Leisure Sciences, 28: 331–349, 2006

ISSN: 0149-0400 print / 1521-0588 online
DOI: 10.1080/01490400600745852

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Place as Relationship Partner: An Alternative Metaphor for Understanding the Quality of Visitor Experience in a Backcountry Setting

JEFFREY J. BROOKS

USDA Forest Service
Rocky Mountain Research Station
Fort Collins, Colorado, USA

GEORGE N. WALLACE

Department of Natural Resource Recreation and Tourism
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado, USA

DANIEL R. WILLIAMS

USDA Forest Service
Rocky Mountain Research Station
Fort Collins, Colorado, USA

This article presents empirical evidence to address how *some visitors build relationships with a wildland place over time. Insights are drawn from qualitative interviews of recreation visitors to the backcountry at Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. The article describes relationship to place as the active construction and accumulation of place meanings. The analysis is organized around three themes that describe how people develop relationships to place: time and experience accrued in place, social and physical interactions in and with the setting, and an active reflective process of regulating sense of identity to affirm commitment to place.*

Keywords behavior, emergent experience, identity, place meanings, relationship to place, satisfaction

Understanding outdoor recreation experiences is a complex and elusive problem that has occupied the attention of leisure researchers for more than three decades. Two recent visitor accounts of experiences at Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP) are examples offered spontaneously in the space provided for "additional comments" at the end of a visitor survey (Wallace, Brooks, & Bates, 2004):

> I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of RMNP. While I visited in September, I expected the trails, picnic areas, and campsites to show signs of the larger numbers of people who visit June-August. Overall, I found the trails well maintained and

Received 24 March 2005; accepted 1 February 2006.
Address correspondence to Jeffrey J. Brooks, USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, 2150 Centre Avenue, Building A, Fort Collins, Colorado 80526. E-mail: jbrooks@fs.fed.us

> the campsites in good shape and clean! I only found a few small pieces of litter in campsites during my stay. The noisy generators in the developed camping area and the noise of planes that persist even in the backcountry areas were most disturbing. Carvings on aspen tree trunks were sad. These trees are so beautiful; the carvings are ghastly wounds (p. 167).
>
> I love Rocky Mountain National Park. It was a special place that my family would always visit every year from the time I was six months old. Every year I continue to visit as much as possible. Anything that can be done to preserve this area would just be great, so that I can bring my children to visit. I hope to carry on my family tradition in this way and have my children love and respect RMNP as much as my parents have taught me to do so (p. 165).

The first account conforms to the familiar and well studied consumer or commodity model that has dominated leisure research since the early 1970s (Schroeder, 1995; Williams, 1989; Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992). This model is powerful because it has analogs in consumer research and clearly describes what a park manager can do to enhance the visitor's experience. The second account in contrast offers less specific advice to the manager aside from affirming the broad goal of preserving the area.

Researchers might be inclined to ignore the latter account and focus on the former because framing the second account in scientific or theoretical terms is less clear and offers little guidance to managers. The second account, however, is no less valid and offers a powerful testimony to the emotional and social significance of the experience for this visitor and holds insight for understanding how relationships to places develop. The purpose of this article is to illustrate what can be learned by studying visitor accounts of the second type that focus on the significance of experiences. This study provides researchers and managers with a broader understanding of a basis for determining whether and how visitors obtain diverse quality experiences (Patterson, Watson, Williams, & Roggenbuck, 1998).

Place concepts and people-place relations have received increasing attention in leisure and outdoor recreation research in recent years (e.g., Kaltenborn & Williams, 2002; Kyle, Absher, & Graefe, 2003; Payton, Fulton, & Anderson, 2005; Stedman, 2002; Vaske & Kobrin, 2001) as well as in the broader domain of environmental psychology (e.g., Gustafson, 2001; Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Manzo, 2003, 2005; Patterson & Williams, 2005; Steel, 2000). The topic has been dominated by quantitative approaches focused on measuring the strength of relationships (e.g., place attachment) with relatively few studies focused on understanding the dynamic processes of developing place relationships over time and across the life course (Manzo, 2003). We examine how place meanings accumulate and how place relationships develop in the context of national park backcountry by asking questions. Do visitors develop deep lasting committed relationships with RMNP? How are these bonds similar to relationships people have with human partners, favorite pets, family homes, or other possessions (Belk, 1992)? How does this phenomenon occur? What are the dimensions of the process? What might this process suggest for enhancing models of quality for the visitor experience?

The Metaphors Researchers Live By

Social science often employs metaphors or linguistic tools to help think about and describe phenomena (Lakoff & Johnson, 1982). A predominant metaphor for describing recreation experience is the *commodity* or *consumer metaphor* (Schroeder, 1995; Williams et al., 1992). Just as the first visitor earlier described the RMNP experience in terms of fulfilled and unfulfilled expectations, recreation researchers employing a consumer metaphor often

have framed visitor experiences within some comparative standards model that evaluates the fulfillment of a set of preconceived expectations for a particular encounter with a wildland setting (Williams, 1989). Comparative standards research involves measuring the extent that particular setting attributes contribute to desired experiences and psychological outcomes. Like all models or metaphors, the commodity approach has limits that have been documented in recreation research (e.g., Schroeder, 1995; Williams, 1989; Williams et al., 1992) and in consumer behavior research (e.g., Fournier, 1991, 1998; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982).

We draw on a different metaphor to account for wildland experiences in our study. Investigators from a variety of fields are increasingly exploring a *relationship metaphor* as a framework to describe environmental and consumer experiences (Fournier, 1998; Manzo, 2003, 2005). Hay (1998) examined how people's relationships to place develop by describing similarities between place relationships and the intimacy, love, and attachment between committed adult pair bonds. Similarly, the structure of interpersonal relationships (Hinde, 1995) and the relationships between consumers and brands they know and use have been shown to resemble people-place relationships described in the literature. Fournier (1998) listed a priori themes that guided life history case studies and qualitative interviews with three women. These themes were that relationships are characterized by reciprocal exchange between interdependent partners, involve the provision of meaning, are multiplex in that they have several dimensions and types that provide an array of benefits for the partners, and evolve and change over time. Fournier inducted the theme of "brand relationship quality" (p. 344). Relationship quality was shown to consist of love and passion, expression of significant aspects of the self, high levels of interdependence between person and brand, commitment or intentions to act in support of the relationship, and intimacy or in-depth knowledge of the brand. Fournier concluded that "quality, perhaps more than any other construct, can capture the richness of the fabric from which brand relationships arise" (p. 363).

Some evidence suggested that places and ongoing leisure pursuits act as relationship partners. For example, Kyle and Chick (2004) investigated enduring leisure involvement for long-time participants at an annual agricultural fair and encampment held in a set locale. Their narrative analysis of 19 in-depth interviews revealed properties of participants' long-term relationships with the leisure event. They found that experiences of informants were shared, interpersonal relationships with family and friends emerged as the most important and meaningful elements of the experience, participants were socialized into the event and their social groups while attending the fair and interacting with others, identities and interpersonal relationships were strengthened by re-connecting to family histories, and identities were intimately connected to the setting and greater community.

In a qualitative study, Manzo (2005) analyzed metropolitan residents' stories about their experiences in urban locales and reported that a variety of personally important places reflected people's evolving identities and provided opportunities for introspection and self-reflection. Manzo found that places where important life experiences had occurred for interviewees emerged as transitional markers and bridges to the past. Place relationships also were characterized as a process in which meanings developed incrementally. In a relationship metaphor, the concept of place integrates the self, the physical setting, other people (Gustafson, 2001), the interactions among these, and the subsequent meanings that accumulate at various stages in the relationship.

Our study contributes a research approach based on understanding meanings relevant to the quality of the visitor experience. The strength of a meaning-based approach is that it allows social science researchers to highlight the importance of deep emotional bonds and place meanings that have been understated in studies that use a commodity metaphor (Borrie & Birzell, 2001; Fournier, 1991; Mick & Buhl, 1992).

Guiding Research Assumptions

Adopting a relationship metaphor has certain methodological implications. This study built on an approach to science that views all experiences, events, and phenomena as interpreted by people and groups. Production of knowledge is an act of interpretation for the purpose of understanding (Kincheloe, 2003). In-depth interviews conducted within an interpretive paradigm have been shown to be effective for capturing lived and dynamic experiences as these unfold in leisure settings (Kyle & Chick, 2004; Patterson et al., 1998; Patterson & Williams, 2002). The interview analysis described in this article focused on contextual understanding, which inevitability brings the researchers' professional and cultural perspectives into the interpretation process (Madill, Jordan, & Shirley, 2000) to provide a "bridge between researchers and participants and a valuable analytic resource" (p. 10). This process enabled researchers and subjects to co-construct an understanding of the phenomenon under study (Hirschman, 1986).

The study methodology was guided by three additional assumptions. First, people are understood as intertwined with and embedded in their surroundings, which makes the study of experiences in isolation from particular contexts inappropriate (Valle, King, & Halling, 1989). Second, recreation is defined as "an emergent experience motivated by the not very well-defined goal of acquiring stories that ultimately enrich one's life" (Patterson et al., 1998, p. 423). Sharing these stories at a later time allows people to re-create and affirm identities and relationships relevant to RMNP (Kyle & Chick, 2004; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983). Third, visitors co-create experiences through impromptu interactions with companions and the setting (Altman & Rogoff, 1987; McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998; Stokols & Shumaker, 1981).

We present an interpretive analysis of interviews with park visitors to understand how their interactions with the setting and their fellow visitors contributed to their relationships with RMNP. The interpretation is not intended to represent all park visitors' relationships to place or individual differences in degree of place bonding in the population. Rather, we illustrate the relationships and experiences that were possible for visitors to have with RMNP (Patterson & Williams, 2002; Patterson et al., 1998).

Study Area

Rocky Mountain National Park, established in 1915, is located in northcentral Colorado, encompassing large expanses of alpine tundra and one 100-plus summits that rise over 12,000 feet above sea level. Popular recreation activities include hiking, scenic driving/viewing, and photography (Brooks & Titre, 2003). Visitors also participate in picnicking, wildlife viewing, developed and backcountry camping, rock climbing, fishing, and horseback riding. Many hiking trail corridors follow drainages and lead to over 150 alpine lakes, which offer pleasant ambience for family, intimate, or solitary picnics or meditation. More than 250 dispersed backcountry camps are available. Approximately 95% of RMNP was either designated or recommended federal wilderness. Park managers initiated this research in 2001 in RMNP as part of a suite of comparable studies that examined perceptions of wilderness character and backcountry experiences (cf. Brooks & Titre; Brooks, Titre, & Wallace, 2004; Wallace et al., 2004).

Methodology

The analyses presented in this paper are based on semi-structured interviews that were tape recorded (25–45 minutes in length) for day visitors and overnight backpackers on-site in the backcountry. The study period was May through August 2001. The interviews were guided using a flexible list of questions to focus the conversations. The complete interview

guide was published elsewhere and explored characteristics of the setting, favorite places, personal feelings while visiting, general relationships between people and wilderness, and opinions about protecting RMNP and wilderness in general (Brooks et al., 2004).

The taped interviews were transcribed verbatim. Each text was crosschecked against the original recordings. Texts were stored and indexed using the computer software program Atlas.ti version 4.1 for Windows (Muhr, 1997). This software package facilitated managing, indexing, extracting, and querying meaningful units of the lengthy texts.

Selection of Research Participants

Since on-site interviewing required that subjects be at a location "hanging out," field researchers selected participants for interviews at 25 popular backcountry attractions where subjects spent adequate time (e.g., waterfalls, alpine lakes, scenic viewing areas, associated trailheads, and backcountry camps). To systematically structure daily schedules for the interviewers, these locations were randomly sampled in combination with blocks of time. The morning period was 8:00 to 11:00 am, mid-day sampling from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, and the afternoon session was 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Logistical constraints occasionally dictated skipping a location and moving to an alternate (e.g., campground closure due to black bear activity). Once at a selected location, the researchers chose both day and overnight visitors to interview. Researchers selected participants to maximize diversity in age, ethnicity, and gender. We did not find substantial ethnic diversity. Numerous interviews were conducted. Twelve of these interviews were selected to maximize the diversity found in the larger sample and to illustrate variation in place identity and experience. Ages were 23–60 years for the seven male and five female Caucasian visitors selected for this analysis, and education, religion, and profession varied among the 12 interviewees (Brooks, 2003). Most interviewees lived in Colorado and had previously visited RMNP.

The Interpretive Analysis

Interviews were conducted as interactive conversations between speakers and not as standardized sets of stimuli and responses (Mishler, 1986). Participants were probed about their personal, social, and historical connections to RMNP as a means to reveal experiences, stories, and their own understandings of self in place (Kvale, 1983). The interview guide facilitated conversation, while the interviewer guided participants to talk about the research topics and clarify ambiguities without directly asking participants about specific meanings (Patterson et al., 1998). The interviews evoked self-presentations of specific identities relative to RMNP (Mick & Buhl, 1992; Mishler, 1986; Patterson & Williams, 2002) and therefore, were highly context dependent (Mishler, 1979).

In the first stage of the interpretation reported by Brooks (2003) and Brooks et al. (2004), a comprehensive hermeneutical analysis (Gadamer, 1989; Patterson, 1993; Patterson & Williams, 2002; Patterson et al., 1998) within each of the 12 transcripts was co-conducted by two of the authors. The purpose of the co-interpretations was to obtain completeness in meaning while allowing novel and emergent insights. The co-interpretation served as a type of triangulation between researchers, but the goal was not objective consensus or complete convergence in interpretation, but rather an integrated co-understanding of meaning.

The within-transcript interpretive process was guided by certain steps (Geertz, 1983; Patterson & Williams, 2002). First, we explicitly discussed our philosophical assumptions relevant to the phenomenon and human nature (Brooks, 2003). Second, we repeatedly read the 12 transcripts in their entirety to gain an initial understanding of each text. Next, we conducted a deeper exploration of the parts or pieces of meaning observed in single statements and phrases while simultaneously referencing our preliminary understanding of

the whole. Finally, we adjusted our understanding of entire texts based on the more detailed interpretation of the parts through iterative discussions.

The within-transcript interpretation was organized around how each interviewee expressed his or her identity in relation to their experiences at RMNP and their broader lives. This analysis laid the groundwork for the across-transcript analysis reported here. The purpose of applying a hermeneutic approach for studying relationship to place is to gain a philosophical understanding of the phenomenon as "an ontological state, not to prescribe a method of interpreting texts in a set fashion" (Arnold & Fischer, 1994, p. 66). In hermeneutics, the interview text under study reflects the contextualized personal expressions of an interviewee. Initially, the co-interpreters focused on the identities claimed by each interviewee and how he or she expressed identity in the transcripts. Examples of claimed identities included passive explorer, experienced outdoor person, and wilderness purist (Brooks, 2003).

The interpretive analysis reported here was conducted *across* the 12 transcripts to describe place meanings that went beyond the unique experience and identity of one visitor. Units of text that had been initially indexed and labeled during the comprehensive within-transcript analysis were queried across transcripts to identify overlap in experiences and stories and how these linked to what participants expressed about themselves in relation to RMNP.

Presentation and Discussion of Results

We found interrelated dimensions of relationship to place. The presentation of these dimensions was organized around three themes evident in both previous research and the interviews: time and experience accrued in RMNP contributed to place relationships, physical and social interaction in and with the setting allowed meanings to accumulate, and self-identity affirmation (i.e., an active reflective process of regulating one's sense of place identity) (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Korpela, 1989) included comparing oneself to other visitors.

The three primary organizing themes were characterized by sub-dimensions (Table 1) that emerged from the across-transcript analysis. Interviewees often expressed more than one sub-dimension of relationship to place together in single interview excerpts. The three

TABLE 1 Organizing Themes with Emergent Dimensions Describing how Place Relationships Develop

Primary themes	Emergent sub-dimensions
Time and experience in place (Extent of contact)	Making return visits
	Gaining knowledge/familiarity/lessons learned
	Benchmarks—symbols of critical life stages
Amount of physical and social interaction with and in place	Being in and engaging with setting and companions
	Extended stays
	Ritualized behaviors
	Family history in outdoors
	Childhood socialization/informal training and social learning
Self-identity affirmation	Introspection/self-reflection/recognition of self-change
	Social comparison with other visitors
	Stewardship/concern/respect for place

main themes were *not* found to be mutually exclusive and encompassed at least two types of experience: (a) the amount and types of experiences and (b) emotional and psychological interpretations of experience (Schreyer, Lime, & Williams, 1984). The interrelatedness of the themes implied that these visitors had unified holistic place relationships making reduction to a typology of independent dimensions unadvisable (Steel, 2000). For clarity, we used the primary themes and sub-dimensions, which are not independent, to organize the analysis and outline the discussion. We present quotes throughout this results section to illustrate evidence of the themes and sub-dimensions and to provide a story-like account of relationship to place in the visitors' own words. All interviewee names are pseudonyms.

Time and Experience in Place

Accumulated recreation experiences conceptualized as a person's history of visiting a place or the frequency of trips have been a useful indicator of place bonding (Hammitt, Backlund, & Bixler, 2004). Previous studies measuring visitors' past experience in wildland settings demonstrated positive statistical relationships between place bonding and past experience or extent of contact (Moore & Graefe, 1994; Moore & Scott, 2003; Wallace et al., 2004; Williams & Vaske, 2003; Williams et al., 1992). Interrelated sub-dimensions emerged that helped to understand how past experience contributed to the development of place relationships including: (a) making return visits; (b) gaining knowledge, familiarity, and lessons learned; and (c) experiencing symbolic benchmarks (see Table 1).

A person may develop a sense of place (Williams & Stewart, 1998) or an attachment orientation (Mitchell, Force, Carroll, & McLaughlin, 1993) over time by making return visits to RMNP. Return visits allowed for memories and interpretations of multiple experiences, both social and physical, to incrementally accrue. For example, Sam, a resident of a nearby city who had been to RMNP many times, stated:

> ... Earlier today I was hiking with my family and some friends of our family, and ... the last time they were out here their daughter was nine months old and now she is seven, and we are hiking the same trails and she is seeing this stuff again, ... it is neat to see that.... so as I've grown older, I've seen it change and get developed and I've seen a lot of growth here... I just hope to be able to bring my kids up here someday and show them what I saw... there is something special about a dad passing that on to his son or daughter...

Making return visits allowed for personal growth in one's place relationship. As visitors gained knowledge about and became more familiar with RMNP, their place relationships evolved as experience increased, and fear, ignorance, or lack of preparedness were replaced with familiarity, intimacy, and preparedness. Jane explained that during earlier visits to RMNP she felt fearful at times:

> ... [Y]ears ago when I first started coming to [RMNP], [my feelings] included a lot more petrified and terrified and overwhelmed. I remember the first time having to cross a snowfield I thought I was just going to freak out ...

The stockpile of experiences for long-time returning visitors included a mix of positive, negative, and even humbling or scary interactions with RMNP. Previous research documented that white-water rafters (Arnould & Price, 1993), hikers (Chhetri, Arrowsmith, & Jackson, 2004), canoeists (Patterson et al., 1998), black-water cave rafters (McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998), and sojourners to the Polar Regions (Steel, 2000) reported a range of

experiences that were challenging, apprehensive, nerve-wracking, frightening, impelling, or socially interactive. Kim recounted a story of a humbling experience and a lesson learned:

> ... I could pick a place in this park, and I could think of an experience that's been good or scary... I guess probably one of the most vivid memories, and ones that still stick with me ... are those ... that were really frightening, I guess (laughs). The ones that really make you realize how small you are compared to the Earth. Like one day I went and hiked up Flat Top [peak]... I wasn't equipped well enough, and I ended up coming down, falling in a waterfall, losing my jacket, my car keys, and all my food, and my lighter, and it was getting dark, and I had to cross the river, scurry across a log, and I was shaking so bad. Finally got down, made it down before total dark ... hitched a ride down. Finally made it back into town, all bloody and scraped up, going 'Oh my gosh I am so small.' You know and I was getting kind of cocky about being hot stuff, like 'I can do it' (laughs).... *you felt like you were brought down a couple notches?* Oh yeah, like a hundred (laughs).

Experiences in wildlands that are important to identity and relationship to place may not always be positive or healthy (Haggard & Williams, 1991). In the extreme case of a war battlefield or memorial park, visitors return to remember personal sacrifices of family, friends, and ancestors. Both positive and negative life events in wildland settings can bring people back to those places. Accounting for both over the life course is important in studies of place meanings and place relationships (Manzo, 2003, 2005).

Visitors may return to certain places because they symbolize critical benchmarks or milestones in life (Manzo, 2003; 2005) such as a marriage, a spiritual awakening, or the transition of a child into adolescence. Jane, a resident of a nearby city and overnight backpacker visiting with her husband and brother, told about a day hike that she experienced after her wedding ceremony in RMNP.

> ... [T]he day after our wedding we—probably the biggest hike I've ever been on—probably 16 or 17 people from our wedding party went up as far as Mills Lake, and lunched by the lake. It was pretty neat. Both of our dads were there, some of our cousins, a lot of our friends... It was great to bring some people who hadn't really been up here before. A big part of the sort of spiritual aspect of the ceremony itself was for us to commit ourselves to the state of marriedness and to the rootedness of being married in this particular place on the land... being rather broadly Rocky Mountain National Park... But, then actually to... bring those people with us, and show them "this is what we are talking about." And not just get the post card view, which we got at the wedding site, but to say now we're going to walk in it and run into the possibility of rain and get sore feet and we are going to get tired and just the whole experience... So yeah, I have a very big spiritual tie to that area and also just great conversations that have happened over the years [on] different hikes...

Jane related the story of the wedding party hike as a metaphor for her marriage—a benchmark in her life. On the surface, Jane talked about close social ties, conversations over the years, and physical interactions, but in a deeper sense, she compared the realities and commitment involved with marriage to the difficult physical realities of a backcountry experience like getting sore feet and being out in the rain. Returning to the place enabled Jane to symbolically and emotionally recommit to her marriage and family, which seemed to both strengthen existing and create new place and interpersonal meanings that transferred

to her daily life (Brooks et al., 2004; Pohl, Borrie, & Patterson, 2000) beyond the one-time experience of a wedding ceremony with a pleasing scenic backdrop.

Arnould and Price (1993) studied multi-day white-water rafting and camping trips and found that participants realized satisfaction through an interactive and unified experience composed of harmony with nature, personal growth, and social bonding among individual participants. Likewise, Jane's story provided an example of the unified holistic or gestalt nature of people-place relationships (Brooks et al., 2004; Hirschman, 1986; Kyle & Chick, 2004; Malm, 1993; Patterson, 1993; Steel, 2000), especially for long-time visitors for whom life goals, the self, family, friends, and RMNP become inseparable. Strong connections and rootedness in a place were associated with emotional and cognitive bonds, social relationships, and temporal aspects (e.g., Low & Altman, 1992). For Jane, these dimensions integrated into a satisfying relationship with RMNP and a general sense of well-being. Some wildland place relationships may be best conceptualized as the incremental accumulation of meanings and not as predictable outcomes of single visits.

Physical and Social Interactions in Place

Long-term relationships with RMNP seemed to be fostered by physical and social interactions in the setting. Interrelated sub-dimensions of this theme emerged that helped to understand how these interactions contributed to the development of place relationships including: (a) being at and engaging with a place and one's companions, (b) extended stays, (c) ritualized behaviors, (d) family history in the outdoors, (e) childhood socialization, and (f) informal training and social leaning (see Table 1).

Some park visitors believe that people can be part of wildland settings, and a connection to a place often requires going to and engaging with the setting and companions. Heidi, a local resident visiting for the day with a church group, explained that people must go to the backcountry to develop connections.

> *How would you describe the relationship between people and wilderness?* I think that varies. I think there's a population that knows that wilderness is essential to their well-being, and there's a part of the population that doesn't know that. To those who know that, it's essential. But I think there are a lot of people who are apathetic to it because it's not a part of their experience.

Likewise Kim stated:

> ... [It] depends on the people (laughs). I mean there's some people, like me—most of the people that I know—that really appreciate and find it a gift ... to be able to go out and populate these places. ... *So there are different relationships?* Yeah, it really depends on the person, and I think it also depends on how much they've had to interact with [a wildland place].

Mike agreed that interacting with a wildland place is essential for building understanding:

> It depends [on] the area. Everybody's actually part of the wilderness, some part or another ... I think you have that understanding of the wilderness once you go to it. ... you have to get connected with it a little bit, to understand. ... *It's something that you can't really learn about by reading books or watching television?* No. Can't watch TV... that's for sure—never really know 'til you come out and experience [for] yourself ...

Place relationships involve people, their interactive experiences in places, and the accumulation of place meanings over time. A more complete understanding of the process of developing a relationship to place required closer examination of the nature of these physical and social interactions.

Similar to important interpersonal relationships (Hinde, 1995; Kyle & Chick, 2004; Steel, 2000) and product brands (Fournier, 1998; Mick & Buhl, 1992), place relationships were found to be reciprocal in nature, suggesting that the experience of the setting was interactive (Greider & Garkovich, 1994; Gustafson, 2001; Manzo, 2003, 2005; Milligan, 1998). Visitors hiking in wildlands tend to explore the wildness, ruggedness, and uniqueness of the place to experience complexities and novel challenges (Brooks & Titre, 2003; Chhetri et al., 2004; Wallace et al., 2004). Visitors and their companions sometimes interacted with the backcountry setting in physically challenging and humbling ways. In the preceding section, Kim shared a personal story about falling down a mountainside in which physical interactions with the setting were unexpected and humbling.

Other types of interactions with setting attributes were observed during field work. For example, visitors shooed, fed, photographed, touched, and even tried to capture wildlife (Brooks & Titre, 2003). People often made physical contact with attributes other than wildlife. Adolescent visitors, for example, were observed digging in the soil with sticks, throwing stones into lakes, climbing in trees and rocks, and dipping fingers and toes into streams. Physically interactive behaviors with the setting seemed to shape visitors' knowledge and memories of places (Gustafson, 2001). How these behaviors affect the accumulation of place meanings and the development of a sense of place for visitors warrants further research.

Visitors often explored away from main trails and attractions. Wallace et al. (2004) reported that 20% of the visitors surveyed had hiked off a designated trail during a visit to RMNP. These respondents wrote about observing or discovering special or unique attributes and phenomena while exploring. For example, one respondent said that she went looking for the remains of an old cabin but without success. Another went off-trail to summit a backcountry peak and found for the first time deer antler velvet, and she ate ripe wild raspberries. Another visitor saw two white tail ptarmigans in autumn plumage while on a cross-country fishing excursion. Two friends reported that they took "the road less traveled" and one of the two "got hot and decided to go skinny-dipping in a mountain lake."

RMNP and other protected areas have cross-country travel zones or primitive areas that may be used by some visitors to consciously create place meanings. Jane explained that exploring places away from designated trails was an important part of her social and physical experience:

> ... a lot of places that I really couldn't name that are sort of off-trail ... finding our own sort of routes. [We] tend to hike with a photographer. We just go off when we go looking for places that interest us, and not necessarily [on trail]—actually done very few peaks and stuff. When I think of wilderness, it's not necessarily a matter of remoteness, really sometimes almost what we bring to the experience. Soon as you get off the trail no matter how close the trail might be it feels more wilderness-like. Walking unguided ... [with] maybe a topo [graphic] map and a sense of where you are, but basically not following the sort of point A to point B version of doing things. But, just getting out into it ... and it doesn't necessarily have to be all that remote to be wilderness.

The interviews captured various on-site social interactions that may help visitors to create and assign social meanings at RMNP. For example, Jon mentioned talking with

his companions and how meanings about backcountry and wilderness can be created in conversations:

> And there always tends to be—I guess you can call it an activity. I mean it seems like every time whether I'm by myself or whether I'm with a group we get into discussions about value of wilderness and the spin off's that have to do with the larger human civilization and the directions that we are going. And these kinds of places often become philosophical—these places become kind of catalysts for those philosophical discussions.

The place seemed to hold a type of meaning for Jon that served to stimulate conversations about the perceived human-nature relationship in society. Discussing the symbolic role of RMNP in shaping societal values of wilderness was an important part of the experience for Jon and seemed to affect how he identified with and related to this place in ways that were not well understood.

Doing extended overnight trips into backcountry was an important part of place relationship and group socialization processes. Jon continued:

> . . . I know one of the states of mind that I like to get into when I'm in the wilderness and takes two or three days to do that . . . is to remember that you are not just kind of out camping that you're living outdoors. And it's kind of immersing yourself in [the] fact that you're living outdoors . . . you deal with whatever comes whether its great weather or bad weather or physical issues that you may be dealing with, things like that, that's part of the challenge . . . once you immerse yourself in it, you realize that you become less and less separate from it. You adapt and adjust to whatever the physical conditions are of the place. I like to think that people come out of the wilderness understanding that as a species we're totally inseparable of course from the physical environment.

Being in a wildland backcountry setting for multiple days and nights physically situated visitors and their companions in a place where they are forced to become intimately aware of the physical conditions and cycles operating at RMNP such as weather patterns, elevation differences, and temperature changes. These shared experiences and challenges seemed to expand their knowledge about how to interact with the setting. Extended trips provided unique social situations and interactions that might never have occurred in everyday urban or suburban contexts, such as working together outside a modern kitchen to prepare meals, procuring and treating drinking water, or setting and breaking camp. Previous research on extended white-water rafting excursions demonstrated that groups of rafters developed a strong sense of community through team work and shared experiences (Arnould & Price, 1993). In a study of environmental relationships in rugged regions of the Arctic and Antarctic, Steel (2000) reported stronger emotional bonds with place for polar sojourners who had repeatedly stayed at remote field camps for extended periods than for those individuals who had stayed at the base camp stations that offered modern comforts and facilities.

Although off-trail exploration and challenge was important to some, visitors did not necessarily have to summit peaks, bushwhack into isolated wilderness, or negotiate dangerous rapids to develop committed relationships with a wildland. Visiting more accessible backcountry settings for a day or two every few years with family to picnic and take photographs created important memories regarding stages in family history for Julie, just like chapters in a book. She described how return trips involved certain rituals that created storied meanings for her family:

> ...just walking in here, smelling the pine ...you just immediately think of the maybe five or six times you've been there before. *What kind of feeling does that evoke for you?* Good memories, a sense of stress-free, going back to ...usually good memories—you know, our kids are up the hill a little farther and the last time we were here they were—maybe 10 years ago, and you take pictures in the same spot and then you've got these little steps that they grew up in ...and then you go home and put it together and create stories ...

Having a relationship with a place often meant that the place was incorporated into one's broader life or culture. Returning to backcountry settings for leisure and recreation with familiar people can make the experience of a place part of a person's broader life. The place became associated with memories of and positive interactions with the visitor's family, friends, and significant others (Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999; Gustafson, 2001; Kyle & Chick, 2004).

Family history in the outdoors provided the time, rituals, and social interactions necessary for the development of relationships to place and for strengthening interpersonal relationships. Pete, a long-time visitor staying at his family's vacation cottage, said that extended stays had played an important role in shaping his family's ongoing relationship with wildlands:

> ...As long as you get farther into the wilderness areas, there's a real sense of self-esteem achieved, I think, when you go and live off the land for a number of days or even a weekend. I mean when—I had a younger family—we would spend ten days hiking in national parks around New England and the northern Midwest and Arizona. My children now—they love it, now they take their children... going around the country kayaking and tent camping and backpacking...

Other types of interactions with companions in RMNP included informal teaching, learning, and socialization of children to develop outdoor skills and to teach behaviors that were thought to be appropriate in the setting. Sam explained:

> ...I just hope to be able to bring my kids up here someday and show them what I saw ...there is something special about a Dad passing that on ...on the trail we were teaching [the girls] to use their "wilderness voice," and be quiet and listen. What is that sound? You know what that sound is, it's water falling down, we are getting closer because it is getting louder, so that develops the kid's logical skills and reasoning skills. ...maybe the selfish hope is to develop their outdoor wilderness skills, camping skills, and that kind of stuff ...

Removed from the distractions of everyday life, backcountry visitors strengthen interpersonal relationships (Pohl et al., 2000). Sam shared how he associated RMNP with memories of "special times" spent with his father:

> ...some special times that I've had with my Father—just he and I on top of a mountain having a conversation ...not a lot of people get to do that with their parents. People can have kind of strained relationships, and boy I'll tell you when you're walking up a 14,000 foot mountain, the world's problems seem pretty small, and you can sort of drop the walls and let the bullshit go and just have a talk, and that's something that I've experienced.

Sam recounted how the experience of hiking a mountain together fostered an openness between him and his father that otherwise might not have developed, and this experience seemed to be a benchmark in their relationship. As meaningful interactions between visitors in backcountry parks continue over time, boundaries between self-identities and place identities may blur. Interpersonal relationships, place relationships, and the benefits to society realized from wildland recreation and leisure can become intertwined. For some visitors, these relations and benefits became increasingly difficult to isolate as bonds with the place developed and strengthened into unified and committed relationships.

Self-Identity Affirmation

Creating place meanings by interacting with the setting and one's companions implied that actual behaviors and thoughts were directed toward knowing the self in relation to place. Sarbin (1983) stated, "acts directed toward locating oneself in the geographical ecology" (p. 338) are the means by which people construct place identities. Korpela (1989) defined place identity to consist of "cognitions of those physical settings ... in or with which an individual, consciously or unconsciously, regulates his [sic] experience of maintaining his sense of self" (p. 245). Proshansky et al. (1983) put forth that "place identity is developed by thinking and talking about places through a process of distancing which allows for reflection and appreciation of places" (p. 61). Seeking self-definition and self-understanding has been linked to how people produce and maintain happiness in wildland places (Haggard & Williams, 1991, 1992; Scherl, 1989).

Telling stories about experiences and pondering one's position in a place relative to others can contribute to identity and place relationship. Self-identity affirmation became evident when visitors talked about observing the behaviors of other visitors and reflecting how their behaviors and identities had evolved and changed (see Table 1). Some interviewees' current relationships with RMNP seemed to be informed by remembering past feelings and interactions at RMNP and other wildlands.

As relationships with RMNP developed, some interviewees talked about becoming more concerned about behaving appropriately, protecting the place, and noticing other visitors who they felt were less concerned about the place. Jacob and Schreyer (1980) alluded to this phenomenon as the development of a sense of possession for a recreation place. Some interviewees seemed to be keenly aware of the presence and the actions of nearby visitors. Kim described witnessing behaviors that she thought were inappropriate:

> ... I find the things people do are ridiculous to me. *Could you give me an example of some of these ridiculous behaviors?* (Hearty laugh) Oh sure. Okay, a couple days ago, we're hiking up the trail and the sky is dark, I mean it's going to rain, you can tell. It's coming down the valley and it's going to rain, and here come a group of about fifteen people walking by, and all they have are little white paper lunch bags with their lunches. And they're about two miles from the trailhead, and that's all they have. And you just know that they're just going to get dumped on, and cold and sick, and you just have to go, "Well, okay, maybe they'll figure it out" ... hiking with their purses, that just cracks me up.

Some interviewees seemed to compare their behaviors to those of other visitors who they perceived as being at an earlier stage in their place relationship, as having no relationship, or at best a dysfunctional relationship. Jack who had been backpacking for several days described behaviors of other visitors at RMNP as a reminder of how he has changed with experience and learning:

> ... I think of all the carvings in trees ... all the cigarettes, all the gum, the things that—my pockets are full when I leave here everyday with litter I pick up ... It's not that they don't like it ... it's ignorance, is what it is, and I was there too once ... [Caring for the place] comes with experiencing it, you become—a love for it or respect for it, just like people, you go into a relationship with it ... one thing is respecting this place more ... I hate seeing the people in their Velcro shoes, or even their polo shirts, and they're hiking into this place. I'm like, "Wow, I just wish they learned more about it before they did it." But, hopefully by wearing those Velcro shoes they realize they need to change that a little bit next time, and that's part of the growing experience. I sure didn't know what to expect here, luckily I'm with someone who did, and they helped us ... and when we see other hikers on a trail in front of us, we quit talking because you don't want to disrupt their experience ... that comes from the NOLS training my buddy has ... it's rubbing off on us.

Some interviewees were reminded of themselves during different stages in their lives. Pete illustrated:

> Oh we absolutely know how devastating motorized vehicles can be. I have to admit I used to ride dirt bikes [during my] younger years up in national forest in Wisconsin. I wouldn't do that now; my son used to build and operate all terrain vehicles, he doesn't do that now. I think it has to be limited to particular activities that minimally impact what we have here ... It took me a long time to realize how little replacement growth occurs at these higher elevations. You have to understand that when you start getting off the trails and damaging this environment—you know how fragile it is—It's not going to grow back like California in two years after the fire—you have green again. That doesn't happen. In 1978 you're up here and you see the damage that the fire did, and you barely have overgrowth up here, in all those years. ... I think it's got to be limited. There has to be rules; there has to be self-discipline. You bring out what you take in, you keep it to cooking stoves, and I would not care to see open fires anywhere ...

This type of introspection involved a sense of how stewardship behaviors and desires to protect wildlands had changed over time for these visitors. Some interviewees were involved in active self-definition, perhaps to confirm place identities and place relationships. For some, this process included reflecting on what they saw others doing in the setting.

Visitors' relationships with RMNP included nurturing love and respect similar to when committed partnerships are forged between people. Respect for a wildland setting and a relationship with it was seen in concerns expressed over its management and in overt behaviors such as picking up litter or practicing low impact camping. How such behaviors affect visitors' relationships to place deserves further study.

Implications and Conclusions

Rocky Mountain National Park is a place where "meanings, activities, and a specific landscape are all implicated and enfolded by each other" (Relph, 1993, p. 37). We applied a relationship metaphor to understand and organize a portion of this complexity as an alternative to the consumer metaphor. Studying how relationships with wildlands developed and how these relationships transferred to everyday life provided insights for scholars about place and leisure. The main theoretical premise of this article was that long-time visitors may value their committed and often life-long relationships with RMNP more than the

attributes of the place in isolation. Although many attributes of this park may be found in similar settings across the Rocky Mountains, the committed relationships with RMNP described in this article are valued by these visitors because they are specific to RMNP and may *not* necessarily transfer to other places with similar conditions and attributes like Glacier or Yellowstone National Parks.

Further research is needed to understand how long-term place relationships affect wildland visitors' lives. Fournier (1998) demonstrated that once a relationship to a product is established for a consumer, additional meanings of the product and an array of possible benefits may be extended into daily life. In this study, we suggested that well-established relationships with RMNP enabled the ongoing creation of place meanings and the subsequent strengthening of place relationships with benefits extending into other life domains.

Another researchable premise based on the relationship metaphor described here and in Fournier's (1998) study is that once a relationship with a specific place becomes deeply established, this relationship may become inseparable from the person's relationship with or sense of value of the concept of wilderness. Future researchers might ask about the differences between committed relationships with specific wildlands and those with the wilderness concept in general. Researchers should consider examining how meaning is transferred across these domains of environmental scale.

A relationship metaphor has implications for visitor satisfaction models. Marketing researchers examining satisfaction with the consumption experience have been critical of the comparative standards paradigm (Arnould & Price, 1993; Fournier & Mick, 1999; Mick & Buhl, 1992; Tse, Nicosia & Wilton, 1990). The comparative standards model frames visitor experience as commodity consumption, where visitors have stable preconsumption expectations about an experience in their minds. A one-time confirmation or disconfirmation of these expectations is the basis for judging visitor satisfaction. Perhaps the comparative standards approach does not accurately or completely represent visitor experience because it has largely "ignored or understated the roles of meaning and emotion in satisfaction" (Fournier & Mick, 1995, p. 15). When wildlands are predominantly defined as sets of attributes that provide one-time outcomes, the broader meanings that are incrementally created and attributed to places and the holistic nature of satisfaction are overlooked (Patterson et al., 1998). As place meanings accumulate, relationships of quality with RMNP can develop that provide aspects of satisfaction that are difficult to explain using the comparative standards approach.

Fournier and Mick (1999) concluded that consumer satisfaction often goes beyond the one-time purchase of a product to include (a) an active dynamic process, (b) a social dimension, (c) meanings and emotions, and (d) broader quality of life aspects. In this study, comparable dimensions of experience emerged, suggesting that researchers consider the quality of the visitor experience in terms of enhancing long-term place-specific relationships to compliment *and* to expand traditional satisfaction research.

Applying a relationship metaphor has methodological implications. This article described place relationships as dynamic phenomenon (Manzo 2003; 2005). Fluctuation in one's place identity and place relationship both in the short term and over the life course suggests a need for longitudinal study designs that include comprehensive interview narratives (Kyle & Chick, 2004) to capture the element of time inherent in the relationship to place process.

Place relationships are often unique to individuals and therefore may be best understood in interview narrative form rather than operationalized, measured, and analyzed as individual or group differences in intensity of place attachment (Sarbin, 1983). This suggestion poses a challenge for integration with technical natural resource management that values statistical generalizability and replication of results. Despite challenges, continued

efforts to understand the meanings of wildland places for people and society promises to provide a better understanding of how lasting place relationships affect immediate experiences at a given time, better account for the dynamic multidimensional process described in this article, help land managers protect a diversity of visitor experiences, and improve the long-term quality of place relationships.

A relationship framework of wildland experience has implications for visitor management. The ability to recount place relationships is an essential part of the outdoor leisure experience. Patterson et al. (1998) found that reliving the experience of a wilderness canoe run by sharing stories after the trip at the landing was a distinct and positive aspect of the trip even if the stories were about negative experiences. As people talk about their relationships with wildlands, these relationships are further formed and realized. Park rangers who guide hikes and those who guide commercial groups should allow time for visitors and groups to relive their experiences through storytelling. Staff working at outdoor recreation areas should consider listening to and discussing with visitors the stories and conversations that they hear at trailheads, visitor centers, and campgrounds to learn more about how the wildland experience relates to visitors' lives and to better understand visitors' place relationships.

We recommend directly incorporating the stories of long-time committed visitors into education and stewardship programs. Perhaps long-time committed visitors should be involved in some aspects of decision-making as well. These informants feel strongly and would seem more interested in sharing their insights and opinions related to park management in focus group interviews, for example.

This study was conducted in the spirit of exploration to build on the relatively limited number of studies that have previously examined how people develop committed relationships with places. This study then contributes to an important "need to reconsider concepts and methods premised upon leisure as an enduring still-life photograph" (Stewart, 1998, p. 399). We acknowledge the importance of a plurality of models and methods for studying visitor experiences (Borrie & Birzell, 2001) and suggest that meaning-based (Fournier, 1991) and relationship-oriented frameworks (Fournier, 1998) account well for emergent experiences and subjective place meanings over time. How place relationships contribute to well-being and "good" experiences or a tolerance for "bad" experiences for visitors should continue to be studied to gain a more complete understanding of the quality of the visitor experience.

Visitors' relationships with outdoor areas can reflect broader satisfactions with social life (Fournier & Mick, 1999), broader socio-cultural and spiritual connections (Fredrickson & Anderson, 1999; Hay, 1998; Thompson, Pollio, & Locander, 1994), and evolving place identities (Manzo, 2003, 2005). Studying how these phenomena happen is a valid research topic for scholars of leisure and outdoor recreation and informative for guiding place-specific education and visitor management. We recommend employing a relationship metaphor to study visitor experience and satisfaction to gain a more complete understanding of what wildland places contribute to the lives of visitors and their companions.

References

Altman, I. & Rogoff, B. (1987). Worldviews in psychology: Trait, interactional, organismic, and transactional perspectives. In D. Stokols & I. Altman (Eds.), *Handbook of Environmental Psychology Vol. I* (pp. 7–40). New York: Wiley.

Arnold, S. J. & Fischer, E. (1994). Hermeneutics and consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research, 21*, 55–70.

Arnould, E. J. & Price, L. L. (1993). River magic: Extraordinary experience and the extended service encounter. *Journal of Consumer Research, 20*, 24–45.

Belk, R. W. (1992). Attachment to possessions. In I. Altman & S. M. Low (Eds.), *Human behavior and the environment: Advances in theory and research. Vol. 12: Place attachment* (pp. 37–62). New York: Plenum.

Borrie, W. T. & Birzell, R. M. (2001). Approaches to measuring quality of the wilderness experience. In W. A. Friedmund, & D. N. Cole (comps.), *Visitor use density and wilderness experience: proceedings* (pp. 29–38). Missoula, MT. Proceedings RMRS-P-20. Ogden, Utah: USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station.

Brooks, J. J. (2003). *Claimed identities, personal projects, and relationship to place: A hermeneutic interpretation of the Backcountry/Wilderness experience at Rocky Mountain National Park.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO.

Brooks, J. J. & Titre, J. P. (2003). *A multiple method assessment of recreation impacts at Rocky Mountain National Park.* Final Report to the National Park Service. Fort Collins, CO: Colorado State University.

Brooks, J. J., Titre, J. P., & Wallace, G. N. (2004). What does it mean to visit Rocky Mountain Park? Visitors tell their stories in Colorado. In I. Camarda, M. J. Manfredo, T. L. Teel, & F. Mulas (Eds.), *Global challenges of Parks and Protected Areas Management: Proceedings of the Ninth International Symposium on Society and Resource Management* (pp. 87–109). Sassari, Italy: Carlo Delfino Editore.

Chhetri, P., Arrowsmith, C., & Jackson, M. (2004). Determining hiking experiences in nature-based tourist destinations. *Tourism Management, 25*, 31–43.

Fournier, S. (1991). A meaning-based framework for the study of consumer-object relations. *Advances in Consumer Research, 18*, 736–742.

Fournier, S. (1998). Consumers and their brands: Developing relationship theory in consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research, 24*, 343–373.

Fournier, S. & Mick, D. G. (1999). Rediscovering satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing, 63*, 5–23.

Fredrickson, L. M., & Anderson D. H. (1999). A qualitative exploration of the wilderness experience as a source of spiritual inspiration. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 19*, 21–39.

Gadamer, H. G. (1989). *Truth and method.* (rev. ed). New York: Crossroad.

Geertz, C. (1983). *Local knowledge: Further essays in interpretive anthropology.* New York: Basic Books.

Greider, T. & Garkovich, L. (1994). Landscapes: The social construction of nature and the environment. *Rural Sociology, 59*, 1–24.

Gustafson, P. (2001). Meanings of place: Everyday experiences and theoretical conceptualizations. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 21*, 5–16.

Haggard, L. M. & Williams, D. R. (1991). Self-identity benefits of leisure activities. In B. L. Driver, P. J. Brown, & G. L. Peterson (Eds.), *Benefits of leisure* (pp. 103–119). State College, PA: Venture.

Haggard, L. M. & Williams, D. R. (1992). Identity affirmation through leisure activities: Leisure symbols of the self. *Journal of Leisure Research, 24*, 1–18.

Hammitt, W. E., Backlund, E. A., & Bixler, R. D. (2004). Experience use history, place bonding and resource substitution of trout anglers during recreation engagements. *Journal of Leisure Research, 36*, 356–378.

Hay, R. (1998). Sense of place in developmental context. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 18*, 5–29.

Hinde, R. A. (1995). A suggested structure for a science of relationships. *Personal Relationships, 2*, 1–15.

Hirschman, E. C. (1986). Humanistic inquiry in marketing research: Philosophy, method, and criteria. *Journal of Marketing Research, 23*, 237–249.

Hirschman, E. & Holbrook, M. (1982). Hedonic consumption: Emerging concepts, methods, and propositions. *Journal of Marketing, 46*, 92–101.

Jacob, G. R. & Schreyer, R. (1980). Conflict in outdoor recreation: A theoretical perspective. *Journal of Leisure Research, 12*, 368–380.

Jorgensen, B. S. & Stedman, R. C. (2001). Sense of place as an attitude: Lakeshore owners attitudes toward their properties. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 21*, 233–248.

Kaltenborn, B. P. & Williams, D. R. (2002). The meaning of place: Attachments to Femundsmarka National Park, Norway, among tourists and locals. *Norwegian Journal of Geography, 56*, 189-198.

Kincheloe, J. L. (2003). *Teachers as researchers: Qualitative inquiry as a path to empowerment*. London: Routledge Falmer.

Korpela, K. M. (1989). Place-identity as a product of environmental self-regulation. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 9*, 241–256.

Kvale, S. (1983). The qualitative research interview: A phenomenological and hermeneutical mode of understanding. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology, 14*, 171–196.

Kyle, G. T., Absher, J. D., & Graefe, A. R. (2003). The moderating role of place attachment on the relationship between attitudes toward fees and spending preferences. *Leisure Sciences, 25*, 33–50.

Kyle, G. & Chick, G. (2004). Enduring leisure involvement: The importance of personal relationships. *Leisure Studies, 23*, 243–266.

Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1982). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Low, S. M. & Altman, I. (1992). Place attachment: A conceptual inquiry. In I. Altman & S. M. Low (Eds.), *Human behavior and the environment: Advances in theory and research. Vol. 12: Place attachment* (pp. 1–12). New York: Plenum.

Madill, A., Jordan, A., & Shirley, C. (2000). Objectivity and reliability in qualitative analysis: Realist, contextualist and radical constructionist epistemologies. *British Journal of Psychology, 91*, 1–20.

Malm, L. (1993). The eclipse of meaning in cognitive psychology: Implications for humanistic psychology. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 33*, 67–87.

Manzo, L. C. (2003). Beyond house and haven: Toward a revisioning of emotional relationships with places. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 23*, 47–61.

Manzo, L. C. (2005). For better or worse: Exploring multiple dimensions of place meaning. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 25*, 67–86.

McIntyre, N. & Roggenbuck, J. W. (1998). Nature/person transactions during an outdoor adventure experience: A multi-phasic analysis. *Journal of Leisure Research, 30*, 401–422.

Mick, D. G. & Buhl, C. (1992). A meaning-based model of advertising experiences. *Journal of Consumer Research, 19*, 317–338.

Milligan, M. J. (1998). Interactional past and potential: The social construction of place attachment. *Symbolic Interaction, 21*, 1–33.

Mishler, E. G. (1979). Meaning in context: Is there any other kind? *Harvard Educational Review, 40*, 1–19.

Mishler, E. G. (1986). *Research interviewing: Context and narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mitchell, M. Y., Force, J. E., Carroll, M. S., & McLaughlin, W. J. (1993). Forest places of the heart: Incorporating special spaces into public management. *Journal of Forestry, 91*, 32–37.

Moore, R. L. & Graefe, A. R. (1994). Attachments to recreation settings: The case of rail-trail users. *Leisure Sciences, 16*, 17–31.

Moore, R. L. & Scott, D. (2003). Place attachment and context: Comparing a park with a trail within. *Forest Science, 49*, 877–884.

Muhr, T. (1997). *Atlas.ti: Visual qualitative data analysis, management, and model building in education, research, and business* (Version 4.1) [Software manual]. Berlin: Scientific Software Development.

Patterson, M. E. (1993). *The normative structure of science, hermeneutics, and leisure experience*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg.

Patterson, M. E. & Williams, D. R. (2002). *Collecting and analyzing qualitative data: Hermeneutic principles, methods, and case examples*. Champaign, IL: Sagamore.

Patterson, M. E. & Williams, D. R. (2005). Maintaining research traditions on place: Diversity of thought and scientific progress. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 25*, 361–380.

Patterson, M. E., Watson, A. E., Williams, D. R., & Roggenbuck, J. W. (1998). An hermeneutic approach to studying the nature of wilderness experiences. *Journal of Leisure Research, 30*, 423–452.

Payton, M. A., Fulton, D. C., & Anderson, D. H. (2005). Influence of place attachment and trust on civic action: A study at Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge. *Society and Natural Resources, 18*, 511–528.

Pohl, S. L., Borrie, W. T., & Patterson, M. E. (2000). Women, wilderness, and everyday life: A documentation of the connection between wilderness recreation and women's everyday lives. *Journal of Leisure Research, 32*, 415–234.

Proshansky, H. M., Fabian, A. K., & Kaminoff, R. (1983). Place identity: Physical world socialization of the self. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 3*, 57–83.

Relph, E. (1993). Modernity and the reclamation of place. In D. Seamon (ed.), *Dwelling seeing and designing: Toward a phenomenological ecology* (pp. 25–40). Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Sarbin, T. R., (1983). Place identity as a component of self: An addendum. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 3*, 337–342.

Scherl, L. M. (1989). Self in wilderness: Understanding the psychological benefits of individual-wilderness interaction though self-control. *Leisure Sciences, 11*, 123–135.

Schreyer, R., Lime, D. W., & Williams, D. R. (1984). Characterizing the influence of past experience on recreation behavior. *Journal of Leisure Research, 16*, 34–50.

Schroeder, H. W. (1995). 'Customers' or 'community'? Changing perspectives on recreational values. In J. L. Thompson, D. W. Lime, B. Gartner & W. M. Sames (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Fourth International Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Trends Symposium and the 1995 National Recreation Resource Planning Conference* (pp. 261–264). St. Paul, MN: North Central Forest Experiment Station.

Stedman, R. C. (2002). Toward a social psychology of place: Predicting behavior from place-based cognitions, attitudes, and identity. *Environment and Behavior, 34*, 561–581.

Steel, G. D. (2000). Polar bonds: Environmental relationships in the Polar Regions. *Environment and Behavior, 32*, 796–816.

Stewart, W. P. (1998). Leisure as multiphase experiences: Challenging traditions. *Journal of Leisure Research, 30*, 391–400.

Stokols, D. & Shumaker, S. A. (1981). People in places: A transactional view of settings. In J. H. Harvey (ed.), *Cognition, social behavior, and the environment* (pp. 441–448). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Thompson, C. J., Pollio, H. R., & Locander, W. B. (1994). The spoken and the unspoken: A hermeneutic approach to understanding the cultural viewpoints that underlie consumers' expressed meanings. *Journal of Consumer Research, 21*, 432–452.

Tse, D. K., Nicosia, F. M., & Wilton, P. C. (1990). Consumer satisfaction as a process. *Psychology and Marketing, 7*, 177–193.

Valle, R. S., King, M., & Halling, S. (1989). An introduction to existential-phenomenological thought in psychology. In R. S. Valle & S. Halling (eds.), *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology: Exploring the breadth of human experience* (pp. 3–16). New York: Plenum.

Vaske, J. J. & Kobrin, K. C. (2001). Place attachment and environmentally responsible behavior. *Journal of Environmental Education, 32*, 16–21.

Wallace, G. N., Brooks, J. J., & Bates, M. L. (2004). *A survey of day and overnight backcountry/wilderness visitors in Rocky Mountain National Park.* Final Report to the National Park Service. Fort Collins, CO: Colorado State University.

Williams, D. R. (1989). Great expectations and the limits to satisfaction: A review of recreation and consumer satisfaction. In A. Watson (ed.), *Outdoor recreation benchmark 1988: Proceedings of the National Outdoor Recreation Forum* (pp. 422–438). USDA Forest Service, Gen. Tech. Rep. SE-52. Asheville, NC: Southeastern Forest Experimental Station.

Williams, D. R., Patterson, M. E., Roggenbuck, J. W., & Watson, A. E. (1992). Beyond the commodity metaphor: Examining emotional and symbolic attachment to place. *Leisure Sciences, 14*, 29–46.

Williams, D. R. & Stewart, S. I. (1998). Sense of place: An elusive concept that is finding a home in ecosystem management. *Journal of Forestry, 96*, 18–23.

Williams, D. R. & Vaske, J. J. (2003). The measurement of place attachment: Validity and generalizability of a psychometric approach. *Forest Science, 49*, 830–840.