
Articles

The Role of Time in Developing Place Meanings

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Abstract

Person-place models suggest that the bonds between individuals and places are complex and multidimensional. While a number of researchers and writers have argued that length of association is an important variable affecting connections to place, little empirical data exists to confirm this hypothesis, and even less is known about how and why time is involved in forming those connections. This study used a mixed methods approach to investigate time in relation to place meanings of visitors and locals in Grand Teton National Park and Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Results indicate that time plays an important role in the processes that connect people with places. The different ways that time influences place meanings are discussed, especially in regards to the expansion of meanings over time. The type of place was also noted as important when assessing place meanings.

KEYWORDS: *Place attachment, place meanings, time*

Studies and writings on places and their meanings span a range of fields, including philosophy, literature, psychology, anthropology, geography, sociology, natural resources, and architecture (Casey, 1997; Kaltenborn, 1998; Low & Altman, 1992; Manzo, 2005; Relph, 1976; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996; Williams & Stewart, 1998). While most people would likely agree that both places and time are important parts of our lives, the influence that time has on our connections to places has been a relatively

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neglected area of study. The present study sought to add to this diverse body of knowledge by exploring how time can influence people's connections to places.

This study starts from the constructivist perspective that people are the "creators" of places (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977; Williams & Patterson, 1994). People obviously exist in some geographical space, which becomes a "place" when it is endowed with personal meanings (Casey, 1997). We posit that place meanings have a temporal dimension that is central to this process of place construction. As noted by Relph (1976), a humanistic geographer, places are centers of action and intention with loci in particular points in time and space, and it is through people's "focusing [on places that] they are set apart from the surroundings while remaining a part of it." (p. 43).

Over the years, many conceptions of the bond between people and places have been hypothesized and studied. The most widespread terms in use include place attachment (Low & Altman, 1992; Williams, et al., 1992), sense of place (SOP) (Cantrill, 1998; Hay, 1998a; Shamai, 1991; Stedman, 2002; Steele, 1981; Williams & Stewart, 1998), place identity (Proshansky, Fabian & Kaminoff, 1983; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996), and place dependence (Stokols & Shumaker, 1981). Similar concepts also described but less empirically studied are rootedness (Chawla, 1992; McAndrew, 1998; Tuan, 1977), topophilia (Tuan, 1974), and geopiety (Tuan, 1975). While many of these concepts share similar definitions, "sense of place" is generally the broadest term used to denote all our connections to places, while "place attachment" is usually more specifically defined as the affective bonds people have with places, including both "place identity" and "place dependence" (see Farnum, Hall & Kruger, 2005). Place attachment, in addition to being a measure of the strength of an individual's attachment to place, also encompasses the more emotional or symbolic meanings that people give to places — and these meanings are the focus of this paper.

Many studies have also noted that people's connections to places are complex and multi-dimensional, resisting simple categorizations (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2005; Gustafson, 1998; Hay 1998b; Manzo, 2005; Smaldone, Harris & Sanyal, 2005; see also Low & Altman, 1992). Most of these studies note the importance of understanding not only the parts or components (meanings) that make up human's attachment to places, but also the various processes by which they become attached. A number of studies have begun to address the different types of processes of developing an attachment to place — processes that are individual, social, cultural, and perhaps even biological (Farnum et al., 2005; Galliano & Loeffler, 1999; Hay, 1998a; Low & Altman, 1992).

One interesting thread woven throughout many writings on place is the importance of time spent at a place (i.e., the length of association with a place). While both researchers and writers (Low, 1992; Moore & Graefe, 1994; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977) have made the case that time in a place and thus increased experience with it are important for deepening the meanings and emotional ties central to the person-place relationship, little in-depth research has actually studied this factor (Backlund & Williams, 2004; Stedman, 2003a). Accordingly, this study sought to provide a greater understanding of why and how time influences visitors and residents' connections to places in Grand Teton National Park (GTNP) and Jackson Hole (JH), Wyoming.

An Overview of Place Attachment

Place attachment, as defined as one's emotional or affective ties to a place, is generally thought to be the result of a long-term connection with a place (Low & Altman 1992; Moore & Graefe, 1994; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). This proposition is different than one that posits that a place is special because it is beautiful, which is often a simple aesthetic response. For example, one can have an emotional response to a beautiful (or ugly) landscape or place, but this response sometimes can be shallow and fleeting. This distinction is one that Schroeder (1991) labeled "meaning" versus "preference." He defined "meaning" as "the thoughts, feelings, memories and interpretations evoked by a landscape," while "preference" is "the degree of liking for one landscape compared to another" (1991, p. 232). For a deeper and lasting emotional attachment to develop—for it to have meaning, in Schroeder's terms—an enduring relationship with a place is usually a critical factor.

Research has generally focused on describing two main aspects of place attachment, place identity and place dependence. Place dependence emerged from a framework proposed by Stokols and Shumaker (1981) and is described as a person's perceived strength of association with the place. Place dependence relies on two factors: 1) the quality of the current place to meet a particular need or function, and 2) the relative quality of other places that are comparable to the current place. Thus, place dependence has been theorized to be a more functional aspect of place attachment. Stokols & Shumaker (1981) noted that length of association with the place, as well as past experiences, plays a role in creating and strengthening place dependence. They argued that endurance and frequency are two critical objective properties of that association. Endurance refers to the length of place association, while frequency refers to the number of times the person and place are associated. Therefore, under this conceptualization, the person-place bond always encompasses a temporal element.

The concept of place identity was first elaborated upon with Proshansky and colleagues' (1983) framework. They theorized that it consists of cognitions about the physical world that represent a "potpourri" of:

memories, ideas, feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and conceptions of behavior and experience...At the core of such physical environment-related cognitions is the 'environmental past' of the person; a past consisting of places, spaces and their properties which have served instrumentally in the satisfaction of the person's biological, psychological, social, and cultural needs. (Proshansky et al., p. 60)

Korpela (1989) modified the above conceptions in his study of place identity, proposing that it is a product of active environmental self-regulation, whereby an emotional attachment lies at the core of place identity. Thus, place identity is defined as a more emotional, or even symbolic, dimension of place attachment that is also formed and strengthened over time (Williams et al., 1992).

Recent studies have identified other potential dimensions of place attachment. For instance, Bricker and Kerstetter (2000) studied place attachment and recreation specialization among whitewater recreationists, and identified a third dimension of place attachment, which they called "lifestyle." Hammitt, Backlund, and Bixler (2006) expanded on the conception of place bonding discussed by Shumaker and Taylor (1983), proposing and then testing an expanded five dimensional model of place bonding. This new model included the previous concepts of place identity and depen-

dence, but added the dimensions of place familiarity, belongingness, and rootedness (Tuan, 1977). Their discussion of familiarity (initial stages of connections; length of residence; memories) and rootedness (intense bonding, often with recreational genealogical/long-term characteristics) reveal aspects of a temporal association with places (Hammitt et al., 2006).

Relf (1976) and Tuan (1977) both argued that creation of an attachment to place requires an enduring connection and prolonged involvement with the place. Other researchers studying communities also have noted that long-term residence increases attachment feelings, partly through familiarity and accumulation of significant events over time, but possibly even more importantly, through social ties (Brown & Perkins, 1992; Gerson et al., 1977; Hummon, 1992; Lalli, 1992; Taylor et al., 1985). In addition, these connections to places are constantly evolving over time, and are "nurtured through a continuing series of events that reaffirm humans' relations with their environments" (Brown & Perkins, 1992, p. 282).

Place Attachment, Recreation Studies, and Time

Interestingly, few studies of recreation places have addressed the role of time in relation to place attachment and meanings. Moore and Graefe (1994) quantitatively examined place attachment, identity, and dependence to recreational trails. They found that longer length of association, more frequent use, and greater proximity to the trails contributed to higher scores on measures of attachment to these places. They also noted differences in how these attachments might form, hypothesizing that place dependence possibly develops quickly, while the more affective place identity requires longer periods of time (Moore & Graefe, 1994). Other quantitative studies have found similar relationships between place attachment and various measures of length of association (Hammitt et al., 2006; Kaltenborn, 1998; Patterson & Williams, 1991; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001). However, other studies have found relatively weak associations between measures of place attachment and measures of past experience (Backlund & Williams, 2003; Kaltenborn & Williams, 2002; Stedman, 2000). As in much of the research on place, comparisons between studies dealing directly with time and length of association are problematic due to differences in construct definition, measurement, place scale, and sampling (Backlund & Williams, 2003).

Qualitative studies have also revealed an association between time and place attachment. For example, Mitchell, Force, Carroll, and McLaughlin (1993) studied recreational users in a National Forest using qualitative methods, and found evidence for the same type of distinction (emotional and functional attachments) noted by Moore and Graefe (1994). Mitchell et al. (1993) labeled the two broad types of users as either (1) attachment-oriented or (2) use-oriented. Regarding length of association, Mitchell et al. (1993) found that all of the attachment-oriented subgroups (three subgroups total) were repeat visitors, while the use-oriented subgroups (two subgroups) included only one of repeat visitors. This finding supports the idea that while time may be important, it likely is not the only factor in people forming affective connections to places. Other qualitative research has also noted the importance of time in forming an attachment to place (Brooks et al., 2006; Hay, 1998a; Manzo, 2005; Smaldone et al., 2005).

Changes in Place Meanings Over Time

Few studies have differentiated between a place's significance to an individual and how attached the individual is to the place and its meanings (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2002; Davenport & Anderson, 2005). As Stedman (2003a) noted, place attachment, which typically has been measured in terms of strength of attachment, differs from the meanings of a place, or the "what" and "why" of attachment to a place. While a person's place attachment is in part based on the meanings attributed to a place, the constructs should be separated.

Some researchers have noted that place meanings may be influenced by one's length of association with a place (Brandenburg & Carroll, 1995; Cantrill & Seneca, 2000; Hay, 1998a; Kiteyama & Markus, 1994). For example, Kiteyama and Markus (1994) suggested that a person's sense of place may change over time, with the salience of different features changing over the duration of their experience with a place. They proposed that newcomers typically view their connection to a region based more on environmental features, whereas those who have been in the region longer tend to view their connection in terms of their social relations at the place. This hypothesis was partly supported by Mitchell et al.'s (1993) results in their study of recreational users in a national forest.

Cantrill (1998) also found some evidence for this hypothesis in a study of residents of a Michigan community. Interview respondents who had lived in the community for less than 15 years were more likely to discuss features of the area's natural environment when describing their sense of place, while longer-term residents were more likely to discuss social relations. Cantrill and Senecah (2000) noted that, "as one spends a longer period of time in a region, social forces such as interpersonal relationships become more important than environmental conditions in describing one's surroundings" (p.7). This finding is also consistent with results from various studies of community as a place (Gerson et al., 1977; Hummon, 1992; Taylor et al., 1985).

Study Purpose

Previous research suggests that place attachment and its meanings, and particularly issues raised by temporal aspects of that attachment, present complexities needing further study. While a number of studies have found that length of association seems to play an important role in place attachment (Kaltenborn, 1998; Moore & Graefe, 1994; Patterson & Williams, 1991; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001), these studies provide less insight into how and why time is involved in becoming attached to a place. Qualitative studies have begun to address these relationships. For instance, some studies have pointed to aspects of time that influence the attachment process through the development of different place meanings, changes in those place meanings over time, and the role of continuity in strengthening person-place bonds (Brandenburg & Carroll, 1995; Brooks et al., 2006; Cantrill, 1998; Cantrill & Senecah, 2000; Gustafson, 2001; Hay, 1998a; Hay, 1998b; Mitchell et al., 1993; Smaldone et al., 2005; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996).

In the present study, quantitative methods were used to confirm and further describe the role of time and experience in developing place meanings, and qualitative methods were used to explore why and how time and experience influence the formation of place meanings. These combined methodologies thus examined place attach-

ment in a holistic and richer approach in order to provide insight into the important role that time plays in the development of place meanings.

Based on previous research, three key research questions are addressed in this paper. First, is a person's length of association with a place related to the meanings of that place? Specifically, do people who have a longer length of association with a special place (in GTNP and elsewhere) express more emotional or social meanings when describing that place, than people having a shorter length of association with a place? Second, in contrast to the first question, do people who have a shorter length of association with the place more often refer to either physical setting or activity meanings, than people with a longer length of association? Finally, do place meanings change over time, and if so, how do they change?

Methods

Study area

Jackson Hole was the area of focus for this project. Jackson Hole is located in northwest Wyoming, and encompasses the town of Jackson and GTNP. Grand Teton National Park protects about 400,000 acres of land and receives over three million visitors a year, the majority of who visit during the summer. Grand Teton National Park is one of the most recognized mountain areas in the world, offering renowned climbing, hiking, rafting, and other year-round outdoor pursuits. The town of Jackson, Wyoming, with a year-round population of about 8,000 people (as of 2000), is located about 15 miles from the heart of the park, and the town's economy is dependent upon tourism revenues. In addition, over 95 percent of the immediate area is public land, protected by various degrees not only in GTNP, but also in national forests, wilderness areas, and the National Elk Refuge. As part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, it is the largest nearly intact ecosystem (about 15 million acres) left in the lower 48 states. Natural places such as GTNP, as iconic national symbols, can also serve to influence our perceptions of them (Abrahamsson, 1999; Greider & Garkovich, 1994). The JH area, bounded by large tracts of federally designated protected landscapes, is therefore not typical of other natural places. Given these circumstances, and in particular the uniqueness of this area as described above, the findings reported here should not necessarily be generalized to other natural places.

Data Collection

Two methodological approaches were used to collect data for this study. First, a drop-off/mail-back questionnaire collecting both quantitative and qualitative data was distributed to GTNP visitors from July through October 2000. Second, personal interviews collecting in-depth qualitative data were conducted with year-round JH residents, as well as visitors to GTNP.

Questionnaires

The questionnaire was randomly distributed to one adult per vehicle in a sample of private vehicles entering the park. A stratified random sampling approach was used, whereby vehicles were selected according to a design stratified by date, time block on that date (in 2- or 3-hour blocks), and entrance gate to GTNP. The questionnaire was

distributed at two of the three entrance gates to GTNP, the Moose and Moran gates, while the entrance from Yellowstone National Park was not used due to logistical constraints. Approximately 24 vehicles were sampled during each time block. Government vehicles and large commercial vehicles (tour buses) were not represented in the sample.

The visitors selected were encouraged to fill out the questionnaire during their visit to the park and drop it off when completed (drop-off points were located at numerous places within the park). They also could mail it back, using the enclosed prepaid-postage envelope. To increase the response rate, follow-up procedures were used based on Dillman's Total Design Method (Salant & Dillman, 1994).

The questionnaire included questions dealing with the visitor's length of association with GTNP. These questions addressed both frequency and endurance (Stokols & Shumaker, 1981) of this connection by gathering information on: 1) length of stay (in hours or days) on the current visit to GTNP, 2) number of visits to GTNP, and 3) the number of years they had visited GTNP.

In regards to questions about special places, respondents were first asked if there were any special places to them in GTNP. If they answered "yes," the respondents were then asked to list up to three special places in the park, describe the reasons why those places were special, and estimate how much time they had spent at each place. This open-ended approach was used in order to capture the depth of meanings, while the use of a survey allowed for a multitude of responses to better identify the range of visitors' experiences of GTNP (Eisenhauer, Krannich, & Blahna, 2000).

All respondents to the questionnaire were also asked similar open-ended questions about special places they may have outside GTNP. This was done for two reasons. First, some visitors to GTNP might not have a special place in the park. Second, length of association to places in GTNP could then be compared to length of association to places outside GTNP based on place meanings. Therefore, visitors were first asked if there were any places outside GTNP that were special to them, and if so, to again list up to three places, describe why they were special, and estimate how much time they had spent at each other place.

The time estimates for each special place reported in GTNP, as well as special places elsewhere, were used to classify the person's length of association as follows: 1) low—one visit, and/or the place had been experienced in a short period of time (under one day), 2) medium—two to four visits, and/or one or more days had been spent at the place, and 3) high—over five visits, and/or weeks or years had been spent at the place. These ordinally-ranked groupings sought to encompass both the frequency and endurance of their connections, and are a simplified version of the concept of "experience use history" described by Schreyer and colleagues (1984).

Interviews

In addition to the questionnaire, personal interviews were conducted with visitors to GTNP, as well as year-round residents of JH. First, criterion sampling was used to sample the visitors (Miles & Huberman, 1994) based on variables that included number of visits to the park and whether individuals had special places in GTNP. These two criteria were chosen for their relevance to the study because they have been shown to be key variables of interest in previous place attachment research. Nine separate

interviews were conducted with GTNP visitors in August and September of 2001. Four of these interviews were "couple" interviews, where both members of the couple participated, for a total of 13 people participating in GTNP visitor interviews. During analysis, these couple interviewees were analyzed separately if both persons responded to most of the questions and they yielded different answers (and thus were considered separate cases). Five of nine separate interviews were with visitors who had visited the park a number of times over a span of at least five years. Four of the nine interviews were conducted with people who had made only a few visits to GTNP. "Data-rich" cases were sought to explore the role of length of association (time and number of visits) and its importance to visitor's place attachment in GTNP (Patton, 1990).

In addition, 29 personal interviews were conducted with JH residents between August and November 2000. A snowball sampling approach was used to identify potential interviewees (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and key variables of interest for sampling these individuals were gender, age, and length of residency in JH. Of the JH residents interviewed, twenty were male and nine female, their ages ranged between 25 and 88 years old (mean=51 years), and the number of years that these interviewees had lived in JH varied from 1½ years to over 65 years. Follow-up interviews were conducted in 2001 with 12 of the original 29 resident interviewees.

When combining the visitor and resident interviews, a total of 38 interviews were conducted, involving 42 individuals. These interviews were semi-structured in format (Newman & Benz, 1998) and used an interview guide approach (Patton, 1990). Interviews were guided by particular issues and questions to make efficient use of time, but also were flexible, allowing for exploration of issues as they arose (Bernard, 2000). Interviewees were asked to discuss a place that was special to them (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2002; Schroeder, 1996) in the JH valley, and then discuss a special place elsewhere. If further prompting was needed, the word "important" was substituted for special, and interviewees were allowed to self-define what that meant. All interviewees were able to think of a special place using only those instructions. During the interviews, the interviewer was careful not to use certain words/phrases when discussing places—such as attachment, dependence, identity, or the like. A key objective was to ensure that interviewees used their own words or meanings to describe their connections to places. The following topics were discussed during the interviews: a description of the place, what they did there, whom they went with, when it became special, and why it was special. The GTNP visitor interviews lasted 20-45 minutes (averaging about 30 minutes), while the JH resident interviews lasted 30-60 minutes.

Iterative Analysis

The questionnaire data provided a broad view of the role that time played for a large number of people. The interview data were then used to explore in-depth the meanings of places and the role of time and location. In addition, in a back-and-forth iterative process, important concepts and phenomena noted in the interviews also suggested further investigations of survey data. The majority of places examined in this study were recreational places, but other types of places such as homes and communities were also described.

As described below, due to the inductive coding approach used, the coding categories for questionnaire data and interview data were developed independently, using

similar but separate coding procedures. Therefore, coding categories for the two data sets (questionnaires and interviews) are not exactly the same. However, the differences between the coding structures ended up being minor: the main difference is that the interview coding structure is much more developed, refined and detailed. This result should not be surprising, given the very different methods of data collection. The strength in a mixed method study is such that quantitative and qualitative data collection and the ensuing analysis complement each other—here, the brief responses from the survey are fleshed out and supported by the detailed and thick descriptions provided in the interview data (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Questionnaire data

Analysis of the questionnaire data took two forms, both quantitative and qualitative. Place meaning questions were first analyzed qualitatively. Out of 674 total responses, 86 distinct places in GTNP were identified. These places were then categorized based on the name of the place, or the type of place if the place was not named distinctly. The types of places mentioned by respondents as special in GTNP varied greatly in terms of scale, from the specific (Inspiration Point, the Chapel of Transfiguration, etc.), to more general (Jenny Lake, Antelope Flats Road, etc.), to very broad, such as the whole park. Respondents could list multiple reasons for the importance of places, resulting in a total of 1299 reasons identified in the questionnaires. Many places were also listed under the question asking about important places outside GTNP (other special places totaled 975, and other special place meanings, 2122). NVivo (QSR*NUDIST Vivo 1.0, 1999), a qualitative data organization and analysis software program, was used to code the reasons/meanings associated with a place's importance. To establish codes, an inductive approach was applied to develop categories of codes based on respondents' meanings — no preconceived categories were assigned, rather the categories emerged from the data based on the respondent's words and meanings (Hycner, 1985). These categories were then refined as analysis progressed.

After initial coding, a total of 36 separate categories of place meanings were identified. A reliability analysis was then conducted using three peers, who used the categories provided to code a sample of approximately 10 percent of the responses. After further refinement and collapsing of these categories, coding based on 17 separate categories was finalized (see Table 1). These codes were next transferred to SPSS for further analysis. All respondents who had mentioned a type of place categorized by place code were identified (for instance, "environmental setting or characteristics"), and then these cases were compared with those who had not identified this place code. Thus, each place code was measured on a nominal level referring to the presence or absence of a code for each respondent. Certain meanings were double- (or even triple-) coded, as it was sometimes impossible to exclude overlapping meanings based on a respondent's answer (see Table 1). Responses that were double-coded were placed in both coding categories during analyses. T-tests, cross-tabulations, and Chi-square statistics were used to analyze statistical relationships between the time (length of association) variables and the place meaning codes. All results reported here were statistically significant, $p < .05$.

TABLE 1
Definitions of the place meaning codes that emerged from the questionnaire results

Place Meaning Code	Definition of Code	Examples of Survey Responses
Physical setting	Reference to views, scenery or beauty as primary descriptor. Also any reference to specific setting feature, such as mountains, water, wildlife, flora, weather, etc.	Scenery; the incredible view; beauty of the lake and mountains
Emotional connection (also included the Escape & Inspiration codes below)	Any reference to a personally emotional or psychological aspect of place.	Great time for reflection; feelings of freedom; peaceful; solitude
Outdoor recreation	Reference to the place in regards to doing outdoor recreational activities, or providing those opportunities, such as hiking, boating (any type), biking, nature photography, etc.	Hiking around the lake; swimming is fantastic; <i>family enjoyment of boating</i> (double coded, see below)
Social ties	Reference to other people, such as friends, family, or memories of other people.	<i>Family enjoyment of boating</i> ; friend's wedding; camaraderie
Special moments, or "first time" experiences	Reference to place as one where a special experience occurred, such as wedding or anniversary; or a "first" experience, or some other unique experience occurred there.	I was married there; saw moose there for first time; highest place I've gone while hiking
Tradition or time	Reference to the idea that going to the place is a tradition for the person; or reference to many visits, or a great deal of time spent at the place being important.	Great memories—3 generations of families; visited there for many years; tradition
Undeveloped, natural	Reference to place as being natural, wild, undeveloped, clean, unpolluted, pure, etc. State of nature dominates.	Unspoiled; very clean; natural; still undeveloped
Escape (a combination of 3 codes—Escape, Peaceful and Solitude)	Reference to any of the following—a place to be removed from, get away from, or escape one's normal, everyday life; or a place having no people, being uncrowded, or solitude as important aspect; or a place that was peaceful, serene, quiet, tranquil, restful, or as place to relax, reflect or contemplate.	Off the beaten path; quiet; solitude; secluded; serenity—a restful place; great place for thinking; soothing
Inspiration (a combination of 3 codes—Inspire; Feel insignificant in nature; Spiritual aspect)	Reference to any of the following—a place described as inspiring, uplifting, etc.; or a place referred to as making one feel insignificant in nature; being made aware of place in the world, etc.; or a place referred to as important because of its spiritual or religious aspects.	Connections I feel to spirit, myself & area; touch of heaven; energy vortex; makes you think of God; makes me realize how small I am
Peaceful	Reference to a place being peaceful, serene, quiet, tranquil, restful, or as place to relax, reflect or contemplate.	Peaceful; serene; calming; silence
Solitude	Reference to a place as having no people, being uncrowded, or solitude as important aspect.	No people; remote; solitude; isolated;

TABLE 1—CONTINUED

Good lodging or food	Reference to a good place to stay--lodging, restaurants, or facilities that make the place special.	Lodge was very nice; lobster; well-managed
Cultural or Historical importance	Response refers to the culture or people of an area as making the place important. Cultural aspects important (such as Native American, etc.); or reference to history or historical importance of the place.	Sense of history; cultural hub; historic value; great mountain to Native Americans
Home	Reference to the person either living at the place or has lived at place—the place is referred to as home, whether literally, or symbolically.	Lived in cabin there for 2 months; it is home; home growing up; home is identity

Interview data

Personal interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the interviewees and transcribed into a Word document, which was then also transferred into NVivo. NVivo allows for a number of tasks: storing and organizing data and files, building coding structures/schemes, searching for themes, crossing and matching themes, diagramming, and analyzing and reporting (Creswell, 1998).

The analysis of qualitative data was focused on “illumination, understanding and extrapolation rather than causal determination, prediction and generalization” (Patton, 1990, p. 424). This inductive analysis began “with specific observations and builds towards general patterns” (Patton, 1990, p. 44). This type of inductive analysis was used for the responses to the interviews. The steps taken to analyze the interviews were adapted from the procedures outlined by Hycner (1985) in his guide for phenomenological analysis (see also, Miles & Huberman, 1994). The unit of analysis in this step was the words and phrases expressed by the interviewees. The interviews were first coded inductively, allowing the codes to emerge from the data, rather than being set a priori. After the first interview was coded, the same coding scheme was then used for the next interview. However, the coding structure was not simply applied without context to the next interviews. Rather, coding categories were added, built upon, and refined during this process (similar to the constant comparison method outlined by Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Each successive interview led to more categories and helped to distinguish and elaborate the overall coding scheme, as refined codes were then reapplied to earlier interviews. Clusters and categories of codes were also established as the coding continued, allowing for patterns to be identified, as NVivo allows for creating a hierarchical “tree” of codes. At the end of the coding process, a detailed case report was written for each interviewee, including key points of the interview and relevant quotes highlighting those points. This procedure focused on the core reasons for each person’s connections to their special places and how those connections were formed, allowing for easier cross-referencing and comparisons.

Results and Discussion of the Survey

A total of 649 questionnaires were distributed during the sampling period in GTNP. Of these, 493 visitors returned completed questionnaires, yielding a 76 per-

cent response rate. A random sample of ten percent of the 156 visitor non-respondents were contacted by phone later and asked a few selected questions to identify possible sources of bias. Comparisons of respondents and non-respondents revealed no major differences with respect to education level, length of stay in the park, and region of residence (for U.S. visitors). One exception is that visitors who lived in the JH area were less likely to return the questionnaire. Differences also were found in visitor age (visitors between the ages of 35 and 55 were less likely to return the questionnaire) and slight differences in group size (visitors in groups of two were more likely to return questionnaires, while those in groups larger than five were less likely to return questionnaires). Additionally, first time visitors were more likely to return questionnaires, while repeat visitors who had visited the park between two and nine times were less likely to return the questionnaire. Given these possible sources of minor bias, some caution should be used when interpreting results.

The mean age of respondents was 47 years (median=48), with an age range of 18 to 86 years. The majority of visitors (66 percent) were traveling in family groups, and first time visitors made up over one-third (38 percent) of the visitors, while 32 percent had visited the park two to four times (see Table 2 for trip characteristics). Half of the visitors spent one day or less in the park.

TABLE 2
Trip Characteristics (survey respondents)

Type of Group	Percentage of Visitors
With family	66%
With friends	12%
Alone	16%
Number of visits	
One visit	38%
2-4 visits	32%
5-9 visits	14%
10 or more visits	16%
Number of days spent in park	
1 day or less	50%
2-4 days	31%
5-7 days	10%
8 or more days	9%

In the following sections, results from the questionnaires are presented and discussed. First, differences in visitor characteristics are examined between people who had a special place in GTNP and those who did not, focusing on length of association. Next, differences in GTNP place meanings based on length of association are ex-

plored. Place meanings and length of association are then examined for special places outside GTNP. Finally, results from the interviews are discussed in light of the findings from the questionnaires. For the sake of brevity, the discussion of our results is woven into the results section.

Who had a special place in GTNP?

Forty-eight percent of questionnaire respondents reported that they had a specific place in GTNP that was special to them. Statistically significant differences between those who had a special place and those who did not were found based on trip characteristics related to length of association, including visitors' number of visits (frequency), number of years visited (endurance of association), and length of stay. Those reporting a special place had a statistically significant longer length of stay (see Table 3), as well as a greater number of visits to the park, and a longer association with the park.

TABLE 3
Length of Association and Special Places

	Had a special place (means)	Did not have a special place (means)	<i>t</i> values
Length of stay (days)	3.4 days	2.2 days	$t = 3.134^{**}$
Number of visits	9.6 visits	2 visits	$t = 6.352^{**}$
Length of association (years)	16.1 years	9.7 years	$t = 4.317^{*}$

* Value statistically significant, $p < .01$

** Value statistically significant, $p < .001$

In regards to special places and visitation, cross-tabulation and Chi-Square analysis found a statistically significant association between repeat visitors and first time visitors. Of repeat visitors, 75 percent reported a special place, while only 45 percent of first timers did ($\chi^2 = 44.52, p < .01$). To assess if the number of visits made to GTNP (frequency) was associated with reporting of a special place, respondents were also categorized into the following four groups: 1) first visit, 2) two to four visits, 3) five to nine visits, and 4) ten or more visits. Statistically significant associations were found, indicating that as the number of visits increased, so did the likelihood of reporting a special place: of particular note, 97 percent of visitors who had visited ten or more times reported a special place in the park ($\chi^2 = 54.25, p < .01$). These findings are consistent with the results of past research that longer lengths of association are associated with stronger measures of place attachment (Kaltenborn, 1998; Moore & Graefe, 1994; Taylor et al., 1985; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001). While this study did not measure strength of place attachment, the finding that people who reported more visits (frequency) and had more years of association with GTNP (endurance) were more likely to report a special place lends support to prior findings and the proposition that greater association with a place leads to greater occurrence of place attachment (Moore & Graefe, 1994; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977).

Place Meanings, Frequency, and Endurance of Association

Visitors described a variety of place meanings for why places in GTNP were special to them, as represented by the definitions of place meaning codes presented in Table 4. Common meanings included: 1) the physical setting, 2) outdoor recreation activities, 3) emotional connections, 4) wildlife viewing, 5) escape, 6) social ties, 7) special moments, 8) the undeveloped nature of the park, and 9) tradition/time spent. Similar meanings have been found in comparable studies focusing on natural resource recreation areas (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2002; Davenport & Anderson, 2005; Eisenhauer, et al. 2000). Bricker & Kerstetter (2002) also noted that many respondents actually reported more than one place meaning in their study, a finding mirrored in the present study.

TABLE 4
Frequencies of Place Meanings

Place Meaning Code	Number of respon- dents using meaning	Percent (of respondents with a special place)
Physical setting	227	73
Outdoor recreation	165	53
Emotional connections	95	30
Wildlife	92	30
Escape	85	27
Social aspects	76	24
Special moments	49	16
Undeveloped	31	10
Time or tradition	26	8.3
Lodging or dining facilities	25	8
Inspire	16	5.1
Culture or history	15	4.8
Learning opportunities	12	3.8
Home or close to home	10	3.2
Unique	4	1.3
Non-outdoor leisure	4	1.3
Variety	4	1.3
Other	37	12

Statistically significant differences were found between visitors' length of association and the place meanings they reported (Table 5). Based on Cross-tabulation and Chi-Square analyses, repeat visitors were found to be significantly more likely than first time visitors to report the following place meanings as important (generally on at least a two-to-one ratio): outdoor recreation, solitude, social ties, special moments, and time or tradition. Differences were not found for the place meanings of physical setting and visitors' emotional connections to places.

TABLE 5
Differences in place meanings between repeat & first time visitors

Place meaning	Percent of repeat visitors using the place meaning	Percent of first time visitors using the place meaning	Chi-square statistic
Physical setting	71%	77%	NS
Outdoor recreation*	60%	34%	* $\chi^2 = 16.715$
Emotional connections	32%	27%	NS
Social ties*	29%	12%	* $\chi^2 = 9.521$
Special moments*	19%	7%	* $\chi^2 = 6.267$
Solitude*	15%	5%	* $\chi^2 = 5.832$
Time or tradition*	11%	2.4%	* $\chi^2 = 5.271$

* Value statistically significant, $p < .05$.

Independent t-tests were also used to test differences between place meanings and the variables associated with time. In relation to number of visits, the only place meaning significantly associated with more visits (frequency) was outdoor recreation (12.5 vs. 6.7 visits, $t = 2.465$, $p < .01$), while the physical setting place meaning was significantly associated with less visits (7.5 vs. 15 visits, $t = 2.295$, $p < .05$). Certain place meanings were more likely to be reported by those who had been coming to GTNP longer (endurance) and thus had stronger connections with park places. These included outdoor recreation (19.2 vs. 12.7 years, $t = 3.434$, $p < .01$), social ties (21.4 vs. 14.5 years, $t = 3.117$, $p < .01$), special moments (20.8 vs. 15.3 years, $t = 2.091$, $p < .05$), time or tradition (23.4 vs. 15.5 years, $t = 2.181$, $p < .05$), and lodging (22.4 vs. 15.5 years, $t = 1.984$, $p < .05$).

Taken together, these findings only partly support previous research. Both theory (Cantrill & Senecah, 2000; Kiteyama & Markus, 1994) and empirical evidence (Gerson et al., 1977; Hummon, 1992; Lalli, 1992; Taylor et al., 1985) suggest that longer associations with a place shifts the bases of attachment from the physical to social aspects of the place. As found in previous research, more visits (frequency) and years connected to GTNP (endurance) were associated with reports of social connections to places in GTNP. While no differences between repeat and first-time visitors were found for the overall category of emotional connections, repeat visitors were more likely to report "special moments" and "solitude," with "special moments" being a meaning also associated with visitors who had made more visits. Both of these meanings, "special moments" and "solitude," have emotional connotations—in fact, the larger category of emotional connections included both these smaller thematic categories. Thus, it may be that only certain types of emotional connections were important to the longer time-associated visitors to GTNP. Other types of emotional connections may be either unimportant to all visitors, or equally important to all visitors, regardless of the length of their visit. Future research should seek to explore this finding.

Contrary to expectations, differences were not found between repeat and first time visitors in their reports of the importance of physical setting as a place meaning.

However, when analyzed by number of visits, those respondents reporting fewer visits were more likely to report meanings involving the setting, as predicted. Interestingly, repeat visitors, visitors who had made more visits, and visitors who had visited more years, were all also associated with higher reports of outdoor recreation, a meaning that could be hypothesized to be closely tied to the setting. One likely reason for these differences may be the type of place studied in the present research. Most previous research of this type was based on community studies, not recreation destinations or national parks. The physical setting was most frequently reported by all visitors as the reason that GTNP was special, regardless of length of association. Given that GTNP is a vacation destination of great scenic beauty, and also a place where outdoor recreation is important for visiting, it is not surprising that most people repeatedly return to the park because of its scenic values and opportunities to recreate. This finding supports similar findings from Bricker & Kerstetter (2002), and suggests the importance of considering the type of place under study and its relation to development of different place meanings. This relationship needs further study, because it appears that the type of place is an important factor in the kinds of meanings people assign to that place, and potentially for the process of place attachment itself. In addition, this issue will be revisited in the discussion of the interview results, which helped further explain this finding.

Results and Discussion of “Other Place” Findings

As Table 6 shows, the length of association for places listed outside JH was generally higher than for places in GTNP. Similar results were found when analyzing each individual place listed. For example, in the case of the first special place listed outside GTNP (respondents were allowed to list up to three places), 73 percent of all the respondents reported a high length of association with the place they listed, while for the first place listed in GTNP, only 30 percent of all the respondents reported a high association.

TABLE 6
Length of association for special places listed on survey

	Low Association	Medium Association	High Association
GTNP places (560 total)	260 places (46% total)	138 places (25% total)	162 places (29% total)
Other places (872 total)	78 places (9% total)	195 places (22% total)	599 places (68% total)

The mean lengths of association for places outside GTNP and place meanings for them were then statistically compared using Kruskal-Wallis tests, and statistically significant results were found for a number of the place meanings. The physical setting was reported more frequently by those with shorter lengths of association ($X^2 = 5.86$, $p < .05$). In contrast, the following meanings were reported more frequently by those with longer lengths of association: outdoor recreation ($X^2 = 8.20$, $p < .01$), social ties

($X^2 = 10.60$, $p < .01$), home ($X^2 = 12.51$, $p < .01$), and tradition/time ($X^2 = 14.16$, $p < .01$). These results tend to support previous findings (Cantrill & Senecah, 2000; Gerson et al., 1977; Hummon, 1992; Lalli, 1992; Taylor et al., 1985). In this study, the physical setting was described as being important in cases of low lengths of association with other places, while social ties, home, and tradition/time were described by those with higher lengths of association. However, meanings related to emotion were not related to length of association. Outdoor recreation again was related to longer lengths of association. The other places listed included many other national parks, natural areas, or vacation spots—all places where outdoor recreation is likely to be an important factor for visiting. This finding reaffirms the importance of the value in considering the type of place when assessing place meanings and attachment, as a similar study conducted in a community, especially within a city, would likely find different results.

Results and Discussion of the Interviews

Interview results for JH residents

In analyzing the interviews from the JH residents, every special place mentioned within JH was a place with which residents had a high level of intensity of visitation in terms of length of association—this use of the term “intensity” is similar to the concept of “experience use history” described by Schreyer and colleagues (1984)¹. Significantly, as we would theorize, all the places mentioned outside the JH area were ones that residents had at least a moderate, if not high, level of intensity of association.

Interestingly, three of the resident interviewees stated they had no special places outside JH. Three other residents were able to identify and talk about another special place, but could not think of any place that was as special to them as the JH place. These interviewees were all people who had spent most of their lives living in Jackson or had enduring ties to the area because their family owned a home here. Thus their ties to the area seemed forged through what Low (1992) described as genealogical linkage, or connections based upon a long family history in the place. Five of these six described themselves as having deep “roots” in JH (Rowles, 1983), and they may also be seen as representing Relph’s (1976) idea of “existential insideness.”

Interviews of non-residents of JH

The visitor interviews also were revealing about the role of time in place attachment. Eight of 13 interviewees described a special place in GTNP, whereas the other five did not have a special place. In terms of intensity of association with places in GTNP, the intensity varied much more among visitors than locals. This would be expected because, for the non-resident interviewees, GTNP was primarily a vacation destination, albeit a special one for some of them, and therefore not a place where they had spent a great deal of time (especially in comparison to the residents). In terms of

¹ Intensity of visits describes the frequency of a person visiting the place in a certain number of years, and it captures both the frequency and endurance of one’s connection to a place. As previously noted, each place discussed by interviewees was given an intensity ranking of low, medium, or high. For instance, examples of low intensity of association might include a person visiting a place on average once every few years (say, five times over 25 years, or only one previous time over five years); examples of high intensity of association might include a person visiting a place an average of many times a year (say, 50 times over 25 years, or 15 times over five years).

intensity of association with GTNP, of the eight visitors who described a special place: one was high; one had a high level earlier in her life, but recently it had decreased to low; two were medium; and four were low. Moreover, for the five visitors who did not describe a special place, the intensity of association also varied: two were high, one was medium, and two were low.

However, when asked to discuss a special place outside the JH area, all of the visitor interviewees could easily think of a place, and four of the thirteen described their homes or a place where they had lived. The other visitor interviewees talked about favorite or cherished vacation spots, and all were places they had visited a number of times, again revealing at least a moderate intensity of association (although most were high) in their connections to special places they discussed.

To summarize these general interview findings, it appeared that the longer the interviewees were associated with a place, the more likely they were to feel that place was special to them. This relationship held up for all places discussed by the residents, and for all places mentioned by non-residents outside GTNP. However, this was not the case for non-residents in regards to places discussed in GTNP—there appeared to be no relationship between the amount of time they had spent in the park, and being able to identify and discuss a special place within the park. This inconsistent finding could be the result of the low sample size or perhaps due to the relatively low intensity of association with GTNP in general (in comparison to the other places they discussed outside the park). The next section will take up the question of how time influences the meanings associated with those attachments.

How Time Influences Place Meanings

A number of studies (Cantrill & Senecah, 2000; Gerson et al., 1977; Hummon, 1992; Kiteyama & Markus, 1994; Lalli, 1992; Taylor et al., 1985) have hypothesized that over time, social and emotional connections to places become more salient and important; whereas often attributes related to the physical setting are important in the beginning stages of place attachment. These hypotheses were supported by the results of the interviews, with a crucial distinction to be added — place meanings seem to be expanded over time, rather than replaced. One distinction made by a number of local interviewees was that their feelings about a place changed over time as they spent more time and gained experience with the place. They noted that the reasons or meanings associated with places in JH changed, or were expanded as they lived in the place. They seemed to be distinguishing between “preference” and “meaning” (Schroeder 1991), and this difference is presented in the next section as one of “attraction” as opposed to “attachment.”

Attraction vs. attachment

A number of the people interviewed for this study described how they became attached or connected to special places, both in JH and outside the valley. Many interviewees, when acknowledging their connections to places, generally described differences in place meanings between their initial impressions of attraction to a place and their lasting attachment to that place: at least 12 interviewees explicitly discussed this difference, and another five implicitly alluded to it. They often said that the beauty of the physical setting was the first thing they noticed. In fact, all interviewees mentioned the

beauty of the scenery or uniqueness of the physical setting (of the JH area) as being important to them. This result serves to reinforce the findings from the questionnaire, which also found that the physical setting was the most frequently reported meaning. However, the interviewees noted this attraction to the physical setting (revealing aspects of place dependence) was quite different from meanings and stronger emotional attachments that developed through living in a place for a longer time, and it was this lengthier attachment that resulted in more meaningful emotional and social connections to that place (place identity). While many interviewees described this phenomenon in various ways, several particularly relevant quotes will be used to illustrate this idea.

IC, a 25 year-old female who lived in JH 1½ years and had since moved away, commented that "... I took the job here because I knew that I loved this place, in the sense that I loved the scenery. I mean I had no attachment to it yet." Later, when asked when she started feeling that this was a special place to her, IC explained,

I really think it might have been yesterday. I think it was the beginning of this spring, somewhere between spring and summer. When I had lived here for a full calendar year and seen all the seasons, and really experienced the park, the town, the community and gotten involved in the community. And I had seen other elements other than just the park. And I really had at that point a sense of place I guess you could say. And the reason why I mentioned yesterday, is because when I came over the pass yesterday after having been away, and having that "oh gosh, I'm really going to leave this place," and when I came back over the pass it was immediately, when I crested & saw the Gros Ventre range, that I was like "home." And then I was coming down into Wilson, I was like "I'm going to miss this place more than I thought I was." And I really do have connections here I didn't realize were so strong.

After living even a relatively short time in the "place" (here IC is talking about the community at large), her connections grew beyond simple aesthetic preferences to include a variety of reasons, including developing social ties to a community. She also noted that just being in the place through the course of a year and seeing the seasons pass helped her connect on a deeper level. This idea of being in a place at least one year, to watch the changing of the seasons, was important to a number of other interviewees as well.

IC's explanation reveals other facets of people's connections to places, especially the ideas that places are typically taken for granted in our lives (Relph, 1976; Stokols & Shumaker, 1981)—and that often journeys away from them and then the return to the place are key moments of realization of the place's importance (Case, 1996). This sudden realization of coming home was noted by other local interviewees, and is likely due in part to the unique geography of the area. When entering JH, one must travel through and over mountain ranges (geographically speaking, a "Hole" is a valley surrounded on all sides by mountains), so one truly feels like one is entering another world when coming over a mountain pass and seeing the valley spreading out ahead, with even more mountains behind it. Stedman (2003b) recently noted that while many studies have focused on understanding the social construction of places, very few studies have investigated the contributions that the physical environment plays in people's connections. His study found that landscape attributes did contribute to people's place meanings related to place attachment and satisfaction. As mentioned above during the discussion of the questionnaire, the JH area is a unique physical setting. Therefore, it would be expected that this unique scenery contributed to the meanings of the place.

However, as noted, it also limits the generalizability of these findings.

Another interviewee was able to express her thoughts on this difference between attraction and attachment in a more direct way. OT, a 48 year-old married woman who had lived in JH for 12 years, commented:

Well certainly while visiting, one can't help but be amazed by the whole thing, it is a beautiful and all that—blah, blah, blah. So when we knew we were moving to Jackson of course we were excited. I tell you it is really different, I have a completely different feeling about Jackson then that feeling. Like the feeling I would imagine what a visitor feels like when they come here and it's just so beautiful. But now I feel, I feel attached, I feel responsible, you know it feels more like family and not just 'I'm on vacation' having a visit. It's just a really different feeling, and it grew slowly. No one can come here and not love this place in some ways. But the attachment feeling now for this place has definitely grown over time. You know it took years really. I think it probably started leaking in maybe after about five years, that I really felt like this was totally a home base.

For OT, as well as other interviewees, being in a place, spending time there, and having experiences there are what are critical for a place changing from just another pretty place to a place that becomes emotionally significant — a place marked with personal and socially shared memories and events (Manzo, 2005; Smaldone et al., 2005). These ideas seem to be describing a time influenced shift, from place dependence to the increasing strength and salience of the more emotional aspects of place identity and enduring involvement (Hammit et al., 2006; Proshansky et al., 1983; Relph, 1976; Williams et al., 1992).

One final example will help shed light on this process of place meanings accumulating over time. EP, a 43 year-old married woman who had lived in JH for 19 years, said her feelings of connection took time to develop,

"And the first couple times I walked up Game Creek, I didn't really have this sense of, 'oh gee, this is really a special place. So I think it was more of a gradual experience, and the same with Signal Mountain. The more you get to know a place, the more you develop a love for it. And, you see it in its different times of the day, and you see it during its different seasons. It just has a tendency to grow on you."

She said while she thought Signal Mountain was beautiful when she first went there, these feelings of connection and love were different, and developed later, over time. Another local interviewee, NT (a 53 year-old married man who had lived in JH for 24 years) went so far as to call these kinds of significant places "sacred." To him, "sacred" did not necessarily have a religious connotation or meaning — it was sacred because he had shared personal experiences at the place over a period of years. When asked why he called them sacred, he responded, "the times we've had up there. Sacred places—they're all over. The Enclosure, I spent some time in the Enclosure up on the backside of the Grand. That was somebody's sacred place. And depending on where you are at what time and what you see." Here, he expressed an idea also mentioned by OT—that every place could have the potential to become important or "sacred" to somebody. OT said, "And it's part of the process of just living in a place for a long time, or a while, you know, gradually it just starts happening. So I, it seems like you can get attached to almost any place, you know. It doesn't have to be just a particular one."

These examples affirm earlier research and hypotheses emphasizing that, over time, one's connections to places tend to expand beyond a focus on environmental or setting features to valuing deeper emotional or social aspects of the place (Cantrill & Senecah, 2000; Kiteyama & Markus, 1994; Moore & Graefe, 1994). A common theme that emerged during the interviews was this idea of expansion of meanings: it did not necessarily seem that a particular meaning was being replaced, but rather that another meaning developed, and was added to the place. The meanings for special places are varied, complex, and seem to accumulate over time, layer by layer. It is if the meanings begin to build on each other, potentially mutually reinforcing one another, and it is the *salience* of meaning(s) that changes, rather than the meaning itself (Kiteyama & Markus, 1994).

In the case of the JH area, it is clear that the physical setting was an important source of place meanings. However, that meaning did not disappear over time, other meanings were simply added, and the place literally comes to mean something "more" to people. The interviewees explicitly expressed the idea that the beauty of the place did not change, or even become less important. As their time in the place grew, other meanings were added, and thus the place's meanings expanded to include these new meanings. Similar to relationships with people, time allows more experience in or with a place, thus allowing more memories to develop, resulting in additional, ever-richer and more complex meanings to develop (Brooks et al., 2006; Hay, 1998a; Manzo, 2005).

Conclusions

The importance of time in connecting people to places was affirmed in the present study. The results from the questionnaires lend some support to prior findings and hypotheses that length of association with a place is important in the development of place attachment. People who reported more visits to GTNP and had more years of association with the park were more likely to report a special place there than those with shorter lengths of association. Similar results were found in the interviews: all the local interviewees described special places in JH as ones with which they had a high intensity of association, and the majority of special places outside the JH area discussed by all interviewees were also places with which they had at least a moderate intensity of association.

The questionnaire findings also indicated that length of association potentially affects the meanings of places. The results revealed consistencies as well as discrepancies in regards to the research questions they addressed. In support of the previous findings about length of association and the meanings of special places (Cantrill & Senecah, 2000; Kitayama & Markus, 1994), people with longer lengths of association more frequently reported social connections to their special places as well as some types of emotional connections (i.e., special moments and solitude). However, both repeat visitors and locals were more likely to report that outdoor recreation activities were important as well, indicating the importance of a national park's use for recreation as a unique factor in making certain places special. Finally, most visitors also reported the importance of the park's physical setting. Thus, the type of place that GTNP is—a vacation destination of great scenic beauty with numerous recreation opportunities—could at least partly explain this finding, suggesting that the type of place being studied is important to consider. This is a reminder that the context of the particular place

under consideration is critical for assessing its meanings (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2002).

In addition, findings from the interviewees helped to further explain how place meanings change over time. One important distinction made by a number of interviewees was that their feelings about their special places have changed, both over time and because of their experiences at the place. This aspect of person-place relationships was referred to as "attraction vs. attachment" in this study. Others (e.g., Moore and Graefe, 1994; Schroeder, 1991) have noted these kinds of changing place meanings over time, theorizing that different types of place attachments develop in different ways: "place dependence" tends to develop quickly, while the more the meaningful, emotionally-based "place identity" develops over a longer period of time. Other researchers have presented similar findings and hypotheses about various kinds of places (Cantrill & Senecah, 2000; Gerson et al., 1977; Hummon, 1992; Kiteyama & Markus, 1994; Lalli, 1992; Taylor et al., 1985). Over time, social connections to places become more important or salient, in contrast to early stages of one's connections to places, when physical settings often are most important. However, results from the interview portion of this study revealed a deepening or expansion of places meanings, as place meanings were added to, rather than replaced.

Three perspectives on places and place attachment were discussed in this paper: 1) Schroeder's (1991) "meaning" vs. "preference," 2) Kiteyama and Markus's (1994) long-term social ties vs. immediate attraction to the physical setting, and 3) place identity vs. place dependence (Moore & Graefe, 1994; Williams et al., 1992). These perspectives appear interrelated and may in fact describe the same phenomenon. Based on their interrelated conceptions, these frameworks suggest that every person-place bond has its locus within an ever-changing temporal scale that provides a critical context affecting that bond. Time should be viewed as a necessary but not sufficient factor contributing to place attachment.

These findings may also point to ways of better distinguishing between the two constructs of place dependence and place identity, and perhaps the need to continue to explore other place dimensions, such as bonding (Hammitt et al., 2006). Although time and the resulting experiences in a place seem to be crucial factors in forming any type of connection with that place, one might ask, does this mean that place dependence forms first, and then is later complemented, or even overshadowed, by place identity? Or does place dependence actually shift to become place identity? This study shows that perhaps both place dependence and place identity form, and it is rather the strength of each that changes, waxing and waning over the course of one's connection to the place. Are there other dimensions that should be included in person-place models? The phenomenon of attachment to place might be better represented by a spectrum of place attachment, ranging from no attachment at one end, to place identity at the other end, with place dependence somewhere in between the poles. Some research has attempted to measure this idea of a spectrum, examining the strength of place attachment (or sense of place) as ranging from being unaware of the place (no attachment) to commitment to, or even sacrifice for, the place (Kaltenborn, 1998; Shamaï, 1991). These typologies could be even more useful if combined with scales measuring the constructs of place dependence and place identity to further investigate possible conceptualizations of these constructs and their linkages and relationships (Hay, 1998a; Hay, 1998b). Finally, longitudinal studies could better assess this temporal

ebb and flow in a person-place relationship by combining qualitative methods (i.e., interviews, etc.) with these quantitative scales.

In the end, the present study adds another strand to the tapestry of understanding how places become important to people. The many ways of conceptualizing people-place connections is evidence of the complexities of this tapestry (Cantrill, 1998; Giuliani, & Feldman, 1993; Hay, 1998a; Low & Altman, 1992; Stokols & Shumaker, 1981; Tuan, 1977; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). However, the goal should not be the reduction of place and people into disjointed components (Williams & Stewart, 1998). It seems likely that as our understanding grows, the perspective that people and places are ever more intertwined through time will also grow in significance.

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