tourists began to visit, and demand for accommodations designed for tourists began in the 1970s. In this early phase, the tourists were young middle-class Torontonians coming to the

region to “get back to nature” (Schifflett, 2012, p. 85). As discussed more in depth in this study, the demographic of the tourist or cottager is still similar to those of the early days of tourism in Muskoka, and for the same reasons. Over time, summer hotels began to emerge, making Muskoka a resort destination. At this time, the cottage community had been developing, with ownership predominately by Canadians, and by 1900, cottages were increasingly elaborate in size and often designed by expert craftsmen and architects (Schifflett, 2012). Schifflet (2012) explains that the core of the Muskoka vacation experience remains to be a back-to-nature ideal that was practiced by the earliest tourists to the region.

Now, the District is home to five area municipalities, as shown below in Figure 1 below, and boasts first class resorts, artisanal shops, and visitor attractions, which greatly benefit from a substantial seasonal population, enabling the area to offer amenities that are “normally associated with larger cities, while maintaining the lifestyle of a small community” (The District Municipality of Muskoka, 2014).

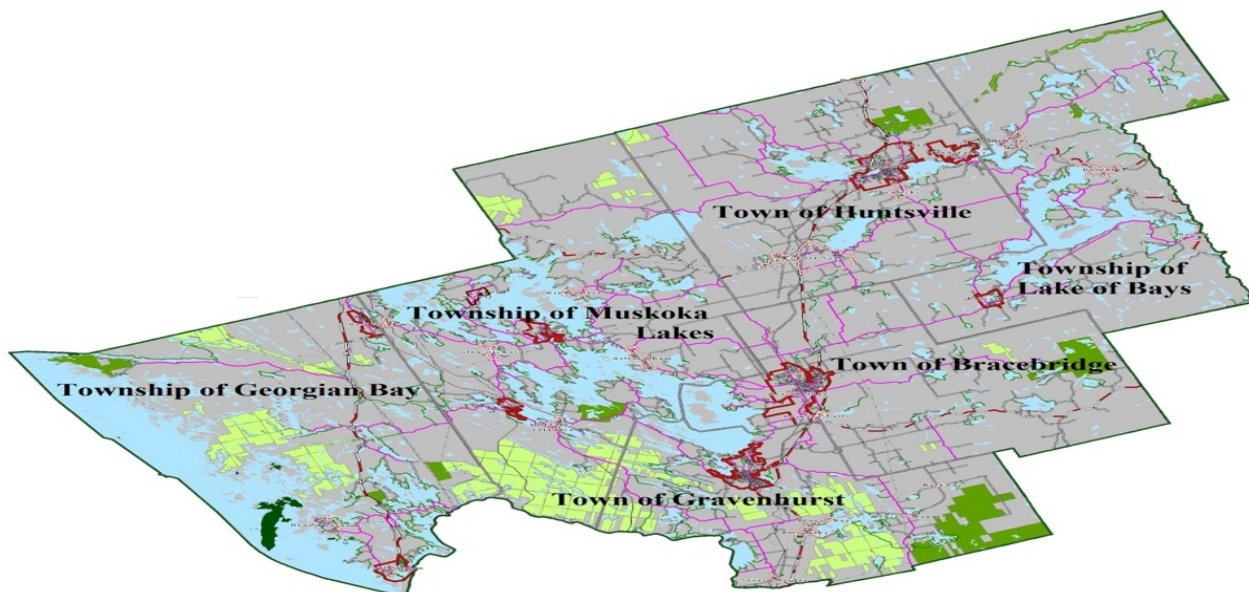


Figure 1: District Municipality of Muskoka (2016)

To understand the extent of the seasonal population, the District (2013) explains that at the end of 2012, there were 22,354 second homes, which accounted for almost 50% of all dwellings in Muskoka. Furthermore, seasonal residents make up approximately 58% of Muskoka's total population (The District Municipality of Muskoka, 2013). As a result, the destination is greatly shaped and impacted by the seasonal population, which is the subject of exploration in this study.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Critical Theory

The purpose of critical theory is to challenge and critique the social world, generally from the stand point of process and modes of production. Particularly, issues such as oppression, identity, and agency are the focus in critical theory (Crotty, 1998). Since conceptualizing and challenging notions of oppression and power are so complex and differ across the social spectrum, other ‘versions’ of critical theory have evolved over time, creating ‘intersectionality’ (Berbary, personal communication, 2016). These intersectional ‘spin-offs’ are critical race theory and feminism(s), which have similar tenets as critical theory but focus on race and gender (Crotty, 1998). These branches of critical theory emerged as there was a lack of representation amongst researchers and focus’ in these groups, as many critical researchers, such as Marx and Gramsci have been known to reinforce hegemonic power structures (Berbary, personal communication, 2016). Since these other styles of critical theory have emerged, when critical theory is discussed here, aspects such as economic power, oppression, and conflict are what is being referred to.

The main tenets of critical theory are grounded in Marx’s ideas of economics and modes of production, where our labour characterizes us as human beings (Crotty, 1998). When humans are characterized by their labour, hegemonic social structures are created and people end up being oppressed, marginalized, or alienated (Crotty, 1990). From what I understand, critical theorists could be considered whistle blowers, in that they call out unethical or unjust situations.

Crotty (1998) explains that while Karl Marx has been acknowledged for inspiring and founding today’s critical theory other key players deserve recognition such as the Frankfurt School, W. E. B. Du Bois, Louis Athusser, Paulo Friere, Jurgen Habermas, Herbert Marcuse, and Theodor Adorno. Critical theory as we know it today began with Karl Marx, a scholar and

radical activist, who had been expelled and banished from various countries due to his eagerness to call out injustice (Crotty, 1998). After his death, the Frankfurt School had been established with a “broadly” Marxist perspective of critical social inquiry (Crotty, 1998). The history of critical theory is quite complex, as according to Crotty (1998), there was never a consistent theory within the Frankfurt School. Scholars such as Adorno, Habermas, and Friere expanded on notions of macro level critical theory in their own individual works such as Friere’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Critical theory today assumes that all thought is facilitated by power relations, that certain groups are privileged over others, and that oppression is diverse as it exists in many forms such as gender, race, and class (Crotty, 1998). These concepts will be further emphasized below, as power and privilege play a large role in defining second home ownership in general, as well as in the specific context of Muskoka, Ontario.

2.1 Literature Review

This study focuses on the reflections of cottaging in a rural, amenity rich destination in Ontario, Canada. Therefore, the literature compiled for review focuses largely on cottage and second home tourism literature. However, due to a lack of second home literature with a focus on destinations in Ontario, second home literature is pulled from global contexts, as can be seen in Appendix A. Generally, research done on cottaging and amenity migration focuses on the various impacts of it (Coppock, 1977; Paris, 2011, Nepal, 2008), the relationships formed between cottagers and locals (Halseth, 2004; Rudzitis et al, 2011), and what it means to be a cottager (Jaakson, 1986; Hall and Müller, 2004; Müller, 2007; Laqervist, 2014; Harrison, 2014). While these aspects will be highlighted in the following literature review, other disciplines are also brought into the discussion. Housing literature and sociology literature are discussed in relation to cottaging and second homeownership as a multi-disciplinary approach that greatly

contributes to the depth of this literature review. Also, rural development literature, particularly rural tourism research is examined in this literature review, given that Muskoka is a rural tourism destination. The four main themes discussed in this literature review are rural tourism, place-making, mobility and affluence, and resident attitudes including the various advantages and disadvantages of second home ownership. These four themes are explored in an effort to gain a better understanding of what the current research says about both what it means to be a cottager, and its various affects.

2.2 Rural Tourism

Due to the setting of this case study, a rural community in Ontario, it is important to integrate literature pertaining to these characteristics in this review. While there is little to no literature on Muskoka itself as a rural tourist destination, other communities in rural Ontario have been analyzed through this lens such as through Mitchell's studies (1998; 2000; 2009; 2010; 2012; 2013) on Elora and St. Jacobs, Ontario. However, it is important to firstly provide a functional definition and conceptualization of rural tourism to frame this discussion.

2.2.1 Defining Rural Tourism

Rural Tourism is simply defined by Lane (1994) as tourism that takes place in the countryside. However, this simple definition is highly complex, as rural areas are constantly challenged by globalization, and as a result are continuously changing. The U.S Censure Bureau (2010) defines rural areas as "all of the land and people located outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters". More specifically, The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (1993) agreed that rural areas as tourist destinations should be classified as:

- economically integrated areas (close to cities and towns but rural in appearance, known for day visit tourism, and farm economies)

- intermediate areas (majority of it is rural land, distant from urban centres, agricultural land uses, characterized by overnight stays focused on scenic areas, and outdoor recreation)
- remote areas (low quality land, natural heritage as a feature, niche market for escape from modern life)

Furthermore, The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defined rural tourism in 1994 as a concept for development and conservation with six distinct qualifications. These qualifications are listed as “located in rural areas, built upon the special features of the rural world (open space, contact with nature, heritage), rural in scale (meaning small scale), traditional in character (slow, organic growth), sustainable (good development to sustain the special rural character), and many different kinds of offerings (complex environment, economy, and history)” (OECD, 1994). Lane (1994) uses the chart below to compare and contrast urban/ resort tourism from rural tourism.

Table 1: Comparing Urban Tourism to Rural Tourism (Lane, 1994)

Urban/ Resort Tourism	Rural Tourism
Little open space	Much open space
Settlements over 10,000	Settlements under 10,000
Densely populated	Sparsely populated
Built environment	Natural environment
Many indoor activities	Many outdoor activities
Infrastructure- intensive	Infrastructure- weak
Strong entertainment/ retail base	Strong individual activities
Large establishments	Small establishments
Nationally/ internationally owned firms	Some farm/ forestry involved
Much full time involvement in tourism	Much part-time involvement in tourism
No farm/ forestry involvement	Much part-time involvement in tourism
Tourism interests self supporting	Tourism supports other industries
Workers may live far from workplace	Workers often live close to workplace
Rarely influenced by seasonal factors	Often influenced by seasonal factors
Many guests	Few guests

These qualifications conclude that rural tourism is multifaceted, touching on various aspects of rural life, from size, to character, to offerings. In regard to offerings, Clemenson and Lane (1997) explain that rural tourism itself is a series of niche activities within a niche activity, calling for Jamal and Robinson (2012) to deem rural tourism an umbrella concept, comprised of various activities such as ecotourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, or farm holidays/ agritourism. Nelson (2013) explains that rural recreation activities such as scenic drives, country picnics, hunting, and fishing, may be included as a rural tourism product, as well as agricultural activities such as assisting in daily chores on a farm, horseback riding, or purchasing items at a farmer's market. The rise in rural tourism, according to the OECD (1994), is due to individuals growing interest in heritage, authenticity, peace and tranquility, REAL travel (rewarding, enriching, adventuresome, learning experience), as well as better transport and communications. Rural tourism has been the focus of development strategies for rural communities, due to the growing interest in consuming rural products and experiences as listed above.

2.2.2 Rural Tourism and Economic Development: Pros and Cons

Frederick (1993) explains that tourism has become a major component of rural economic development due to the increase of tourism demand in amenity rich locales, changing rural economic patterns, tourism being perceived as a clean industry, and its ability to create jobs with relatively low capital requirements to start up. Frederick (1993) explains local communities often buy into developing tourism in their town as a sense of pride, knowing their town has something to offer to tourists, and will help build amenities for their advantage. Therefore, individuals are often keen to adopt tourism as a form of economic development. Wilson et al. (2001) supports this and explains that developing rural tourism is less costly than other industries, as little investment, training, or capital are needed for development, and will be build of "free" resources

such as places of natural beauty like mountains, climates, or clean air (Frederick, 1993). This is seen as beneficial to rural tourism destinations, who may be feeling the impacts of globalization in their more production based industries, whom may now seek alternative industries to sustain themselves. According to Wilson et al (2001), rural tourism acts for a base for businesses that would otherwise not be self-sustaining with the existing small, local population, and allows for decision making to be done by local people, independent of outside firms. These businesses, in turn create jobs for low-skilled workers or youth, whom may be otherwise unemployed, which is ideal for economies with poorly educated or trained labour forces (Frederick, 1993).

However, while there are positive attributes to tourism as a development strategy, there are a number of disadvantages and critiques associated as well. Smith (1989) explains that employment in the tourism industry, like many service sector positions, remains low paying. Smith (1989) found that specifically, regions in the rural south that moved towards a reliance in tourism created changes in lower income categories. Specifically, a negative impact was felt by women and as a result, their children, as their roles were predominately low underpaying and undervalued, in areas such as waitressing, “hotel maids”, and retail clerks (Smith, 1989). This suggests that women in rural tourism areas suffer more than their male counterparts, as they are often limited to the subservient roles listed above. Deller (2010) also explained that tourism and recreation jobs can be considered “substandard” due to their low wages, but individuals are often willing to work these jobs to live in amenity rich areas, resulting in higher levels of poverty via the working poor and broadening income gaps. To support this, Leatherman and Marcouiller (1996) examined tourism as a development strategy in rural regions in southwestern Wisconsin, and found that tourism hollowed out the economic effects on middle-income households, with the majority of effects being felt on high-income and low-income households.

Seasonality also appears to be an issue in tourism dependent locales, as often these destinations only produce profits during certain times of the year (Wilson et al, 2001). This becomes problematic in the offseason for seasonally employed workers, who find themselves unemployed during the offseason. Fik (1993) that tourism dependency is known to foster economic growth during the “good times”, but the effects of slowing tourism transfers cause off-putting structural deficits. Relatedly, these off seasons according to Marcouiller (1997) cause downturns in cash flow for the rural community businesses, and those employed by them. It is important to note that Deller (2010) acknowledges that “the influence of tourism and recreation development on poverty, has not been adequately addressed within the rural development literature” (pg. 181), identifying a gap within this research frame. To add to this discussion, Marcouiller (1997) writes that tourists tend to place upward pressure on prices for local goods and services during peak seasons, which causes inflation that impacts local residents who do not benefit by being the seller of these inflated goods and services. Relatedly, a lack of affordable housing becomes apparent in these destinations, as the prices of housing becomes inflated, but local people are working in low paying tourism related jobs, and therefore unable to keep up with the inflation (Marcouiller, 1997). These examples portray that while there are significant economic benefits for introducing tourism as an economic development strategy, there are considerations that must be allotted for in the planning process of tourism. Thus, from a planning approach, Marcouiller (1997) calls for more integrative tourism planning to provide effective strategies for enhancing social, economic, and political assets in destinations. As most often, Marcouiller (1997) leaders within rural areas often focus on strategies to attract visitors through marketing, promotion, and visitor assistance, without considering the potential impacts that may

be created due to their visitation. This particular study, aims to look at tourism in Muskoka in regard to its enhancement of social, economic, and political assets in the destination.

2.2.3 Creative Destruction and Enhancement in Ontario

In addition to what is discussed above, rural communities whom utilize tourism as a strategy for economic development also risk what Schumpeter (1942) coined as creative destruction, used in tourism studies by Mitchell (1998; 2000; 2009; 2010; 2012; 2013). Since 1998, Mitchell has applied Schumpeter's (1942) concept of creative destruction to rural tourism destinations in Ontario, to describe the process in which destinations have transitioned into a consumptive state. Mitchell (2013) summarizes Schumpeter's (1942) creative destruction as a process by which capitalist economies desire profit and produce innovations to create economic growth, whilst in turn destroying previous economic activities reliant on previous innovations. In 1998, Mitchell introduced a model of creative destruction and applied it to the village of St. Jacobs, Ontario, a community characterized by its recreational shopping, but also for its small town atmosphere, Mennonite community, and rural heritage. Since then, Mitchell has applied the model to other destinations in Canada, and its use has been seen in studies in Zhu Jia Jiao, Shanghai (Huang, 2006), Creemore, Ontario (Vanderwerf, 2008), and Ferryland, Newfoundland and Labrador (Sullivan, 2010). Mitchell's (1998) model of creative destruction is comprised of five stages, being: early commodification, advanced commodification, pre-destruction, advanced destruction, and lastly, stage five being post-destruction.

Early commodification is influenced by supply and demand forces in the destination, in which community members recognize an opportunity to generate profit by investing in the commodification of historical aspects of the community, such as buildings, to appeal to consumers. Advanced commodification occurs when investment levels are escalated, causing the

rural destination to introduce new offerings to meet the demands of visitors, while also causing disruption for residents who do not benefit from the increase of rural tourism. The next phase, early destruction, refers to a commodified landscape which continues to evolve with an escalated number of visitors, causing negative impacts such as crowding, congestion, and crime. Advanced destruction occurs when significant investment occurs in the destination, such as the inclusion of a major hotel development, which may cause out-migration of local residents and disintegration of the community. Lastly, Mitchell (1998) explains that post-destruction refers to the visitor's realization that the destination has become an unauthentic representation of the countryside, straying away from the rural idyll that was once at the heart of the destination.

More recently, Mitchell (2013) introduced the term 'creative enhancement' which refers to the process in which rural spaces are transforming from a production-based economy, to one that serves multiple functions. As opposed to creative destruction, creative enhancement allows for multiple functions to coexist, rather than having a new innovation displace previous functions. Mitchell (2013) believes that the process of creative enhancement is more representative of the reality occurring in contemporary rural spaces. Mitchell (2013) uses both creative destruction, referring to displacement, and creative enhancements, referring to additions, as a way to describe transforming spaces in Canada's amenity-rich landscapes. Specifically, Mitchell (2013) revisited her studies on the Ontario villages of St. Jacobs and Elora, which she previously analyzed through the model of creative destruction, to consider if creative enhancement or destruction was underway. The following figure depicts the processes of change in rural spaces, according to Mitchell (2013), expressing the difference between creative

destruction and enhancement, below.

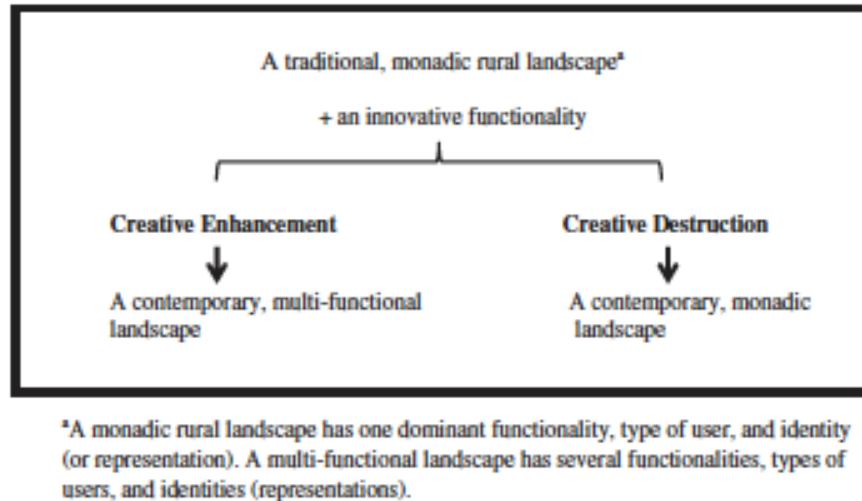


Figure 2: Creative Enhancement and Destruction (Mitchell, 2013)

Mitchell (2013) used the year 1976 as a baseline, and observed census reports for each respective village studied to identify the businesses listed in the destinations. From there, she was able to group businesses into functional categories, based on the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS), being: primary production, secondary production, essential consumption, heritage consumption, leisure consumption, and fashion consumption, as illustrated in Appendix D. Mitchell (2013) explains that creative destruction is shown to be underway when a particular business category declined over time, whereas creative enhancement was occurring if a particular category was added, without influencing a decline in an older category.

In Elora, Mitchell (2013) found that the destination, known to attract heritage-seeking consumers who value handicrafts, arts, and unique accommodation, had not reached creative destruction. However, talks of introducing a hotel, banquet facility, retail commercial space, and condominium development, threaten this analysis, as Mitchell (2013) explains that this would

tarnish the rural idyll of Elora. St. Jacobs, Ontario, appears to present both the process of creative destruction and enhancement. Mitchell (2013) explains a number of ongoing processes in the destination, such as the functional displacement to Old Order Mennonite populations in the destination, who can no longer purchase their traditional supplies such as feed, or fabric, or flour. The destination has also experienced the process of ‘boutiqueification’ (Guimond and Simard, 2010), which refers to the introduction of upscale merchandise more often found in cosmopolitan areas. Furthermore, the process of ‘taskification’ has been introduced to the destination, whereby non-discretionary goods and services such as office spaces, are formed in the landscape. These developments have acted as both destructive and enhancing, as they have displaced old innovations, whilst also introducing new, beneficial functions. Mitchell (2013) explains that these results show that a single community may be continuously evolving, containing hybrid landscapes which reflect multiple functions, such as task-scape, heritage-scape, leisure-scape, or boutique-scape. Figure Three, displays the transformations of rural community landscapes, to hybrid landscapes made up of these multiple functions listed above.

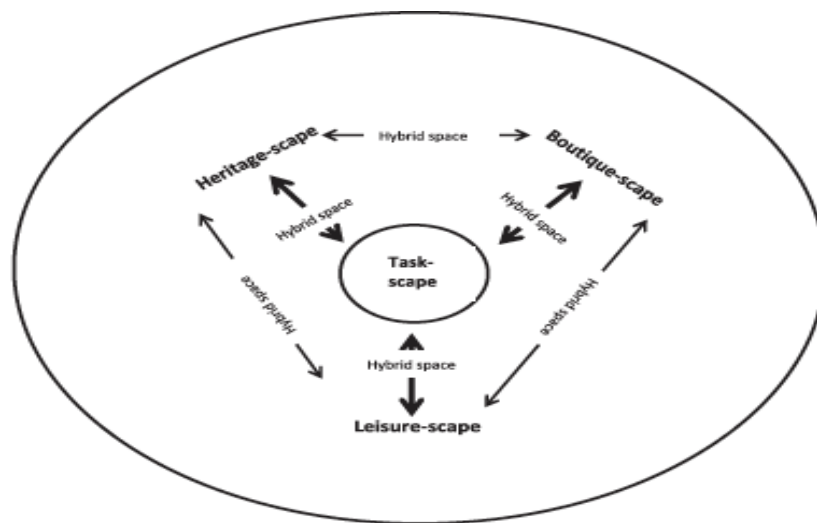


Fig. 5. The transformation of rural community landscapes.

Figure Three: Transformative Rural Community Landscapes (Mitchell, 2013)

Mitchell's work is prominent in understanding the changes of rural, amenity-rich spaces in Ontario, as a result of commodification and an increase in tourism. This work acknowledges the complexities of rural change, as landscapes continue to move away from purely production-based industries, to more hybrid destinations utilized for varying processes of consumption. This literature is pertinent to this study on tourism in Muskoka, to understand where or if the destination in focus is experiencing creative destruction, enhancement, or facets of both.

2.3 Place Making

The cottage appears in the tourism literature to be the common base of semi-permanent rural lifestyles. Creswell (2015) explains that place is a way of seeing, knowing, and understanding the world, that through place we see attachments and connections, meanings and experience. Place can be defined by Agnew (1987) as location, locale, and sense of place. Location, is made up of the specific objective coordinates of the Earth's surface, locale refers to the material setting for social relations, and sense of place refers to the subjective and emotional attachment people have to place (Agnew, 1987). In the tourism literature, it has been noted that a distinguished sense of place is created by the cottagers or second-homeowners within their chosen destination. Although Pred (1984) describes "the destination" as an accumulation of all those paths and places one visits and takes during the trip, meaning that each person has their own unique assemblage of that destination. Literature suggests that cottage and second-home destinations conjure consistent themes by travellers such as evoking feelings of nostalgia, appreciation of nature, family connection, and freedom from everyday urban life (Jaakson, 1986; Lagerqvist, 2014; Harrison, 2014). This section seeks to break down these individual concepts and unpack their relation to place-making of the destination and its implications on the cottager, or second-homeowner, and visitor. Firstly, authentically representing place in tourism literature

is discussed. Due to limited research on cottages within Canada, literature from both global and local Canadian contexts will be used to recognize what it means to be a recurring cottager or second-homeowner in a rural destination.

2.3.1 Authentic Representation of Place

Authentically representing destinations and places in tourism contexts has been deemed a challenge by many tourism scholars. MacCannell (1973) first introduced the concept of “staged authenticity” in regard to tourist attractions. This concept of “staged authenticity” refers to a mystification or performance of a false reality for the sake of maintaining Goffman’s (1959) concept of the front stage and back stage. These front stages are meeting places for hosts and guests, and the back stages are places where the ‘home team’ relaxes, prepares, and conceals props and activities that may discredit the performance out front (MacCannell, 1973).

MacCannell (1973) explains that while many tourists seek new, intimate, authentic experiences, to see life as it is really lived in the places they visit, they almost always fail in achieving these goals by becoming content with inauthentic experiences that are staged for them. Hughes (1995) explains that globalization has played a large role in these inauthentic experiences, as globally, commodification has drawn actors into consumption practices which are often manipulated for corporate economic interests for profitability, which has been referred to as “Coca-Colaization”. Hughes (1995) explains how multinational chain hotels, standardized holiday packages, and the interchangeability of destinations are results of these commodification processes. This commodification becomes a challenge when trying to authentically represent tourist destinations, and ultimately alters how places are constructed based on how they are represented in print, souvenirs, and heritage sites (Duncan, 1989).

Cresswell (2015) writes that increased mobility has led to the accelerating erosion of place. For example, a combination of mass communication, increased mobility, and a consumer society has been blame for rapidly accelerating the homogenization of the world (Cresswell, 2015). This means that places may look, sound, feel, and smell the same wherever in the world they may be. Relph (1976) expressed difficulty for individuals to connect to the world through place, as there has been a lack of authenticity in the world. Authenticity, according to Relph (1976), refers to a genuine and sincere attitude towards a place, making the individual an existential insider. In contrast, an inauthentic attitude to place leads to having no sense of place, and acting in a way which is socially convenient or acceptable, that can be adopted without real involvement (Relph, 1976). In the modern world, we are becoming surrounded by a creeping placelessness, marked by an inability to connect and have meaningful relationships to place (Relph, 1976). This view posits that increased mobility and ease of introduction to new places through travel, threatens the authenticity of the destinations as places become consumable, rather than authentically experienced.

It appears as though authentically representing places in tourism proves to be a challenge as a consequence of globalization and commodification. However, it is important to understand how these places are represented to understand how these destinations are commercialized and perceived by both the producers and the consumers. To expand on this discussion, common themes associated with place making at the cottage are discussed, as found in tourism literature.

2.3.2 Nostalgia & Serendipity

The role that nostalgia and serendipity play in the cottage and second-home experience appears to cross borders, as examples of these whimsical feelings have been given in both global and local contexts. For example, Jaakson (1986) explains that even the term “cottage” has

associations and meanings that are widely shared by many middle-class Canadian families, which often times means “summer by the lake”, making it integral to our countries folklore (p. 371). This is also observed by Müller (2007) as he explains that staying at the cottage is important to the folklore in Nordic Countries. For example, in Canadian, Nordic, and other European examples, cottages have been given imaginative names, suggesting that the cottage is a place for playfulness, due to the large number of recreation and leisure activities associated with the cottage (Jaakson, 1986; Harrison, 2014; Lagerqvist, 2014).

The cottage has been referred to as a place that is idyllic, traditional, charming, ancient, and genuinely rural, a symbol of holidays, urban dreams, heritage, and even a place for meditation and relaxation (Harrison, 2012, Lagerqvist, 2014). These depictions have made “the cottage” national symbols which give concrete meaning to patriotism within their given countries (Smith, 1991). For example, Harrison (2012) writes that in a Canadian context, cottagers expressed that those who spent time cottaging in Haliburton, Ontario, knew what it meant to be Canadian; not that this concept was spoken amongst cottagers, but that it was simply known. Jaakson (1986) also notes that many Canadian cottagers “know they are up north” simply by spatial markers on their journey to the destination, such as passing through the Canadian Shield on their drive.

Based on the discussed literature, it is clear that nostalgic feelings surrounding the visiting and owning of a cottage assists in creating a place that is referred to as spiritual and idyllic. “The cottage” in literature appears to be a place that symbolizes nationalism and what it means to be traditional and furthermore, spatial markers tend to give cottagers a sense of welcoming regardless of their intention, and play a large role in the making of place for the cottager.

2.3.3 Appreciation of Nature

According to McGranahan (1999), amenity migrants, cottagers, and second-homeowners are attracted to regions with varied topography with close proximity to surface water, which foster diverse, unique recreational activities. Buckley (2005) also explains that amenity migration influences residential and recreational development that restructures rural, mountainous, and coastal landscapes worldwide. This would explain why locations in the American West such as Montana, Wyoming, and Sierra Nevada, as well as the Rocky Mountains, are prevalent in amenity migration and cottage literature.

Cadieux (2011) makes an interesting suggestion that nature has competing discourses within cottage country; being that it is rural, native, something to live amongst, and something to protect. These four competing discourses all revolve around the appreciation of nature and are important to the making of place in regard to the natural environment and its relationship with cottagers, second-homeowners, and amenity migrants. Buckley (2005) explains that amenity migration, cottage ownership, and second homeownership is basically an extension of a long-held interest in adventure recreation, suggesting that appreciating and accessing natural landscapes plays a large role in the creation of place for these groups of people. In many cases, the second home owner “literally buying into the rural experience” (Gallant et al, 2005, p. 19). For example, Jaakson (1986) explains that in Canada, the majority of cottages are situated on waterfront or are located closely to a lake, which are utilized for recreation and relaxation. In his 20-year phenomenological study of Canadian second home owners Jaakson (1986), identified three contrasting groups of home owners in regard to their relationship with nature. The first group he identifies consists of second-home owners who are rustic, seek simplicity, and are highly in tune and knowledgeable about nature. His second group is made up of second-home

owners who seek to modify the environment nearby their property, by planting lawns, painting rocks, grooming or “cleaning up” their shoreline, cutting trees and planting flowers. The third group which he identifies are the majority of second-home owners, who fall into a broad category between the first two groups mentioned (Jaakson, 1986). In this study, it appears that nature is of varying importance to second-homeowners, but indeed plays a role in the experience of being at the cottage.

The cottage destination appears in tourism literature to allow urbanites access to peace, nature, the countryside, and to be surrounded by those who share an appreciation for outdoor landscapes and an escape from urban life (Jaakson, 1986; Lagerqvist, 2014). Periainen (2006) explains that the cottage often makes owners feel as though they are isolated, placed in the middle of nature, even though neighbours may only be 100m away. This isolation within nature allows cottagers and visitors to experience nature in an intimate setting, as the proximity to the lake and natural environment is one of the major pull factors of cottage ownership.

Natural landscapes appear to be one of the major pull factors for amenity migrants and cottagers, as varied topography and close proximity to surface water appear to be the main natural characteristics of attractive regions for amenity migrants. While nature at the cottage may take many forms, as Cadieux (2011) suggests, cottage and second-home ownership appears to be based on a long standing appreciation of nature, the outdoors, and outdoor recreation. Properties close to waterfront allows these groups of people to feel as though they are placed in the middle of nature, creating an intimate oasis for families and their guests.

Coppock (1977) writes that the existence of summer cottages is paradoxical, as the people who own cottages in green spaces are typically the same people who own homes on the greenest tree-lined streets with carefully tended to gardens. Often times, the Ontario cottage they are

visiting is not even situated in the countryside, but rather a o, where the countryside is only a vision on the drive to the cottage. This summer city offers travellers a taste of freedom from their routines and everyday lives in the city, as is discussed more thoroughly below.

2.3.4 Freedom from Everyday Life

One major desire for those who cottage is the concept of being away from their traditional city-based lifestyles. The cottage is a “clock-free” place, where people cannot be bothered, and are separated from their daily routines (Jaakson, 1986). Harrison (2014) found that cottagers in Ontario described staying at the cottage as travelling to their other, more preferred life, perhaps because life at the summer cottage appears to be perceived as more authentic than city life is, where one is more relaxed and more comfortable to be themselves (Perianian, 2006). Similarly, participants in Quinn’s (2004) study in Wexford, UK explained they felt more relaxed at their second home than in their ‘primary’ residences. This is likely why Righton (2006) explains that in Ontario, thousands of urbanites commute out of cities on Friday afternoons, heading for cottages that look and act more like second-homes. Harrison (2014) even found that meaning is attached to these car rides to the cottage, where sentiments such as “are we there yet” and car sickness are all part of the cherished experience of leaving the city behind. In addition, more people are heading to the cottage, as more than ever before working at the cottage is more accessible due to increased use of technology. Now, cottagers are able to disconnect and reconnect from their everyday city life at their convenience, while still immersed in the middle of nature. Coppock (1977) also suggests that often time in the city, there is a lack of community connection. The creation and involvement in cottage associations has members feeling like they are a part of a community, which factors into their enjoyment at the cottage. Furthermore, many cottagers, second-homeowners and amenity migrants are retirees, whom rely on a pension to life.

Salzmann et al (2010) explain that this group of people migrate for the sole purpose to abandon a previous stressful, city-based lifestyle where they were a part of the upper-middle class.

Essentially, the cottage becomes a place that the city is not. Cottagers, second-homeowners, and amenity migrants cherish these places as they act as an escape from their city-based lives, in a place where they can be their more preferred versions of themselves.

However, Coppock (1977) explains that humans inherently seek nomadic and impulsive experiences, which are often fostered by travel and ‘being on the move’. While vacations are taken at the cottage, they are often done routinely as in every weekend or every summer. Due to this, Coppock (1977) writes that the cottage may tie the owner down by demanding time and finances. Similarly, the route to the cottage may become mundane and monotonous just as the route to work or school has become. It appears that the cottage offers a freedom from everyday life, where the city is left behind for a more authentic, rural experience with family. Below, the significance of family at the cottage is discussed in depth.

2.3.5 Family Connection

The role that family plays in place-making at the cottage appears to be integral. For instance, the cottage is often referred to as “the family cottage”, representing a place that is exclusive to the family. Jaakson’s (1986) research explains that for many cases, second homes have been within families for years, and are often inherited and passed down, creating a sense of continuity, or “roots” which differ from the urban residence. Furthermore, Jaakson (1986) found that many families felt more of a place attachment to the cottage, than to their urban dwellings which they may move around from. Due to this, the sentiment “we’d never sell the cottage!” was used often in Jaakson’s study of cottagers in Ontario (1986, p. 380). Coppock’s (1977) work

supports this, when he writes that the cottage becomes the gathering place where distant, dispersed families return to each year to renew their bonds of being a part of family.

Research by Durko and Petrick (2013) has found that family vacations in general contribute to the wellbeing and happiness of family members, as well as having a positive effect on family cohesion. Similarly, Shaw, Havitz and Delemere (2008) found that family vacations not only intensified family bonds, but also provided an escape from the routine daily life and creating lasting memories. These notions can be applied and perhaps even intensified when applied to the family cottage. For instance, the family cottage acts as a vacation home for families, one where they grow accustomed to and build on traditions and create new memories year after year (Harrison, 2014). The cottage appears to be a place grounded in family history and togetherness, as well as a place for family-based leisure and recreation while at the cottage.

While little research focuses on the role that family has in the creation of place in regard to the cottage (second-home), it appears that the notion of family cohesion at the cottage is simply implied. This is gathered by terms such as “the family cottage”, or “family fun”, associated with time spent and recreation activities at the cottage. The role of family appears to be integral through Jaakson’s (1986) study, where cottagers felt more attached to their second-home than they did their primary residences, due to the strong family history and connection associated with the place.

This section discussed related academic literature to the importance that nostalgia, appreciation of nature, freedom from everyday life, and family connection has in the formation of place for the destination of “the cottage”. The section was able to identify commonalities in the ways people attach meaning to their respective second-homes, and how these places differed from their primary residences both locally and globally. It was observed that each sub-theme

discussed throughout this section seemingly intertwined with each other, suggesting that these factors co-constructed the places that families worldwide cherished. While the meanings of place were discussed above in relation to the cottager, an important aspect to look at is how accessible these places are, to understand whom the cottager is. Below, the concepts of mobility and affluence are discussed to further the understanding of those who own second homes.

2.4 Mobility & Affluence

According to Bottero (2013) an agreement exists that ‘class’ is a question of advantage and disadvantage in regard to who gets what and how, especially in situations involving money, property, occupational positions, cultural assets or power and influence. Principally, those who have more power and control are the ones who have access to more opportunities, than those who do not. Bordieau (1984) writes that social class greatly influences our lifestyles, which become identifying markers of our class differences and social divisions between and within classes. Bordieau (1984) explains how our tastes, preferences, and behaviours function as our markers of class. An example of this appears in cottage literature, as cottage ownership is explained by Coppock (1977) as being a marker or lifestyle associated with higher class. Specifically, in a Canadian context, Coppock (1977) writes that the most important facet of cottage ownership in Ontario is the status associated with it.

The ownership of an inessential home alludes to a sense of status and prestige, a symbol of privilege for those who are fortunate enough to own a cottage. Cottagers in Ontario tend to brag while using sentiments such as ‘I’m going up to the cottage for the weekend, as usual; get in a bit of fishing’ (Coppock, 1977, p. 30), when casually referring to their recreational second home and discretionary leisure time. These cottage landscapes, according to Halseth (2004) are in recent years becoming elite landscapes, with the socio-economic status of cottagers greatly

contrasting those of not only the local populations within these destinations, but also of those within Canada as a whole.

2.4.1 Social Class Mobility & Affluence at the Cottage

Sorokin (1959) explains that social mobility is understood as an individual or social object of value that has transitioned from one social position to another either horizontally or vertically. Sorokin (1959) specifies that a horizontal mobility shift is meant for an individual or object to transition from a social group situated at the same level whereas vertical social mobility refers to ascending or descending, as Sorokin calls “social climbing” or “social sinking”. Paris (2011) supports this, by writing that social mobility is a term that refers to people of lower social status achieving higher status or wealth, or those in more privileged positions descending down the social ladder. In a consumptive-driven world, social mobility and social class stratification plays a large role in shaping our identities and influencing our interactions with others. Bordieau (1984), a sociologist and prominent researcher on social class, argues that affluence and class differentiation are mechanisms of class inequalities, where people are judged by their standards of living and their lifestyles, solely based on their capacity for consumption.

When writing on social mobility, Bordieau (1984) explains that four different forms of resources and capital exist which contribute to ‘class’ and cultural lifestyle divisions, which are economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital. Economic capital refers to material resources, wealth, income, and property, whereas cultural capital refers to cultural knowledge and education credentials. Furthermore, social capital refers to social networks and connections one may have, while symbolic capital is more complex as Bordieau (1991) refers to this aspect when referring to one’s prestige, reputation, of acceptance within a society. These

four factors act in combination with one another to influence social classes, as opposed to each being a singular indicator of one's social class status.

The post-industrial era, according to Gosta Esping-Andersen (1985) played a large role in re-defining class structures and mobility in the world. For example, Gosta Esping-Andersen (1985) writes that servant classes are in large part a 'thing of the past', as previously people were condemned to lives of servitude on behalf of an anonymous mass, whereas now these working groups act as a collective. Furthermore, Gosta Esping-Andersen (1985) writes that the unskilled service masses and industrial unskilled workers were once seen as having a pre-determined destiny made up of tolerable life-cycle guarantees and jobs rights, whereas now they are a fluid group, temporarily willing or forced to take unpleasant jobs. Education also appears in Gosta Esping-Andersen's (1985) book as being a means of creating class divide, as education is a determinant of life-chances, resulting in skilled workers whom are better educated than unskilled workers. This is challenged in more recent work by Bottero (2013), when she explains that cultural competency is becoming more important and new occupations are arising such as sales, public relations, marketing, advertising, medical and social assistance, and cultural production. This is much like Florida's (2005) creative class, which refers to a mass rise in creative jobs. Florida (2005) writes that over the past two decades, creativity has become the driving force of the western economy, adding more than 20 million jobs, and accounting for a third of the workers in the advanced industrial nations. This creative sector, according to Florida (2005) is made up of professionals such as professors, entrepreneurs, artists, musicians, designers, lawyers, health care professionals, and bankers. These are people who are employed in science and engineering, research and development, technology based industries, arts, music, culture, aesthetic and design work, and knowledge based professions such as health care, finance, and

law. These new, valued roles have given rise to individual's various forms of capital, leading to new class differentiations not solely based and valued on education level and economic capital.

While new professions exist, giving opportunity for more people to own second homes, cottages have a long ancestry of belonging to the wealthy. Coppock (1977) explains that in ancient Egypt and classical Rome, families would own as many as fifteen homes or villas, with many of them situated along lakes or rivers. More recently, Coppock (1977) explains the term cottage has been applied to luxurious mansions belonging to American millionaires in locations such as Newport, Rhode Island. This suggests that the definition of cottage is shifting, and encompassing a variety of different styles and types of housing markets, from rustic buildings, to condominiums or timeshares, to luxurious mansions.

In the literature Marcouiller et al (2011) write that now more than ever, there has been an increase of wealthy people, resulting in a shift in status. Luxury goods, according to Marcouiller et al (2011), are now considered to be easily available to those in the middle class. Müller (2007) supports this notion and explains that rising disposable incomes across various social class spectrums has made cottage ownership affordable for both the middle class and the wealthy. Based on this premise, it would suggest that people are no longer satisfied merely with luxury goods but now seek out luxury experiences at a price they can afford.

As a result of luxury experiences being sought after by many people, the innovative website Airbnb has emerged, which has marketed itself as a website enabling you to 'rent unique places to stay from unique hosts in over 190 countries' (Airbnb, 2015). Their website explains that you, as a consumer, are able to 'find hosts with extra rooms, entire homes, and unique accommodations like castles and igloos' (Airbnb, 2015). The website interface, which also is offered as a mobile application, is sleek and simple as it offers features such as maps, reviews,

messaging forums between hosts and guests, and nearby attractions, which allow for a positive online user experience for tourists which Benyon (2013) explains is a critical issue in contributing to the overall tourism experience. This user-friendly site is perhaps a contributing factor to Airbnb's rapid growth, which went from offering 50,000 listings in late 2010 according to Caulfield (2010) to over 2,000,000 now in 2015 (Airbnb, 2015). Christensen (1995,1997, 2003), associates disruptive innovation theory, with the popularization of peer-to-peer accommodation services such as Airbnb. According to Guttentag (2013), a disruptive product will generally underperform with regard to its competitors key performance attributes, but offers a clear number of other benefits such as lower cost or ease of convenience. While it appears that Airbnb is marketing luxury, unique experiences, as expressed earlier, an important pull factor for Airbnb users is the low cost of many accommodations, which are often times lower than hotel accommodations in similar areas. For example, Lieber's (2011) article found that in New York City, staying in various Airbnb's for five nights cost him approximately \$700 less than if he had chosen to stay in nearby hotels based on pricing found on expedia.com. This low price, paired with Airbnb's marketing of unique experiences pairs well with Marcouiller (2011) and Müller's (2007) explanation of middle class families having easier access to and more demand for quality products and services.

Something to consider would be Airbnb's impact on cottaging and tourism in Muskoka. As of 2013, The Muskoka Second Home Study (2013) expressed that only 6% of cottage owners rented out their properties. At this time, Airbnb and perhaps the concept of peer-to-peer accommodations was still in a stage of growth, with only 300,000 listings by early 2013 according to Geron (2013). Now, when searching 'District Municipality of Muskoka, Ontario' into the Airbnb search bar, over 300 listings appear with prices a night ranging from \$60 CAD-

\$2,001 CAD per night, averaging at \$265 CAD. While this may still be a small percentage of cottages, it may be interesting to see the increase in cottage rental in Muskoka as a result of this disruptive innovation. This allows for more people to experience the cottage experience in Muskoka, without the outright purchase or timeshare of a cottage.

Cottages and the rural landscapes often foster privacy, outdoor recreational opportunities, and the space and therefore possibility for the development of large properties, which contributes to luxurious experiences that people are seeking. However, Marcouiller et al (2011) add that resource competition in some locations has become less of a factor as wealthy people are able to pay higher prices to outbid others. This appears to be the scenario for millionaire, luxurious cottages as described by Coppock (1977), as opposed to modest second dwellings. In these locations where luxurious cottages are the norm, wealthy people have created clusters of developed areas that Nepal and Jamal (2011) refer to as “enclavic”, which are characterized by high housing prices, aesthetic attractions, and exclusivity. In relation, studies on cottage towns within Canada were consistent by both Gill and Clark (1992) and Halseth (2004) when they found that second home owners tended to have higher income and education levels than their permanent counterparts, as well as employment in professional occupations as opposed to primary and secondary sector occupations.

Halseth (2004) explains that in Canada, amenity locations are relatively limited due to upward pressures placed on cottage property prices, based on regulations to protect cottage areas from pollution pressures. This accessibility limitation imposes financial limitations on who is able to participate in cottage ownership, according to Halseth (2004), making these landscape elite, which disrupts rural communities, and leads to the displacement of local people. For example, Rudzitis et al (2011) explain that amenity based growth is prominent in areas such as

Aspen or Vail, Colorado, Sun Valley, Idaho and Jackson Hole, Wyoming, based on a growing ski industry. Due to the growth of resorts and second homes in these areas, local people have been priced out of their homes and are unable to afford to work in the service industry associated with the destination. The following has been written about this notion:

Aspen is now a slavish service community [...] where absentee greed heads are taking over the town like a pack of wild dogs [...] it is a big-time tourist town, and only two kinds of people live here [...] the Users and the Used—and the gap between them gets wider every day (Thompson, 2002).

This quote reinforces notions of class systems operating and clashing in cottage and resort destinations, due to the introduction and overtaking of wealthy people to the area, which will be discussed in more depth below, in the resident attitudes section. It is important to understand the role that affluence plays into second home ownership, and how it shapes the experience for both the second home owner and local person. In particular, the defining factors of affluence and mobility were touched upon above, in relation to wealthy second-home owners. Furthermore, the rise of the creative class was discussed, and its relation to luxury experiences being sought out by more and more individuals, outside of the upper class. As a result, the so-called sharing economy has emerged widening access and, influencing the travel and tourism industry. Therefore, the influence that Airbnb may have on cottage ownership and visitation is an interesting concept to consider, which creates accessibility for those who may not find second home ownership affordable. In relation to affordability, the concept of displacement in rural cottage locales is discussed, as it is a contemporary issue facing local communities in amenity rich destinations, and therefore deserves discussion in this context.

2.4.2 Social Class Stratification

Social stratification is defined by Sorokin (1959) as the differentiation of a given population into classes, manifested by the existence of “upper and lower social layers” (Sorokin,

1959, p. 11). The concept is based on the essence of unequal distribution of power, privilege, duties and responsibilities amongst members of a society, and can be reduced to three principal forms of class, being: economic, political, and occupational stratification, according to Sorokin (1959). Historically, according to Curtis and Scott (1979), discussions on social class and stratification began as early as Aristotle and Plato, but came into fruition by whom has been referred to as the father of the study of social class, Karl Marx, who utilized a scientific perspective into the study of social class, referred to often in the philosophical literature as Marxism (Tepperman, 1975; Curtis & Scott, 1979, Hunter, 1981; Gosta Esping-Andersen, 1993). The early writers on social stratification admitted that “all complex societies are stratified and that there is an inherent basis of conflict among groups with diverse economic and class interests” (Curtis and Scott, 1979, p. 30). Tepperman (1975) explains that societal stratification implies not only inequality between power and resources but also involves a notion of continued membership in social strata which is achieved through behaviour aimed at bettering or maintaining power resources.

In second home literature, being a part of the cottage community is seen as a form of status, as Jaakson (1986) writes that cottagers feel like members of a private club, where acceptance appears to be founded on membership. Cottagers according to Jaakson (1986) find common ground in a sort of brotherhood from cottaging in the same location, where the lake has seemingly become a form of private property that is public only to a minority including a few cottagers. Cottagers begin to speak in what Jaakson (1986) refers to as “one voice”, on issues surrounding the lake and nearby properties. For example, cottagers in his study expressed concerns like “we don’t want *those* boats here,” or “we don’t believe in condominiums, they don’t fit into our lake character”, or “this is our lake, let those people (referring to the general

public) use provincial parks instead” (Jaakson, 1986, pg. 384). These statements infer that exclusivity, entitlement, dominance, and a unity play a role in keeping “others” out at the cottage.

According to Little (2014), a Canadian sociologist, social stratification is defined as an institutionalized system of social inequality, referring to situations in which the divisions and relationships of social inequality have solidified into a system that determines who gets what, when, and why. In Harrison’s (2013) study, she found that cottagers in Haliburton, a destination geographically close to Muskoka, praised her for choosing Haliburton over Muskoka for her research on the meanings of cottages. Their perception was that Muskoka had “been spoiled” (Harrison, 2013), and that cottages in Muskoka were owned by the very wealthy, or the “high rollers” who were ostentatious in their demonstration of wealth. These demonstrations of wealth appeared to impose class conflicts, and an awareness of the class system amongst those in the destination.

The importance of discussing social class stratification in this study is to understand forms of hierarchy and ultimately the relationship between social class stratification and social mobility, which Tepperman (1975) explains are closely related topics in sociology. Veltmeyer (1986) understands ‘social upper class’ in Canada to consist of two groups: those who come from ‘old families’ with wealth, and the ‘nouveau riches’, meaning new money, which refers to doctors and lawyers whom are successful social climbers whose “family connections are better than their bank accounts” (Veltmeyer, 1986, p. 42). Just as Jaakson (1986) expressed in relation to cottage life, Veltmeyer (1986) explains that becoming a part of this wealthy elite is much like being a member within a private club, in which status is achieved by receiving the ‘right’ dinner invitations, hiring the ‘right’ social secretaries, and sending their children to the ‘right’ schools.

Relatedly, Veltmeyer (1986) explains that the upper class in Canada possesses a high degree of geographic mobility as reflected in their seasonal migrations, many club memberships, and vacations. In Canada, the majority of this ‘upper class’ live in Toronto and Montreal, as according to Veltmeyer (1986) this is where the majority of national institutional establishments exist, such as universities, churches and women’s clubs, business organisations, men’s clubs, and fashionable resorts, which attract more of the wealthy and self-made millionaires. Muskoka, located approximately 2 hours north of Toronto, is in close geographic distance from the wealthy whom Veltmeyer (1986) refer to. While Veltmeyer’s work is dated, The Muskoka Home Study (2013) explains that 71% of cottagers claim their permanent residence is in the GTA, referring to Toronto, York, Durham, Peel and Halton. In this context, social class stratification and mobility greatly influence the privilege of cottage ownership and what it means to be a ‘cottager’ in Muskoka.

2.5 Resident Attitudes: Advantages & Disadvantages

Resident Advantages	Resident Disadvantages
Economic growth	Class conflicts (locals vs. cottagers)
Town revitalization	Misrepresentation of place
Outsider contributions of skills, abilities, etc.	Environmental clash of opinions (preservation vs. degradation)
Introduction of high quality amenities	Commodification of nature
	Local resentment of tourism/ leisure industry

Table Two: Resident Attitudes of Advantages & Disadvantages

A great deal of literature on second homes and cottages focuses on impacts, from both a positive and negative perspective; towards rural communities where they are situated. A multitude of methods and stakeholders are used to examine such impacts, however, in the

context of this case study, the local community will be analyzed. For that reason, the voices of Muskoka's local people were analyzed through media articles, to understand their opinions on cottaging in their community. Particularly, Doxey's Irritation Index (1975), speaks to the social relationships between hosts and guests within a destination. Doxey (1975) breaks down experiences in the destination into a continuum of four stages: euphoria, apathy, irritation, and antagonism. The main idea is that while the number of visitors increases, the more negative feelings are rendered (Doxey, 1975). It appears that this index can be applied to Muskoka, as the more popular and overrun the destination has become, the more frustrations have arisen. Furthermore, as seen expressed above, differing interests between stakeholder groups leads greatly to these tensions. In the literature, Gosnell et al (2009) explains that second home owners often import their own expectations, values, and constructions of rurality to their new destination, which can significantly alter the social context in their new communities. In these cases, Gosnell et al (2009) explains that amenity migrants may be offended by some aspects of rural life, such as smells, sounds, and noise and may work to reconstruct these rural spaces to better match their urban lifestyles, which is then resented by the local people, as is the case of the examples above. Moss (2006) explains that this becomes problematic because amenity migrants often lack understanding of local traditions and culture, and do not seek out local sources of information to educate themselves on these traditions and culture. Or, as Nepal and Jamal (2011) write, second home owners or elites may influence community events such as arts, craft exhibitions, and performance events, which leads to resentment of the longtime residents, who see these aspects as attempts to commodify local culture.

Nature also appears to be commodified, as Leitos and Ruckriegle (2013) have explained that the large homes owned by cottagers are threatening to the species-rich ecosystems, such as

beaches, lakes, riversides, and mountaintops, which are degraded by the introduction of man-made structures and facilities. For example, Radeloff et al (2010) found that between 1940 and 2000, housing units increased by 20% per decade when in 50km of a protected area in the US, in contrast to the national average of 13%, which puts these protected areas at risk. Buckley (2005) explains how fenced residential areas around national parks can restrict the movement of wildlife, who know no boundaries. He also explains that the introduction of alien species, such as household pets, can become predators on native birds, reptiles and mammals (Buckley, 2005). These are likely implications overlooked by cottagers, who may see no problems in bringing their household pets to the cottage.

Due to these previous examples, Paris (2007) explains that some locals may also resent the growth of these leisure and activity markets that initially attracted cottage owners. This is seen in a study done by Smith and Krannich (2000) on a community that was highly dependent on tourism. The study (2000) implies that residents supported tourism up until the communities' retail sales derived by the industry exceeded 30%, implying that beyond that was reasoned to exceed social carrying capacity level, and support began to decline. Jaakson (1986) explains that second homeowners are much like tourists, as they are visibly distinct from the locals as they are different in class, status, and values. It is interesting when Jaakson (1986) notes that even though the cottagers are recurrent and regular visitors, the "us-they" dichotomy remains static, more deeply socialized, and more firmly institutionalized, as is seen in the above examples. This "us-they" dichotomy, as Jaakson (1986) notes, fosters a dynamic relationship revolving around the concept of servitude, as the local community often caters to and resents the second homeowners and tourists, as they are the foundation of their seasonal income source.

While many negative aspects have been touched upon above, it is important to acknowledge the beneficial aspects of cottage ownership, as there are many. As mentioned earlier, tourism fosters economic growth. In British Columbia, a province deeply imbedded in amenity migration and cottage ownership research, tourism is a significant source of revenue. This is seen by the presence of gift shops, restaurants, local markets featuring crafts, adventure shops, gas stations, recreation activities and festivals in amenity-rich locations. Supply is created by demand, and when there is an increasing demand for certain businesses, they are likely to appear in the destination as a result of “spillover” from direct tourist attractions such as a ski hill, or a national park. Therefore, tourism contributes positively to destinations and its residents in this respect, creating jobs that would not otherwise exist if the tourism industry were not in effect. This concept is prevalent in Nepal and Jamal’s (2011) research, when they discovered that tourism-driven growth and development lead to a downtown revitalization, leading to the increase of hospitality, facilities, and the service sector. Furthermore, in tourism literature, it is suggested by Gosnell et al (2009) that amenity migrants often have the skills, abilities, and capital to improve their new locale and their demand for quality amenities can generate businesses and incomes. Gripton (2009) speaks similarly, as he claims, “positive effects of amenity migration included contributions made by knowledgeable, talented amenity migrants to the community's economic and social development”

While this section has predominately emphasized the negative connotations that research has associated with second homes in the literature, a great deal of positive aspects are emphasized as well. It is important to discuss the various literature related to second home ownership to grasp what may present itself in this study, as well as to identify any gaps and limitations that have been posed by previous research. As of now, the understanding is that

cottages and rural destinations play a large role in the creation of place and identity in the lives of both local people and cottagers. Furthermore, affluence and mobility are crucial topics to discuss in understanding the social climate and power dynamics of cottaging, which often lead to various negative and positive attitudes which are perceived as both advantages and disadvantages to the local community. This literature review aims to be a supporting base for further research on the impacts that second home ownership has on local residents in Muskoka, Ontario.

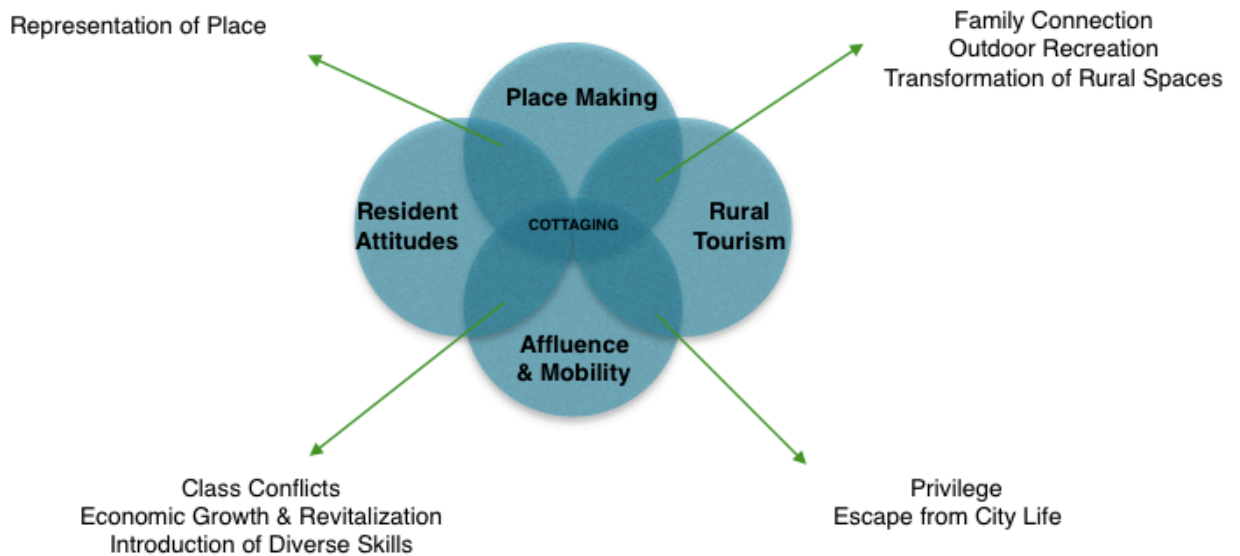


Figure Four: Literature Review Venn Diagram

Above, Figure Five, is a visual depiction of the intersection of themes emphasized throughout the literature review, as a way to reflect on the significance of the literature. At the core of the diagram is amenity migration and cottaging as the main theme. Surrounding this theme are place making, rural tourism, affluence and mobility, and resident attitudes. Place making appears in the literature to refer to the way destinations evoke feelings and how the destinations are perceived, especially by the tourist or second homeowner in this context. This

section is of importance, as it aids in understanding how destinations become more than just a destination, and begins to create meaning for individuals. Depicted in this literature were the feelings most often expressed as being evoked in cottage and second home literature, in the form of nostalgia, family connection, access to the outdoors, authentic representation of place, and freedom from everyday life. Rural tourism speaks specifically to the rurality of the destination, and how rural characteristics draw in visitation. The positive and negative attributes associated with rural tourism are discussed, as are the transformations that tourism can bring to rural destinations. Affluence and mobility heavily influences cottage ownership, as it provides access and membership to these locales, both in the form of ownership and social belonging amongst fellow cottagers. Lastly, resident attitudes are emphasized in this literature review, as this is the group which will be analyzed in this study. The goal of this study is to understand how cottaging impacts the local community in Muskoka, Ontario, and therefore becoming familiar with literature in this domain is important to prepare for this particular study.

The visual depiction above seeks to express how these three particular themes transect. For example, the notions of family connection and privilege play out under the themes of both place making and affluence and mobility. Often times, families who come together at the cottage come from wealthier, more privileged backgrounds than those who do not. Furthermore, affluence and mobility and resident attitudes intersect on issues such as class conflicts, often due to power imbalances between the two groups, which leads to resentment of both the second homeowner and the tourism industry itself. However, positive aspects are present as well, in the form of economic growth and town revitalization as the result of a prosperous tourism industry, as well as the introduction of diverse skills and abilities from second homeowners, which otherwise may not be present in the community. Family connection, outdoor recreation, and the

transformation of rural spaces, are all vast themes, but both pertain to place making and rural tourism and make up a significant portion of the literature reviewed. Lastly, resident attitudes and place making intertwine in regard to the representation of place. In literature, it appears that local residents have conflicting ideas on how place should be represented, and feel as though their home is misrepresented by both the second homeowner and by the media. As a whole, the literature above expresses what the cottage means to both the visitor and to the local residents, the role that power and privilege play in stakeholder interactions, and the advantages and disadvantages of this form of tourism. Intertwined throughout the review are destination specific examples from media sources. These particular examples suggest that investigation into this particular topic in Muskoka may be worthwhile for tourism research.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY & METHODS

3.0 Methodology

The purpose of this case study is to understand local people's perceptions of seasonal second homeowners in the District Municipality of Muskoka. Specifically, their various political, social, economic, and environmental impacts will be examined in order to give a voice to those in the rural community who have been affected by amenity migration. My research questions include:

1. How do cottagers and locals in Muskoka interact?
2. What are the perceptions of Muskokan cottagers from the perspective of locals?
3. What meanings do local people ascribe to cottaging and tourism in Muskoka?
4. How do local people perceive their community in comparison to the contrived Muskoka brand?

Case study methodology as a strategy is often appropriate when asking exploratory "how" questions, as seen above (Yin, 1994). Historically, case study research was used in the discipline of anthropology, formed by early accounts of journeys, investigations of other cultures in the form of field studies, and participant observation, as the dominant methods of data collection (Johannson, n.d.). Platt (1992) explains that the first generation of case studies were formed in the Chicago School of Sociology, although inquiry as a whole was dominated by positivism and quantitative methods at that time. By the 1960s, Johannson (n.d.) explains that a second generation of case study methodology began to emerge, which bridged a gap between positivism and hermeneutics and helped to form the philosophical underpinnings of social sciences. Robert Yin appears to be a key player in the creation of the case study methodology we see now, as he transferred experimental logic that was used in positivism to the field of natural inquiry and combined qualitative methods to the process (Johannson, n.d.). Yin (1994) identifies case study

as a form of empirical inquiry which investigates contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context. Yin (1994) explains that case study method is used deliberately to cover contextual conditions that are highly pertinent to the phenomenon being studied. In this study, the context is Muskoka, Ontario, and the phenomenon to be explored is cottaging and second home ownership. The history of case study methodology suggests that the methodology is most often used within social sciences, as a way for researchers to capture the complexity of a single case (Johannson, n.d.). Due to the complexity and multi-method approach that case study research takes, there are many different forms of the methodology and methods used. For example, the three most popular forms of case study are intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. Intrinsic case study focuses on the unique case itself, instrumental case study focuses on an issue or concern to illustrate the particular issue within the specific case, and collective case study also identifies an issue or concern for the purpose of illustrating the problem amongst multiple cases (Berbary, 2014). For this particular study, intrinsic case study methodology will be used. Simply, the case of cottaging in Muskoka will be looked at to understand it's complexities and illuminate its uniqueness. Stake (1995) explains that intrinsic case study research is done when the researcher is genuinely interested in the case, not because by doing said study the research is able to gain knowledge about other cases or a general problem.

In regard to methods, Yin (1994) explains that case study research takes a multi-method approach, relying on multiple sources of evidence. This distinction has informed the methods used in this study, which will be discussed further below. Furthermore, Yin (1994) explains the importance of understanding the unit of analysis within a study. Yin (1994) explains that defining the unit of analysis within a case study can be misconstrued, as the local community may be the intended unit of analysis within this study, however, the 16 individuals to be

interviewed may not be representative of the entire local community. Therefore, it is important to make the distinction between the 16 individuals in this study and the broader local community, that these interviewees are a small group of the larger community, confined to the time frame of the study.

Creswell (1998) explains that a researcher would choose this methodology when they are interested in delving into a particular issue, concern, or unique happening within a space that is bounded by time, location, or event. Similarly, Hammond and Wellington (2013) write that research students whom already have detailed knowledge of, and access to a particular context, choose case study methodology in order to find out “what is happening” in that context. This is the case for myself, as I have a connection to the study, having been a cottager in Muskoka since I was a child. Now, my father permanently lives in Muskoka, which has given me the opportunity to work in the tourism industry during the summer months. During my time as a tourism worker, as a gas dock attendant at a marina, and a restaurant server in a resort, I observed the complex relationships that existed between local people and cottagers. At the gas dock, cottagers would make comments such as “you’re too smart to be a local, where are you from?” and the locals would express their distaste for cottagers by saying, “the citidiots are coming to town”. I found myself torn between these two roles, as a local and a cottager, as I had features of both groups, and found that my identity was torn between these conflicting groups which I both loosely identified with. This experience has made me see this destination through a more critical lens, and is ultimately what has led to my research purpose which is to critically analyze the uniqueness of these relationships that evolve in Muskoka. Stake (1978) speaks to the opportunity for emancipation through case study research, as case studies focus on particular experience which is intended to be shared with audience, and “not just to swell the archives”

(Stake, 1978, p. 5). As such, an epilogue is featured in this study, to discuss the outlets for sharing this study with others.

Access to this site was gained through a key informant, whom I professionally associate with. This key informant was open to distributing information regarding my study, via email and telephone calling to local residents in Muskoka, to aid in the recruitment of study participants. This was a purposeful method, as participants were sought out by the key informant, after understanding that these people are local residents. During the interview process, a number of interviewees referred other individuals to be interviewed, and thus snowball sampling was also used. I was able to gain a rapport with these individuals through email or telephone, which allowed me to set up mutually appropriate interview times. In the end, 16 interviewees were chosen for the study. This study may fall under what Yin (1994) identifies as a revelatory case, meaning the phenomenon has been previously inaccessible for scientific investigation. Due to my connection to the destination, I was able to gain access to interviewees, whom otherwise may have been hesitant to participate, as discussed in the methods section.

3.1 Methods

In this case study, I conducted 16 in-depth semi-structured interviews with local residents within the Muskoka community from July 13- August 15, 2016. I chose to conduct these interviews during the peak season of cottaging in Muskoka which is from June to August, so that narratives reflected current experiences, opposed to being asked to recall experiences and perceptions during the winter months. Bryman, Teevan, and Bell (2012) write that semi-structured interviews are designed to bring out how the interviewees make sense of issues and events, which was ideal for the research questions posed in this study. Interviewees agreed to have their quotations used in this study, and therefore their pseudonyms were used in the data analysis. On the next page, is a chart depicting information pertaining to the participant. As seen below, the interviewees differ in time spent living in Muskoka. Defining who was a local was difficult in this study, however, it was concluded that the resident was to have lived in the destination full-time for at least one year. As discussed in the limitations section, an interview was omitted from the data analysis, as the interviewee was living in Muskoka for the summer months, being four months. This then, considered the interviewee a seasonal resident, but does represent the connection to Muskoka, that even those who would be considered a cottager or seasonal resident, feels, or is perceived by others (such as the individual who recommended this interviewee) as a permanently attached to the destination.

Participant	Interview Length	Lines of Data	Occupation	Time Spent Living In Muskoka Full-Time
Samuel	1 hour 40 minutes	1-861	Chair of Environmental Organization	19 years
Kevin	1 hour 7 minutes	880-1550	Retired tourism planner, educator	84 years
Michelle and Ryan	57 minutes	1581-2201	Environmental consultants	35 years
Nina	32 minutes	2235-2617	Photographer	25 years
Greg	54 minutes	2630-3145	Community Advocate	30 years
Bridget	1 hour and 5 minutes	3158-3772	Community Advocate	40 years
Karl & Patricia	43 minutes	4296-4671	CEO of National Corporation & Homemaker	~20 years/ 4 years
Heather	48 minutes	4296-4671	Community Advocate	13 years
Isaac	1 hour 32 minutes	4691-5120	Retired social services worker	45 years
Sylvia	46 minutes	5216-5555	Planning and Economic Development	17 years
Kimberly	57 minutes	5567-5910	Tourism Marketer	48 years
Karol	45 minutes	5916-6170	Photographer	42 years
Grace	36 minutes	6179-6446	Volunteer Organizer	34 years
Sandra	54 minutes	6485-6852	Social Worker	5 years

Table Three: Interviewee Table

Lastly, content analysis of media articles were examined to illuminate the way Muskoka is portrayed to the general public, and was used for the formulation of the case study. While Bryman, Teevan, and Bell (2012) explain that content analysis is most often associated with quantitative research tradition, it can be used in a qualitative research process which involves a search for underlying themes within a particular content. Content analysis, according to Creswell

(2014), is a form of data collection that goes beyond typical observations and interviews and can capture useful information that interviews may miss. This was the aim with the use of content analysis in this study of media articles and published documents regarding Muskoka. These documents also assisted in formulating questions for the semi-structured interview, as the articles informed issues and discussion points applicable to the interviewees and the context of Muskoka.

In regard to ethics, the Office of Research Ethics at University of Waterloo approved this study. All participants in this study are protected by full disclosure, and were given a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality. Each interview participant was presented a consent form prior to contributing to the study to ensure full understanding of this.

3.2 Justification

The literature reviewed has demonstrated there is a lack of contemporary research giving a voice to the rural, long-term residents, or tourism workers of destinations affected by cottage ownership in Ontario. Much of the literature is based on scientific environmental experiments and observations, explanations of social tensions based on political issues and disagreements, and analyses of economic statistics. Furthermore, little to no academic literature exists on cottage ownership in the District Municipality of Muskoka. However, many non-academic articles exist within the popular media, authored by The New York Times (2005), The Globe & Mail (2015), and Toronto Life (2005) with titles such as *Muskoka: The Malibu of the North*, *The story of the Muskoka River: A struggle between preservation and development*, and *The other Muskoka: next door to cottage country's \$2-million pleasure palace*. With titles as thought provoking as those listed above, Muskoka appears to be a destination facing many tensions, and therefore the purpose of this case study is to unpack and understand cottage ownership and these impacts on the community.

While the majority of the literature in the review above were from secondary sources, a mix of both qualitative and quantitative studies were also analyzed, as seen in Appendix B. For the purpose of this study, qualitative styles such as Harrison's (2004) study of cottages in Haliburton, Ontario, and Nepal & Jamal's (2011) study on mountain communities in British Columbia, which took exploratory approaches through qualitative interviewing and secondary data analysis, seem more appealing. Marshall & Rossman (1999) explain that a qualitative approach allows the researcher to delve into in-depth complexities and processes. This chosen methodology, case study, allows participants to speak openly regarding phenomena as it pertains to them, in less rigid forms than a quantitative study may pose.

3.3 Data Analysis and Coding

During interviews, detailed notes were taken and interviews were recorded, whilst following an interview guide, which is provided in Appendix E. Afterwards, I personally transcribed the interviews for the analysis portion of the study. Transcribing my own interviews aided in the analysis portion of this study, as I became more familiar with the data throughout this process. Once transcribed, I printed each interview and bound them in a binder, to keep all of the interviews together. Thematic analysis coding was used in this study, as influenced by Charmaz (2006). Charmaz writes that "coding means categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece of data" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 48). By using a short name in the coding process, it seeks to answer "what might these statements indicate?" and aids in demonstrating relations between concepts and categories in the data (Charmaz, 2006). Using this approach to coding allows for the researcher to gather rich data, which is categorized by detailed description, multiple views, and useful comparisons.

The coding process itself is characterized by two main phases. The first phase involved

naming each word, line, or segment of the data, followed by a focused phase that uses the most frequent initial codes to sort the large amounts of data (Charmaz, 2006). To begin, I read each transcript and chose the key word from each line, referred to as line-by-line coding. Once that was completed, I began to compare and connect each key word into larger themes that represented these comparisons, which is known as focused coding. Below, line by line coding of the data is shown. Erasable coloured pens were used to organize the categories, as seen below. At times, quotations in the data would represent multiple themes, as seen in the image below, where it is highlighted orange, with two differing colours wrapped around the left side of the quotation, to show that the quote represented more than one theme. Text was highlighted as a form of memo, to remind me that it was a quote that stood out.

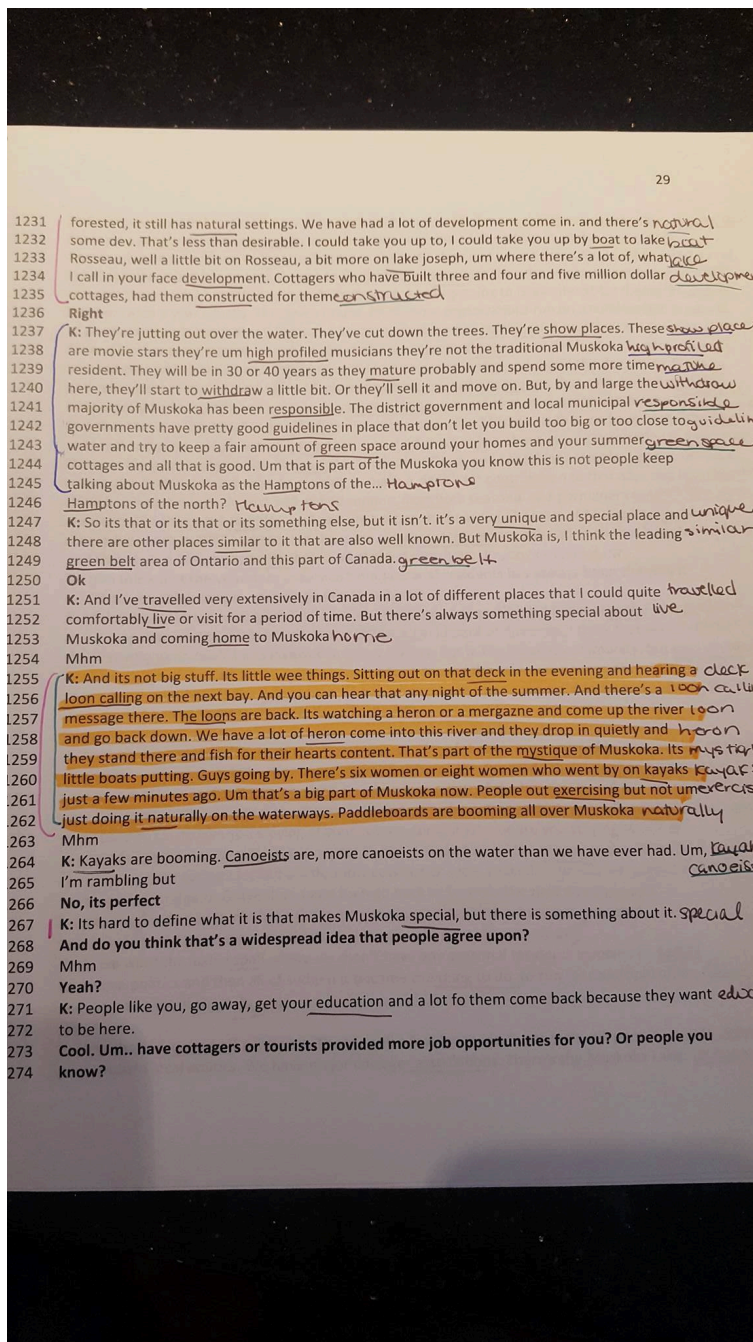


Figure Five: Line-by-line Coding

Categories were colour coded; environment was green, community was purple, rurality was red, us-they was blue, economic reliance was orange, sense of place was pink, and globalization and seasonality shared a teal coloured pen, as these themes were less common in the data. Each interview had the categories organized by line and displayed at the beginning of each interview.

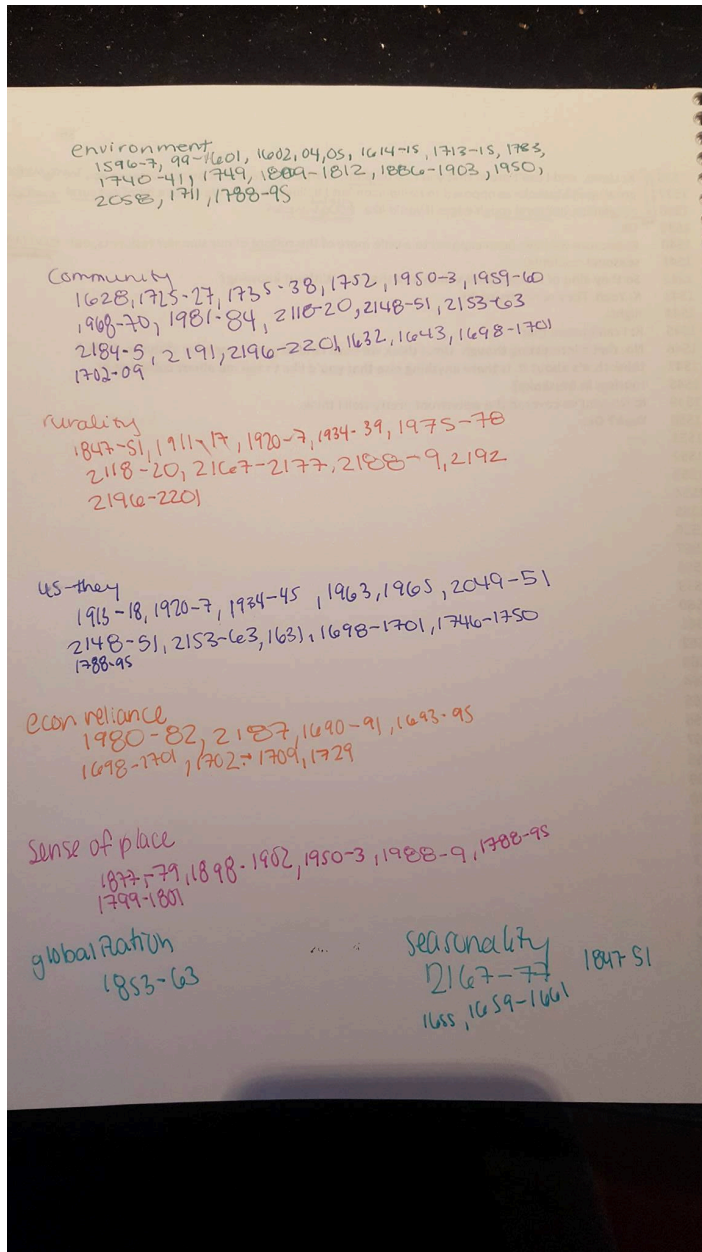


Figure Six: Organizing Codes

Once all of the categories per interview were organized, they were inputted into a master chart of categories and their related quoted lines, to refer to while writing the results and analysis portion of this study. Each interviewees pseudonym was listed in the chart, along with the lines associated with each category. Once the writing process began, each line was copied into the document specific to the category, and the writing process began.

	Rurality	Us-They	Environment	Community	Economic Reliance	Globalization/Seasonality	Sense of Place
Samuel	142-3, 294-313, 401, 460-62, 522-6, 530-33, 549, 580-81, 591, 596, 830	35, 323-38, 343-45, 357-366, 611-16, 694-717	71-85, 104, 122, 126, 110, 160, 168, 199, 201, 208, 213, 235-6, 240, 407-9, 501, 511-12, 539-42, 559, 592, 625-7, 638-9, 854	75, 79, 80, 96-98, 94, 124-8, 132, 164, 178, 194, 200-3, 217-19, 349, 351, 352-4, 379-83, 388-97, 563, 571, 579, 590, 607, 620, 648, 695, 747, 748-9, 768-9, 768, 821-3	258-260, 267-307, 308-341, 485-87		119-29, 246-9, 605-34, 696-717,
Kevin	1143, 1176-1190, 1399-1404, 1408-11, 1530-	1089-96, 1139-1144, 1176-90, 1237-45,	966, 1032, 1046, 1127-32, 1176-89, 1211-21, 1223-35, 1241-43, 1249, 1255-62, 1264,	957-964-5, 967, 980-6, 1137-39, 1191-97, 1199-1204, 1275-6, 1286-1291, 1303.	1125-1144, 1149-56, 1164-73, 1191-97, 1199-1204, 1508-		1089-96, 1209-35, 1255-62, 1267, 1369,

Figure Seven: Example of Coding Chart

After the initial results section was completed for each major theme, a discussion section was introduced to act as a conclusion for each theme. This was done to avoid the reader having to remind themselves of the results section in a later chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH OUTCOMES

4.0 Introduction to Research Outcomes

The purpose of this case study is to understand local people's perceptions of cottagers, and the tourism industry in the District Municipality of Muskoka. This chapter presents the results from the data collection process with local residents of Muskoka, Ontario. This chapter presents the various themes that make up local people's perception of the tourism in their community.

To begin, the "Realities of Muskoka" introducing the destination through the eyes of local residents, characterized by community challenges, the depiction of the destination in the media, and the seasonality of the destination. To follow, Identifying Binaries, speaks to the various stereotypes of the cottager, legends and recalled stories are brought to light, as well as tensions and differences, relationships between the two stakeholders, and the smart and caring nature of cottagers in Muskoka. The next section places an emphasis on the financial contribution of cottaging and tourism in the destination, highlighting the economic significance, seasonality, shifting times in the destination, and the philanthropic efforts of visitors. Environmental protection is the following focus, as an environmental ethos and subsequent philanthropic efforts exist in the destination, as well as restrictions and regulations that contribute to the construction of environmental place making. Lastly, place attachment is expressed in terms of environmental attachment, tradition, history, heritage, and home.

4.1 The Case

The District Municipality of Muskoka, Ontario, the site for this study, is located in Central Ontario, Canada with an area size of 3,937.76 km² (Statistics Canada, 2011). The permanent population of the destination is approximately 59, 220 people, whereas the seasonal

population is 83, 203 (The District Municipality of Muskoka, 2013). As for the volume of tourists, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport (2013) reported there were 4.3 million visitors to the destination in 2013, 69% of them being overnight visitors. Furthermore, tourism employs one third of the local population, making it the primary industry in the destination. District Municipality of Muskoka, 2014). These statistics show that Muskoka has a significant tourism industry with a high visitation rate, and the seasonal population outnumbers the permanent population. This contributes to the rationale of this study, which is to understand the relationship between these two groups (permanent and seasonal populations). Muskoka is deemed as *cottage country* in Ontario and is known to many as a wealthy tourist destination for the rich and the famous, as mentioned in the data analysis below. However, this reputation has fostered a large disparity economically and socially between local residents and seasonal second homeowners, as will be discussed below.

Muskoka is marketed as a 90-minute drive north of Canada's business capital Toronto, and is known for its magical landscape, characterized by the granite rock of the Canadian Shield, picturesque waterfalls, and charming towns and villages (Discover Muskoka, 2016). The destination offers a multitude of outdoor recreational activities such as fishing, hiking, boating, golfing, kayaking, zip lining, ice skating, beaches, but also offers opportunities such as brewery tours, shopping, art galleries and festivals, and heritage experiences. These core activities have been broken down into distinctive core sectors, being water-based features, outdoor recreation, resort experiences, small town experience, heritage and culture, and the "cottage" experience (Muskoka Assessment Project, 2013). As an image, the destination has been recognized by National Geographic Magazine as one of the *top 20 Best Places to Visit* and was chosen as the number one pick for the *Ten Best Trips of Summer*, furthermore, the destination has been

recognized by National Geographic as one of the *100 Best Places That Can Change Your Child's Life* (Discover Muskoka, 2016). Such acknowledgements have made Muskoka a popular tourist destination and has contributed to its place associated and brand image. On the way into Muskoka, a sign reading “Muskoka- Once Discovered, Never Forgotten” mystically welcomes cottagers to “cottage country” (Appendix B), which contributes to this brand image of Muskoka being an unforgettable destination.

When analyzing secondary data, however, such as media articles, blogs, and books about Muskoka, a crisis of representation appears to be an issue, as emphasized in the media by local people. For example, controversy began in Muskoka in 2013 when local farmers were denied to be vendors at what was deemed a local farmers market in Gravenhurst, while those who purchased their products at the Toronto food terminal were given permission to be vendors (Steel, 2013). Local Muskokan, Wendle Messer (2013) added to the controversy when he published a fictional book titled *Farmers Market*, based in the fictional town of Gravywurst, with an abstract reading, “Across North America, there are weeds in the garden. Food terminal hucksters infest some farmers’ markets or even control them. This book is the story of one such market”. This publication was later banned in Gravenhurst and appears to be a local person’s attempt to bring back stage issues to the forefront, to whistleblow the inauthentic experiences produced by this “local” farmer’s market.

After analyzing a document compiled for the 2015 Muskoka Tourism Marketing Summit, which took place on Wednesday, February 4, 2015, authenticity is listed as the second most critical element to the Muskoka brand, as seen in Appendix A. However, it is not discussed in depth to define what authenticity means in this context. It appears as though the term authenticity is used in this context as a ‘buzz word’ to bring in more tourists, as opposed to capturing how to

authentically portray Muskoka. Another critical term listed is “accessible- everyone’s welcome”, which is contested by many media sources, as Muskoka appears to be a recognized destination and a “playground of the rich and famous” (Destination Canada, 2011; Travel Industry Today, 2014; The Globe and Mail, 2015). This rich and famous reputation that Muskoka holds alludes to a sense of exclusivity, which will be discussed multiple times throughout this study, which also does not appear to authentically represent the location as a whole, especially the local people who may not fall within this glorified reality. It appears the destination is overshadowed by a reputation as being exclusive and accessible to those who can afford it, and perhaps this is why Muskoka Tourism may seek to present Muskoka as a place for everyone. While it appears that local stakeholders are working together in Muskoka to brand the destination, there still may be issues surrounding authentically representing the destination outside of corporate interests to bring in more tourists.

Financially, The District Municipality of Muskoka’s Second Home Study (2013) indicates a significant income gap between permanent and seasonal households. According to this study, in 2013 only 22% of permanent households earned over \$100,000 per year, whereas 70% of second homeowners reported being in this income bracket, depicted below.

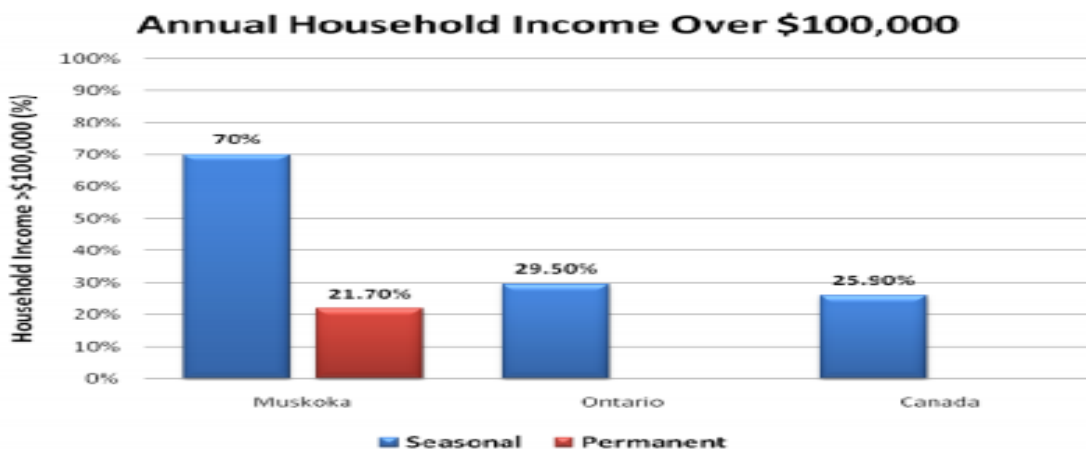


Figure Eight: Annual Household Income Over \$100,00 (District Municipality of Muskoka, 2013)

Furthermore, the chart below depicts the household income range of second homeowners. The percentage of second homes owned by those in the lowest income bracket mentioned in the study, \$50,000 per year and under, decreased from 15% in 2004 to only 6% in 2013. Similarly, those within the high and very high income brackets of \$100,000 per year and over has increased from 56% in 2004 to 70% of total second household ownership in 2013, shown here.

Percentage of Households Within Income Range						
Municipality	Under \$50k	\$50k-\$100k	\$100k-\$150k	\$150k-\$200k	\$200k-\$250k	Over \$250k
MUSKOKA	6.0%	23.9%	20.3%	14.8%	8.8%	26.1%
Bracebridge	8.2%	24.5%	26.6%	13.5%	6.0%	21.2%
Georgian Bay	5.7%	27.4%	20.4%	15.9%	8.0%	22.5%
Gravenhurst	4.5%	23.2%	23.0%	16.5%	10.2%	22.6%
Huntsville	8.8%	29.8%	20.0%	13.7%	8.1%	19.6%
Lake of Bays	4.3%	25.4%	19.4%	15.0%	11.0%	24.9%
Muskoka Lakes	6.2%	20.1%	17.7%	13.8%	8.5%	33.7%

Table Four: Income Range (The District Municipality of Muskoka, 2013)

The statistics presented in Table 1 suggest that a significant income gap exists between permanent and seasonal household incomes across Muskoka. The extent of wealth of second homeowners in the destination has been acknowledged in the media, as well as in a Canadian context Muskoka has been deemed “The Hamptons of the North” (Bloomberg Business, 2015; The Star, 2015; Business News Network, 2015) for luxury cottage living by multiple media sources. This, paired with Muskoka’s discussion in the popular media and entertainment websites as the “playground of the rich and famous” (Destination Canada, 2011; Travel Industry Today, 2014; The Globe and Mail, 2015) has given this destination a reputation for attracting the wealthy, in addition to real estate prices. In a New York Times (2005) article, snippets of social stratification in Muskoka are touched on as the destination has been referred to as “The Malibu of the North”, and has been described as being “beautiful and secluded, with palatial homes for

the Canadian super wealthy that fit the Hollywood model elegantly”, with visitors who are “anxious to show off their wealth”. The article (2005) continues to explain how the “blue-collar guys could put away some money and buy a small place”, but this notion has been threatened as a “new generation of millionaires arrived [...] [causing] small cottages [to be] torn down and replaced with oversize facsimiles”. These oversized cottages, appear to lack the authenticity of the rustic cottage that once was the norm in northern Ontario, which gave Canadians a “back-to-nature” sentiment (Jaakson, 1986). Such opulence has created concerns for example, a quote from a 65-year-old Toronto nurse, explains, “we couldn’t afford our cottage anymore, everything is high-end, high-end, high-end” (The New York Times, 2005), referring to a rise in property taxes which pushed a large number of cottager owners out of Muskoka.

A specific ostentatious example of wealth demonstration in Muskoka has been noted in the media, appears on the dock of a Muskoka cottage on Baxter Island. A 14-foot-high, 2,000-pound sculpture, named Koilos, as seen in Figure Three below, which was first installed in Toronto’s distillery district in 2009, is now erect on a cottage dock, yielding many mixed responses from cottagers, local people and the media (Finney, 2013).



Figure Nine: Koilos Sculpture on Baxter Island

Responses such as, “that’s a beautiful piece of art, but it doesn’t belong in Muskoka”, or “this shouldn’t be here, its an eyesore” (Finney, 2013) have been expressed, however, others have shown to love the sculpture, expressing “thanks for bringing it here for us to enjoy” (Seagal, 2013). This particular statue and the varying responses to it, appears to represent the multitude of feelings towards demonstrations of wealth in Muskoka, and the extent of wealth on the lakes. The resentment towards wealthy cottagers has created class conflicts in the destination, as expressed by Grainger (2005) in *Toronto Life*. Grainger (2005), whom grew up as a local to the area spoke specifically to class conflicts between locals and cottagers in Muskoka, Ontario. He expressed:

When city friends talked about going up to their cottage in "the Muskokas"—an affectation that implies a link with New York's Hamptons—I corrected them, saying there was no East or West Muskoka and therefore no need for the plural. And I'd tell them a little bit about what it's really like up there--how their northern playground of pleasant lakeside cottages and resorts is built next door to grinding poverty, addiction and spousal abuse, a place where locals head off to hunting camps in the bush to get right liquored up, sleep with their best friend's wife and shoot stuff (Grainger, 2005)

This quote greatly differs from the Muskoka that is advertised in the New York Times (2005) as the “Malibu of the North”, implying that there is more to be discovered in this rural community than the glitz and glamour of cottage ownership. A similar opinion is expressed by Muskoka local Ken Black, who spoke to the *Globe and Mail* (2015), explaining, “I have a certain distaste bordering on disgust for the ostentatious cottages of Muskoka”. Black also took to his own personal blog, writing, “It’s time for silly season again, that time of year when a big Toronto daily newspaper offers comment on Muskoka that is both inaccurate and misleading”, and discusses how newspaper writers often only interviewed “rich and famous” cottagers, and therefore “generalized [...] ill-founded assumptions into an article that was full of exaggeration and misinformation” (Ken Black, personal communication, 2015). Based on these examples, it appears

that local people are frustrated with how Muskoka is represented in media, as an unauthentic vacation spot for the rich and famous.

The clash between the locals and cottagers does not simply stop at the representation of place, but also how place is utilized in Muskoka. For example, McGregor (2013) writes how the Conservative government angered environmentalists in 2012, when changes were made to one of the oldest statutes in the country, the Navigable Waters Protection Act, which required federal approval for construction on any body of water large enough to float a canoe. McGregor (2013) states that according to the government, the law needlessly constrained development of small projects such as docks or bridges, and therefore the law was changed. This new law no longer required federal approval from all bodies of water except for a select few. Of the select few lakes still to be protected, Tony Clement's conservative riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka, which is the location of some of the most expensive cottages in Muskoka, remained. McGregor (2013) writes that under the new law, these lakes surrounded by affluent cottagers, who were referred to as NHL players and Hollywood stars, would continue to enjoy federal protection, while the vast majority of Canadian lakes would not. Similarly, the *National Post* (2007) writes that fights over access to public docks, and the closures of barges on Lake Rosseau in Muskoka are common, and end up pitting local people against powerful cottagers such as media mogul Ted Rogers or philanthropist Richard Ivey, all who wish to utilize the barges for their own conflicting, personal uses. Cottagers express their concerns, such as Mr. Rogers who states,

Ever since I can remember, barges have been coming from Adams Bay, Skeleton Bay, Windermere and other locations. If these locations are closed, how can we islanders survive? (The National Post, 2007, p.1)

However, the *National Post* (2007) explains that the locals have different opinions on the matter, as they claim that contractors and affluent cottagers have total control over public facilities,

making it difficult for locals to utilize the docks. Another example is found in *The Globe and Mail* (2015), as an article explains how the Muskoka River passes through 42 dams, mostly for the purpose of water-level controls, while 11 are for the production of hydroelectricity. The article (2015) centers in on viewpoints of local residents, over the plans for a new hydro project in Bala, Ontario. This proposed project would reroute water into a generating system, and create infrastructure, which would require the demolition of a number of local businesses within the immediate area. In response, the article explains how signs have been erected throughout the district saying “Save the Bala Falls” and “Stop the Hydro Plant”, as locals explain “the Muskoka River has been almost totally dammed, we’re doing everything we can to keep this from happening” (Globe and Mail, 2015). The article acknowledges that “the old familiar themes of the Muskoka watershed are being played out here: the past competing with the future, locals up against outsiders” (Globe and Mail, 2015). These statements suggest that issues regarding the preservation and degradation of the environment have long been played out within Muskoka, and deserve attention.

While the examples above do not represent the entire picture of life in Muskoka, it sheds light on an array of meanings and understandings of cottaging to the local people, and becomes a starting point for this case study. This was done not only as a way to shed light on the current situation in Muskoka, which is not represented in academic literature. The findings suggest that issues such as representation of place, and environmental and political conflicts occurred as a result of cottage ownership in Muskoka, mostly surrounding conflicting ideologies on topics such as class, illustration of place by the media, land access and use, and policy regarding the conservation and protection of the environment.

4.2 The “Realities” of Muskoka

The analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that several local residents brought attention to what they referred to as the “realities” of Muskoka, or the “underbelly” of the destination. To the study informants, the media’s lavish interpretation or common perception of Muskoka as a destination did not accurately depict their experience in their hometown. Interviewees suggested that there is a side to Muskoka that only some “enlightened locals” or visitors know and/or speak about. In line with this description, it was found that some interviewees overtly discussed this “reality” or “underbelly” for the majority of their interview, while with others, this theme was completely undetected or only slightly alluded to. While seemingly interconnected and related, the following sections represent the subthemes which explore these described “realities” of Muskoka and emerged from the analysis of the data. The three sub-themes which will be discussed in the subsequent sections include:

1. Community Challenges
2. Depiction in the Media
3. Seasonality

4.2.1 Community Challenges

Many respondents suggest that while a reputation of Muskoka and its notorious wealth does exist and is a dominant discourse, there are much grimmer realities that may go unnoticed by visitors, second home owners, and even local people. Specifically, aspects such as lower income, alcoholism, lack of affordable housing and transportation were discussed by respondents. Greg, a retired professional, highlighted this when he says:

let me remind you that Muskoka people have some real challenges. We have a lower income than the provincial average, we have more disease, more alcoholism, we’ve got more mental health issues than the average and we need to help our citizens.

Greg's comments underscore some specific concerns regarding the challenges faced by the region. Michelle, an environmental planner, explains how the extent of the poverty level in Muskoka can be unnoticed when she explains:

there's a lot of poverty in Muskoka [...] and not all of the people who come, because a lot of our donors are aware of it, but most of them have no idea how significant the issues are here. That the average household income is below the provincial average and um and probably some don't want to know.

The donors Michelle refers to are most often second homeowners, who have higher disposable incomes, allowing them to contribute philanthropically to local causes. Furthermore, many respondents expressed how the lower household incomes of local people have impacts on local children. Michelle adds to this discussion when she explains,

Kids that live in social housing, the district has a lot of programs for them. There's one that we supported that was sending kids from Muskoka to camp who are from Muskoka. 'Cause a lot of them have never been in a boat, never been in a canoe, don't know how to swim because they can't afford it.

Greg, too, explains the various impacts that poverty has on local children. He discusses programs that are important for youth in Muskoka as a result of low incomes and living and poverty, when he says:

Some of the schools in Muskoka that need both breakfast and lunch programs because the kids don't have and the families don't have enough money to feed them so that they can learn properly. Or organizations need to give money to kids so they can take their first trip outside of Muskoka as part of a classroom because their parents or parent can't even get them to Barrie or Toronto to give them an experience to show them that there's more than living in poverty. So, you know you've got a job to do, and depicting Muskoka as being the wealthiest playground in the world or the Hamptons of Canada, um don't do the citizens of Muskoka any benefit.

The discussion around children living in families with low incomes continues, highlighting root causes of poverty in Muskoka, when Isaac, explains:

Average income is low [...] a fair degree of poverty and then you have children born into that poverty and the only way you can begin to break the cycle is with them, through them, for them and most of that comes early on through early childhood development

Isaac explains that because of this, many social assistance programs and workshops exist in Muskoka for children and youth, but also for adults and the elderly. As a consequence of the low average wage, informants revealed that they must prudently pick and choose programming for their children, Heather explains:

The year round population definitely has less money. A lot of the programs are free. I'd say in our programs 1 in 5 is asking for subsidy. And they are asking for subsidy on a 25-dollar program... Do I pay for electives or do I pay for school shoes, or do I pay for girls unplugged? (a program by the YWCA)

Grace, a volunteer coordinator, speaks to this when she highlights that lower incomes in Muskoka may be a symptom of poverty, which fosters the need for these mentioned programs adding:

Poverty is huge issue here, and kids they have breakfast clubs because a lot of kids are going to school without food [...] There's a lot of people who live 30 miles outside of town in a little wee home, with no car or anything but that's the only way they can afford to pay the rent. And that's why we have such a problem with transportation in this area.

Along with the need for programs, specifically geared at feeding and providing opportunities for youth living in low income families, Grace has also identified affordable housing and transportation as a challenge for local people. This is mirrored by Karol, when she explains:

They are living in a not so hot place for high rent. The rents are still high here for an area that the town and the townspeople aren't rich. Obviously some are. But the prices are very high for rentals here.

Similarly, Kimberly, a tourism marketer, adds to this discussion on affordable housing and its impact when she says:

I think Muskoka Lakes Townships which I live in which is so funny because its one of the poorest areas. Like my daughter goes to a school where some of the kids are so poor that they don't have running water. Its also where the most expensive cottages are.

Similar insights were analyzed in the data numerous times, with these merely a representation of the various challenges noted by local people, which are mentioned as going largely unnoticed by locals and visitors. This notion of issues going unnoticed, appears to be in part because the destination is greatly shaped by its brand image and transient population, which paints Muskoka as a weekend or summer destination for the rich and the wealthy. This takes attention away from issues such as poverty in the permanent population, and puts a focus on the wealth of the destination- known for the enormous cottages, resorts, and celebrity status associated with the destination. How local people feel about the depiction of their hometown in the media, is discussed in depth below.

4.2.2 Depiction in the Media

Known and detested by many local people, Muskoka has been depicted in the media as “The Hamptons of the North” (Bloomberg Business, 2015; The Star, 2015; Business News Network, 2015), which compares Muskoka to the destination in Long Island, New York, known for having the most expensive and luxurious summer homes in the United States. The term the “playground of the rich and famous” (Destination Canada, 2011; Travel Industry Today, 2014; The Globe and Mail, 2015) has also been applied to the destination, referring to a large number of well-known celebrities and successful business people who spend their leisure time in Muskoka either cottaging or visiting resorts. Due to this high profile status of the destination, a question in the interview guide was geared towards the perceptions that local people have of this reputation. When interviewees were asked, “how do you feel about the depiction of Muskoka in the media?”, informants highlighted their thoughts on the Muskoka brand, feelings of resentment due to a misrepresentation of the destination, but also an understanding that this was a way of “doing business” to bring in more visitors, which they were ultimately grateful for.

Samuel spoke about Muskoka's brand, and how it is effective in bringing in visitors, unlike other destinations, when he said:

Well, I think its got a brand. When you say Muskoka, people automatically conjure up an image. The image is like high end cottages, beautiful lakes, stunning views [...] it's a premium brand. Umm, and I think that's effective like I think you know that's way better than having whatever brand you know like some of the [...] we are not Ajax or Buffalo, you know we don't have a problem with our brand

Greg spoke frankly about his feeling on the depiction of Muskoka in the media and this brand that Samuel described, when he explained:

The national media, the National Geographic media about it's the greatest place in the world to visit, that's fine. Because a lot of those international magazines talk about the beauty of Algonquin Park, the lakes the rivers, the streams, the forests, the animals, all of that stuff. It's the TV shows that talk about cottage life in Muskoka that are talking about the top 1%."

Greg's explanation highlights the challenges as previously mentioned and explains how the destination's illustrious reputation does not reflect the reality for many local people. Sandra, a social worker, discusses how Muskoka is perceived on television similarly to Greg, and how she feels that is a way of doing business:

Like I don't know if you've been watching, you probably haven't, the Love It or List It Vacation Homes [Canadian television show]. They always have these things about Muskoka. They will say, what a beautiful mansion in Muskoka blah blah blah so exciting. They don't understand the underbelly of Muskoka. There's that whole picture. I don't think it's a problem. I think its just business. It's a way to promote tourism. You're not going to say: come to Muskoka where the income level is this this and this, and we have more people on EI than anywhere else and addictions is super high and sexual abuse, lets talk about that. Actually, do you know how they have Breakfast Television (a Canadian television show), they come to Muskoka once a year. A lot of time they are at a fancy shmancy resorts. I get so furious. I'm going to call those guys one time and I'm going to tell them that I want to be on the show and I want to talk about the difficulties and the challenges in Muskoka and if you want to make a donation, send it to sexual assault services because it's a real problem. I get it. That's what they are doing and they are promoting those resorts and all that stuff but it's a little infuriating to see such a one sided view. And it would be the same if they were showing a totally bleak side. Its not all bleak and its not all good. Its more complex than that.

Isaac feels resentment like Sandra, as he speaks out about the branding and marketing of Muskoka as a destination for the rich and wealthy and explains:

I hate it. I hate it. No. its bullshit. Do you want an elaboration? It drives us crazy. What is depicted is the “Hamptons of the North” and they use that phrase. I know why, because that’s what the advertisers want and that’s going to attract [wealthy] people to their businesses [...] We try to pitch it one point, we went around to the publishers and we said you buggers, you’re Whistlerizing Muskoka. What do you mean we are Whistelerizing Muskoka? You’re turning us into Whistler... Well listen you bastards, don’t take pictures of hardened shores and castles, that don’t typify the Muskoka you all know, what’s at the real core of it. So I think its quite badly portrayed.

Greg felt that the media does well with promoting the destination to visitors, but feels more work needs to be done to explain what the real, authentic depiction of what Muskoka is,

You know, the magazines that we have in Muskoka are fabulous to read, but they don’t talk about the reality. They’re talking about the one percent. Or half of one percent of Muskoka lifestyles. They aren’t talking about the reality. So we need to do a lot more, we need to do a lot more with social media. We need to do a lot more in waking the social conscious of these people.

Sylvia expresses similar sentiments, explaining how the media’s depiction of Muskoka has added to a misrepresentation of how local people live, when she explains:

Well if you’re talking about the Hamptons of the North and things like that, I have mixed feelings about that. In some ways, I think its good for us because it promotes more visitation. It doesn’t really reflect who we are. A lot of people have the perception that Muskoka is all rich people with big houses on lakes and my daughter goes to Western and a lot of friends assume she lives in a big cottage on a lake and we don’t, we live in a modest size house in town. I think the reality is Muskoka is really a big mix of people so I don’t know if what’s described in the media is always accurate depiction. For example, we have one of the biggest gaps between housing prices and income in Ontario. Because we have so many part time, seasonal, service based jobs but our housing prices, our assessment are impacted by higher assessment properties so we do have a huge gap [...] We have homeless people, people who can’t find jobs, people with addictions, people with mental health issues. We have 600 families waiting for housing units that are affordable.

Samuel expresses that similar examples of false representation exist in other destinations such as the Caribbean, and branding away from this reality is just a way of doing business, when he says:

There's no acknowledgment that we need any kind of assistance or help or that there might be another side to that equation. And there's lots of other places like that in the world, like the Caribbean is a classic where an ocean front beach house could be a ten-million-dollar property and yet there's people living with dirt floors and shacks with no indoor plumbing. I've seen that, I've lived in the Caribbean. In comparison. Here is similar. I mean there are people living with leaky roofs and mold in the walls and a damp basement and you know tough to pay the electricity bill and you know heating was scrapped skids that they found or fire wood they dragged out of the forest...So we know all that exists and does the Muskoka brand speak to that? No. Do you want the Muskoka brand to speak to that? Probably not. What you want the Muskoka brand to do is its work which is making sure the tourists and cottagers keep coming because they create opportunity but somehow you want to acknowledge you know that yeah there's problems associated with that

These examples express how local people acknowledge Muskoka's brand image as an important contributor to bringing in visitors and revenue to the destination. However, it is apparent the brand which clearly has the intention to draw in their ideal visitors accentuates and favours depicting the wealthy counterparts of Muskoka, leading to a misrepresentation of local people and their economic circumstances, creating a cause for concern and detest amongst interviewees because the understanding of the extent of need for local people is devalued. Many interviewees discuss that much of the hardship that individuals face is at the expense of seasonal jobs, which may cause unemployment in the off season, with low wages and long hours during peak seasons. Seasonality and its impact on local people in Muskoka is discussed further below.

4.2.3 Seasonality

As with many tourism destinations, seasonality plays a large part in shaping the destination. Many respondents, whether working in the tourism field or not, spent time discussing the role of seasonality in Muskoka. Samuel explained that Muskoka is less busy in the winter months, saying:

You can walk down the main street in the winter and walk in the middle of the street on a lot of days and maybe just step to the right or left occasionally for a car to go by [...] a lot of the shops you know go on limited hours or shut down for a month.

Ryan explains that local people embrace the hustle and bustle of the busy summer season to be able to enjoy their winters, when he says “We put up with it for the summer to ride the coattails for the winter.” Similarly, Nina, who previously worked in the tourism industry in Muskoka explained:

(In the winter) I would go on either EI or I wouldn't and just work the odd one day week and then would literally work 12 hour days (in the summer), I think I worked a 40 day stretch once where I didn't have a day off because you just want to make that money because you know in the winter time you're going to regret taking that weekend off [...] your weekends are your busiest time because that's when you're making your money and that's when you need to be working...people like who live here are on completely opposite schedules of the cottagers.

Kimberly also explained her experience working seasonally in the resort industry in Muskoka, when she said:

A drug problem is prevalent, seasonal workers, I worked in the resort industry where the resorts complained that they can't get good help so they bring in temporary foreign workers for dirt cheap but the problem is who the F can survive for 11 dollars an hour as a reservation agent. They don't pay. And even to get to these places you need money. You need gas. You need a car. 11 dollars an hour doesn't do anything. That's where the tension arises. There's one like this is our playground and there's another that I'm trying to survive. That is so funny, that is really what Muskoka is.

Karol expanded on this and explained how specifically, seasonal jobs have created social tensions and issues for families:

In the winter when there were layoffs, a lot of drinking. A lot of alcoholism. And then the fights, no money and alcohol, not being able to make anything or make ends meet very often escalated.

Greg agreed with Karol and explained how seasonal jobs impact families in Muskoka by saying:

Seasonal jobs are hard on a lot of families in Muskoka, we need to find better jobs but we can't throw tourism out. We need to support it, we need to encourage it, broaden it, we need to convince them to pay better money.

Low wages are also mentioned by Samantha, when she explains the income gap between seasonal workers and their wealthy cottager counterparts when she explains:

Very few have year round jobs, very few earn a living wage. Its very difficult so, those women are exposed to unbridled wealth and similarly, some of the cottagers are surrounded by poverty and they understandably from their end, choose not to pay attention when they are here. So its not, I don't understand it to be antagonistic either way. Its just a huge income gap.

Heather expands on this notion of women working multiple jobs in the industry when she says:

Women are holding down three jobs and they are barely making a living wage. They are working for 13 bucks an hour but they are driving an hour to clean it. Because there aren't a lot of jobs here that are sustainable year round.

Samuel explains that having multiple jobs is the norm for many local people in Muskoka, as well as the existence of a “black market economy”, so that individuals can “make it work” during the off season, when he says:

Who knows you might have 4 jobs. You might also own 3 properties and you're managing or collecting rent or fixing their roofs. A lot of people have a lot of different irons in the fire. I think there's kind of a black market economy too where people are running like a full time garage sale on Kijiji or something...it may not be like high income but every little piece adds up right...They're always selling stuff on Kijiji or eBay and they might have 2 part-time jobs and they might be cleaning cottages in the summer and it all kind of adds up and I'm pretty sure not every nickel gets reported to the CRA.

These low wages associated with tourism work are apparent in the destination, fostering need for individuals to seek out alternative sources of income, such as multiple jobs or resorting to the “black market economy”, as Samuel mentions. Kimberly explains her frustration with a friend of hers, who owns a resort in Muskoka and struggles to find “cheap workers”. She explains:

While business owners say we contribute to the economy by hiring people, they pay them shit. Their hands are tied. I have a best friend who owns a resort and drives an Audi SUV and her workers get paid 12 dollars an hour and she is worth about 18 million dollars [...] I get frustrated when they are around the table complaining that they can't get cheap workers. My solution is, why don't you fucking pay them? Then you would have the best workers.

While it is made clear by respondents that tourism creates jobs for local people in Muskoka, the seasonality and low wages associated with these roles fosters economic inconsistency for local people. Sylvia explains this when she says:

There are things that tourism helps with, it creates those minimum wage jobs, it creates this employment that's seasonal, part-time, no benefits, people working multiple jobs to pay bills and so its kind of a 2 edged-sword for those people but if we didn't have tourism I don't know what those people would be doing.

Grace feels similarly about tourism jobs being a “2 edged-sword” when she says:

Unfortunately for some people that have seasonal work and minimum wage in retail and stuff, it totally dies down in the winter and they are on pogy [slang for welfare] and they hardly make it. But overall, I think [it is] huge to our economy.

Interviewees suggest that low wage, seasonal jobs are a leading cause of issues in Muskoka, yet feel as though they are necessary. As will be mentioned later on, local people feel as though their economy relies on cottaging and tourism.

4.2.4 Discussion

The analysis of the data revealed that Muskoka is a destination with difficulties that are often overlooked due to its reputation for attracting wealthy elite. Data analysis suggests that Muskoka has its own collection of community challenges largely impacted by seasonality, which may go unnoticed due to the distinguished brand image and the destination possesses, as a destination for the rich and wealthy. In Muskoka, local people's perceptions of rural tourism reflect the literature, in the sense that tourism can be a double edged-sword, with varying benefits and downfalls. For example, Wilson et al (2001) explains that rural tourism is beneficial for communities, because businesses that would otherwise not be self-sustaining, due to their small, local population, are able to thrive due to the influx of tourists and their demands for products and services. Frederick (1993) explains that these businesses in turn create jobs for low-

skilled workers or youth, whom may otherwise not be employed. This is recognized in the data; as local residents acknowledge that tourism is the main employer for many in the destination.

However, local residents expressed that the jobs created by tourism are often seasonal and low paying, which in turn strains the individuals and families involved. Such concerns are also evident in the literature, as Smith (1989) explains that employment in the tourism industry is quite often low paying, causing challenges for employees. Wilson et al (2001) also expresses that employment in the tourism industry is often seasonal, and therefore profits are only produced during certain times of the year. Interviewees were adamant in explaining that Muskoka has “another side”, that is characterized by homelessness, low incomes, alcoholism, a lack of affordable housing, and a lack of transportation; comprising some of the critiques associated with tourism as a form of economic development. Although there are benefits for those who are the investors of tourism in rural destinations (Mitchell, 1998) there are clearly, drawbacks for those who are working and living on the front lines of the industry. An example of this in the data is when Kimberly’s friend, a resort owner, worth 18 million dollars, pays her staff 12 dollars an hour, and complains about struggling to find “cheap workers”. This example creates concerns regarding the adequate nature of tourism jobs in the region which may provide sustainable incomes and hence livelihoods for local people. In fact, this example brings to the forefront the “other side” of the industry in the region.

The data reveals that tourism workers, and even those working in secondary industries in Muskoka are experiencing the disadvantages of a seasonal tourism industry with low paying employment. Interviewees acknowledged that the offseason is tough for many involved in the industry, as they “hardly make it” in the winter, but overall, tourism is huge to the economy in Muskoka, according to Grace. In the literature, Fik et al (1993) support this, when they explain

that tourism dependency fosters economic growth during the “good times”, such as the peak season, but off-putting structural deficits occur in the offseason. Marcouiller (1997) explains that seasonality often causes downturns in cash flow for the rural community businesses, and those employed by them in the offseason, which produces a number of challenges similar to those expressed in the data. Particularly, the data explains that women, and in turn, their children are impacted by these low-waged jobs, which calls for the need for breakfast clubs in schools and social and recreation programming for women and children in Muskoka, such as a program aimed at sending local kids from Muskoka to camp in Muskoka, because their parents are unable to fund such an opportunity otherwise. This is also seen in the literature, when Smith (1989) observed that women and inherently, their children in the rural south felt the negative impacts of tourism most, as their jobs are often underpaying, undervalued, subservient, and not sufficient enough to sustain household needs. Relatedly, Marcouiller (1997) wrote that a lack of affordable housing becomes apparent in amenity rich destinations, as the housing market becomes inflated with the influx of cottagers, retirees, and visitors, making it difficult for local people to acquire affordable housing. In these locations such as Kimberly, British Columbia (Nepal and Jamal, 2011), Vail, Colorado, and Jackson Hole, Wyoming (Rudzitis et al, 2011) where luxurious cottages and resorts are the norm, wealthy people have created clusters of developed areas that Nepal and Jamal (2011) refer to as “enclavic”, which are characterized by high housing prices, aesthetic attractions, and exclusivity. Due to the growth of resorts and second homes in these areas, local people have been priced out of their homes and are unable to afford to work in the service industry associated with the destination. This too, is apparent in the data. Interviewees expressed that due to the low wages and seasonality associated with tourism work, many local people are unable to afford housing in Muskoka. In the literature, Halseth (2004) writes that

cottage landscapes are increasingly becoming elite landscapes where the socio-economic status of cottagers greatly contrasts that of the local population within the destination. The elitist view of Muskoka is often what is portrayed in the media, and has become common perception to those outside of the destination. Sylvia expresses, *my daughter goes to Western [University of Western Ontario] and a lot of friends assume she lives in a big cottage on a lake and we don't*, and when Greg claims *what is depicted is the "Hamptons of the North" and they use that phrase. I know why, because that's what the advertisers want and that's going to attract [wealthy] people to their businesses*. These examples express how local people acknowledge Muskoka's brand image as an important contributor to bringing in visitors and revenue to the destination. However, it is apparent the brand which clearly has the intention to draw in their ideal visitors accentuates and favours depicting the wealthy counterparts of Muskoka, leading to a misrepresentation of local people and their economic circumstances, creating a cause for concern and detest amongst interviewees because the understanding of the extent of need for local people is devalued. Conflicts of destination branding in regard to Kimberley, British Columbia has been evidenced in the literature. Nepal (2008) explains that older businesses in the destination wished to continue marketing the landscape as traditionally Bavarian, whereas newer establishments hoped to brand the destination as an "alpine" town. This disagreement of place branding resulted in "increasingly noisy" town hall meetings in not only Kimberly, but also Fernie, and Golden, British Columbia (Nepal, 2008). Consequently, this concept of the "real Muskoka" would refer to the back stage of the destination, which is largely hidden or mystified for the sake of maintaining Goffman's (1959) concept of the front stage. These front stages refer to spaces where hosts and guests meet, and back stages are where the host community conceals anything that may discredit the performance in the front stage (MacCannell, 1973). Relatedly, Duncan

(1989) explains that often times, the commodification of destinations alters how places are constructed and represented through print, souvenirs, and heritage sites. This appears to be the case in Muskoka, as the data explains that print and media do not accurately depict Muskoka's local population, which while it frustrates local people, is understood as necessary as a means to bring in visitors to further facilitate perceived economic growth through rural tourism.

It is interesting to note that Deller (2010) acknowledges that “the influence of tourism and recreation development on poverty, has not been adequately addressed within the rural development literature” (pg. 181), identifying a gap within this research frame. The data in this study identifies poverty as a prominent theme in the Muskoka landscape. Although interviewees were initially reluctant to elaborate and make the connection between tourism work and poverty during interviews, perhaps because they felt their economy is reliant on visitation and consumption. Poverty, in relation to rural tourism and cottaging in Muskoka was not an expected outcome prior to data collection, as it was not a topic explored in the literature and therefore initially included in the formulation of the literature review. As a consequence, the researcher seconds Deller's (2010) work which addresses poverty as an inadequately addressed area in rural development literature and provides empirical evidence which contributes to this area scarcely researched.

Another contribution to research is evidenced in Samuel's mention of a *black market economy* consisting of selling via online platforms such as Kijiji or eBay, as a way to mitigate the impacts of low paying, seasonal jobs. This strategy appears to be unique to the existing literature. While working multiple jobs is seen in the literature pertaining to tourism work, mention of an online marketplace economy has not been discussed in depth. While illegal black markets associated with tourism in regard to organ trafficking (Starzl et al, 2009), prostitution

and cigars (Salloum, 1996), or unregistered guesthouses (Radan-Gorska, 2013) has been touched upon in the literature, selling of this kind has not been noted in research, perhaps due to the more recent changing of traditional markets, and the increase of the sharing economy, now contributing to tourism literature with regard to Uber and Airbnb (Guttentag, 2013, Fang, 2016).

In summary, Muskoka as a case appears to fit in with literature pertaining to rural tourism benefits such as the introduction of businesses and jobs for those who may otherwise not be employed (Wilson et al, 2001). In contrast, consistent mention of poverty as a consequence of the following characteristics appears to be unique to the research on cottaging destinations. Issues related to tourism reliance (Fik et al, 1993), low wages, seasonality (Marcouiller, 1997), housing affordability (Marcouiller, 1997; Halseth, 2004), and its impact on families and women, in particular (Smith, 1989) appeared in Muskoka. Furthermore, the representation of Muskoka is similar to other amenity-rich destinations such as Kimberly, Fernie, and Golden, British Columbia, Elora, Ontario, and St. Jacobs, Ontario, where destination branding can be disputed (Nepal, 2008), commodified (Duncan, 1989; Mitchell, 1998), and manipulated as unauthentic (MacCannell, 1973) for the sake of attracting visitation.

As for solutions to the aforementioned issues listed throughout this section, many of the interviewed stakeholders spoke about how to create awareness, especially with seasonal populations, around causes faced by local people. Engagement, for Greg, appears to be a way of spreading awareness of these issues:

I would like to see cottagers engaged in helping Muskoka improve. And its not all their fault, because sometimes we don't go a good job at reaching out to them [...] we have to learn to engage people personally and tell them the story about what's happening to the real people in Muskoka.

Bridget added to this, when she explained the importance of engaging both cottager and local populations, so they can work together. She expressed,

we try to engage both sides in learning about the other and appreciating each other, and thereby involve [one another] as opposed to challenging [one another].

The concept of engaging seasonal populations, and their relationships with local people will be discussed further in the next section.

4.3 Identifying Binaries

Interviewees in this study, whom were all local, felt strongly about their relationships with cottagers in Muskoka. When speaking of cottagers, different stereotypes and typologies presented themselves, as well as various legends and stories regarding their experiences with seasonal counterparts. Often times, such stories prompted the mention of tensions and hence differences between cottagers and local people, as interviewees overtly acknowledged the incidence of a “us-they” (Jaakson, 1986), or the “we-them” opposition. However, it is important to mention that the relationships between cottagers and locals is not necessarily always tense or negative. Often times in Muskoka, cottagers contribute greatly to the community through donations and philanthropic efforts, which greatly shapes the environment and its services for local people such as through community foundations or women’s shelters. The following five sub-themes illuminate the distinct binaries illuminated in this case.

1. Cottager Types
2. Legends and Recalled Stories
3. Tensions & Differences
4. Relationships
5. Smart & Caring

4.3.1 Types of Cottager

Throughout the analysis of the data it became clear that interviewees commonly mentioned what seems like a typology or stereotype of *the cottager*. While analyzing the data,

local people seemed to display resentment towards the rise of luxury mansions referred to as cottages. Familiar names of celebrities are consistently mentioned throughout interviews as a way to represent the magnitude of wealth on the lakes. Interviewees described that the affluence of Muskoka cottagers is displayed through their large cottages, luxury vehicles, and celebrity status. Perceived differences amongst three groups emerged by interviewees, being: long-term cottagers/seasonal residents, those whom they referred to as the “nouveau riche”, and the “real” cottagers of Muskoka who spent their times in modest sized dwellings as opposed to mansions. Greg explains differences between these cottagers when he says:

On the small lakes, on the rivers, you know out in the bush, cabins, um so those folks, they're a different kind of cottager than the extremely newer cottagers [...] the new folks that fly in go to the cottage, bring their friends from wherever in the world, do their entertaining and their playing and then leave.

To Greg, the size of the cottage and the location is meaningful in determining the type of cottager someone is. Sandra also makes mention of “the cabin”, and its counterpart, when she speaks quite similarly about these cottager differences, explaining:

There's almost a difference between the cottagers. There's the ones who just have a cabin, whatever, its nothing fancy...you have another group, that's just extreme wealth and extreme consumerism and extreme spending that I think its just weird. Its such a disconnect.

This divide refers to the variety of cottages that exist in Muskoka, from the older style cottages and cabins, to the newer cottages that have a reputation for parading extreme wealth on the lakes. Kevin, who had lived in Muskoka for over 80 years and has now passed away since his interview, expanded on this when he explained that cottages now are much different than when he was young, expressing:

The places that are being built now no longer resemble cottages [...] They are mammoth and I don't think this is necessarily a good thing for Muskoka, but it is the reality. That here is a lot of money coming to Muskoka spent by people who are building mammoth big seasonal residences.

It was common for interviewees to speak about celebrities whom they were familiar with as second homeowners, and express their opinions about their contributions to Muskoka.

Isaac explains that the owners of these mammoth cottages impose their different lifestyle values on Muskoka's landscape and social sphere, which strays away from the values of the "traditional" Muskoka resident. He explains:

These are movie stars, they're um high profiled musicians, they're not the traditional Muskoka resident [...] Muskoka has always attracted some different cats who come here and bring different values and different lifestyles and we tend to tolerate and expect them. Kevin O'Leary is the latest cool cat who comes to Muskoka and builds the great big cottage and turns the sound system up as loud as it can go and a big boat with a loud motor that he runs up and down Lake Rousseau apparently antagonizing the hell out of all of his neighbours. Do I have anything in common with those people? No!

The mention of other celebrities and wealthy individuals was common amongst interviewees, as they provided both positive and negative examples. It seems as though their presence has become commonplace, to be anticipated by local residents during each peak season. Isaac explains that for the most part celebrities and wealthy cottagers who spend the summer in Muskoka "fit in" well, due to their personal values which align well with local people. Isaac explains that cottagers spend time in the destination for various reasons which either align well, or are a disconnect from the authentic Muskoka he perceives. He outlined that cottagers spend time in Muskoka for either the natural environment, to get away from their busy urban lifestyles, or because cottage ownership in Muskoka has become popular amongst elite, as a status symbol. This is particularly apparent when he said:

We have a lot of professional hockey players coming in here now. Some of them fit in beautifully. Some come to Muskoka not because they want to, I guess they enjoy the good weather and the natural beauty but because having a place in Muskoka is the thing to do [...] we are tending to attract now are the movie stars and you know they've got a lot of money. If they have any connection to Canada they know that Muskoka is the place to spend it. They come up here and most of them fit in pretty well. Most of them come here to get away [...] from publicity and attention so you quite often will see a familiar

face and think, god I know that person and then all of a sudden you realize no you don't know her [...] Goldie Hawn and her daughter [Kate Hudson]. Well they tend to go around in ripped jeans and are here to enjoy the summer, to enjoy themselves and they didn't want to be seen as Goldie Hawn they wanted to be part of the cottage [atmosphere]. So you get a mixture of people, you take the good with the bad.

Like Isaac, Nina explains that she does not resent most wealthy cottagers in Muskoka. In fact, Nina embraces the need for leisure spaces for these individuals and does not mind that space being Muskoka. However, it is interesting to note that Nina uses distancing discourse, even though she is articulating a need for shared space when she expressed:

Well there's got to be somewhere for those people to go, Justin Bieber and stuff who want to live here [...] Like you drive by them in the boat and wonder wow I wonder what that person does [for a living], so I mean its not super realistic for people to think that they are going to own those homes. I don't resent the people who do though, like good for them. Its not reality for anyone who lives in Muskoka really, with the exception of a few people.

Similar to the previous section on realities in Muskoka, Nina identified the lavish lifestyles of those who cottage in Muskoka as being far-fetched for many local residents. This is due to the substantively differing levels of income, which were discussed more thoroughly in the previous section. However, the data presents an understanding amongst interviewees that these lifestyles of the rich and the wealthy have become familiar in Muskoka, even if it is not reflective of how locals live. Nina mentions that when she views the cottages on the water, she often wonders who the owners are, and what they do for a living. Throughout data analysis, this seems to be common amongst interviewees. Interviewees gave names of celebrities or wealthy people who cottage in Muskoka, indicated in a variety of examples above, and would accompany “Muskoka legends” and recalled stories about interactions with these individuals, which will be discussed further below.

4.3.2 Legends and Recalled Stories

When interviewees were asked about their respective relationships with cottagers and visitors, various “Muskoka” legends and recalled stories were told. Many of these told stories and legends revealed negative sentiments, and the concept of an “us-they” or “we-them” dichotomy took form. In these stories, interviewees acknowledged the so-called differences between types of cottagers, as discussed above, along with stories that support their experiences. Bridget told a particular story which she described as the “book ending of the we-them”, saying:

I go grocery shopping and I had an experience several summers ago now [...] I will never forget this, it was a Friday afternoon, the grocery store was just bedlam, we were in a checkout line, it was hot, everybody was cranky, and we all knew we shouldn't have left our purchases until late Friday afternoon. The person in front of me said something, muttering to themselves in a loud mutter, “you'd think the locals would shop before this time on Friday! So they wouldn't be in our way.” I raised my eyebrows. Then heard a response from directly behind me “you'd think the cottagers would think about getting their groceries before they got here late on a Friday afternoon”. So I'm unable to resist and say “you'd think all of us would have thought to do this sometime other than now.” [...]it was a perfect example of the we-them [...] But I think, for me, it was the book ending of the we-them. Like relax, its just soda pop you're buying.

Grace acknowledged, like above, that there are two types of tourists, some of whom she mentions are known to have a certain attitude. She explains:

I have kind of noticed there are two types of tourists, there's the older generation and the older families who have been here for years, and I'm not saying it's all of them, but there's the nouveau rich who have a certain attitude and also their kids can have an attitude too.

Grace explained that these negatively recalled stories about the nouveau rich are simply the ones that stand out in local people's minds, above the positive stories. She makes sure to mention that there are positive attributes of cottagers, as well as the negative stories. She explains this when she gave an example of a negative experience, saying:

When our kids were at the golf club, even then I remember one of the local kids, who is a builder's kid was standing in line and one of the other kids butted in line in front of him and they said “what's going on?” and he said “your dad works for my dad and I will

have him fired” you know if you tell on me, that sort of thing. That’s the few, few in far between. Those are the ones who seem to stick out in our minds. Those stories about the fights in the grocery lines and they happen, but they aren’t, I think its probably a minority but there is a really different flavour with the different generations and where they’ve gotten the money and the older generations just respect the lakes and they don’t even want all these big noisy boats. But then there’s this whole new vibe.

As highlighted by both Bridgit and Grace above, almost every interviewee discussed grocery store interactions throughout their interviews; highlighting this specific space as one which breeds conflict. Whether they discussed the social connection they felt with their neighbours while there, or the influx of people during peak season, the grocery store appears to be a space where both cottagers and local people interact. Kimberly explained:

there’s this thing at grocery stores, [cottagers] assume because the checkout is so busy that the people are quote unquote “retarded”. Do you know what I mean? They think that the locals don’t know how to process groceries properly [...] That’s where the tension between the two legitimately comes. Its crazy.

Kimberly vehemently expresses tension around the “we-them” at the local hospital as well.

While she did not give a name of the individual in the following story, she did explain that it has been a common story for locals to tell, which refers to the “cottager attitude”, and the depiction of the “we-them”. She explained,

This celebrity got fixed up [had constructive surgery] [at the local hospital] thank you very much and went on a popular television talk show and said he was in a greasy spoon hospital. The locals were so mad. That type of attitude, the cottager attitude, this is the hospital where you have your babies, if you’re sick this is where you go, old people whether is palliative care, a hospice system here. So the seasonal cottager population, these hospitals are there for them, they contribute to these hospitals, some of them are so good, they make major donations to these hospitals, but at the same time the doctors as well coming out of medical schools from the south think oh this is just a dinky little hospital. We are used to working in Toronto hospitals, but its exceptional quality care but there’s this perception that its local because its secondary.

These stories serve as examples of various tensions and differences between local people and cottagers. Beyond these stories, local people went on to discuss tensions and differences between cottagers and themselves, which are discussed more in depth below.

4.3.4 Tensions & Differences

To different extents, interviewees mentioned various tensions and differences between local people and cottagers. Much to what was discussed above, locals told stories of these tensions and expressed their thoughts on their seasonal neighbours, pinpointing where these differences and tensions lay. Sylvia explains how while she believes there are differences between local people and cottagers, there aren't necessarily conflicts. She explained:

I don't think there's conflicts, I think there are differences. I think our cottagers are generally speaking, well-to-do, affluent people and there are huge disparities in our permanent population. We have a pretty high percentage of elderly, disabled, poor people in Muskoka who are here as permanent residents. So it does create a bit of a dichotomy between those two groups but I do not think there is any conflict between the groups, they're just different. As far as tourists go, they create jobs. There are some seasonal residents when they have a cottage on a quiet lake, they would probably be happier if there wasn't a noisy resort on the lake but at the same time they also want restaurants and marinas to go to. I don't think there are any conflicts, but I think there are differences.

Other interviewees spoke about cottagers similarly to Sylvia. Interviewees acknowledged the differences and disparities but did not feel direct conflict as a result of these differences. Bridget spoke to this, when she said:

We [cottagers and locals] interact all over the place and what's wonderful is um I'm so unaware of where we interact [...] I think that others may be aware of me because I drive a car that is about 12 years older than their car. I think people do notice those things. Its not a Lexus or Mercedes or an Audi or anything like that but I've never had any bad experiences as a result of that [...] I imagine that if I were driving a Lexus SUV I I would notice, not positively, the 15-year-old Subaru next to me.

Consumerism appeared to be a common theme when discussing differentiations between groups.

Sandra, for example, mentioned that it has become easy for local people to decipher who a cottager or tourist is in Muskoka simply by their clothing. She explains:

Even when my kids come, sometimes they try to pick out who's a tourist. You know? Oh yeah there they are with their fancy boat shoes and their matching shorts and their golf shirts and all that stuff. Its pretty obvious who is local and who is not. Clothing says a lot. If people are dressed in a certain way, you're going to know who they are. You know a

fancy hairstyle and expensive sunglasses and lots of jewellery on, well, likely they are not from here.

It appears that the vehicles and clothing that cottagers tend to have are reflective of their extent of wealth, which differs greatly from many local people. Karl explained the extent of consumerism by some cottagers and how it impacts their reputation in Muskoka when he said:

You sit at the boat launch and you see a guy with a brand new \$100,000-dollar boat and not have a clue. They have tons of money but they don't necessarily have "Muskoka brains" as we call it. The locals call it Muskoka brains and city brains. So, I don't know how much the kids use it anymore. We have seen many great examples of lack of Muskoka brains and too much city brains.

The concept of cottagers not having "Muskoka brains" is mentioned by Nina, as well. "Muskoka brains" appears to refer to having the know-how that locals have when it comes to boating, hunting, fishing, or even navigating around Muskoka; essentially any activity that an "outsider" wouldn't necessarily do in their normal context. Nina had worked for years in the marine industry in Muskoka and spoke to her experience by saying:

[My job was] still frustrating sometimes. I didn't want to tell someone how to drive a boat 18 times and then watch them smash it into a dock. So that was frustrating but without those people we wouldn't have an income at all.

While negative connotations and labels are associated with cottagers, they are also ascribed to local people. Bridget, explained an experience her son had with an employer from Toronto, whom was a cottager in Muskoka. She said:

[My son] was at risk of being one of those local kids who thought "oh cottagers". He loved them. He got to know them as people as opposed to a label, and they him. They had always thought, and in fact the girl who employed him said well "I've never hired a local because locals have a reputation of not showing up and when they do they're drunk but I'll give you a chance", and now she hires locals primarily.

This quotation represents the idea that while stereotypes, stories, and tensions do exist between local people and cottagers, once they do actually get to know one another, there can be positive outcomes. However, some residents are concerned about the increase in land value as a result of

greater development and the diverse socioeconomic status between cottagers and locals. Isaac voiced his concerns regarding this topic when he explained,

So the greater development, another concern was that because of the increase of land value, which is of course directly proportioned to the environment being good and people like being here and are prepared to pay big money and so the value goes up. Because the land value is high, only those with a higher economic status are able to buy it and the population on the waterfront is increasingly becoming them and the locals are becoming us. The point is, two solitudes, and extending that, the servants will live in the towns and rural areas and the elite will live on the waterfront. Its going to happen, its happening now. Its terrible. None of us, will be able to afford to live here and I'm sympathetic to that.

This quotation expresses the disparity between the two solitudes of the cottagers and the locals, and future concerns for continued development in the destination. Below, the relationships that exist between cottagers and local people is discussed thoroughly.

4.3.5 Relationships

The various relationships between cottagers and local people appear in the data analysis to be complex, as both positive and negative connotations are articulated. It is often mentioned by interviewees that casual encounters such as at the grocery store, service encounters, or through volunteer experiences are where the majority of locals and cottagers meet, rather than organized encounters in social settings intimating friendships. Samuel expands on this when he explains:

I think there's a caesium between cottagers and full time residents. I don't think they necessarily meet a lot. I think when they do its probably cottager meeting with you plumbing contractor. It's probably the classic meeting of the local with the cottager and I think you know from what I have seen cottagers try to be friendly. They're at the cottage. They don't want it to be a hard core business relationship. I think they like the down home nature of the local contractor and they want to interact with them in a way that is not bossy or pushy, obviously there's some that are probably is I think but my experience, what I've seen it's "Call joe the plumber, he's a great guy". And they'll spend the time like yacking and like while Joe's fixing the thing you're like "oh how's so and so" and they learn about the family a bit. I don't think its always a power relationship. "You're the plumber dammit, do your job". I think there's a friendlier kind of getting along that I've seen.

This service relationship is brought to light by many interviewees, either based on what they had seen, heard of, or experienced first-hand in a professional capacity. Sandra explained her shock behind some of the service based us-they relationships between cottagers and locals in Muskoka when she expressed:

Until I moved here, I didn't really understand the depth of poverty that's actually here year round and I didn't get the whole concept of cottagers vs. the locals and that sort of whole vibe, especially people that have lived here for a long time. Sort of feeling, that people may feel intimidated or looked down on by cottagers, like I had an opportunity when I was in homecare, which was a really great thing because I got to travel all over Muskoka into really remote places where people were not serviced at all. I saw people that worked for wealthy cottagers. I was shocked. I thought I was in the deep south reading "The Help" or something when I heard about what some of these people were doing and they were babysitting these children, getting their groceries, cleaning their houses, planning their parties, you know, they were basically slaves. I was really shocked.

Kimberly, explained that she worked in a role similar to what Sandra explained above. She said:

But that's the difference, some of them are compassionate and they appreciate their cottage and their cleaning lady. I looked after their dogs. I looked after their houses. You know, part of the family. The other side to that is you're the playground. The land is our playground.

The concept of Muskoka acting as a playground for cottagers is consistent throughout the data analysis. This playground that interviewees refer to speaks to the cottages and resorts on the lakes and rivers, and the recreation activities associated with the destination. Often times, cottagers partake in leisure activities such as boating, or golfing. In fact, boating in Muskoka is one of the most popular activities tourists engage in, with 1,486,800 tourists doing so a year according to Statistics Canada (2013). Bridget explains how these are not activities that she partakes in, simply because of the high price associated with the activities. She says that many cottagers do not make friends with local people, simply because they make friends with their fellow cottagers on their

lakes. She also notes that local people who are a part of the “cottager lifestyle” are involved because they themselves own a cottage on the lake. She explains:

In part, [there's not a lot of contact between cottagers and locals] because a lot of cottagers have friends on the lake. So if you happen to be a local who has a cottage on that lake, then you're a part of it. But because you're a cottager on that lake, not because you're a local. Also, thinking of my friends who all golf. I can't afford to golf. I just can't afford those kinds of fees. So we see each other doing other things but I'm not a part of the golfing world. I don't have a big huge boat, that kind of world. So again that's about being on the lake. We do meet to go to the theatre or to go to concerts that kind of thing. In addition, many of them, I just said it. Me and the cottagers. Have grown up on that lake. And so they have childhood friends who they are reengaging with every summer and that's lovely. But I'm not part of that.

As demonstrated in the data relationships between cottagers and local people take form in many different ways. As displayed above, there appears to be many stories, tensions, and differences between groups, but this cannot be mentioned without examining the positive relationships that take form between cottagers and locals in the destination. Below, the constructive relations between local people and cottagers is discussed, as this became a clear theme throughout data analysis.

4.3.6 Smart & Caring

While negative connotations associated with the stereotypes of cottagers in Muskoka became commonly mentioned throughout the data, so too, did another dimension. Many interviewees acknowledged a strong connection with cottagers, whom greatly assist the local community through their philanthropic efforts and contribution to various local causes. Their presence alone, appeared to benefit the community, by introducing new culture to local people that they otherwise wouldn't be exposed to if cottaging or tourism did not exist in Muskoka. Karl explained:

I can't prove that you're a brighter, sharper, more with it person because you grew up in Muskoka as opposed to Halliburton but I believe its true. We lose a bit of our rural

roughness, our rural rough edges if you'd like, because we have been exposed to a little more of the culture of our summer residents, our seasonal residents.

Having a diverse community, involving the different culture of seasonal residents appears to be valuable to Karl, as displayed above. Many respondents mentioned this, as well as cottagers' proneness to assist by volunteering for local causes. For example, Grace explained:

Some [...] try to find volunteer work in the summers. I think the majority are here to have fun with their families and [...] maybe a handful of very rich people who donate to hospitals [...] This is their second home, this becomes a home to them, and they do become part of the community.

Bridget mentioned that cottagers in Muskoka contribute more to the community than she herself does when she is cottaging elsewhere. She explained:

I think cottaging is fantastic, I think the involvement of cottagers in Muskoka with the local community is greater than I myself participate in when I am a cottager.

This optimism is mirrored by Greg, as he mentions cottager contributions to the community in various capacities. Greg explained that:

If you're coming to Muskoka for years and years and years and you've got cottages and all of those good things, you know its not because you're dumb. Its because you're pretty smart. I like smart people; they can solve problems [...] We are seeing more and more of them [cottagers] willing to invest time and energy and their talent into the social challenges of Muskoka residents. Whether it be poverty, women's issues, youth issues, the need for food banks, supper clubs, places for clothing, shelter for a lot of families, a lot of single family women in Muskoka, under the poverty line, uh skill learning, we need as Muskoka to acknowledge that with these cottagers so that they understand they have a responsibility to help with that as well as coming to enjoy the beauty of Muskoka.

Similarly, Michelle described other contributions of cottagers when she explained:

A lot of them [cottagers] also are involved in a mentorship program, like business people help people create new businesses, are second homeowners who now live here. A lot of people who contribute to organizations like the conservancy, or people with legal advice, are retired lawyers. So there's a knowledge base that exists out there. It gets delivered. Sometimes when people are seasonal owners and they retire here, they volunteer in a huge way. And bring a knowledge trust that might not otherwise exist.

Many of the interviewees who work closely with engaging cottagers to be volunteers and donors, expressed that there are challenges with creating the connections to foster a sense of community with seasonal, transient residents, but in doing so, Muskoka benefits from engaging caring individuals. Greg explained:

[we] engage them on their terms, as volunteers, as donors, as impact people, as advisors, you know, knowing that they have a busy life and a full life, but we still want their contribution and if it happens to be on a Tuesday evening, that's fine [...] The cottagers that I know, and I know thousands of them. Care. I'm probably not friends with a lot of cottagers that don't care, because why would I? I meet the ones that are out and about in Muskoka, asking questions and getting involved. They're neat.

These quotations present a different side to the Muskoka cottager, one that acknowledges their positive contributions to the community through compassionate efforts. These compassionate efforts will be referred to more thoroughly in the next section, where the data regarding the reliance of financial contributions from cottaging and tourism is gathered. Financial contributions and volunteerism from cottagers highlighted in the next theme seems to juxtapose the concerns expressed when understanding the data pertaining to cottager types, legends and recalled stories, and tensions and differences seen above.

4.3.7 Discussion

The analysis of the data pertaining to identifying binaries, or the host-guest relationship, in Muskoka, posits that tensions and differences do exist between local people and visitors. These tensions and differences appeared to be facilitated by negative stereotypes of the cottager, and frequently elaborated and retold stories of the undesirable relations between the groups. In contrast, a positive relationship between hosts and second homeowners also exists and is

acknowledged in the data, as second homeowners act as donors and volunteers towards community organizations.

Cottagers in Muskoka appear to be stereotyped into two separate and opposing groups, as either the “nouveau riche” or the “real” cottagers. The differences between these two groups are lifestyle choices related to the size of their second dwelling and their recreational use of the natural landscape. Local people felt that the difference between these cottagers is often apparent in their intentions for spending time in Muskoka, whether it is to embrace the natural environment, get away from their urban lifestyles, or simply because owning a cottage in Muskoka has been seen as a status symbol amongst the elite. All three of these reasons are mentioned in the literature on cottage ownership. Buckley (2005) explains that cottage ownership is essentially an extension of a long-held interest in adventure recreation, which suggests that accessing natural landscapes is a large aspect of the cottage experience. Relatedly, in the tourism literature, the cottage is seen as a place for urbanites to access peace, nature, the countryside, and to be surrounded by those who share a love for outdoor environments and escape their lives in the city (Jaakson, 1986; Lagerqvist, 2014). Cottage ownership as a status symbol is also seen in literature by Coppock (1977) as he explained that cottage ownership in Ontario is perceived as a marker or lifestyle associated with higher class. Jaakson (1986) also identified three distinct types of cottager, in relation to their consumption of nature. He identified one group as rustic, or simple- similar to the “real” cottager in Muskoka, another group as known to commodify nature on their property- such as the “nouveau riche”, and a third group fell broadly in between in two. Thus, these profiles and stereotypes of the cottager in Muskoka are reflected in the literature, as well. However, the “real” cottager appears to be much more favourable to local people, as will be discussed below.

Local individuals expressed their concerns and distaste for the actions of the “nouveau riche” cottager in Muskoka. Isaac’s explanation of this type of cottager highlights various themes in cottage literature, relating to us-they dichotomies. He explained:

Muskoka has always attracted some different cats who come here and bring different values and different lifestyles and we tend to tolerate and expect them. Kevin O’Leary is the latest cool cat who comes to Muskoka and builds the great big cottage and turns the sound system as loud as it can go and a big boat with the great big motor that he runs up and down Lake Rousseau apparently antagonizing the hell out of all his neighbours.

This sense of antagonizing the host community, and perhaps even other guests/ cottagers, relates to Doxey’s Irritation Index (1975), which speaks to the social relationships between hosts and guests within a destination. Doxey (1975) breaks down experiences in the destination into a continuum of four stages: euphoria, apathy, irritation, and antagonism. Antagonism, according to Doxey (1975) occurs when host populations express their anger towards tourists and begins to blame tourists for negative impacts tourism as brought to the destination. Antagonism appears to be felt in Muskoka in these instances, when local people disagree with the actions of ostentatious cottagers. Furthermore, as expressed above, differing interests between stakeholder groups leads greatly to these tensions. In the literature, it is shown that cottagers often import their own expectations, values, and constructions of rurality into their destination, which can alter the social context of the community. Gosnell et al (2009) explained that cottagers may reconstruct their rural spaces to better match their urban lifestyles, which may become resented by local people. Kevin, for example expresses this when he says “*the places that are being built now no longer resemble cottages [...] They are mammoth and I don’t think this is necessarily a good thing for Muskoka, but it is the reality*”. This was similarly reflected by interviewees, whom were cottage owners, in Harrison’s (2013) work in Haliburton, Ontario, when it was identified that Muskoka had “been spoiled”, and that cottages in Muskoka were owned by very wealthy

“high rollers” whose demonstrations of wealth were ostentatious. In the literature, it is expressed by Moss (2006) that reconstructing rural landscapes to better match the cottager’s urban dwellings are problematic, because cottagers do not understand local traditions and culture, and do not seek out local sources of information to educate themselves on these traditions or culture. These demonstrations of wealth appear to impose class conflicts, and an awareness of the class system amongst those in the destination. Nina, explained that while she does not resent those who own these ostentatious cottages, explains that owning a property such as the lakefront cottages is not a reality for most local people in Muskoka. She claimed, *I don’t resent the people who do [own a cottage] though, like good for them. Its not reality for anyone who lives in Muskoka really, with the exception of a few people.* As also discussed in the previous section, Halseth (2004) explains that the socio-economic status of cottagers often greatly contrasts that of the local population, which was touched upon in Nina’s quotation. However, the mention of celebrities and individuals who antagonize the destination appears to be commonplace in Muskoka, and to be expected based on the data. On the other hand, interviewees acknowledged that there are a number of cottagers who according to Isaac, *fit in beautifully [...] so you get a mixture of people, you take the good with the bad.* This makes it difficult to assert Muskoka with Doxey’s (1975) phase of antagonism, as it appears local people only resent certain cottagers, or in the case of Nina, have accepted the diversity amongst cottagers.

Distinct binaries are certainly apparent in Muskoka, though, and was specifically observed throughout the re-telling of negative stories about cottagers. Interviewees themselves articulated that their stories reflected the *book ending of the we-them*. Stories of this kind referred to grocery store fights on tense Friday afternoons, elitist attitudes of the nouveau riche, and power imbalances between locals and cottagers founded in roles that fostered servitude such as

producer (local person) and consumer (cottager). These examples fit with Jaakson's (1986) work, which notes that the "we-them" in cottage destinations often fosters a dynamic relationship revolving around the concept of servitude, where the local community caters to and resents cottagers and tourists, although they are the foundation of their seasonal income source. A specific example of this was explained by Grace, when she told a story about power imbalances and servitude in Muskoka, when she spoke about the son of a cottager butting in line in front of the son of a contractor, claiming that his dad, the cottager, would have the contractor fired if his son complained. However, it is important to note that interviewees acknowledged that the negative stories were the ones that stood out more prominently in their minds, over the positive stories. Jaakson (1986) also explains that second homeowners are much like tourists, as they are visibly distinct from the locals as they are different in class, status, and values, as discussed above in regard to stereotypes of the cottager. Relatedly, Sandra explained that her children often try to pick out who a tourist is in Muskoka simply by their clothing choices. She explained:

its pretty obvious who is local and who is not. Clothing says a lot. If people are dressed in a certain way, you're going to know who they are. You know a fancy hairstyle and expensive sunglasses and lots of jewellery on, well, likely they are not from here.

The language used by Sandra in this claim supports the notion of the "us-they" as she distances herself and local people from the statement, by strongly using the word "they" to refer to the wealthy stereotype associated with cottagers and tourists in Muskoka. Sandra's mention of clothing being an identifier of class is supported by Bordieau (1984) who explains that our tastes, preferences, and behaviours function as markers of our class, which identifies class differences and social divisions between and within classes. This suggests that local people are apparent of the class differences between local people and cottagers, which leads to the previously discussed tensions and differences between the groups. This is seen in the literature as well, as Jaakson

(1986) expresses that although cottagers are recurrent and regular visitors, the “us-they” dichotomy remains unchanged; if not more firmly established. However, it is interesting to note that interviewees on the whole, did not appear to fully resent cottagers or tourists; this was evidenced by Sylvia for example, who determined a distinction between “*conflicts*” and “*differences*” suggesting the latter as an explanation between locals and cottagers. Such dissimilarities stemmed from differences in class markers and values, and only those who were identified as the nouveau riche, characterized by their extreme consumerism and antagonistic behaviour were resented. This appears to be unique to the extant literature, as interviewees acknowledge the antagonism phase of Doxey’s (1975) Irridex, but also have accepted and embraced other types of cottagers, whom they perceive as beneficial to the community.

Interviewees noted that although they have resentment or distaste for certain cottagers, there are a number of cottagers who are philanthropic and contribute to local causes. In the literature, Gosnell et al (2009) explained that cottagers have the skills, abilities, and capital to improve the destination they visit, as they demand quality amenities and generate business and incomes. Gripton (2009) similarly found that cottagers are known to contribute to the economic and social development of their destinations through the use of their talent, knowledge, and financial support. In Muskoka, cottagers appear to have an extremely positive impact on their communities through the introduction of their skills and capital to improve the destination financially, through donations and socially, such as through the introduction of new culture as expressed by Karl, when he explained *we lose a bit of our rural roughness [...] because we have been exposed to a little more of the culture of our summer residents, our seasonal residents*. The juxtaposition between resentment, tolerance, and engagement appears to be unique to Muskoka, a destination which appears in the data to be complex in regard to how cottagers are perceived

and valued. It appears that the destination is not distinctly in a phase of antagonism (Doxey, 1975), although it does hold tenants of such phase. An us-they dichotomy, as explained by Jaakson (1986) is in place, as distinct class differences are observed and applied to relationships in the destination. However, these differences are also utilized for positive outcomes for the local population in regard to the receipt of fiscal donations and volunteer time, to improve the destination. It appears that the positive attributes of cottaging and tourism in the destination outweigh the negative class differences, which will be discussed further in the next section, financial significance.

4.4 Relying on Financial Contributions

The data revealed an emphasis on the economic benefits attributed to the cottaging population and the seasonal influx of tourists. Thus, to locals, there are many perceived economic benefits derived directly from the tourism industry, as well as tertiary industries, allowing Muskoka to be vibrant during the summer months, and sustained during the winter. For example, when asked, “how have cottagers impacted the economy in Muskoka?”, interviewees responded with a largely positive and holistic outlook, outside of simply tourism. For example, Bridget explained:

Oh. How haven't they? Every way. Every way. From construction, to maintenance, to septic systems, to marinas, to shopping in town, to incredible philanthropists, and patrons of the arts, to um, helping with the marketing just by telling people how much they love it here.

This section will provide an in-depth exploration of the underpinnings of the theme ‘economic reliance’ and further explore Bridget’s sentiments highlighted above. The following section is organized by sub-sections as follows:

1. Economic Significance
2. Seasonality, Revisited

3. Shifting Times
4. Philanthropy

These key themes are important indicators of the fiscal significance local people attribute to cottaging and tourism in Muskoka.

4.4.1 Economic Significance

The importance of tourism and cottaging to the economy of Muskoka was often reiterated by interviewees. Specifically, the creation of jobs, contribution to the tax base, and the overall significance of the industry as a whole was the focus of discussion in nearly every interview held. This acknowledgement strayed away from the resentful tone that dominated the discussion of the “us-they” section above. Rather, for the most part the data revealed a sense of gratitude and pride for the tourism industry in Muskoka. Before delving into the positive attributes of tourism and cottaging to Muskoka’s economy, which makes up a strong proportion of the following data, it is important to mention that threads of previous sections did make their way into data regarding the economy. To local residents, data on cottaging and tourism is complex and therefore multifaceted, with both positive and negative attributes. Sandra, in particular mentioned an optimistic vitality that cottagers and tourists bring to the destination when they visit, but also acknowledged that socially, there is still work to be done to form positive relationships between the two groups, when she explained:

Lots of money. Vibrancy. The tax base. Let’s put it this way, from the business side of things. Its good. Tourism is good. From a social perspective, its creating a class system in some ways, not so good [...] In the south back in the day when slaves lived in plantations. Economically it was great. It was booming. It was going good. Got all the work done. Its all good. But its that the underbelly, the other side of the story, that’s not so great. I think that Muskoka has always struggled with this because its been a tourist location.

This aforementioned underbelly, a common thread among the transcripts places an importance on its relevance in the lives of local people. However, the consistent mention of tourism as an economic driver is also just as consistent. Sylvia explained for instance:

Tourism is the basis of Muskoka's economy. We probably have theatres we wouldn't have without cottagers and tourists, we have restaurants, that we wouldn't have otherwise. Our permanent population is around 60,000 in Muskoka but with the seasonal[ity] its 140,00, we have a lot more than we would otherwise, in my opinion. It creates jobs, drives our economy.

Sylvia's mention of amenities available for local people as a result of the industry is common, and is even used as a marketing strategy for the District Municipality of Muskoka on their website. The District (2016) writes, "Muskoka is able to offer many amenities normally associated with larger cities, while maintaining the attractive lifestyle of a small community" due in large part to demand from their seasonal population. Kimberly explained that although cottagers may be seasonal residents, their taxes support the year round population. She said:

They're part of the backbone right, they are not here but they have to pay taxes here. They pay for water access; they pay for gas at marinas. Just because they're here for a short time doesn't mean they don't pay taxes year round and they are so often on the water so much more and so the taxes that they do pay are substantial. So all that money goes to hospitals, roads, infrastructure.

Randy's comments around the benefits of tax-paying cottagers mirrored Kimberly's specifically he explained:

Because they pay their taxes, we get this wonderful community centre that we aren't sharing with 60,000 people who are seasonal [during the winter]. We are sharing it with 15,000 permanent [during the winter]. Theatre, and music, transportation, highways, probably even cell service wouldn't be the same up here if it wasn't for that demand. We put up with it for the summer to ride the coattails for the winter.

Grace, quite similarly, discussed how taxes and donations from the cottagers assisted in improving infrastructure in Muskoka, when she stated:

I think with what they charge in tax, certainly it supports our education. Building more roads, bridges are being fixed now, roads have been cleaned up, they contribute a lot of money. Hospitals. We would be way more over budget if it wasn't for donations or taxes.

This theme of mentioning the cottager's tax assessment continued, as well as cottager's various spending and volunteer habits, which will be revisited further in this section, when Sylvia explained:

Well, they contribute through their tax assessment, volunteer hours, by purchasing gas and groceries, going to restaurants and theatres, you know purchasing supplies, buying boats, going to marinas.

Above contributing to the tax base, spending habits of cottagers, which were touched upon in the previous section regarding stereotypes, were discussed again when explaining the economic impact of cottagers in the destination. Patricia explained the extent of spending in Muskoka but also shared a story, much like those told in the previous section, Legends and Recalled stories, when she expressed:

They're leaving their money here and those who come up on weekends, they'll buy their gas here for their boats, and they'll buy their boats here. Hopefully they buy local and I think most of them do. I also think that Muskoka is a wealthy place to cottage and the real estate prices have skyrocketed so I think also it's a good place for the economy, for merchants. Let's face it, the clientele, my girlfriend was at Don's Bakery a couple weeks ago and of course its packed in there because its amazing. This lady walks in and she's like I want everything on the whole top case. Everything. You know like, money was no object. I think in that case, there's a lot of money up here coming in and its good for the economy.

Karol expressed similar sentiments when discussing the target market for her artwork. Karol is an established professional photographer in Muskoka with her own art gallery. She explained that for the most part, her target market is made up of cottagers and tourists because they have more of a discretionary income to use towards her higher priced artwork. She explained:

Well I have a really good local base but I would say mostly tourists [purchase] in the summertime. But I mean your target market are people with a little bit of money. They have extra cash to spend. And like my work is not super expensive but we have had things

that are 5, 6, 7,000 dollars. Yeah it's a special person buying that but they did tend to be tourists. Not even just cottagers, tourists too.

Not only do small businesses such as the bakery and art galleries benefit economically from cottagers and tourists, but so do trades industries. Samuel explained the extent of work tradespeople in Muskoka do for cottagers, when he said:

They employ trades galore. Talk to any cottager [...] Like at our cottage, in the utility room there's a piece of plywood with a fuse panel on it. And right on there with a marker is plumber you know with a phone number, name [...] So you've got plumber, electrician, roofing. You always got a haulage guy who is always pulling up loads of gravel to fill your roads, and you've got a septic guy. A roofer. Every cottager is doing all that stuff. And they have a handyman [...] Imagine that. Imagine if that wasn't here. There would be nothing. There would be nobody. Nothing would be here. Bracebridge would be the size of say Port Carling and Port Carling would be the size of Baysville and Baysville would be well it wouldn't exist. Right. Like. They're really important.

Michelle, put it quite simply when she mentioned the critical impact tourism and cottaging has on the trades and construction industry in Muskoka, and said:

I think its critical to Muskoka, there's lots of studies been done on it. To Muskoka, it's critical. We have a huge trades/ construction industry that relies on second homeowners and tourists.

Heather has first hand experience on the topic and explained that her husband is employed in the construction industry in Muskoka. She mentioned that services such as the trades and the marine industry rely heavily on the cottaging population, while expressing the following:

We have a huge building, construction industry here. My husband does carpentry, he is around the clock and working from 6 in morning when his texts start ringing to about 9 o'clock or 10 o'clock at night. The cottager finally got to the cottage and wants to know how the railing is going. They drive the economy for services like boating and food and groceries and cleaning services, gardening services, landscaping services. Construction. No question.

To local people, it appears to be inconclusive that the cottaging population and in general, tourists, have a positive impact on their community by contributing financially to create a healthy economy. However, it is important to note that the majority of these examples valued the

support from cottagers directly during peak season for the purpose of employment, or via their tax payments in the off season. Seasonality continuously reappeared while discussing economic reliance in Muskoka, and therefore will be brought to the forefront below.

4.4.2 Seasonality, Revisited

While seasonality was discussed previously in regard to the realities in Muskoka, it is imperative to reiterate these findings, as respondents incessantly provided examples and details that characterized their tourism-based economy as principally seasonal. To provide quantitative evidence, 54% of visits occurred in 2013 from July to September, while 28% of visits occurred from April through June (Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport, 2013). Grace explained seasonality in the destination when she explained:

At the end of a winter, spring comes, May 24 weekend comes along, and its kind of exciting to see everybody. It just comes alive again. You know, people say, here are the terrorist tourists, you know some of them, and the traffic and blah blah blah [...] People like to pretend they don't like them sometimes but we would be lost without them and its fun, its vibrant, it is busy, and its exhausting for a lot of people because you live here and you work so hard some of these people and then its winter. Its just exhausting.

Grace expressed both a frustration with seasonality, due to its impact on traffic congestion but also explains that the destination becomes more vibrant, fostering an industry in which local people would be lost without the presence of cottagers and tourists. Sandra, explained her own experience of becoming a full time resident after identifying as a long-term cottager, and concurred when she expressed similar sentiments around vibrancy in the summer and sleepiness in the winter:

It is what it is. Its funny you know, now that I live here. I identify more with being a resident than a cottager so I'm like oh my gosh, those tourists, they're in my face, they're up in my grill. That kind of thing. I find it a bit aggravating but on the other hand I know that the economy depends on it, so in some ways I am happy. For example, right now Bracebridge is so lovely and so booming that it brings a vibrancy and a fun kind of vibe because its pretty sleepy in the winter time.

Kimberly, also explained the busy-ness of Muskoka during peak season and defined her own relationship with cottagers as casual, characterized mostly by interaction in the grocery store. Kimberly's husband's interaction with cottagers differed, though, as his is as a professional plumber, a role which is highly impacted by the seasonal introduction of cottagers. Kimberly explained both her experience, and her husbands when she said:

As a local, the interaction with cottagers personally is on two levels- my husband is a self employed plumber so his main business clients are mainly cottagers [...] from April to October, which is the season that the cottages are open- I don't see him. Right like, he's got to make hay while the sun shines. He is one of the people who is seasonally employed due to the cottage industry. And my interaction with them as a local is not as direct. I'm in the grocery store right now with cottagers. So I am affected by that because some of the prices are raised in the summer and because they also want to make hay while the sun shines. So I am affected by that but you know, also restaurants are busier. Everything is just exponentially busier.

The seasonal busy-ness of grocery stores and restaurants, and the congestion of these spaces was consistently mentioned by respondents. However, it is important to note that seasonality does not impact only primarily the tourism industry. Secondary businesses, such as the trades, are greatly impacted as well. Sandra, like Kimberly, also explained how many local people rely on the tourism industry for seasonal work, when she explained:

Many of them rely on tourism and that's the way they survive. So they work really hard, long hours during the summer and then they are on EI [Employment Insurance] during the winter.

Karl similarly discussed how the smaller towns in Muskoka are barely used during the winter, but the contribution of the tourist dollar during the summer months is what keeps the destinations vibrant, while allowing Muskoka to flourish throughout the offseason. He explained:

[Tourism is] what drives their business year round, restaurant traffic, and stores, even Bala, I mean Port Carling is built around the water for four-month summer traffic. A lot of these places are barely used in the winter, but we know how important the tourist dollar is to Muskoka and I think that the decision makers here certainly see that, like in Bracebridge, they built their town to accommodate the cottagers so they can leave their money there and the town can flourish for the other 8 months. So how do I feel about it? I

think its just a part of living in Muskoka, you're going to share your home with other people for a third of the year. You know, traffic becomes a problem sometimes. There's a lot more traffic and a lot more people in the lines at the grocery store, but you kind of work around it, you go shopping Wednesday, Thursday, go back Tuesday when everyone goes home. The tourist dollar is very important to these businesses.

Karl mentions that local people share the destination for four months of the year to benefit during the following eight months. Ryan spoke quite similarly, when he said:

We have to appreciate how busy it is. I say this so many times, like in stores when its busy and we're lined up talking to the cashier, "Isn't it great that these people are here spending their money?" and because they're spending so much money, we get so many amenities.

This appears to be the consensus of how interviewees perceive seasonal tourism economic impacts in Muskoka. To the majority, interviewees believed sharing their hometown with cottagers and tourists, albeit busy and often causing congestion, is a largely positive way to reap economic benefits year round from their tax base and spending habits.

4.4.3 Shifting Times

While the influence of globalization is not explicitly stated by interviewees, many stories and insights noted throughout data analysis suggest globalization has impacted the economic environment, as well as the social wellbeing of local individuals in Muskoka. Greg, for example, explained that because of an increase in technology use, individuals were able to spend time at their cottage for longer periods, or transform into permanent residents of Muskoka, all the while still contributing to their careers in larger city centres via online platforms. He explained:

I knew a guy that was an editor in Tokyo for pharmaceutical journals in English, and he realized one day he could live in Bracebridge at his cottage and in Tokyo they would never know. And he would go to Tokyo four times a year. So there's lots of them [cottagers] who are starting to do that and they're realizing hey, I can come up here where my passion is, where my history is, a lot of them have history, a lot of them are third, fourth, fifth generation people.

This increase in individuals spending more time at the cottage, or transforming into permanent residents may be related to the destinations popularity in the media. On the world stage, Muskoka appears to have become more prominent due to media coverage. Kevin, who was 83 at the time of his interview, explained the changes to Muskoka's reputation from his childhood, when he explained National Geographic's acknowledgement of the destination. He said:

National Geographic [...] in its traveller magazine has identified Muskoka as one of the top destinations in North America. Well hell when I was a kid, National Geographic didn't know where Canada was, let alone Muskoka.

Many respondents attributed part of the mass visitation to Muskoka to the media coverage by National Geographic, as the best summer destination of 2011. While being chosen as the best summer destination in 2011 may suggest that the destination is newly shaped by tourism, that is untrue. Isaac explained that cottaging and tourism has been an industry that has outlasted manufacturing in Muskoka, and has been the base of the economy for over 100 years. Isaac explained that Muskoka has been shaped by globalization as a result of the end of the manufacturing era, when he described:

All of us recognized from the very beginning that tourism was the foundation to our economy, not withstanding the manufacturing era, which was reasonably short, came in the early 70s, was gone in the 80s uh because of well now, its easy to say because of free trade. Kimberly Clark is still here and in part because they are resource based which is wood products so they are still manufacturing based on a raw product which is available here whereas aluminum can be more economically processed elsewhere. So those kinds of manufacturing things came and went, they are now serving other purposes, but tourism has been the base. We all acknowledge that our economy is diverse but holy smokes, take away the tourism and we would be dead.

Greg also explained that tourism will continue to be the base of the economy in Muskoka for years to come, while explaining the decline in the industrial based economy. He did however acknowledge a need to diversify the market with technology based sectors or entrepreneurial endeavours. Greg explained:

Tourism has been here for 150 years. Its going to be here for another 150. Yes, we need to broaden the commercial and industrial base but we aren't going to have thousands of factories here anymore. We used to have lots of factories and lots of production but that's changed in the world, that's changed everywhere. Yes, we have got new entrepreneurial high tech kind of things coming, and that's great. There's still going to be a tourist cottage based economy in Muskoka for at least the next hundred years.

Nina, who founded her photography business this past year, is a walking example of the entrepreneurial spirit in Muskoka that Greg described as important to diversifying the destination. She explained that the tourism industry in Muskoka has allowed communities to survive by creating restaurants, shops, and programs, in places which were once factories that boomed during the industrial era. She, herself, spent the majority of her young life working in the marine industry in Muskoka, and explained that without cottagers and tourists, she would have never had a summer job, and her boss never would have had a business to run. She explained the following:

They're [cottagers and tourists] allowing communities to survive [...] [there is] just like a lot of growth on the lakes that is basically for the tourists. Like I don't know if you remember but the wharf used to be this massive factory and it just had this huge smokestack and it was basically condemned, and I'm sure it was working at one time and there was nothing there [...] [Now] the docks are full and everyone is going out for dinner at the pub and Boston Pizza and they do their paddle boarding and yoga on paddle boards and stuff like that. And I don't think those programs would be around if it weren't for cottagers.

This introduction of services and amenities with the intention to please cottagers was also mentioned by Karl, who discussed the difference in restaurants and store offerings since he was a child growing up in Muskoka. He explained:

We have added more restaurants. Growing up, you could count the places to eat on one hand and now you've got your box store restaurants and who would have thought we would have a Home Depot in Bracebridge and a massive Canadian Tire rebuilt in Gravenhurst. A lot of that couldn't survive on just the local sizes, its based a lot on the cottage traffic so yeah [...] obviously the locals benefit from that.

The build up of amenities is seen as a perk for both local people and visitors and is marketed as such on destination marketing material for the destination, as previously mentioned. The local community appears to also benefit from philanthropic efforts of cottagers, as well, which will be discussed further below.

4.4.4 Philanthropy

Philanthropy has been recognized throughout data analysis as an extremely positive outcome of cottage visitation in Muskoka. Interviewees consistently acknowledged the benefit provided by cottagers who are cognizant of various issues in Muskoka and are generous in supporting the local community through their volunteer time or financial aid. Isaac, having worked in the social services field, felt strongly that cottagers were a strong tool for economic development, as well as fostering community support through various donations. He explained this when he said:

They've been huge contributors in my experience. Significant contributors to local wellbeing because cottager support of community essential infrastructure such as hospitals has been fantastic, incredible. By and large, cottager support in terms of cash for community foundations that are either health related or environmentally related has been very very strong. In fact, they have been the founders of some of the environmental organizations. They were the ones who gave the grease to get things going.

Sandra agreed, and explained how cottager's donations, as well as their purchasing of goods and services has driven Muskoka's economy. She explained:

There are some cottagers who are very generous and donate to the hospital, donate to foundations, donate to Port Carling to the Nurse Practitioner Wellness Centre that is out there. It's certainly not bad. There are people who are out there who are really contributing to the community. So that's good. Obviously they drive the economy. They purchase goods and services here.

This was also acknowledged by Kevin; he spoke similarly when he explained that cottagers are likely to contribute in various ways to the local community, whether it be environmental, health-related, or social causes, due to their investment in property there. He said:

These people are invested in Muskoka and therefore you can encourage them to invest in and we do, in our hospitals, we can encourage them to invest in our summer theatres, um they have pets so they take them to the vets, so when you raise money to put in a dog walk in Bracebridge, you get some support from summer cottagers, seasonal residents. I guess that package of they value and the use the environment. And they are conscious of protecting it. They contribute significantly to our hospitals and our environmental agencies. Big time contributors.

As seen above, large fiscal donations to local hospitals by seasonal residents is continuously observed in the data. Kevin explained that unique to Muskoka is that cottagers are avid donors. He explained donations which are large in size are often done discreetly by cottagers, and local residents whom donate often offer less money, simply based on the income gap of the two groups. He said:

[Donations are] often done very quietly but when hospitals put on an addition, when they need to build a new hospital, the place [where] they raise money is out on various part of the lakes, they may get the local service clubs, or they might get small donations from local residents but when they want to get a \$50,000 or \$200,000 or \$500,000 donation, it comes off the lakes seasonal residents. That's something that's sort of unique, I don't know if that's unique, but its part of the local tradition.

To expand on the magnitude of some cottager's donations, Isaac, the only interviewee who lives permanently on a lake in Muskoka which is primarily dominated by seasonal cottages, explained the nature of his neighbour's donation to the local hospital. His quote signifies the extent of generosity of some seasonal residents towards local foundations, but also highlights the normalcy of such mass donations which appears to have fostered a sense of entitlement or expectation from locals regarding these donations. He explained:

Another gentleman, he cottages just over the hill and he is in and out in his chopper [helicopter]. He gave a million bucks to the hospital. Good for him. My wife says, "cheap bastard, he gave 15 [million] to Sick Kids [Hospital], why not more than 1 million here?" I said, "that's his choice. We should be happy with a million."

This quote also subtly hints at the tension and differences of Muskoka being a destination for a *second* home and therefore may affect not only spending habits in the destination, but also

philanthropic efforts. Implying that donations from this mentioned individual were higher to Sick Kids Hospital, which is located in Toronto, where his *first* home is likely situated, appears to place an emphasis on this cottager's commitment to elsewhere. This appeared to aggravate Isaac's wife, which was quite similarly mentioned by other respondents. Heather, who works on community building in Muskoka expressed that while cottagers do donate and contribute to the community in various ways, it can be a challenge to get these seasonal visitors involved philanthropically, simply because they are visiting during their leisure time. She explained,

They come up here to recreate, they come here to be at the cottage, chill out, unplug, right. So they are less aware or they get hit by those charities where they work and live all the time and when they come up here they just really want to unplug and not be on all the time. But do they contribute? Absolutely. They are out there at the garden centers. And you know, enjoying things and buying their groceries, and going to the liquor stores, and buying gas.

This poses specific challenges for community leaders who rely on and leverage donations from seasonal people for various local causes. This will be revisited in the following section, environmental protection, as many associations and regulations have been formed to ensure that the environment remains healthy.

4.4.5 Discussion

Above, the economy of Muskoka is examined and discussed from the point of view of local interviewees. To locals, the tourism industry is the economic backbone of the destination, and subsequently, tertiary industries benefit from the introduction of cottagers and tourists. All interviewees acknowledged this, and felt strongly that without the tourism industry Muskoka would not be vibrant or self-sustaining. This is apparent in the literature, as well, as Frederick (1993) explains that tourism has become a major component of rural economic development in destinations that are amenity rich. This in turn, contributes to a change of economic patterns, as tourism creates jobs with relatively low start-up costs. In the data, it is acknowledged that not

only tourism related industries benefit from the introduction of cottagers and tourists, but so too do trades industries. This was identified when Samuel explained “they [cottagers] employ trades galore”. The rationale being that each cottager employs a roofer, a plumber, an electrician, etc. In the literature, Frederick (1993) acknowledged this, as she explained that tourism businesses create jobs for low-skilled workers or youth, whom may be otherwise unemployed, which is ideal for economies with poorly educated individuals or trained labour forces (Frederick, 1993). It appears that the trades industry is heavily reliant on second homeowners in Muskoka, which is largely absent from the second home literature. Michelle explains “we have a huge trades/ construction industry that relies on second homeowners and tourists” and Heather, also expressed “they [tourists and cottagers] drive the economy for services like [...] gardening services, landscaping services, construction”. There appears to be a gap in the literature regarding the impacts of and connection between cottaging and reliant trades industries, which may be interesting for further investigation.

The concept of job creation is prevalent in Nepal and Jamal’s (2011) research when it was discovered that tourism-driven growth and development in Fernie, British Columbia, led to a revitalization of the downtown, which led to the increase of hospitality businesses, facilities, and the service sector. Similarly, in the data on Muskoka, local people felt that the financial contributions and simply the presence of cottagers aided in creating vibrancy in the destination, as noted when Grace explained, “people like to pretend they don’t like them [cottagers] sometimes, but we would be lost without them and its fun, its vibrant, it is busy”. This vibrancy and demand for amenities from cottagers positively impacts the local population, as many interviewees mentioned that the local community would not benefit from the amenities created by the demand from cottagers and visitor. Relatedly, in the literature, Frederick (1993) explained

that local communities will often support the development of tourism in their town, as it fosters a sense of pride in their community by knowing they have something to offer visitors, as well as the opportunity to build amenities to benefit both visitors and themselves. Interestingly, just as Nepal and Jamal (2011) found that residents expressed great enthusiasm about a major store like Canadian Tire (a hardware and automotive store) coming to town, the same store was mentioned in the data on Muskoka as being introduced as a result of visitor numbers, which in turn benefits local people. This would be seen as beneficial for local people for job creation, and as a place to access goods and services that otherwise would not be accessible to them.

However, it is important to note that while the destination becomes vibrant in peak season, this vibrancy can also lead to congestion, crowding, and in turn, resentment of the tourism industry at times, which Mitchell (1998) defines as early destruction. By and large, though, local individuals in Muskoka appear to appreciate the tourism and cottage industries, as they feel that businesses and their respective employees heavily rely on the influx of consumers during peak season. The offseason, on the other hand, appears to be characterized by unemployment and a lack of resources, as explained more in depth previously in the Realities of Muskoka section, and is simply revisited here.

While not explicit, globalization was alluded to during interviews, such as the ease and ability to connect to the rest of the world which influenced an increase of communication technologies. According to interviewees, the influence of communication technologies has increased visitation, and although as mentioned in the Realities of Muskoka section, the destination is not always depicted authentically, interviewees value the attention placed on the destination by what I will describe as positive promoters, such as National Geographic. The increase in technology has also allowed for individuals to live in cottage country and still work

when necessary, as they have the the ability and thus choice to connect to metropolitan areas via the internet. Harrison (2004) found in her research on Haliburton, Ontario, that more individuals were visiting the cottage, as increased technology allowed cottagers to disconnect and reconnect, by choice via technology, to their everyday city lives, while still being immersed in nature.

Technology and the increase of tourism as an industry, appears to have replaced the industrial era, which followed an agricultural era in Muskoka, which was no longer feasible. This relates to the literature on rural tourism as a way to move away from traditional sources of rural economic growth such as industrial or agricultural industries (Marcouiller, 1997). This move towards rural tourism is beneficial to landscapes who may be feeling the impacts of globalization and may now seek alternative industries to sustain themselves, as shown to be the case for Muskoka. The philanthropic contributions of cottagers to Muskoka was also viewed by local people as positive, whether through fiscal donations or volunteer time. This concept will be revisited in the following section, environmental protection, as a majority of philanthropic efforts are focused on environmental protection in the destination.

4.5 Environmental Protection

The protection of the natural environment in Muskoka is prevalent in the data; which suggests that many local people, as well as cottagers respect the environment and live and act with an environmental ethos to preserve Muskoka's natural character. Philanthropic efforts, paired with environmental regulations work together to sustain Muskoka's pristine ecosystem, especially when challenged with the mass development associated with cottage creation, and the expansion of the tourism industry which is highly consumptive in kind. As seen previously in the data, a dichotomy exists regarding the consumption of nature, and the conservation of nature, and this plays out below in the data analysis. Below, the following sub-themes will be explored:

1. Environmental Ethos & Philanthropic Efforts
2. Environmental Restrictions & Regulations
3. Environmental Place Making

4.5.1 Environmental Ethos & Philanthropic Efforts

As a continuation of the previous section of data analysis, philanthropy, with a focus on environmental protection will be highlighted here. Environmental protection appears in the data continuously, as the destination's primary attractions are attributed to the aesthetically pleasing, and recreational functions of the natural environment. However, challenges do present themselves, as preserving the environment whilst also fostering development is inherently complex. Kevin, explains his positive outlook towards tourism in Muskoka, as it is a largely green industry in his opinion. He explains:

I have a very positive outlook on our seasonal residents. I would rather have a sector of our economy based on seasonal residents who tend to appreciate the natural part of Muskoka, who tend to look after the environment as opposed to manufacturing that may or may not be environmentally responsible [...] So I look at tourism as a clean industry, an environmentally responsible industry. And we've done a lot of work promoting that through the watershed council, through the water conservancy, which is the land trust group. The district government certainly promotes that approach to tourism. As are the lodge owners, they are responsible people, and the cottagers are largely a responsible group. So my outlook is very positive.

Kevin mentions the environmental efforts done by associations such as the Watershed Council and the Water Conservancy, as well as the government, lodge owners, and cottagers. To Kevin, these initiatives make for a positive, clean industry, with a focus on protecting the environment.

Greg mentioned similar sentiments, when he spoke of the relationship between cottagers and environmental associations. His impression is that because cottagers devote their time and capital to having a second home in Muskoka, they are keen to form associations to protect their investments. He explained:

They [cottagers] really help council sometimes and some of the non-profits too. The Muskoka Conservancy and others, you know, work to defend the environment of Muskoka to the culture of Muskoka to preserve things. To enhance the infrastructure so that its safer and more sustainable and you know protect Muskoka. You know if you're investing this money and your family is committed over the years, you want to protect it. They've done some great things [...] Let's protect what we've got, and many of them are willing to pay for that.

The partnerships formed by cottagers whilst forming associations to better the environment is prominent in the Muskoka, fostered by an environmental ethos. Michelle explains this environmental ethos around cottage ownership in Muskoka when she stated:

I also think that they bring an ethic around environment that's important for Muskoka. So the lake associations [made up by cottagers] they put a lot of effort, like personal effort and money into protecting the environment and studying the environment. Water quality analysis. Surveys. All kinds of stuff and it's the cottage associations primarily as a group that do this. I think its primarily second homeowners [that make up the associations] but there are some [locals]. So I use the word cottage association, its cottage association. Property owners, there's other lakes that have a really good mix of permanent and seasonal and they often will call themselves property associations and the idea there is to get away of the image of "we're cottagers" and we are all in it together.

The data constantly demonstrates evidence that cottagers are adamant on preserving Muskoka's natural environment through environmentally focused associations. Sylvia explained:

I think lake associations are very strong advocates for the natural environment. The Muskoka Lakes Association for example has a water quality program, they spend thousands of dollars a year on water quality testing, monitoring, lake associations work with the district in watershed programs to promote stewardship on lakes. More generally, being stewards themselves on shorelines, some of them own larger tracks of land, including forested areas and some seasonal residents are not waterfront residents as well. Some do own property in the rural areas as well. Contribute to the conservation of the natural environment in the rural areas as well. Very few seasonal residents do not have an interest in protecting the natural environment.

Heather touched upon the previous sentiments, but also acknowledged that there is room to improve. She explains that while there are positive efforts taken towards environmental protection, there is also large scale development on the shorelines which threatens this. She

speaks of the recurring distinction of values between cottagers; how nature is valued as something to be consumed, or honoured to be preserved. She states:

Certainly I know that some of them [cottagers], because of this affinity to the land, are involved with organizations such as the Muskoka Conservancy. They are protecting shoreline, they don't want to subdivide and sell [...] The downside is that you can take a boat or a steamship out on Muskoka and see boathouse, boathouse, boathouse, boathouse, right? There is the push to get further out in the water to build bigger, to build new, you see the contrast when you are out there on the lake between the little lake cabin out in the woods and the monster house with the monster lawn that is completely manicured, and a double bayed boathouse and maybe there's a place for a plane. Huge. People that buy whole islands. I'm sure they protect their islands, but I'm sure there's an impact [...]. Some of them [cottagers] certainly don't care that much, they want their big cottage and they can afford it and they will build to suit their needs. Others just want to come here and they have their cottage and its an old one from the 50s and maybe they want to fix it up enough you know that they can keep coming here. I can imagine with any population anywhere in Canada there is a huge range of peoples values of what they think nature and the environment is for. Is it a resource or is it a gift? It is something that you are privileged and honored to be living in, or is it something that you consume?

Given that these differences of values are inevitable; the data explains that local individuals and associations are working to create an awareness of their initiatives to expand their reach. Greg explained that those within the community, whether they are local people, tourism operators, or cottagers, need to work together to conserve the environment and live with an environmental ethic beyond their own yard. He stated:

I think the big thing is that everybody needs to learn to engage them [cottagers] and they need to learn as cottagers that Muskoka is more than their lot, or their section of the lake. If you're going to come and use resources in Muskoka and enjoy those natural resources, then you as a cottager have an obligation to the total community to help improve the whole community rather than "my little section is the only section I care about" you know, when its your personal little section yeah you can get passionate about it, but if we are going to be sustainable, cottagers, local residents, tourism operators, we've got to be partners in this whole thing.

Kimberly agreed, and continues the discussion on a dichotomy between cottagers, as seen before in the data, when she explained there are cottagers who use nature for consumption, but there are

also cottagers who belong to associations which make an effort to care for the environment. She explains:

This is a very important point. There's a dichotomy. Some of them bring their boats that have no business on our lake. There's a tradition of serenity that is absolutely destroyed by some of these boats and play toys but on the other hand the Muskoka Lakes Association contributes enormously because the cottagers do the water quality testing. They take the samples from the lake that allow the Watershed Council the information in order to show them the state of the environment. So they are the ones who make sure the lake is being taken care of. They themselves contribute to that process and there are quite a few of them.

Kimberly's mention of the Muskoka Lakes Association and Watershed Council, leads into the next discussion on environmental restrictions and regulations. In the data, local residents acknowledged the contribution that cottagers have to evoke and inspire restrictions and regulations, the importance of them, as well as the contrasting distaste for such regulations by cottagers.

4.5.2 Environmental Restrictions & Regulations

The data shows that due to the environmental ethos and importance placed on the protecting the environment in Muskoka, regulations have been enforced to uphold these values.

Kevin explained how the governments have made an effort in doing so, when he stated:

The district government and local municipal governments have pretty good guidelines in place that don't let you build too big or too close to water and try to keep a fair amount of green space around your homes and your summer cottages and all that is good.

These regulations, however, have deterred many developers from choosing Muskoka as a place to build. Greg, for example, explained his experience with cottage developers, and the rationale for the denial of their large scale development due to environmental regulations. He explained:

You know one of the developers said if you won't let me build that here, I'll take my clients other places. My reaction and many reaction of others is, that's fine, we like it this way. We want it to be low impact on the shoreline. We want it to be good for the water quality, we want it to be good for the water sustainability and we don't want algae blooms and we don't want all these things. So thank you very much. We are not just doing it for the buck, to be bigger bigger bigger. We are doing it because we love our

land, we love our water, we appreciate why people come and we protect it. And you know what, people will still come.

While environmental restrictions have deterred some of the negative impacts associated with large scale development, data shows that many cottagers have become frustrated with these regulations. Sandra, for example, discussed the dislike by many cottagers for new regulations on lake-front properties. She stated:

They [cottagers] don't like the environmental restrictions that are now put on the properties. They have a sense of entitlement, so they think, this is my land and I should be able to do whatever I want and I don't care if it's a loon nesting ground or whatever. "I should be able to put my cottage right on the shore" [they think].

Bridget spoke to this theme, as well, and discussed how continuing to develop mass cottages threatens the natural aesthetic which attracts visitors to Muskoka's landscape. She commented:

I think the creation of what I call subdivision cottaging. I mean these intensive developments like over near Minett [a town in Muskoka]. That's a whole town over there. Its so big they have their own sewage treatment plant. Its just why people come here is this image of pristine nature. The very act of intensifying access to it, are places that are at risk.

This discussion is prominent in the data, that the environment needs to be protected by regulations in order to retain the naturalness and aesthetic beauty of the destination. Sylvia explains that she believes Muskoka differs from other destinations, and needs sustainable policies and regulations to protect the natural environment and character of the place, but also needs to expand economically.

The only other thing would be our planning approach to tourism. Certainly from a planning approach, Muskoka is so much different [...] Our water quality is fantastic and so I think we need to continue with policies that you know, continue to protect character and the natural environment but we do need to grow our economy so policies do need to support development [...] There is a sense from some that they have their slice of heaven and they don't want anyone else to get theirs. They like what they have and they don't want to see any development on their lake. I think there's relatively few who have that attitude but it does exist. I think Muskoka has a very unique character and Muskoka is a name that is recognized worldwide. So I think we need to work at maintaining that uniqueness. I think that combination of rock and trees and water and that cottaging experience you know the old traditional resort experience, its different than other places.

Sylvia's mention of rock, trees, and water, contributes to data on environmental place making, and the importance of regulating and protecting the environment to conserve its distinct character and place association. Data pertaining to this theme, environmental place making, will be explained below.

4.5.3 Environmental Place Making

As seen throughout the data, Muskoka's character is often attributed to its natural environment. Thus, the data shows that locals and cottagers alike believe that guarding the environment is important to preserving its character. Samuel explained that Muskoka's reputation is upheld by its clean environment, and lifestyle associated with the outdoors. He claimed:

Muskoka has a great reputation as being a great place to live. It has a great natural environment. You can raise a family without fear of like smog and contamination and traffic jams and just you know so, its really got a good reputation for having a clean environment and a good lifestyle. I think a good quality of life. So I think people when you go out and talk to people about their priorities and you know what they love about being here that always comes to the top and it always comes to forests, lakes, rocks, and trees.

Michelle agreed, and described that Muskoka's reputation as a world destination is in large part because of its heritage and dedication to the natural environment. However, she also discussed the complications that can arise due to urban development, and therefore she emphasized the value of environmental planning in Muskoka. She states:

We're a world destination because of this and our heritage is our environment, the water, the trees, and everything and I think it has a lot to do with the tourism industry [...] they [cottages and tourists] have such a pride and a concept about this place and they don't want to see change. They want to see green, they want the trees, but there's complications to that because they're also supporting the urban style development and its 1 of the 20 that doesn't do it right. So I think our heritage is really important and I think its preserved by them. Because the second homeowners value that environment and heritage of Muskoka [...] they value planning. So as rate payers, that's onto the politicians who then value planning. Muskoka has a high number of planners, public planners and private planners.

This idea that the environment is highly important to Muskokans is reiterated by Sylvia, as well, when she also explained why planning is valued so highly. She also touched on social issues, which were previously mentioned in data analysis when she explained:

I think the natural environment is always at the top of everyone's list, character of small towns and shorelines you know but also the need to create jobs and provide transit and affordable housing, I think all of those things are important. I don't think we can let Muskoka become the Hamptons of the North.

As seen here, environmental place associations in Muskoka prove to be of value in the data, and therefore sense of place will be analyzed in the next section to understand how local people perceive and value their hometown.

4.5.4 Discussion

The health of the environment in Muskoka is highly valued by locals and cottagers combined; supported by the efforts of the district government promoting responsibility, the Muskoka Conservatory striving to preserve both the culture and the environment, Cottage Associations and Lake Associations as evidenced in the above presentation of the data. It could be argued that there is a trickle down effect in regard to environmental protection in Muskoka, from the district government taking action, to local associations forming to do the same. Therefore, the data suggests that an environmental ethos exists amongst many residents and visitors to the destination. This ethos fosters a philanthropic spirit amongst seasonal residents, and also is reflected in regulations and restrictions enforced in the destination. These implemented regulations support the perpetuation of Muskoka as a place characterized by healthy water, trees, and a high quality of life. The data places an importance on safeguarding the environment to combat the mass development which has become commonplace in the destination, threatening the very character which makes it unique. In the literature, Cadieux (2011) expressed similar suggestions, explaining that nature has competing discourses in cottage

country: as rural, native, something to live amongst, and something to protect, all of which focus on the appreciation of nature. Similarly, and as discussed in the section on Identifying Binaries, Jaakson (1986) identified three contrasting groups of second homeowner-nature relationships in his 20-year phenomenological study of Canadian cottagers. Jaakson (1986) identified a group consisting of individuals who were rustic, sought simplicity, and were highly in tune with nature. The second group was composed of those who sought to modify the natural environment on their property, by planting lawns, or “grooming” their shorelines. He then found that a third group fit somewhere in between the two previously listed (Jaakson, 1986). This was noted in the data by interviewees, who expressed that there were cottagers who used nature for consumption, but there are also cottagers who greatly contribute to the protection of the environment through councils and conservancies. In Muskoka, the data presented a black and white dichotomy in regard to cottager-nature relationships, in that either the cottager is a mass consumer, or a protector.

In the literature, Halseth (2004) explains that in Canada, amenity rich locations as cottage destinations are relatively limited, as there have been upward pressures on cottage property prices, based on regulations to protect and conserve cottage areas from pollution pressures. This upward pressure limits who are able to own a cottage, according to Halseth (2004). In the case of Muskoka, it appears that environmental regulations on development have deterred developers from pursuing Muskoka as a spot to build, and has created frustration for cottagers who feel a sense of entitlement to develop as they please on their land. However, local individuals feel strongly about regulating and preserving the environment, to maintain the naturalness and aesthetic beauty of the destination, which is a major characteristic as Muskoka as a place. In the literature, natural landscapes appear to be a major pull factor for cottagers, as Cadieux (2011)

suggests, cottage and second-home ownership appears to be based on a long standing appreciation of nature, the outdoors, and outdoor recreation. In the data, Muskoka has a reputation for being a great place to live due to its natural environment and heritage. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1993) explained that rural tourism often features aspects of the rural world such as contact with nature and heritage, which supports the findings in the data. Furthermore, Mitchell (2013) identified different landscapes associated with rural tourism destinations, one being heritage-scape, emphasizing that heritage is a common attraction for visitors to a destination, and for hosts to cherish and share. The following section will expand on environmental place making and explore data related to the charm of the destination and the sense of place associated with Muskoka.

4.6 Place Attachment

The data indicates that connections and place attachments to Muskoka are strong, but are subjective and thus was different among each informant. Kevin explained it well when he said *“it’s hard to define what it is that makes Muskoka special, but there is something about it”*. The data expresses that both local people and visitors connect to Muskoka, and although they perceive the destination differently, their ties can be equally as strong. The data explains that these special connections are attributed to the perceived health and wellbeing benefits associated with the destination, as supported by access to the natural environment and supplementary outdoor activities, a notion of getting away from the hustle and bustle of city life, and family traditions associated with the land. As such, the data below will be organized into the following subsections.

1. Environmental Attachment
2. Tradition, History & Heritage
3. Home

It is important to note that the subject matter in these subsections often intertwine, as the themes are closely related and unpacking interviewees emotional connections to a place is inherently multifaceted. To begin, Environmental Attachment will act as a continuation of the data displayed in the section Environmental Protection, while introducing how individuals connect deeply with Muskoka through the natural environment. Then, Tradition, History & Heritage will illuminate the long standing traditions individuals associate to Muskoka as a place. Lastly, data narrated to defining and cherishing Muskoka as home is analyzed.

4.6.1 Environmental Attachment

As seen in the previous section, Environmental Protection, many Muskokans and cottagers alike feel passionately about preserving the natural environment in Muskoka. Relatedly, data also shows that many respondents discussed their attachment to Muskoka as prominently influenced by the natural environment. Interviewees focused their discussions on the recreational activities available in the destination, their connection to the environment, and the beauty of the forests, lakes, and wildlife. Samuel, for example, explained his love for living directly in a destination where outdoor recreation activities are plentiful, rather than having to travel to experience such. He explained:

There's lots of outdoor activities available. You're more in it. Grabbing a canoe, throwing it in the water and going on a trip. A day trip, a picnic, an overnight, its easy. You don't need to drive 4 hours to get to your destination where you get out of the car. You're always there.

Healthy living via participating in various outdoor activities were suggested by Kevin to be quintessentially associated with the destination. Accordingly, Kevin refers to such engagement with the outdoors as part of the charisma of Muskoka, when he expressed:

Its little boats putting [...] There's six women or eight women who went by on kayaks just a few minutes ago. That's a big part of Muskoka now. People out exercising but just doing it naturally on the waterways. Paddleboards are booming all over Muskoka. Kayaks are

booming. Canoeists are, more canoeists on the water than we have ever had [...] That's part of the mystique of Muskoka.

Sylvia, too, explained that while she does not live directly on the water, her love for Muskoka stems from nature and the outdoors being readily available to her to spend time in, when she stated *"I love being here. Although I don't live on the water I love being able to get to the water, its about paddling in the summer and cross country skiing in the winter. Its about being able to access nature and the outdoors"*. Heather explained that it is not just local people who value this connection with nature that Muskoka fosters, that cottagers and year round residents alike choose to spend their time in the destination due to their appreciation of nature and nature based activities. She claimed:

[I feel] a connection to the environment. All of us, a lot of us, the cottagers and the year round people, that's part of the reason why we live here. The privacy. Quiet. 7:00am I go out on my back deck gazebo, I don't hear somebody's lawn mower, I hear birds. A crazy ruckus forest full of birds. There are bears coming through and we can go for a kayak or a paddle.

Heather's also mentions the sounds of Muskoka, as she suggests that Muskoka is private and quiet, contrasting the sounds of your neighbour's lawn mower that you may hear in the city.

Patricia, similarly, explained that the quiet, simplicity, and wildlife associated with Muskoka's forests was what she found amazing about living in Muskoka. She explained:

To me, [I appreciate] the simplicity. Coming out on the deck, its so quiet. You don't hear all that background noise, and even at night time when we sit out and see the stars and stuff you don't see all the extra light from the city and stuff. And going for hikes, we know there's deer and moose and bear and stuff on the property. Its amazing.

Kevin spoke to this when he explained that for many, their connection to Muskoka is a connection to the landscape and its associated traditions. He explained, *"Muskoka is full of that kind of natural setting that makes it an attractive place. Makes it a place that people want to come"*. Health and wellbeing appear to be part of the reason people love Muskoka, as they like

being outdoors and participating in outdoor activities. Kevin expanded on this idea, and pulled on his personal experience in Muskoka, discussing his love for being in nature in his own backyard. He explained:

I think for a lot of people, I have to generalize, because I don't know how else. It's the natural beauty and the natural settings that are already here and haven't changed significantly. For example, I still respond emotionally to the sound of the Winona [Muskoka's steamship] blowing her horn as she goes past the mouth of the river at night. And I can sit here on my deck and have a beer and hear the sound and its like I was a kid 50 or 60 years ago. That's part of the Muskoka tradition for me. It might be different for someone else. But for me it's the little things like that. And I mentioned, it's the call of the loon across the lake. It's that mystique or Muskoka tradition that people would choose this over say, Sauble Beach [an Ontario beach town].

To Kevin, the natural beauty of Muskoka is what sets the destination apart from other beach towns, and simply staying home in Ontario. The space in Muskoka feels differently than other destinations and contrasts city life, where the sounds are soothing. His Muskoka tradition, or place association, is influenced by what he calls *the little things* such as the call of the loon, or the tradition of the Segwun's horn blowing on the water. Again, sounds of Muskoka are mentioned in the data, expressing that soothing sounds plays a role in the value placed on Muskoka. Similarly, other respondents spoke of their highly valued connections to nature in Muskoka, either through their participation in outdoor recreation opportunities, or simply living in abundant forests close to water, contributing to their love of the place. In Part of Kevin's love for Muskoka is attributed to the tradition, history, and heritage that he has, as well as his ability to simulate his senses, contribute to his personal wellbeing and health in a natural environment, as a self-proclaimed Champion of Muskoka. Data pertaining to traditions, history, and heritage, will be illuminated below, as respondents repeatedly mentioned these concepts throughout the data.

4.6.2 Tradition, History & Heritage

The data elucidates that while the connection to landscape is highly valued by local people and cottagers, so too are the long held traditions and history that are cherished by individuals and families who spend time in Muskoka. Respondents spoke of their attachment to Muskoka as being formed by treasured family habits and memories from their childhoods. Samuel, whom was introduced to Muskoka as a cottager, shed a tear when discussing his memories of visiting Muskoka as a child. He explained:

There's a lot of family history here for me. You know I think a lot of people have that. A lot of people I know have family history here and they value that. Like there's you know that fishing spot your uncle showed you. You know that thing that you did. Or there's a great lookout on that hill there. How do you know there's a great lookout? Well you know my grandpa showed me back when I was eight. There's that whole element of it. [he pauses and wipes a tear from his eye]

While Kevin was born and raised in Muskoka, his stories regarding his attachment to Muskoka were similar to Samuel's. Kevin described his memories and what he called *the sounds of summer*, which became tradition to him, when he claimed:

Oh, I remember diving off a certain dock, or diving off the dock was so cool and refreshing. Or you know, the sun was so hot. Varies from person to person. And that's what we base our memories on. Our love of a place is on the positive experiences we have in times past and those become the traditions that appeal to me or you. Yours may be entirely different than mine. I don't think everyone gets excited by the call of the loon or the sound of the Winona going by, but for me those are the sounds of summer. That's what I associate with summer.

Similarly, Isaac, having grown up in Toronto, spent his summers at the cottage in Muskoka, as did his ancestors. In the winter months, Isaac explained a tradition that he had formed while daydreaming of returning to Muskoka. He shared the following memory:

[As a kid], in the winter was when I daydreamed about my Muskoka aquarium. We would take home moss and rocks and you know plants that grew in the bush here. Put it in an aquarium and watered in and put a piece of glass on top and when you took off the piece of glass you could smell Muskoka. It was cool and my parents and my ancestors go back [as cottagers]. Its my life, my life has been rooted here.

The data suggests that Muskoka holds a special place in many people's hearts, due to their love of nature, and traditions associated with spending time there. An intergenerational family connection is also inherent to the place, as seen in the data. Respondents announce their links to Muskoka as longstanding due to their ancestor's visitation, and therefore cherish the place. An interesting finding pertaining to place attachments, ancestors, and traditions in Muskoka came from an interview with Greg. He explained:

People really are committed to Muskoka as a lifestyle and the way to understand is to look at The Globe and Mail obituaries. Muskoka is referenced, and cottage life is referenced more in the obituaries of The Globe and Mail than any other region in the world. Like, Mom died after her last visit to Muskoka after 100 years. Or after 60 years. Grandpa was happiest at the cottage in Muskoka with his grandkids. You know, mom was lucky enough to visit the cottage and pass away gently on the shores of Lake Rosseau. You know these things are in The Globe and Mail every single week. People have history in Muskoka. This is where they love. [...] You know, this is history, this is where families develop values because this is the only constant they've got.

This data suggests that people feel most fulfilled at their cottages in Muskoka, just as Kevin, a local resident, expresses that there is no place he would rather live. The mention of families developing their values at the cottage, which is perceived as a constant, is also continuous in the data. Heather added to this data, and explained the place attachment fostered by tradition felt by both long term local residents, as well as those who visited for many summers.

There's people who have been there for 5 or 6 generations [...] Some family members that have never left. Right? Never gone much further beyond Toronto. They are very much attached to Muskoka. And they are making maple syrup in the winter time and they are on snowmobiles, and they hunt, and they farm, and they work you know and they've been living here for a long, long time. At the same time, you have the cottagers who have been creating a story of their own that is history and memory and their childhood experiences, their sense of place in Muskoka is equally strong. I think also for those kids that were sent to camp up here. We talk about golf courses, but how many camps are up here? Muskoka, Olympia, Ride Girls Camp, there's so many camps and you talk to people our age and in their 60s that have an experience of going to camp. That's a very Canadian thing. And every year they go to camp.

The data shows that individuals have a strong connection to the land in Muskoka. It is noted that local people have a more functional, production based connection to the land, through quintessentially Canadian nature based production of maple syrup, or hunting and farming. Cottagers affinity to the land is more in regard to, but not limited to, their consumption of nature as a recreational opportunity such as golfing or attending summer camp. The data explains that both local residents and visitors have stories connected to Muskoka, and although they may differ, their connection to Muskoka can be equally strong. Muskoka, referenced as home, will be explored in the following section, to understand how local people attribute meaning to their primary landscape.

4.6.3 Home

When respondents were asked, “what does Muskoka mean to you?”, all but one respondent replied with the word “home”. Michelle, for example, simply stated “Home. Centre of the universe. Pretty much”. This is unsurprising, given that all interviewees were in fact local residents, whose primary residence is in Muskoka. However, their descriptions of home, and the meanings associated with Muskoka being home varied. Kevin explained there is no where else he would rather live, when he explained:

There's no place I'd rather live. There's no place I'd feel as at home or as comfortable, lots of nice places to visit. If you said to me do you want to go to New Zealand for a trip tomorrow? Yeah! Love to. But I want to come home at the end of it. I want to come back to where my roots are and I think Muskoka has a lot of people living here who have that.

To Kevin, Muskoka is where his roots are, like many others. Karol, explained that while Muskoka is home, she prefers to say she is from Huntsville [a town in Muskoka], because the name of Muskoka has a sense of elitism associated with it. She claimed:

Its home. But really I don't really call it Muskoka. I tell people I live in Huntsville. Its like Muskoka is name dropping. I don't really live in Muskoka. I just feel like I live in Huntsville. I feel kind of proud though. If I'm feeling like I want to impress someone I will say I live in

Muskoka. Let's put it that way. If I'm at an art show in Toronto, yeah I say I live in Muskoka. It has a certain clout to it. Its getting that way.

Nina felt similarly to Karol and explained that Muskoka is not a getaway for her, or an impressive destination, it is simply her home. She expanded, and explained why she values having Muskoka as her home when she said:

It feels homey and relaxed and not as busy as the city. It kind of worries me that some day Muskoka is going to become [a city]. You see all these places going up, and people are moving here because they understand that they can and it is only a two-hour drive to the city. I don't really want it to become a city itself. I would probably move because I value the fact that I can look out my window and not see someone for 20 minutes or yeah that its not so packed that you can't get a table at a restaurant because sometimes in the summer its like that.

The threat of expansion due to continued development in Muskoka was dreaded by other respondents as well. Bridget, too, addressed that she has fears for the community as it is faced with continuous growth, when she explained that “[Muskoka is] Home. What all of that conveys. Beauty, opportunity, poverty, social isolation. The recreation and sports. I fear for Muskoka. I fear for our ability to continue to provide what is provided.” The demand of resources for incoming populations of cottagers and retirees, as well as the lack of employment opportunities for local people has strained Muskoka, as expressed previously in the data analysis. As such, this discussion on home begins to mirror the previous data analysis section Realities of Muskoka, where Muskoka is portrayed as a complex, yet aesthetically pleasing destination. Kimberly eloquently expressed that to her, it is important that Muskoka is depicted and understood beyond the natural landscape. She explains that Muskoka is more than just a playground for the wealthy and that it needs to be cared for as such, by calling for contribution from local people and cottagers to the wellbeing of Muskoka. She explained:

Its home because of the natural landscape [...] When you say its my home and I love it, that's true, but it needs some guardianship and some care too. The problem is you can't just take Muskoka for granted. I've stepped up, I've worked on projects, I'm a volunteer.

I'm a guider. Whatever, you have to contribute to its wellbeing. The volunteerism in the local population is massive. They [cottagers] think its just the playground. You hear Muskoka and you hear vacation. No. Its our life and you can't just take it for granted. To me Muskoka is home that is worth contributing to. I think its an important distinction to make.

While the attributes of home differed from interviewee to interviewee in the data, it was clear that Muskoka was a haven for those interviewed. Data suggests that those interviewed highly valued living where they do, because of their roots there, their love for the natural environment, the improvement of their quality of life, and their ability to engage in the outdoors which in turn seemed to contribute to their positive outlook. However, it is crucial to note that interviewees felt that Muskoka, as their home, is worth contributing to and preserving, so that it does not become overrun or misrepresented.

4.6.4 Creative Destruction and Enhancement in Muskoka

As noted in the literature review, Mitchell's (1998; 2000; 2009; 2010; 2012; 2013) work on creative destruction and enhancement is prominent in understanding the changes of rural spaces in Ontario, influenced by commodification and increased tourism demands. The work in Elora and St. Jacobs specifically, acknowledges the changes of rural landscapes which have utilized tourism to become more hybrid destinations, straying from previous production based industries. Using Mitchell's influence, Muskoka will be analyzed below according to Mitchell's framework (2013), which acknowledges the innovative functionalities in these new emerging spaces, and deems the innovations as creative enhancement and/or destruction.

Muskoka appears to have become a hybrid landscape, much like Elora and St. Jacobs. It appears that Muskoka, Ontario features processes of both creative destruction and creative enhancement. The heritage-scape (Mitchell and de Waal, 2009), leisure-scape, and boutique-scape functions which are acknowledged in Mitchell's (2013) work, are all apparent in Muskoka

as well. In the towns of Muskoka, visitors will find goods that appeal to authenticity seeking consumers, who look for unique experiences, and historic sights such as The Muskoka Steamship boat cruises, Muskoka Museum, Muskoka Pioneer Village, which make up the nine historical museums in the destination (Discover Muskoka, 2016). Leisure-scape, defined by entertainment and recreation, which is more fascinated by ‘surfaces and signs, than authenticity’ (Feifer, 1985) is also seen in Muskoka, especially on the lakes, where watersport recreation appears to dominate. These products appear to mix together in Muskoka, although compartmentalized, where the heritage-scape is consumed in museums, art galleries, or on tours, and the leisure-scape is seen on the waterways, at local restaurants, hotel chains, festivals, and the boutique-scape is found in high priced boutiques in each of the small towns, with high price tags and designer names. Areas with these characteristics are deemed by Mitchell (2013) as pleasure-scapes, with a function of hedonic consumption.

Muskoka does not appear to fit into Mitchell’s (1998) work on landscape change, where residents mourn the loss of their rural idyll, as their landscape changed. Instead, in Muskoka, it appears as though the destination has consistently been changing, but has also has been reliant on tourism for many decades. Due to this, residents interviewed in this study did not appear to long for a rural idyll of the past. In fact, the eldest interviewee, whom had lived in Muskoka for 84 years, identified that visitors and cottagers to the region were similar in numbers to his youth. Visitation to the destination for consumptive purposes appears to be the norm, and therefore differs from Mitchell’s work (1998; 2000; 2009; 2010; 2012; 2013), which placed a focus on more “up-and-coming”, or more recently transitioning landscapes. Muskoka evolved from a production-based economy, being logging, in the 1870’s, simply because lumbermen had extracted all of the trees, which put them out of business (Visit Muskoka, 2016). During this

time, resorts were produced, with the first resort being established in 1869. With the help of boat cruises and the steamship era in Muskoka, visitors from around the world began to visit, establishing tourism as the primary industry in the destination earlier than the 1900s. This suggests that perhaps, the destination is in the post-destruction phase of Mitchell's (1998) model of creative destruction, as tourism has been the dominant industry in Muskoka for over a century. Instead, perhaps different forms of tourism have evolved over time in the destination. For example, interviewees in this study identified dwindling numbers of resorts, which have been the norm for decades, but an increase of cottaging on the lakes, Airbnb rentals, and retirement condominiums, which present new opportunities and challenges in regard to the tourism industry in Muskoka.

4.6.5 Discussion

The data indicates that individuals have a strong place attachment to Muskoka, fostered by their love of the attractive natural environment, which inherently cultivated family traditions for respondents. Muskoka is recognized in the data as a constant for many, as specifically 15 out of 16 participants expressed that Muskoka meant home, to them. In the data, Muskoka is perceived as home, and as a place worthy of protection and preservation from the challenges associated with mass development. Interviewees spoke to their beautiful place associations of Muskoka, such as the call of the loon on the lake, or childhood memories, as well as their darker associations of Muskoka such as social isolation experienced in the off season, and poverty.

As mentioned in the previous section, an appreciation of nature was apparent in the data, as both cottagers and locals alike cherish the natural environment in Muskoka and perceive it to be an important determinant to their construct of place and quality of life. In the literature, cottage destinations such as Muskoka, allow urbanites access to peace, nature, the countryside,

escape their urban lives, and to be surrounded by those who share an appreciation for outdoor landscapes (Jaakson, 1986; Lagerqvist, 2014). In the data, an emphasis was placed on engaging in a variety of outdoor activities such as kayaking, hiking, or wildlife viewing. The wilderness is readily accessible to those who live in or visit Muskoka. Accessibility seemed to contribute to respondent's quality of life and wellbeing. This particular finding is recognized in the literature, specifically, Buckley (2005) explained that cottage ownership is an extension of an individual's long-held appreciation for outdoor recreation. It is interesting to apply this to local individuals, as it appears that a number of the interviewees whom chose Muskoka as their permanent community felt this way about accessing outdoor recreation activities and appreciated living in nature. To the informants, Muskoka's natural beauty sets the destination apart from other beach towns such as Sauble Beach, Ontario, and from simply staying home. Respondents in this study appreciated Muskoka, for its contrast to city life. The serene sounds in Muskoka were described by informants, such as the call of the loon and the tradition of the Segwun's horn blowing on the water. These sounds were contrasted by city annoyances such as the neighbour's lawn mower; the visions in Muskoka were described as simplistic, such as a dark sky in Muskoka, contrasted by city lights. This relates to the literature, where cottagers appreciate the destination due to the feeling of freedom from their everyday lives, or city life. In the literature, the cottage is perceived as a "clock-free" place, where people become separated from their daily routines (Jaakson, 1986). Harrison (2014) found that cottagers in Haliburton, Ontario described staying at the cottage as a way to travel to their more preferred life, as cottage life is perceived to be more authentic than city life is, where cottagers can feel more relaxed and comfortable (Perianian, 2006). Similarly, participants in Quinn's (2004) study in Wexford, UK explained they felt more relaxed at their second home than in their 'primary' residences. In the literature

and in the data, the cottage becomes an escape from the city, where individuals can be their more preferred versions of themselves. Thus enhancing their quality of life, being more in tune with self, and improving their well-being.

Family history and traditions in Muskoka were also apparent in the data. The cottage was seen as a constant in the lives of both cottagers and local people. The cottage fostered family connections and bonds that were cherished by respondents, whom either grew up as cottagers in Muskoka, or those whom have longstanding family ties as local people. In the literature, Jaakson's (1986) research explained that in Canada, second homes have been within families for years, and are often inherited and passed down. This in turn creates a sense of continuity, or "roots" which differ from the urban residence. The sentiment "we'd never sell the cottage!" was used often in Jaakson's study of cottagers in Ontario (1986, p. 380), as many families felt more of a place attachment to their cottage than their city residence. Coppock's (1977) work aligned with this as well, as he wrote that the cottage becomes a gathering place for distant and dispersed families, where bonds can be renewed. Harrison (2014) too, found that the family cottage becomes a space where families build on traditions and create new memories. In the data, childhood memories in Muskoka stood out to respondents, even conjuring up tears when discussing their love for the destination the nostalgic memories associated with their time spent in Muskoka. The data suggests that individuals are committed to Muskoka due to their family history, and that Muskoka is even mentioned in obituaries, as a favourite place, where visitors were happiest, or where their family values developed. The cottage experience in Muskoka was seen as quintessentially Canadian, which has also been established in the literature. Research suggested that the cottage is a place that is idyllic, traditional, charming, ancient, and genuinely rural, a symbol of holidays, urban dreams, heritage, and even a place for meditation and

relaxation (Harrison, 2012, Lagerqvist, 2014). These depictions have made “the cottage” national symbols which give concrete meaning to patriotism within their given countries (Smith, 1991). This was mentioned briefly in the data, when Heather spoke of cottage visitation and summer camps as “a very Canadian thing”.

The last focus of this section, is of Muskoka as home. This is a natural theme; as local residents were the interviewees in this study. While the meanings of home differed from interviewee to interviewee, respondents were adamant in expressing their connections to Muskoka as strong, and that the destination deserves to be protected and contributed to, for the health and wellbeing of the environment, local people, and the relationship between locals and visitors.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

While investigating the viewpoints of local individuals in the context of Muskoka, this thesis aimed to understand the relationships between locals and cottagers, and the insights local individuals held towards cottagers and the dominant tourism industry in their community. Critical theory was adopted as the theoretical lens to explore this project. Critical theory assumes that all thought is facilitated by power relations, that certain groups are privileged over others and that oppression is diverse, existing in many forms such as gender, race and class (Crotty, 1998). This particular study focused on power relations between local residents and cottagers in Muskoka, whom differed overtly in socioeconomic status and land uses. As a consequence of the critical theory lens for this study, power relations specific to this case became prevalent. Particularly, when understanding the relationships between cottagers and local residents, distinct binaries and negative stories came to the forefront. Muskoka appears to be a destination inherently impacted by power relations, due to the tourism industry being their main economic driver. In Muskoka, the reliance on the seasonal tourism industry and cottagers has created binaries founded in power relationships and servitude. The interpretation of the data demonstrated that while local people found the seasonal tourism industry, influx of affluent cottagers, and misrepresentation of Muskoka in the media to be a nuisance at times, they felt that the economy is profoundly reliant on the tourism industry and its related seasonal residents. As a result, the local community has come to accept and to an extent, embrace the opportunity to act as hosts.

This chapter's purpose is to summarize and discuss the main findings of this research. Afterwards, the key contributions this work adds to the greater academic debate on cottaging and

tourism is discussed. Following, limitations and constraints that presented themselves throughout this research process will be expressed and will be followed by implications for future research, to suggest how to grow from this particular study.

5.1 Summary of Main Findings

The aim of this study was to understand local people's perceptions of cottagers, and the tourism industry in the District Municipality of Muskoka. This was achieved through 16 semi-structured interviews with local community members in Muskoka, during the peak summer season (July-August) of 2016. Four research questions were chosen to frame the interviews with local residents. The questions were:

1. How do cottagers and locals in Muskoka interact?
2. What are the perceptions of Muskokan cottagers from the perspective of locals?
3. What meanings do local people ascribe to cottaging and tourism in Muskoka?
4. How do local people perceive their community in comparison to the contrived Muskoka brand?

The following four subsections will illustrate how the study responded to each of these research questions.

5.1.1 Research Question #1

How do cottagers and locals in Muskoka interact?

In the data, it appears that cottager and local resident interactions in Muskoka are highly seasonal, occurring most often in the summer months. The interaction between these groups appears to differ, largely depending on the employment status of the local individual. To those who work in the tourism or trade industry, the interaction with cottagers is direct, professional, and at times founded in subordination. This level of subordination differed in the data, as some interviewees mentioned that the relationship between cottagers and their contractors is "a friendlier kind of getting along", whereas another respondent compared the work of local

housekeepers to the novel “The Help”, with a plot that focused on black housekeepers in Mississippi in the 1960s, and explained, “they [local housekeepers in Muskoka] were basically slaves”. It was described in the data that “people may feel intimidated or looked down on by cottagers”, due to their differing and often higher socioeconomic status. Those not directly involved in the tourism or trade industry, describes the interaction with cottagers as casual, such as in the grocery store or local restaurants. Bridget, for example, explained that locals and cottagers interact “all over the place [...] I’m so unaware of where we interact”. However, Bridget did mention that she feels the cottagers are more likely aware of her presence in the destination, when she drives her 15 year-old Subaru, which stands out beside the Lexus, Mercedes Benz, and Audi branded vehicles, which are typically owned by cottagers. This explanation reinforces the aforementioned socioeconomic divide between cottagers and locals. The grocery store, in particular, was identified in the data as a specific place that breeds conflict, as interviewees told stories of busy summer days, and banter that occurred between locals and cottagers. Interviewees explained times when cottagers voiced their negative opinions and sometimes hostile reactions about local people in checkout lines, such as that the local people ought to have purchased their groceries during the week, or that cashiers were incompetent.

In regard to friendships, it was understood in the data that local people and cottagers do not often develop social ties or bonds, simply because cottagers tend to associate with fellow cottagers on their lake, and reengage with one another each season. It is often when local people engage in recreational activities such as at the golf or sailing club, or from an involvement on boards and associations, that friendships and bonds between the two groups are formed. It appears in the data that more of an effort to engage and connect local people and cottagers to one another could contribute to the wellbeing of both stakeholders whilst sharing the space.

5.1.2 Research Question #2

What are the perceptions of Muskokan cottagers from the perspective of locals?

Similar to the interactions between cottagers and locals in Muskoka, the perceptions of Muskokan cottagers are diverse. Distinct binaries were introduced in the data, as local people explained the various stereotypes attributed to Muskoka cottagers, legends and recalled stories, tensions and differences. Definite benefits and positive attributes associated with cottagers, however, were also highlighted in the data.

To begin, the identified binaries of cottagers posited that tensions and differences do exist between the host and guests in Muskoka. Local people stereotyped cottagers in two separate groups, being the “nouveau riche” or the “real” cottagers. This aligned with Jaakson’s (1986) research on Ontario cottagers, which claimed that cottagers were either consumptive, or rustic and simple, or somewhere in between. The “somewhere in between” cottager was not specifically discussed in this particular study, as locals spoke to the two extreme typologies of the cottager in Muskoka. Those who were deemed the “nouveau riche” were known to have “too much city brains”, suggesting that they did not fit in to the rural lifestyle in Muskoka, characterized by a knowledge and appreciation of the outdoors and respective outdoor activities such as boating or fishing. “Real” cottagers were those who “fit in beautifully, and want to be a part of the cottage atmosphere”, who contribute to the community whilst sitting on Boards, and extend their wealth in philanthropic efforts. Differences in land use values appeared to be the distinctive marker between these stereotypes, suggesting that local people prefer cottagers who are more rustic, rural, and simplistic in their actions.

Cottagers who contributed philanthropically were viewed highly by interviewees, as their skills, abilities and capital to assist in improving the destination, as appreciated in the literature

by Gripton (2009). Socially, respondents felt that the introduction of cottagers to the destination made local people more cultured, as Karl explained, “we lose a bit of our rural roughness”. It appears in the data that while the negative stereotypes and associations of cottagers were discussed more in depth, the positive attributes outweighed the negatives in the minds of interviewees.

5.1.3 Research Question #3

What meanings do local people ascribe to cottaging and tourism in Muskoka?

In the data, local people acknowledged a reliance, albeit primarily fiscal, on cottagers and tourists in Muskoka. Interviewees were adamant that tourism is the economic backbone of the destination, and expressed that “we would be lost without them [cottagers and tourists]”. Not only was the tourism industry seen as a beneficiary, but so too were tertiary industries such as trades and services, as each cottager is perceived to have their own plumber, roofer, etc. In Muskoka, tourism and cottaging has created jobs for local people which otherwise would not exist. Similarly, the demand for amenities and resources from tourists and cottagers has benefitted the local population, as they now have access to premium recreation facilities, and box stores that are normally associated with larger cities, such as Canadian Tire. Local residents appear to make the connection that cottagers and tourists positively impact the destination due to their visitation and demand.

In contrast, local people did raise concerns about their reliance on tourism, primarily due to the seasonal impacts on those employed by the industry. Interviewees acknowledged a need to diversify the economy, perhaps by introducing entrepreneurial, or technological industries to Muskoka, as a means to combat the negative impacts of seasonal tourism work. This was expressed as the offseason in Muskoka was characterized by unemployment and a lack of

resources, which in turn led to issues such as substance abuse, sexual assault, and poverty. It is interesting to note that interviewees were hesitant to blame these issues solely on the cottaging and tourism industry in Muskoka, but did express that there were connections due to the seasonal unemployment fostered by the industry. This appears to have led to a resentment of the industry; the wealthy cottage counterparts, and the media depiction of Muskoka will be discussed more in depth in the next section.

5.1.4 Research Question #4

How do local people perceive their community in comparison to the contrived Muskoka brand?

Local individuals have mixed feelings about cottagers and tourism in Muskoka, as well as differing opinions on the depiction of the destination in the media. Just how local individuals prefer the “real” cottager, whose actions are pure, simplistic, and appreciative of nature, they prefer media that mirrors the “real” cottager, or the “real” Muskoka. This appears to be why interviewees favour publications by the National Geographic, which positions Muskoka as a top destination due to its attractive natural landscape, and associated outdoor activities. On the other hand, media comparing Muskoka to The Hamptons, New York, a wealthy vacation destination, and focusing on the cottages which could be considered mansions, appeared to infuriate local people. This was highlighted in several areas of the results section, as interviewees felt that the media did not accurately depict the “real” Muskoka, whose local population greatly struggles in contrast to the wealthy cottagers who spend their leisure time in the destination.

Respondents acknowledged that Muskoka has a lower provincial income average than other communities, as well as more disease, alcoholism, and mental health issues on average. These issues were reiterated in the data, and a connection was made to the tourism industry, as a number of struggling individuals are indeed employed through tourism. Specifically, it was

identified in the data, that women in Muskoka tend to suffer most from seasonal tourism roles, which was also seen in the rural south (Smith, 1993). However, it is important to note that tourism jobs are not entirely to blame, as they create roles for individuals who may be low-skilled workers and otherwise not be employed, whom may be dealing with these issues regardless of the tourism industry (Frederick, 1993). While respondents felt that the media did not accurately depict the “real” Muskoka, it was acknowledged that local people understand it is a way of doing business, to attract more visitors. This is perceived as beneficial, regardless of the disconnect to the host community.

On the whole, Muskoka as a place, to the local individuals interviewed was perceived as home. The place connection that local people held to Muskoka did not surpass that of visitors which was interesting to note, as Heather explained, “at the same time, you have the cottagers who have been creating a story of their own that is history and memory and their childhood experiences, their sense of place in Muskoka is equally strong.” Home, to the interviewees had differing meanings, but encompassed the strong connection local people had to Muskoka, as interviewees expressed the importance of protecting and contributing to the health and wellbeing of the environment, the local people, and the visitors.

5.2 Key Contributions

Primarily, this thesis contributes to the existing literature on cottaging and amenity migration. There appears to be a paucity in the literature, as this theme was researched in depth in the 1970s-1990s, early 2000s, however, based on this study, there is still a lot to learn about cottaging in rural tourism destinations. Currently, there is a lack of second home literature with a focus on destinations in Ontario, Canada (albeit Coppock, 1977; Halseth, 1998, 2004; Harrison, 2004) specifically there are no scholarly papers exploring the case study of Muskoka and thus

this project adds to the literature. The work of Coppock (1977), Halseth (1998; 2004) and Harrison (2004), all with a focus on Ontario cottages differed from this study in terms of methods and/or focus. For example, Coppock's (1977) work explored secondary sources, Halseth's (1998, 2004) focused on cottagers transitioning into retirees, and also secondary data analysis, while Harrison (2004) concentrated on cottager perceptions, as opposed to the perceptions of local peoples. This research introduces the concept of amenity migration and cottage ownership to destinations that are not mountainous ski towns, which tend to be the dominant focus for amenity migration research. These amenity rich areas attract mass visitation of this kind as recognized in Sweden (Hall and Muller, 2004) British Columbia (Nepal, 2008; Nepal & Jamal, 2011) United Kingdom, American Midwest, Australia, Ireland (Paris, 2011) and Southwestern America (Marcouiller et al, 2011).

This thesis also discusses the relationship between seasonal unemployment and poverty in rural tourism destinations. Deller (2010) acknowledges that "the influence of tourism and recreation development on poverty, has not been adequately addressed within the rural development literature" (pg. 181), which appears to present a gap which this thesis tries to fill. This thesis also contributes to data relating to Doxey's (1975) Irridex, as respondents acknowledged their antagonism of the tourism and cottaging industry in Muskoka, but at the same time, accepted, embraced, and overall perceived the industry as beneficial the community, which appears to be lacking in current research.

5.3 Limitations

After completing this research process, a number of limitations presented themselves. First, defining whom is a local was a challenge. In the end, a local person was defined as someone who would considered themselves and other cottagers a permanent resident in the destination.

Therefore, local interviewees ranged from living in the destination from 3-84 years. However, since recommendations were often received regarding contacts of those I should approach to interview, there were times I attended an interview to find I was interviewing a cottager who was spending four months living in the destination, but was considered a local person by the previous interviewee. Also, there was difficulty recruiting interviewees, as a few prospective interviewees denied contact, as they felt the study was controversial perhaps because they felt it threatened their job security in the tourism industry, or public sphere, and did not feel comfortable sharing their experiences. Some interviewees explained the surprise or disinterest their peers had with their participation in the study, suggesting that the study came off as intrusive or unimportant. In the literature, Creswell (2014) explains that interviews often take place in a non-natural field setting, and not all interviewees may be articulate or receptive in the interview process. This was realized in the research process, as some interviewees appeared shy, secretive, and insisted their confidentiality, whereas others were forthcoming and excited to share their perspectives. In a few cases, my age appeared to be a limitation, as interviewees referred to me, as a “kid” implying a potentially reversed power dynamic, referred to in the literature as positionality, which is beneficial to comprehend to understand a position that differs from your own (Hammond et al, 2013). Some interviewees also had abruptly responded to questions, such as when I asked “When do you interact with cottagers most?”, and they responded with, “*well*, at the cottage?”. While a minor setback, this became discouraging at times throughout the research process.

In regard to choosing participants based on the recommendations of others I realize this may have limited the diversity of interviewees, as I found I was continuously interviewing community leaders or influential people in Muskoka. This was not my original intention which was not detrimental, however, I do not feel it was representative of the whole of Muskoka’s local

population, especially those who were identified as struggling as a result of the seasonality of the destination. The interviewees chosen were not directly tourism workers, although many had been at some point in their lives. I feel the data would be significantly different if I had interviewed those working in the industry, during the peak season timeframe that I conducted my research. This also was a limitation, as individuals I contacted who did work in the industry were too swamped with work that they could not commit to an interview until October 2016, when their busy season had ended. This study focused on the local community in Muskoka, whom are affected by cottagers. The perspective is not inclusive of the second-home owner, cottaging community, and therefore does not illuminate the entire Muskoka community as a whole. While 16 individuals were studied, the viewpoint of the local community portrays a one-sided view of the destination.

5.4 Implications for Future Research

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter there is limited research carried out on amenity migration in Ontario and there has been no research carried out on Muskoka as a case study to explore this. This is significant given the rising international attention received by Muskoka as a premiere cottaging destination worldwide (attractive to the rich and famous), on par with similar destinations such as the Hamptons in the United States. There also appears to be a gap in the literature regarding the impacts of and connection between cottaging and reliant trades industries, which may be interesting for further investigation.

An opportunity for further research in this area is ripe. A larger, longitudinal study may be interesting, as it would be a more thorough study featuring insights from both locals and second-home owner community stakeholders. It would be interesting to note if a change in attitude exists over the long term, where participants are interviewed in the peak season of the summer, as well

as during the winter off-season. Furthermore, research on the role of women in tourism in Muskoka would be interesting, as it was identified that women felt the impacts of seasonality the most in this specific context.

An unintended finding of this project was learning about the ‘underbelly’ of Muskoka. Specifically, some informants referred to the existing poverty in the region as a consequence of low paying wages and seasonality of work in the destination. An interesting study would be to explore the role of tourism in Muskoka in providing opportunities and skill development for impoverished communities in the area. Accordingly, a detailed mapping exercise exploring the services that exist, following a quantitative survey determining the needs of this community could determine what services could better support this community. This type of research would make a valuable contribution to the scholarly research as such discussions are currently absent.

5.5 Epilogue

Critical theory is known for its use in shedding light on power relations, but also to emancipate findings beyond the academic community. As such, this epilogue serves to offer closing thoughts on this study and ways in which the findings and themes can be shared beyond “just the archives” (Stake, 1978, p. 5). The overall intent of this study was to explore cottaging in Muskoka in depth, as a phenomenon, and its impacts. This was inspired by my own experiences within the destination which challenged my self perception of being a “local” or a “cottager”, as in the context of Muskoka, both labels carried different weight, and had inherent meanings.

This project came about simply by talking with a stranger at a birthday party in November 2013. I had just spent my first summer in Muskoka, where I was initially exposed to some of the themes discussed within this study. I was speaking passionately about the power relationships that played out in the destination, and the socioeconomic divide between “locals” and

“cottagers”. The individual I was speaking to about this simply said, “Why don’t you do a Masters degree on it?”. I laughed and thought nothing of it. I was in my third year, and had not previously consider graduate research. However, this conversation lingered in my mind for the next two years, as I revisited Muskoka each year and still felt inclined to share my stories, to explain what was “really happening” in the destination. The power of a simple conversation with a stranger amplified my interest and led me in the direction to share my stories hundreds of times over. Instead of being a conversation piece, my stories became the focus of my past year and a half, and as such, I feel obligated to share this newly found knowledge with others. The power of a simple conversation shall not be denounced, as sharing this study through casual conversation has offered new insights to those who claim to have “never thought of that before”, or think, “that’s really cool, I actually noticed that when...”. Both cottagers and locals in Muskoka have expressed interest in my research and have commented on becoming a more mindful consumer in Muskoka.

Through teaching, I have shared my thesis project with students to shed light on my topic, and to also inspire students to think critically about their own experiences in tourism and hospitality. I have found that students enjoy learning about research possibilities, and that they can make their own passion project through academia, as I have. I intend to continue teaching and inspiring students, with my plans to complete my PhD and work in academia.

In a more tactical way, future publications and presentations on this study will be a form of sharing my results to a broader community. Also, I feel there is an opportunity to publish results from this study in a way that is accessible to the public in Muskoka, such as through Cottage Life or Muskoka Life magazines, or the local newspaper Muskoka Region. This way, the results from this study can be shared more broadly.

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Appendix A
Literature Review Table

Author & Date	Type of Study	Geographical Focus	Contribution
Formosa & Higgs, 2013	Secondary Source	North America & Europe	Mobility & Affluence
Marcouiller, Lapping, Furuseth, 2011	Secondary Source	Southern and western U.S. mountain communities Sweden (referencing Hall, 2005) Ski resort towns in USA, Florida, Upper East side of NYC, Adironnacks, Hamptons, New England, Hilton Head	Amenity migrants Destination/ resort communities Spatial concentrations of rural wealth
Paris, 2011	Quantitative	UK, USA (southeast, west, Midwest, northeast), Australia, Ireland	Second homes & lifestyle choices, impacts on communities & places
Coppock, 1977	Secondary Source	Ontario- “north of Toronto”	Issues & conflicts Inessential purposes Evaluating cottage environments Planning aspects
Harrison, 2004	Qualitative interviews with cottagers	Haliburton, Ontario	Place making Family at the cottage Gender at the cottage Privilege Discussion on Muskoka***
Hall and Müller, 2004	Secondary Source	Various case studies: Canada Britain Ireland USA Western Australia New Zealand South Africa Spain	Privilege Being away from the city Place attachment Travel to second homes Development issues

		Norway Sweden	The role second homes place in each destination
Halseth (in Hall & Müller, 2004)		Ontario	Privilege
Svenson (in Hall & Müller, 2004)	Secondary Source	Canada	Away from the city
Jaakson, 1986	Qualitative Interviewing	Across Canada- not one specific destination mentioned	300 interviews over a 20 year period. What is means to be a cottager.
Gallent, Mace, Twdwr-Jones, 2005	Secondary Source	European Perspectives & UK Policies	Demand Impacts Various case studies Land use planning Policy
Nepal, 2008	Quantitative: literature review, development of a questionnaire interview, pre-tests and face-to-face interviews	British Colombia	Local peoples attitudes towards tourism and tourism development
Nepal & Jamal, 2011	Qualitative: Exploratory secondary data analysis & 30 qualitative interviews with the mayors, planners, residents, and other stakeholders in the tourism and resort sectors	British Colombia: Fernie, Golden, Revelstoke, Kimberely, Rossland	Resort induced changes in small, mountain communities. -growth in real estate -planning implications -new social, spatial, and economic patterns -sustainability considerations

Appendix B Muskoka Brand

Through round table discussions, participants reported back on how they would like to address each of the following key questions:

“Re-energizing the Muskoka brand”: Each group devoted the first 10 minutes to discussing what elements are critical to include in a re-energized version of the Muskoka Tourism brand

- luxury
- authenticity
- accessible Wilderness (differentiates from Niagara, Prince Edward County, Stratford)
- define your own luxury from JW to camping
- create your own luxury from wide range of experiences
- lifestyle
- experience
- clean
- beautiful
- pristine
- nature/forests
- clean water
- weekend every day
- transportation - only viable option is car
- destination
- Muskoka chairs
- great experiences
- active
- environment
- family
- play
- relax
- proximity
- cleanliness
- accessible - everyone's welcome
- sunsets
- clear waters
- nature
- heritage
- art
- cottage full time
- never wanting to leave
- image. peaceful; nature; wildlife; snow is white; pristine; untouched; creative/unique; party; envy "I was in Muskoka"; elitist; safe (won't jeopardize your life); nostalgia; cottage/cabin.
- visitor motivation - space to relax



- pain point: price perception; perceived distance; fixated demographic internally; youth looking for clubs; Subaru ad; how the brand is marketed and pigeon hole; weekend traffic; technology not available; very little multiculturalism and why; have signage that should say Muskoka; assumption everyone knows about Muskoka
- core - water, rocks, trees not just looking but exploring
- activities, attractions, craft breweries, arts & entertainment, festivals, sporting events (cycling, tri-athlon, etc),
- history/culture
- four season
- need to package - hotels, events, meals, studio tours
- discount coupons
- environment
- relaxation
- rejuvenate
- wild life
- Muskoka branding to older generation - Muskoka chairs on dock at sunset, relaxing
- Muskoka branding to younger generation - hiking, biking, activities, sports, families, beach, bands, music
- "everything for everybody" Muskoka has something different to offer that appeals to all.
- the commonality is the environmental appeal, rich culture and heritage; musical heritage (Dunn's big bands, Muskoka Chautauqua (arts/culture, lifelong learning)
- start with Muskoka chair on dock the typical, the known, then it transforms... poetry reading in theatre or in art gallery, or at concert, or spectating a sporting event or fine dining.
- take the Muskoka chair and incorporate into situation
- "let the environment inspire you"
- highlighting local experiences
- 50 year olds cherishing a cup of tea @ sunrise
- 20 somethings cherishing beers
- 8 year olds cherishing ice cream or juice boxes
- connections to health, relaxation, peace, less stressful, renewal of body, mind and spirit
- relaxation while staying connected
- 4 special elements in Muskoka earth (rocks), air (clean air), fire (fire place, sunsets) , water (fresh lakes)
- inspiration from Group of Seven
- Muskoka eat, sleep, do, shop
- picturesque downtowns, farmers markets, rural experiences,
- more intimate. not big box
- views while dining
- competition: Collingwood, Niagara
- name all of the communities, what they represent
- what defines the Muskoka experience
- authenticity
- romance, magic, seduction of Muskoka

- lakes, trees,
- quintessential elements
- natural elements
- nature/ environment
- friendly/approachable
- heritage/tradition
- wilderness with amenities
- cottage country culture
- rugged
- 1,600 lakes
- pain. not cohesive (Muskoka story); perceived as \$\$\$ (need a story to dispel that); few night time activities; geography; Muskoka just the three big lakes (doesn't encompass Huntsville/LOB, etc)

Print publications: what is needed? How can we consolidate our efforts? Target audience: who are they? How do we reach them (past and future)?

- agreed people like to use them
- differentiate private vs public tourism
- keep MTMA as lure piece (simple, smaller)
- local publications keep local (where to dine, where to stay, what to do)
- shouldn't be "internal" distributed at border crossings, enroutes etc.
- the lure piece - MTMA guide should indicate why I would want to visit Muskoka and where is it, what is it. needs the story.
- yet the group was and is fond of Where Magazine concept internally

The Visitor Experience, aligning our efforts: Visitor Centres, bringing the visitor planning and welcoming experience into the "age of apps". What does the new visitor experience look like, both pre-arrival and during the visit?

- 2 schools of thought: centres are passe or on their way to passe. Duplicated
- older population relies on them. not everyone has "apps"
- opportunity to reach out and be friendly; promote brochures; sell other experiences;
- way of defining our tourism region
- need a place for staff to work
- interactive kiosks
- popular with international visitors
- key, knowledgeable staff, personal recommendations
- costly
- people who come in have already discovered Muskoka
- opportunities to rent out
- expensive way to deliver this service



**Appendix C
Muskoka Sign**



Appendix D Mitchell (2012) Production Chart

Table 3
Criteria for firm placement in functional categories.

Functionality	2012 NAICS codes	Characteristics of select firms identified through fieldwork and web page analysis
Primary production	11: Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting 12: Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction 22: Utilities	
Secondary production	23: Construction 31–33: Manufacturing	
Essential consumption	41: Wholesale 44–45: Retail (select) 48–49: Trucking and warehousing 51: Information and cultural industries (select) 52: Finance and insurance 53: Real estate and leasing 54: Professional, scientific and technical services 56: Administrative, waste management and remediation services 61: Educational services 62: Health care and social assistance 81: Other services 91: Public administration	<i>Retail:</i> Stores providing essential goods including groceries, sporting goods, pharmaceutical products, gasoline etc.
Heritage consumption	44–45: Retail (select) 712: Heritage industries 72: Accommodation and food services (select) 7712: Visual, performing or literary arts (select)	<i>Retail:</i> Establishments that provide authentic products that capitalize on local place-based assets <i>Accommodation and food services:</i> Restaurants specializing in local cuisine; unique independently-owned accommodation venues that emphasize place-based assets <i>Visual, performing or literary arts:</i> Venues that promote local artists
Leisure consumption	44–45: Retail (select) 711: Spectator sports 713: Amusement, gambling and recreation industries 72: Accommodation and food services (select) 7712: Visual, performing or literary arts (select)	<i>Retail:</i> Establishments that sell faux-authentic commodities <i>Accommodation and food services:</i> Generic (e.g. a snack bar) and/or chain restaurants/hotels/motels <i>Visual, performing or literary arts:</i> Venues that promote non-local artists
Fashion consumption	44–45: Retail (select) 72: Accommodation and food services (select) 71394: Fitness and recreational sports centers (select) 7712: Visual, performing or literary arts (select)	<i>Retail:</i> Shops selling upmarket or designer clothing, household furnishings, jewelry and accessories etc. that are produced outside the region; <i>Accommodation and food services:</i> Restaurants specializing in international gourmet cuisine; new 4-5 star accommodation venues <i>Visual, performing or literary arts:</i> Venues that attract nationally/internationally acclaimed performers appealing to a select market. <i>Fitness:</i> Spas

Source: Statistics Canada (2012a).

Appendix E

Interview Guide

INITIAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- How long have you lived in Muskoka?
- What do you do for a living?
- What is your level of involvement in the tourism industry in Muskoka?

RESEARCH QUESTION #1: What role do cottagers, second home owners, and tourists play in the lives of long-term residents and tourism workers in Muskoka?

POTENTIAL PROBES:

- How do you as a local person most often interact with cottagers or tourists? Explain the relationship that you have with cottagers...
- Is there a particular time frame that you interact with these people most?
- Has the presence of cottagers and tourists been consistent over your time spent living in Muskoka?
- How would you describe your feelings about tourism and cottage ownership? Has this opinion changed over time?

RESEARCH QUESTION #2: What economic/ environmental affects do cottagers, second-home owners, and tourists have on Muskoka? Are these impacts positive or negative, or both?

POTENTIAL PROBES:

- How do you feel cottagers have contributed to the economy in Muskoka?
- How do you feel cottagers have contributed to the environment in Muskoka?
- Have cottagers and tourists provided more job opportunities for you, or for people you know?
- How have you been impacted personally?

- Have you noticed an improvement of overall infrastructure as a result of tourism or cottaging?
- Do you think any changes need to be made in regard to tourism or cottaging in Muskoka?

RESEARCH QUESTION #2: Does the influx of cottagers alter the meaning of place in Muskoka, from the local's perspective?

POTENTIAL PROBES:

- How do you feel about the depiction of Muskoka in the media?
- Similarly, how do you feel cottagers perceive Muskoka in comparison to yourself?
- Does your perception of Muskoka change when there is an influx of cottagers and tourists?
- What does Muskoka mean to you?
- Have cottagers created traffic congestion or crowding?

Is there anything else you would like to tell me about cottaging or tourism in Muskoka?