

Consumption Communities:
An Examination of the Kitchener Market as a Third Place

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A thesis
presented to the University of Waterloo
in fulfillment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Recreation and Leisure Studies

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2010

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Leisure time, leisure activities, and leisure spaces largely surround matters of consumption. However, the role consumption plays in the reproduction and performance of community is a necessarily contested topic among leisure scholars. For their part, leisure scholars have tended to regard consumption and places of consumption with a great deal of trepidation, skepticism, and even contempt (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Hemingway, 1996; Reid, 1995; Stormann, 2000). Implications for and about community appear to be at the forefront of anxiety about consumption as it relates to leisure. As a result, a focus on “community” has become a practical response to assumptions about pervasive individualism, consumption, and the loss of community, in general.

Following calls for the incorporation of community in leisure studies (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Glover & Stewart, 2006) and drawing on Cook’s (2006a) call to move leisure studies “beyond individualism” (p. 464), this study sought to empirically examine the significance local residents attribute to everyday places of consumption. Furthermore, this study aimed to challenge the idea that leisure time, activities, places, and spaces based on consumption serve only to further alienate individuals from communities, thus weakening the social relevance of leisure, in general (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). The purpose of this research, therefore, was to challenge the essentialist conceptualization of consumption by exploring the relationship between places of consumption and the everyday lived experience of community. To do so, I engaged patrons at the Kitchener Market, a venue that encourages consumptive acts, yet serves as a focal point for everyday engagement in community. The primary research question providing focus for this study was: *What roles, if any, do places of consumption, particularly third places, play in the everyday lived experience of community?*

Results of this research suggest there are new ways for understanding leisure and community as they relate to consumption. Rather than considering consumption places as points of exchange with little or no emotional sentiment attached, this research suggests these places have the potential to develop and create community as well as incorporate consumer values, ideals, ethics, and sentiments. Third places, as everyday places of consumption, should be examined for their potential to create, enact, and build community. Consumption is not separate from society, community and leisure; rather, consumption constitutes a salient aspect of everyday living and should be considered an important component of community.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful and indebted to the many individuals who participated alongside me on this journey. First I extend my sincere gratitude to my advisor, and friend, Dr. Troy Glover. Troy inspired and enhanced my ability to think critically and for that I will be forever grateful. Thanks also to the members of my committee for their guidance, knowledge, and dedication to this project as well as my success. Dr. Mark Havitz, Dr. Ron McCarville, Dr. Heather Mair, Dr. Jeff Lederer, and Dr. Erin Sharpe – whether at the beginning or the end, they all played an important role in this process.

Thanks to my PhD colleagues, the faculty, and the staff in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies. A special thanks to the cohort for all of the milestone socials and timely reminders we are all in this together – I could have hardly picked a better group of people with whom to share this process. Thanks especially to Colleen and Darla – two great friends who continue to make me laugh and smile, usually at their expense, but always at the right time.

Thank you to my study participants – consistent and loyal patrons of the Kitchener Market. You are amazing people and great urban promoters from whom I learned more than I ever imagined I could. I look forward to continuing the friendships we have established and seeing you at the market again.

It would have been impossible to complete this process without the love and support of my amazing family. Dad, I teetered between thanking you and blaming you for making me do this little thing called a PhD. Today, I guess it ends with a big thank you. Mom, your constant support and friendship over the past four years will never be forgotten. I hope you will continue to take me out for dinner – even when I am gainfully employed. Thank you to all of my family for joining me at the market and for loving it as much as I do. I hope our market memories will be reflected in the stories we share with the boys as they grow.

My biggest thank you is saved for Shawn whose overwhelming love and support kept me going and kept me grounded at the same time. It has been a long four years for us – time to begin our next adventure (let's start with a long john).

Dedication

To my five favourite boys,
Liam, Kieran, Alexander, Callum, and William.
When I'm old, and you're older,
I hope you remember that I always jumped on the trampoline with you.
And I loved every minute of it.

And to Shawn,
You eat meat.
I don't.
But we make it work.

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PROLOGUE



The long john: a cream filled donut unlike any other donut you have ever eaten before. It is in no way pretentious – no sprinkles, no sparkles, just a bit, okay a lot, of icing sugar and at just 65 cents this delicious little pastry practically sells itself. Looking back on it now, it was the humble long john that really started this research project. Upon returning to Waterloo to begin my PhD process I (re)discovered the Kitchener Market, and the tasty long john of my youth. I have fond memories of going to the old Kitchener Market building with my mom and sister and the long john is often a key character in the market stories we continue to tell to this day. Oh, how I loved those long johns. It is not as though I was a deprived child, I certainly was fed well enough – unlike my mom whose best, or at least most frequently told childhood stories are about food. But my mom really was a child deprived so it only makes sense that food products are a central character in her childhood stories. So why do I have such a fond affection for these little donuts? More than the taste, it is about the experience of consuming the long john. The Norris Bakery lady, who sells me my long johns every week, once told me she sells over two hundred long johns every Saturday and I know for a fact that if I do not get mine by 11am there is a good possibility I will be going without long johns that week. In

conducting this research project I quickly realized that most members of the market community have their own version of the long john. If it is not the long john people speak affectionately about, it is another market product.

For my mother it is the “slice.” Sold by two different vendors at the Kitchener Market, the “slice” has no other name of which I am aware. You just point and say, “I’ll have one slice, please.” Anna, from the Croatian Cuisine – one of the vendors that sell the “slice,” once described the “slice” to me – she said, “it’s like custard, but not custard. It’s good.” And that is pretty much how my mom describes it as well. And my mom loves it and hardly ever fails to remind me (or anyone else who will listen) that if she had been given a slice as a child she would have thought she had died and gone to heaven. “Yes, mother I know,” I always reply, “and getting an orange a Christmas was a huge deal.”



For Ellie it is Sproll’s Bakery, where she buys her bread every Saturday. She explained to me that she goes to Sproll’s first, always gets the same thing (dark rye bread), and she prefers to be served by the young woman mostly because she knows Ellie does not require a plastic bag. They small talk about the weather or how crowded the market is that day, and Ellie continues on her way, usually heading to the produce section.



For Melissa, it is the apples. She eats at least two a day, she tells me, and always buys her apples at the same place, though not always the same variety. She makes sure to check with her apple vendor to see what is good that week, what variety is fresh, and what variety is best for eating not for baking. Melissa never bakes with her apples.



For Melody going to the market means taking the time to find a specific item to create a special meal. In this case a capon for her son's birthday celebration.



And for most everyone, it is the availability of local produce and fresh food. This project is not about long johns (or the other products people purchase at the market), it is about what the long johns represent. The traditions, the memories, the stories, and the feelings all associated with the long history of the Kitchener Market. This project is about our attitudes toward food and how and why we choose to purchase and consume the way we do. It is about the conscious consumption of food products. And, it is about how we create our individual and community identities around consumption products. This project is about what results from the consumption practices and traditions surrounding the Kitchener Market. It is about social interaction, as pictured by Ray who claims he enjoys interacting and being in a place where everyone is doing the same thing as him: sitting, watching, eating, and interacting with friends, family, and strangers.



This project is about community. How these consumption practices – whether the product is long johns, eggs, or apples – create and enable local community. There really is no doubt that community is alive and active in the market space. How this community is enacted is at the heart of this project.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INSIGHTS AND INSPIRATIONS

Leisure time, leisure activities, and leisure spaces largely surround matters of consumption. However, the role consumption plays in the reproduction and performance of community is a necessarily contested topic among leisure scholars. In a recent article, Cook (2006a) suggested that although consumption, consuming, and consumer culture are inherent in Western society, many leisure researchers harbour genuine fear that consumption has and continues to contaminate the seemingly public nature of leisure goods. Leisure scholars have tended to regard consumption and places of consumption with a great deal of trepidation, skepticism, and even contempt (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Hemingway, 1996; Reid, 1995; Stormann, 2000). This sentiment, no doubt, has strong connections to the roots of the leisure field, which are inextricably linked to the voluntary and public provision of recreation.

While ideals connected to community and public good drove the development of the recreation profession in North America (Glover & Stewart, 2006), the study of leisure evolved to focus on individualism stressing independence, autonomy, and personal benefits and constraints. More recently, however, and often related to critiques of consumption, privatization, and individualism, the (re)discovery of community in leisure studies has focused leisure research on ideas such as social capital, civic engagement, public good, community development, sense of community, citizenship, and civil society as means by which community may be enhanced. In short, a focus on ‘community’ has become a practical response to assumptions about the loss of community, pervasive

individualism, and consumption. Implications for and about community, therefore, appear to be at the forefront of anxiety about consumption as it relates to leisure.

Notions of community and consumption possess an underlying moral and ethical aspect associated with the objectives and goals of leisure provision. These terms are often used in the normative sense, whereby any action, research, or policy connected to community and the “vilification of consumption” (Cook, 2006a, p. 456) is assumed to be equivalent to ethics, values, and the public good. Arai and Pedlar (2003), for instance, argued the social relevance of leisure has diminished over the years due to the domination of consumption and individualism in leisure research and practice. The focus on consumption, they suggested, has resulted in neglect of community and the common good. In forwarding a communitarian conceptualization of leisure as an alternative, Arai and Pedlar emphasized “the value of a sort of leisure that brings people together around practices of shared meaning” (p. 188) and argued instrumental consumption discourages individuals from engaging in meaningful communal experiences, thereby diminishing community life, in general. Put simply, Arai and Pedlar argued that consumption is bad for community.

Similarly, Hemingway (1996) lamented what he considered the “instrumental deformation of leisure” (p. 31). In his essay arguing for the emancipation of leisure as a means to restore democracy, Hemingway characterized consumption as entirely individualistic, revolving primarily around the self or the family. In this sense, consumption involves exchange relationships rather than communicative or normative ties. Consumption, he further argued, is focused on individual self-interest, which is detrimental to the greater public interest. Accordingly, Hemingway argued:

Acts of private consumption respond to an instrumental rationality that undermines active critical discussion and culture creation. The public sphere loses more than its political function as leisure becomes determined by private consumption; it loses the cultural capacity to generate social roles that are emancipatory in the sense of expanding the range of human capacities. (p. 36)

Hemingway further argued that leisure must focus on active citizenship rather than passive consumption to achieve the emancipatory potential that has long been considered a goal of leisure provision and services by leisure scholars.

Such negative sentiments about consumption and its implications for leisure and community amount to what Coalter (1998, 2000) referred to as a “normative citizenship paradigm.” Under this paradigm, the public is encouraged to use and participate actively in public goods and services if the greater good of the community is to be served. In contrast, non-participation is considered detrimental to community goals because those who fail to participate also fail to contribute toward the type of community in which they wish to live. In this way, participation in public recreation and leisure services is viewed not only as a right, but an obligation. Though social rights grant citizens access to public recreation services, responsible citizenship involves the moral duty to participate in the services produced by the state. Public recreation provision, therefore, is believed to be a central component for securing the social welfare of citizens. Accordingly, public recreation participation becomes a central component of active citizenship and community. Because social service provision, such as recreation and leisure policy, is intended to alleviate the inequalities created by capitalism and consumption (Barbalet, 1988; Marshall, 1992; Turner, 1986), non-participation in public recreation and leisure

services is viewed as a threat to social stability (Coalter, 1998). Consequently, passivity and non-participation are vilified because, if adopted, the individual presumably fails to make a positive contribution toward his or her community. As such, participation in private, consumption-based leisure activity is not recognized as a virtuous expression of citizenship or community.

Not surprisingly, Coalter (1998) criticized the so-called normative citizenship paradigm for being a “crude dichotomy between public/active and commercial/passive” (p. 34). With respect to the construction of citizenship, specifically, Coalter argued the salience of the state’s role as a direct provider may be more symbolic than real. Government service provision constitutes an increasingly small component of leisure opportunities. Moreover, he contended that simply because public funds are used to provide recreation and leisure services does not mean all members of the community desire, require, or utilize such services. By contrast, “the profit-oriented and supposedly exploitative nature of commercial leisure provision does not automatically mean that it does not provide satisfying forms of social membership and identity” (Coalter, 1998, p. 24). In short, Coalter lamented the lack of research on the nature, role, and significance of the commercial sector in the provision of leisure and citizenship opportunities, and subsequently, encouraged leisure researchers to examine commercial service providers in relation to the construction of citizenship. I would add that the construction of community and its relation to places of consumption should also not be overlooked.

Cook (2006a) has articulated similar concerns about the essentialist views of consumption, leisure, and community that pervade leisure studies. He suggested the “tendency to view consumer society as an outright and necessary hindrance to realizing

community rests on a thin, stylized conception of consumption as essentially an individual act" (p. 457). Cook argued that consumption is not necessarily "an individualistic, self-indulgent activity but rather can incorporate the values and sentiments of love, caring, mutuality, and social connectedness" (p. 459). In this way, consumption is not separate from society, community and leisure; rather, it constitutes a salient aspect of everyday living. With this in mind, Cook called for leisure scholars to view leisure as an expressive cultural form that must be socially conspicuous to be socially relevant.

Given the arguments presented by Cook (2006a) and Coalter (1998), it seems misguided and overly simplistic to characterize consumptive leisure practices as individualistic and inherently bad for community. Indeed, despite claims that consumption promotes individualism (Arai & Pedlar, 2003), "forecloses democratic, collective and community activity" (Stormann, 2000, p. 167), and diminishes emancipatory potential (Hemingway, 1996), empirical work examining these claims is virtually non-existent in the leisure literature. Even so, the dominant discourse remains: practices of leisure consumption weakens community ties and promotes the loss of community.

1.2 PURPOSE

Following calls for the incorporation of community in leisure studies (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Glover & Stewart, 2006) and drawing on Cook's (2006a) call to move leisure studies "beyond individualism" (p. 464), this study sought to examine the significance local residents attribute to everyday places of consumption as sites for the

enactment of community. Furthermore, this study aimed to challenge the idea that leisure time, activities, places, and spaces based on consumption serve only to further alienate individuals from communities, thus weakening the social relevance of leisure, in general (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). The purpose of this research, therefore, was to challenge the essentialist conceptualization of consumption by exploring the relationship between a place of consumption and the everyday lived experience of community. To do so, I engaged patrons at the Kitchener Market, a venue that encourages consumptive acts, yet serves as a focal point for everyday engagement in community.

1.3 CONTEXT

Drawing upon the arguments noted above, this thesis explores the relationship between consumption and community by examining a “third place,” the Kitchener Market. Often associated with consumption, third places provide visual assurances of sociability as well as unique community-based experiences. Oldenburg (1999) claimed “the third place is a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work” (p. 16). Primarily commercial establishments, third places, such as coffee shops, restaurants, bars, and pubs offer informal settings that promote community and social cohesion (Lofland, 1998; Oldenburg, 1999; Rosenbaum, Ward, Walker, & Ostrom, 2007). However, other public places such as curling rinks (Mair, 2009) have also been examined as third places. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that third places are leisure spaces. In this sense, third places offer an ideal environment to examine community in relation to consumption and consumer culture. Indeed, leisure scholars,

including Hemingway (1996), Coalter (1998), Glover (2006), and Mair (2006) have suggested that the field of leisure studies must consider the creation of community as a possible outcome of leisure service and provision.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary research question providing focus for this study was: *What roles, if any, do places of consumption, particularly third places, play in the everyday lived experience of community?* Secondly, *how do places of consumption create and build community?*

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Issues surrounding notions, existence, and the nature of community in modern society are pervasive in the social sciences. Indeed, in the past few years alone, theories of community have become widespread in all aspects of society, including research, practice, and politics (Taylor, 2003). Community, a fundamental concept in social theory and one of the most important and basic forms of organization in society (Konig, 1968), has been a topic of study since Aristotle and Plato, and continues to pervade in sociology (e.g., Dewey, 1927; Durkheim, 1893; Jacobs, 1961; Putnam, 2000; Simmel, 1950; Tönnies, 1887; Wirth, 1938). The importance of community to social scholars is not trivial; beyond family, community is the primary realm of social experience. Community is a broad social structure through which individuals maintain contact with one another. As such, it is an important feature in the social well being of individuals and societies. Consequently, the study of community and, more specifically, the loss of community has become an increasingly important topic among contemporary social scholars (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Bauman, 2001; Etzioni, 1995; Florida, 2002; Putnam, 2000; Sennett, 1998). These scholars often position the loss of community in relation to capitalism (Bauman, 2001), globalization (Rifkin, 1995), neoliberalism (Sennett, 1998), consumption (Hemingway, 1996), and commercialization (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). However, despite such claims, the loss of community has rarely been empirically examined in relation to places of consumption (see Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001 as a notable exception). This dissertation is concerned with how people come together to enact

community in commercial establishments. More specifically, this dissertation addresses the enactment of community in a place of consumption.

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to understanding the relationship between leisure, consumption, and community. First, the concept of community is discussed, merging literature from the fields of community psychology, sociology, geography, and leisure studies. Building on the concept of community, consumption is next addressed in relation to the alleged loss of community. Finally, everyday places of leisure consumption are discussed; this section addresses issues of public space, space and place, and third places as pertinent to leisure, consumption, and community.

2.2 COMMUNITY

The embrace of community as a construct, while undoubtedly reflective of very powerful and formative ideas in leisure studies, is premised largely upon unspoken assumptions and vague descriptions. As Lyon (1987) noted, “in the social sciences the most important concepts are often among the most imprecise... in fact... there seems to be an inverse relationship between the importance of a concept and the precision with which it is defined” (p. 4). Although historically, community research has not been overly prominent within leisure studies research (Pedlar & Haworth, 2006), there is no doubt community is becoming an increasingly important and central idea in leisure studies. Indeed, as noted by Glover and Stewart (2006), “community is especially relevant to leisure studies. Building a sense of community and forging social webs are at the very core of leisure provision, leisure participation, and the traditions of leisure research” (p. 325).

In their chapter introducing *Conversations on Community Theory*, Wood and Judikis (2002) suggested that “most of us use the term ‘community’ very loosely, even carelessly” (p. 11). Indeed, the term community and its associated ideas have become common place in research as well as everyday and practical discourse (Glover & Stewart, 2006; Simonson, 1996). The term community, it seems, is addressed by most social science disciplines as if “we all understand the concept in the same way” (Wood & Judikis, 2002, p. 1), yet, as Butcher (1993) suggested, “community, as it has been noted on countless occasions, lacks definitional precision... it is one of those ‘hoorah’ words that seems to encourage warm and positive feelings at the expense of precise and meaningful analysis” (p. 3). In this sense, community is a sentimental, romantic construct; it has generally been examined from a positive or optimistic perspective with little consideration for critical examinations of community and how it may manifest itself (Glover & Stewart, 2006). Community, as a result, has become the basis of research and government policy initiatives, as well as an impetus for change, including social, economic, political, and cultural dilemmas that afflict present day society (Taylor, 2003).

2.2.1 What is Community?

Over the years, community has been studied from various academic perspectives, including sociology, planning, geography, leisure studies, and tourism management. As such, many understandings, theories, and concepts surrounding community currently exist in the related literature and “community” has, therefore, remained “a very elusive construct” (Theodori, 2005, p. 662). In his classic and well-cited source, George Hillery Jr. (1955) attempted to develop a comprehensive and concise definition of community, which included 94 distinct definitions of community in the sociological-related literature

alone. Hillery concluded three common elements existed in the conceptualization of community: 1) spatial consciousness (area), 2) common ties, and 3) social interaction. Although many recent concepts of community have acknowledged the three elements defined by Hillery as essential components of community, considerable debate exists surrounding whether these elements are comprehensive, exclusive, or in line with contemporary understandings of community. Such debates generally surround the necessity of spatial consciousness as an indicator of community.

Theodori (2005) reminded us that community may be defined by two, separate concepts – those communities that are “territory-based” or those that are “territory-free.” Territory-based communities are similar to Hillery’s (1955) conception of community and are based primarily on spatial or geographical features. These communities are also often referred to as “communities of place” (e.g., Pedlar & Haworth, 2006). Conversely, territory-free communities are social groupings with no geographic boundary. These communities are often referred to as “communities of interest,” although in a recent review of the value of online communities Armstrong and Hagel (2000) acknowledged that communities of interest are just one subset of territory-free communities; others include communities of relationships, communities of transaction, and communities of fantasy.

Traditional conceptualizations of community tended to focus on territory-based communities. A central feature of Tönnies’ (1887), Durkheim’s (1893), Simmel’s (1950), and Wirth’s (1938) conceptualizations of community was in the contrast between rural and urban communities. More recently, however, social scholars have begun to direct attention towards territory-free communities. Pedlar and Haworth (2006), for example,

suggested that, in addition to communities of place/space, there are many other kinds of community under examination today, including physical, emotional, psychological, social, and economic communities of interest. Although scholars have historically accepted physical space as an inherent feature of any form of community (Fernback, 1999), industrialization, urbanization, and technological changes have led them to increasingly question this assumption (Wellman & Gulia, 1999). Indeed, spatial consciousness of a community may be less relevant than Hillery (1955) originally imagined. Results from Lysloff's (2003) online ethnography, for example, acknowledged that "online communities...are as 'real' as those offline" (p. 236), suggesting that community is about more than the geographic boundary. Etzioni (1995, 2004) asserted that communities are social entities defined by two compatible, yet distinct elements. First, a community member has a complex interrelationship with other community members that is both reinforcing and supportive. Second, the community members have a commitment to a shared set of values, norms, and meaning. In this sense, virtual communities (Lysloff, 2003), brand communities (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001), and communities of interest (Pedlar & Haworth, 2006) may all exhibit characteristics associated with traditional notions of "community."

How community is defined and empirically examined becomes an important issue for social scientists examining community constructs because the term is often tied to related constructs and discussed as theories of community, such as "sense of community" (McMillan & Chavis, 1986), "community attachment" (Kasarda & Janowitz, 1974), "community satisfaction" (Theodori, 2001), and/or "social capital" (Putnam, 2000). Communities of interest, for example, are an extension of psychological sense of

community. In this sense, the notion that community is an individual sentiment, not necessarily defined by geographic membership, is an important consideration in examinations of sense of community.

Two important considerations pertaining to the examination of community must be acknowledged for the purposes of this study. These are (1) the tendency to view community as either place-based or place-free and (2) the historical inclination to contrast urban and rural communities. In this sense, it may not be beneficial to ask “what is community”, but rather “when is community” and “how is community.” As such, researchers may examine the “when’s” and “how’s” of community, based on the socially constructed relationships within. From this perspective, community is not necessarily a fixed place, space, or object, but occurs when people come together to form relationships based on shared identity, interdependence, and mutual responsibilities, although these relationships may (or may not) be formed around a specific geographic location. Furthermore, community may be created or enacted regardless of the urban or rural characteristics of the place.

Etzioni (1995) asserted that while most social science disciplines have recently begun to acknowledge the importance of the concept of community, thus pondering a definition and concept of the term, community has been a cornerstone of sociological thinking for centuries. He defined community as a group of people who share affective bonds in a culture that is embodied by two characteristics:

- (1) A community entails a web of affect-laden relations among a group of individuals, relations that often crisscross and reinforce one another; and (2)

community requires a commitment to a set of shared values, norms, and meanings, and a shared history and identity in-short, a shared culture. (p. 14)

Unlike other prevalent community definitions and paradigms, such as Park's ecological model of community (Lyon, 1987) or Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft* community distinctions (Tönnies, 1887) Etzioni's conceptualization of community is territory-free. In this sense, various communities can be identified on the basis of commonality, relationships, or self-identification among their members. Community, therefore, can be a spatial location, an occupation, a leisure pursuit or activity, or devotion to a brand or consumption object (McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002).

2.2.2 Community in leisure studies

Community has been examined at the geographic or neighbourhood level, where many researchers claim there has been a loss of community, in general, and decreasing sense of community and social capital (Glynn, 1986; Putnam, 2000), specifically. However, some research suggests that community and sense of community, as well as social capital are not decreasing, but rather interest-based, relational groups, and non-geographically bound communities are satisfying the growing need for community (e.g., Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Accordingly, the “community label” is affixed to a multitude of social forms and groups, geographically bound, or otherwise. Leisure is one such social form.

Arai and Pedlar (2003) argued leisure research and provision primarily concentrated on the individual in the latter years of the 20th Century. They explained that “consumption and individualism came to dominate leisure and recreation research and praxis across modern democratic nations” (p. 185). The dominant focus on issues of

consumption and individualism may be due, in part, to the shift from public provision to privatization and conservatism that dominated leisure practice in the latter half of the 20th Century in most Western nations (Coalter, 2000). Indeed, the academic field of leisure studies is tied heavily to leisure practice. The privatization of leisure resources, along with the expanding leisure economy of the 20th Century, therefore, created a body of research dedicated to private, and often individual, leisure practices (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Coalter, 2000). These trends toward the commercialization and consumption of leisure resources led leisure scholars and practitioners to adopt a “reactive approach, which emphasizes individual choice and autonomy and constrained attempts to develop a framework that moves beyond individualism” (Arai & Pedlar, 2003, p. 186). However, despite a dominant focus on commercialized and individualized leisure pursuits, the roots of leisure research and practice remain tied to, and largely drawn from, public provision and community based research and practice.

Relative to related disciplines, the leisure studies literature embodies a long-standing history of using leisure and recreation opportunities and resources to create community and counter its loss in general society (e.g., Brightbill, 1960). As a result, leisure scholars confront the idea of community from a unique perspective. As Cook (2003) suggested:

Recreation performs the culturally significant work of simultaneously creating and expressing community membership and identity. Recreation and the related social forms of play, games, leisure, and sport do not exist as add-ons or appendices to a community but rather serve as indispensable vehicles for its realization... one doesn't only play “in” community, one plays community into

being time and again. Hence, recreation can be understood as a kind of “re-creation” of social life. (p. 1146)

The recognition of this close link between leisure and recreation participation and community was recognized early in the development of the leisure and recreation profession. Indeed, “in North America, central to the thinking of the early 20th Century reformers such as Jacob Riis, Jane Addams, Joseph Lee, and Luther Gulick, was a belief in the potential of recreation to enrich quality of life” (Arai & Pedlar, 2003, p. 186). As such, the idea of community (more specifically the loss of community) was a major contributor to the rise and success of the Playground Movement, the predecessor to the modern day conception of recreation and leisure studies. Indeed, Glover and Stewart (2006) noted, “recapturing community was the impetus that drove the development of the recreation profession in North America” (p. 317).

The recreation movement was a clear humanitarian response to the social issues caused by city/industrial life (Kelly, 1996). Reformers embraced the idea of constructive leisure to create, nurture, and enhance human development for individuals, families, and communities living in the industrial city. With social reform as a primary goal, settlement houses, voluntary organizations, networks of national, state, and municipal parks, and the Playground Association of America were established in the early years of the 20th Century to improve mental, moral, and overall well-being of urban communities.

While the National Recreation Association was conducting nation-wide surveys to determine how to successfully enable community-based recreation and leisure provision in urban areas, social reform advocates were writing and publishing their observations concerning the benefits of leisure in the industrial city. In their works,

reformers argued that leisure has the capacity to produce moral, spiritual, and character development in youth living in the industrial city (Kelly, 1996). As Johnson and McLean (1994) noted, early provision of public recreation services in North America was intended to “inculcate desirable character traits in both the individual and in the society” (p. 120) and “provide leisure experiences that would have a salutary effect on the moral character of the participants” (p. 117). Early reformers, therefore, sought to establish recreation and leisure pursuits as a method to reconcile the needs of the industrial city with the principles of democracy, community, and social values.

Concerned about the urban environment and the negative impact of industrialization on the social and physical environment, leisure reformers, educators, researchers, and advocates recognized the importance of play and leisure for individual and community development. The early recreation movement helped focus attention on the importance of play, leisure, and public outdoor recreation facilities. Through research and writing, the individuals and organizations involved in the recreation movement expanded the concept of recreation and the importance of leisure-time activities was increasingly recognized (Neumeyer & Neumeyer, 1958). Modern-day recreation and leisure research and practice grew from the need to provide urban residents with constructive, community-based activities. Indeed, recapturing community lost as a result of the industrial revolution and the separation of home and work was a major force behind the development of the recreation profession in North America (Glover & Stewart, 2006). While the pretences under which recreation provision occurs may have changed over the past century, the importance of leisure for community has not diminished.

Historically, parks, leisure, and recreation played a formative role in forwarding the enhancement of community life (Glover & Stewart, 2006). Leisure researchers, however, dedicated a better portion of the 20th Century to studying leisure and recreation from an individual or psychological perspective. Johnson and McLean (1994) noted that although “the traditional concept of recreation as citizenship training still influences present-day recreation practice, it does not have the pervasive acceptance that it once did” (p. 121). Indeed, Driver, Brown, and Peterson’s seminal book *The Benefits of Leisure* (1991) dedicated six chapters to what were termed “sociological measures.” Upon closer examination, just two of the six entries addressed community specifically. While the authors of these chapters acknowledged that the “concept of community remains elusive” (Allen, 1991, p. 331), both focused on community as a group of people living within close proximity to each other (Allen; Marans & Mohai, 1991). Similarly, Jackson and Burton’s edited book *Leisure Studies: Prospects for the 21st Century* (1999) scarcely acknowledged the importance of community to leisure studies (or the importance of leisure to community). A comprehensive collection of leisure scholarship and ideas, the purpose of Jackson and Burton’s work was “to take stock of accomplishments, identify omissions, and chart directions for leisure study and research” (p. xxii). The concept of community, however, remained unexamined throughout the collection.

Despite its roots in community organizing, it has been only recently that leisure researchers have turned their attention away from a normative, and often individualistic, view of community as a geographic or spatially limited area to community as a group of people with a common sense of purpose(s) or interest(s) among its members. In his entry concerning recreation in the *Encyclopedia of Community*, Cook (2003) acknowledged

that “recreation figures centrally in the (re)creation of community because both recreation and community are informed by the twin processes of social affinity and social differentiation” (p. 1146). However, Glover and Stewart (2006) suggested a distinction exists between community *recreation* and *community recreation*. Accordingly, community *recreation* “dominates leisure research insofar as it has tended to focus on recreation programs, activities, events, and their delivery” (p. 318). Conversely, “relationships between groups of people are at the core of *community recreation*” (p. 320). Under this dichotomy, Glover and Stewart (2006) suggested the primary reason for the individualization of leisure and recreation is related research has traditionally been conducted from a psychological perspective. Indeed, leisure research has maintained psychological underpinnings throughout the latter half of the 20th Century (e.g., Coalter, 1999; Mannell & Kleiber, 1997; Neulinger, 1974). However, Arai and Pedlar (2003) suggested leisure and recreation provision and research turned away from community focused to individual centred as a result of the shift from public service offerings to privatization of recreation and leisure services. The consequence, according to Arai and Pedlar “has been to restrict our perception of the social benefits of leisure as a practice to those that are reaped by the individual...and to deemphasize the meaning of leisure to the community” (p. 186). Despite the reason for the shift from the community to the individual in both practice and research, it is impossible to ignore the concept of community as an important issue in present day leisure research and provision. Leisure researchers, as a result, have begun to examine the importance of community to leisure studies. Most recently, for example, *A Handbook of Leisure Studies* featured a chapter on the importance of community in leisure studies (Pedlar & Haworth, 2006).

Recognizing the importance of community among leisure scholars, there is a growing interest to move away from an individual focus and re-evaluate the position of community within leisure studies (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Hemingway, 2006; Mair, 2006; Rojek, 2001; Veal, 1998). Examples of the scholarly integration of community and leisure can be found in a recently published special issue of *Leisure/loisir*, vol. 30, 2006. In recent years, the move to recapture community in leisure has popularized ideas of social capital, civic engagement, sense of community, and civil society. A focus on “community” has become the response to loss of community, decreases in social capital, social exclusion, empowerment, and capitalism.

Notwithstanding a handful of exceptions, leisure scholars often treat the term community as a normative ideal. This treatment is evidenced in such ideas as: building community through leisure, community attachment, sense of community, community development, and social capital. While such normative community research may be credited with producing theories of practice and understandings of community behaviour, leisure researchers have scarcely acknowledged the “contested nature of community” (Glover & Stewart, 2006, p. 325). Cook (2006a), for example, noted that “many writers today who study ‘community’ often fetishize these ideas by invoking notions like *Gemeinschaft* or by calling for a “‘return’ to community” (p. 460). Similarly, Glover and Stewart (2006) noted, “in focusing on community, we believe leisure scholars must be more critical of community, its externalities, and how it manifests itself in leisure contexts” (p. 323). Furthermore, Mair (2006) suggested that in studies of community (community development, specifically) leisure researchers should think critically about social change and improve efforts to advance community-based approaches. In this sense,

leisure researchers must acknowledge all types of communities, including community as place, relational structure, psychological, social construction, or communities of interest (Glover & Stewart, 2006). Arai and Pedlar's (2003) concept of community, for example, is not based solely on membership or place, but also emphasizes interdependence, mutuality, reciprocity, stewardship, and social justice. In their vision of community, Arai and Pedlar suggested that people unite in communal leisure practices. In this sense, social cohesion, openness, inclusion, and acceptance of difference are actualized through leisure as a community of shared meaning. Similarly, Sharpe (2005) introduced leisure studies to Turner's (1969, 1974) concept of *communitas* to describe "anti-structural" communities. *Communitas* captures the feelings of equality, community, togetherness, and unity that may emerge in leisure participation and leisure settings such as music festivals and raves, fantasy baseball, and whitewater rafting trips (Sharpe, 2005).

The concept of community is complex and multifaceted. The study of community has a long-standing history in leisure studies and, as a result, has been approached from various viewpoints and examined by various methods. Community, however, has generally been examined as an option to overcome individualism and difference, or to produce social capital, civic engagement, and mutual identification. Moreover, leisure scholars have evoked a romantic image of community and viewed leisure as a means by which community may be enacted, created, or saved. As a result, some constructs associated with leisure, such as private provision, individual consumption, and commercialization, have been examined as counter-productive for community.

2.3 CONSUMPTION

Many terms and concepts surrounding the purchase and exchange of goods and services exist in the postmodern era. Terms such as commodity, commodification, and consumption all evoke images and understandings associated with the exchange, purchase, sale, or trade of goods and services in capitalist society. While these terms are often used synonymously and ambiguously, subtle and important differences do exist. A commodity, for example, is often described as an item that is bought, sold, or consumed (Glennie, 1998). Schor (2003), however, noted that “a commodity is not only bought and sold... but also produced specifically for the purpose of exchange” (p. 2). Accordingly, commodification is the process of assigning or creating economic value to a commodity or object of consumption (Schor). In this sense, commodities are specifically designed by producers for consumption by consumers. In Keynesian economic terms, therefore, consumption is the total personal expenditure of produced goods and services (e.g., commodities); essentially, consumption is the purchase and use of goods and services (Miles & Paddison, 1998). This research considers consumption as both an economic and cultural process (Lee, 1993; Miles & Paddison). As Zukin (1998) noted, while “consumption still involves the satisfaction of everyday needs, many new urban consumption spaces relate to new patterns of leisure, travel, and culture” (p. 825). In this sense, examinations of consumption and places of consumption recognize that consumer actions and experiences play an important role in creating community and maintaining social worlds (Miles & Paddison).

While perhaps useful for economists or market analysts, prevailing definitions and examinations of consumption as the simple purchase of goods and services do not

consider the sociological, psychological, or cultural aspects associated with consumption. Indeed, interpersonal contact with friends, family, and community members influence a person's patterns and places of consumption. Discussions of consumption, therefore, should also consider the interrelationships that exist among the economic, the social, and the cultural decisions made by consumers (Miles & Paddison, 1998). McCracken (1990), for example, suggested that consumption is largely a cultural phenomenon:

In Western developed societies culture is profoundly connected to and dependant upon consumption. Without consumer goods, modern developed societies would lose key instruments for the reproduction, representation, and manipulation of their culture...the meaning of consumer goods and the meaning creation accomplished by consumer processes are important parts of the scaffolding of our present realities. Without consumer goods, certain acts of self-definition and collective definition in this culture would be impossible. (p. xi)

Viewed from this cultural perspective, studies of consumption must necessarily take into consideration the ways in which consumer goods and services are purchased and used (Miles & Paddison). In this sense, motivations for the purchase of consumer goods are as important as the commodification process, itself. Given sociological and cultural considerations and informed by a social constructivist perspective, for the purposes of this research, consuming is viewed as a type of social and cultural action in which people purchase and use consumption objects (including goods and services) in various ways (Holt, 1995, cf. Simmel, 1950).

Market based, selling, buying, and trading, has existed since antiquity. These actions are defined by society's desire and need to consume both products and services.

Despite recent recognition that individuals' consumption experiences are imperative in the formation of social worlds, community, and social self (e.g., McCracken, 1990; Miles & Paddison, 1998) consumption is often addressed (and criticized) in relation to issues and concepts surrounding modernity and post-modernity. To be sure, philosophical treatments of consumption date back to the industrial revolution and the rise of capitalism and modernity. The disdain for mass culture, consumption, and production is connected to the values of sociologists, philosophers, and intellectuals of the early 20th Century who criticized modernism, high culture, and consumption. These sentiments have had a profound and continuing impact on political, cultural, and philosophical analysis. Karl Marx, for example, is widely cited for his critiques of capitalism; his famous work, *Das Kapital*, began with a focus on, and criticism of, consumption and commodities (Gottdiener, 2000). Marx discussed consumption in relation to production. To Marx, consumption is inseparable from production and production is inseparable from consumption, "that is, in producing objects, material and human energies are always consumed; while in consuming objects, some aspect of the consumer is produced" (Ritzer et al., 2001, p. 411). Marx, however, suggested that in the capitalist system the working class become alienated because they work for wages alone, not for the value of work itself. In this sense, for Marx, factory-based capitalism and ensuing consumption is a system of domination and manipulation (Langman, 1992). Though Marx's political theory has been heavily critiqued over the past hundred years, many of his ideas and philosophies remain prevalent in present-day assessments of consumer culture.

Marx, however, is not alone in his early analysis of capitalist-based consumption and production. Thorstein Veblen, in his 1899 commentary on consumer culture, *The*

Theory of the Leisure Class, coined the term “conspicuous consumption” to describe consumption that is motivated by an attempt to advertise wealth. Similar to Marx, Veblen criticized consumption as a means to gain and indicate social status, thus “chaining the individual to a lifetime of meaningless activity; that is, activity that does not contribute to the moral worth of the individual or society” (Rojek, 1995, p. 73). Although Veblen identified the “new leisure class” as the American *nouveaux riches* who emulated lifestyles of the upper-class through consumption behaviours, the social significance of consumption has been virtually ignored by leisure scholars. Perhaps the first sociologist to recognize the “significance of consumption in its own right” (Miles & Paddison, 1998, p. 817) and one of the first contributors to leisure theory, Veblen’s *Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) is often neglected in discussions of individualism, consumption, community, and leisure (Rojek, 1995).

Influenced by early social theory, it remains common to view consumption as a threat to social order (Ritzer et al., 2001) and community (Shields, 1992). Such sentiment may be related to ideas associated with postmodernism. Cova (1997) noted, “the idea of the present as postmodern is now firmly on the agenda for debate” (p. 298) and while there is controversy over whether the postmodern era actually exists (Mansvelt, 2005; Slater, 1997) there is little doubt that Western society has at least extended beyond modernity. Glennie and Thrift (1992) noted that the identification of postmodernity rests on many processes connected to consumption, including commodification and social division, and is critical of consumption practices. Indeed, commodification and “commodity fetishism” are inherent in almost all aspects of everyday postmodern life (Mansvelt, 2005, p. 44) and are closely connected to acts and places of consumption.

Baudrillard (1983) argued that in the postmodern era commodities are characterized by their sign-value, as opposed to their use- and exchange-value alone. Similar to Veblen, for Baudrillard, society is organized around consumption and the display of commodities through which individuals gain prestige, identity, and status (Kellner, 2008). In this sense, purchased commodities can be used as signs by individuals to signal either individuality or commonality with others because identity is closely related to what and how people purchase and consume commodities (Mansvelt, 2005).

The increasing division between individuals and groups is often examined as a consequence of changes in consumption in a postmodern epoch (Mansvelt, 2005, p. 46). In this sense, products are produced and purchased with the specific intent of creating diversity. The maintenance of social divisions created by consumer products ensures continued growth of niche markets (Glennie & Thrift, 1992). Criticizing postmodern consumptive practices, Bauman (1990) noted, “communities of consumption replace real community... public life gives way to organized commercial spectacles” (p. 204). Bauman’s sentiment remains prevalent in the social science literature – simply, consumption and community are incompatible. Such sentiment remains prevalent in the sociology and leisure literature.

2.3.1 Leisure, Consumption, and the (Alleged) Loss of Community

Drawing on research and ideas from related fields, such as planning, geography, and sociology, leisure researchers have combined leisure theory with communitarianism (Arai & Pedlar, 2003), Third Way (Pedlar, 2006), community development (Mair, 2006), social capital (Glover, 2006), and consumption (Whitson, 2006) to advance the concept of community within leisure studies. This shift in our understanding of “community”, and

associated ideas, within leisure studies may be related to an underlying assumption that individualism, consumption, and market competitiveness are directly responsible for the loss of community in modern society. Indeed, Studdert (2005) suggested that the notion of a crisis in community is based upon a number of factors including: a perceived decline in voluntary association (Putnam, 2000), a growing cynicism towards political and social institutions (Putnam, 2000), a pervasive disenchantment with institutional politics (Giddens, 1998), a rise in socially damaging neoliberal individualism (Bauman, 1996; Sennett, 1998), and the destruction of traditional industrial communities because of the success of globalization (Rifkin, 1995; Sullivan, 1990). The leisure literature, heavily based on normative theory and paradigms, remains critical of consumption, yet continues to praise community. This contrast may be due, in part, to the notion that, until recently, few leisure scholars and leisure practitioners have adopted a community perspective. In this sense, a false dichotomy exists where private leisure provision is (negatively) associated with individualism, consumption, and commercial activity and public leisure provision is (positively) associated with community, freedom, social capital, and active citizenship (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Coalter, 1998).

Kelly (1987) described individuals' leisure connection to the economy and consumption products as "commodity fetishism." Framing consumption and production as the antithesis to leisure as freedom, Kelly suggested, "leisure has become distorted by such 'commodification' so that it is not a domain of freedom and becoming but an instrument of economic and political control" (p. 184). In this way, Kelly reinforced the prevalent dichotomy in leisure studies whereby leisure is associated with something "real" and intrinsically motivated, thus suggesting that leisure based in consumption is

not a true or “real” experience. Indeed, Kelly suggested that because of “commodity fetishism” leisure based in production and consumption can not be “real freedom” (p. 184). Similar rhetoric remains prevalent in the leisure literature and among leisure scholars (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Hemingway, 1996).

From Marx (1867) to Veblen (1899) and from Kelly (1987) to Arai and Pedlar (2003) sociologists and leisure scholars alike have criticized consumption as a fundamental challenge to the enactment of community. Cook (2006a) argued that “the tendency to view consumer society as an outright and necessary hindrance to realizing community rests on a thin, stylized conception of consumption as essentially an individual act” (p. 457). Cook views the connection between consumption (and postmodern thought) and the loss of community as essentialist. The result, he suggested, is “the veneration of leisure, the fetishization of community and the vilification of consumption” (p. 456) with little or no regard for the consequences of the adoration of community and leisure at the expense of consumption and associated notions.

The concept of community is often situated in critiques of modernity. Many early sociologists viewed consequences of modern thought, behaviour, and development patterns as not only a challenge to community, but also a direct cause of the loss of community (e.g., Tönnies, 1887; Wirth, 1938). Furthermore, associated concepts of modernity such as, commerce, consumption, and capitalism are often implicated in the loss of community. As a result, community and the loss of community has been studied, examined, and critiqued extensively since the late 19th Century and the rise of consumer society (e.g., Bellah, 1985; Durkheim, 1893; Marx, 1867; Putnam, 2000; Simmel, 1950, Tönnies, 1887). With his publication *Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft* (Community and

Society), Ferdinand Tönnies (1887) began early efforts to define community and conceptualize its importance in human society. Tönnies' early theory of community contrasted rural and urban communities. Under Tönnies' conceptualization, rural areas, associated with *Gemeinschaft*, harboured a sense of respect for the individual regardless of social status, while urban industrial societies (*Gesellschaft*) perpetuated emotional disengagement and inhibited social bonding (Lyon, 1987). In this way, rural villages, Tönnies explained, created continuing connections of kinship, friendship, and neighbourhood (all imperative to community). Associated with industrial society and modernity, *Gesellschaft* is a social organization in which members possess weak ties and are primarily motivated by self-interest. Tönnies further argued that individuals residing in urban societies are motivated by individualized needs and desires, with little or no concern for the well being of the greater "community."

The processes of modernity are complex and diverse, but it is generally agreed that the 19th Century witnessed the climax of the profound changes that created the modern era (Clarke, 1997). These changes included the rise of capitalism, individualism, and urbanization. As such, commerce (the driving force behind modernity) and advancing consumer culture were (and continue to be) implicated for the loss of community, social cohesion, and public space. Indeed, as noted by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001), "the growing centrality of the individual consumer and his or her growing materialistic desires were (and are) said to be part and parcel of the loss of community" (p. 413). This conviction, originating in the late 19th Century remains prominent in sociological discourse today and is based on the assumption that something more natural

and real (i.e., community) is being replaced by depersonalized, mass produced commodities – all features of modern society (Muniz & O’Guinn, 2001).

Historically, community was almost always invoked with a halo around it – community was an unequivocal good, an indicator of high quality of life, it was associated with social cohesion, caring, and selflessness and was contrasted with individualism, alienation, and self interest. Despite the positive aspects, some scholars warned against accepting community and related ideas without critically examining its potential weaknesses. In the context of public health, Labonte (2005) suggested that community may be “romanticized in a way that can obscure real and important power inequities among different communities that may subtly imperil the health and well-being of less powerful groups” (p. 85). Communitarians acknowledge that different communities may hold conflicting ideas and beliefs (Etzioni, 1998), yet there exists an assumption “that these differences will not clash with each other” (Taylor, 2003, p. 52). Despite recent criticism of community as inherently beneficial (e.g., Taylor, 2003), it was in the capacity of “community as good” that the connection between community and consumption was first wrought in the sociological literature in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Early scholars, such as Weber, Marx, Durkheim, and Tönnies viewed the acts of consumption and industrial production as a threat to the social order of the day. Weber (1904), for example, viewed consumption as a threat to Protestant ethics (cited in Ritzer, Goodman, & Wiedenhoft, 2001). Indeed, Williams (1982) suggested “that almost all the social philosophers writing about the rise of mass consumption in late nineteenth-century France saw consumption as primarily an individual phenomenon that threatened social order” (cited in Ritzer et al., 2001, p. 411). Yet, despite such early criticisms, mass

consumption and production continued and democratic, western nations became all but dependent on the capitalist framework envisioned by Adam Smith. As a result, leisure opportunities and leisure pursuits became highly commercialized and consumption based.

2.3.2.1 Leisure and consumption

From amusement parks to casinos and from athletic complexes to shopping malls, leisure time, leisure space, and leisure activities are largely associated with consumption. As Lippke (2001) noted, even forms of leisure that are not commercially produced are increasingly accompanied by factors associated with consumption. For many, the highlight of a visit to a museum, national park, or historic district, is the souvenir shop where trinkets and gifts representing the visit may be purchased. Even the tourist experience itself is defined by consumption insofar as the individual is paying for goods and services to experience a new culture. Indeed, most leisure and recreation pursuits involve necessary acts of consumption (e.g., specialized equipment and clothing or transportation).

From an historical perspective, consumption has played a unique role in post-industrial leisure opportunities and provision. Indeed, consumptive practices have dominated most recreation and leisure pursuits in the modern era. The history of consumption in the leisure literature, however, has been virtually forgotten and/or ignored (see Butsch, 1990; Cook, 2006a as notable exceptions). Rarely critically examined (Rojek, 1995), yet widely celebrated, Veblen's (1899) *The Theory of the Leisure Class* provides a logical foundation for discussions of consumption as it relates to leisure (Cook, 2006b). Veblen's critical theories of consumerism suggested individuals engage in leisure exclusively to display social status outwardly. While it can hardly be

argued that a similar leisure class exists today, for leisure scholars Veblen's work and discussions of consumption linked together "leisure and consumption from the outset as expressive activities" (Cook, 2006b, p. 307). In this way, Veblen's work negatively positioned the use of consumption commodities as a method to enact status competition, create social distinction, promote alienation, and emulate the behaviour of others. Yet despite general recognition that most leisure pursuits involve some form of consumptive product, leisure is "often conceptualized... as an escape from the vicissitudes of productive life" and as a result "the relationship between leisure and consumption is decidedly one-sided" (Cook, 2006b, p. 304). Instead, leisure scholars have exhibited a tendency to romanticize the community aspects of the Playground and Settlement House movements and not-for-profit and public leisure provision. Indeed, a focus on leisure as emancipatory action (Hemingway, 1996; 1999), participatory democracy (Stormann, 1993), and community development (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 1997; 2003) remains prevalent in the leisure literature. In North America, however, prior to public and not-for-profit providers of leisure, only commercial leisure providers existed (Cross, 1990). Activities such as theatre, gambling, drinking, circuses, and fairs, for example, were common commercialized, consumption-based, activities provided for the amusement and entertainment of all social classes by the 1800s.

As discussed, settlement houses provided community-oriented, not-for-profit recreation programs in working class, immigrant, and urban neighbourhoods. Settlement houses often provided the only recreation facilities and programs available in industrialized, working-class neighbourhoods. Indeed, the settlement house may be considered the first not-for-profit leisure provider in North America. Leaders of the

movement fought for public funding of playgrounds and often formed their own recreational facilities and programs. During the same period (e.g., 1890 to 1920), however, changes in the American economy significantly altered the everyday lives and leisure pursuits of most working class North Americans. Created by the industrial revolution, highly mechanized manufacturing processes allowed the mass production and distribution of consumer goods (Cross, 1990). A never-before-seen flood of consumable leisure products entered the marketplace – from automobiles to bicycles and hockey sticks to toy dolls – creating the first generation with relatively easy access to mass produced consumer goods (Cross). Women and youth entered the workforce, at what were considered alarming rates, all in an effort to fuel the capitalist machine and acquire consumer goods – many of these goods, of course, were leisure goods.

Over time working class populations began to distance themselves from traditional, community-based social events and instead began to patronize new, consumptive-based leisure services and entertainments such as amusement parks, dance halls, and movie theatres (Cross, 1990). Despite the growing middle-class and the ability of these individuals to emulate the upper-class, class struggles ensued. Indeed, Butsch (1990) noted, “changes in the economic, political, and cultural landscape in the nineteenth century gradually eroded the patterns of traditional authority and supplanted them with class conflict” (p. 11). Upper-class Victorians, for example, criticized the working class who commonly displayed an uninhibited demeanour toward others and indulged in the pleasures of modern life and commodity driven leisure and recreation. Commercial amusements and leisure pursuits, in particular, were condemned as immoral and corrupting influences. The early Park Movement grew largely from this disdain for

commercial activity and was a response to what was viewed as the breakdown of the traditional community. In this sense, there has historically been a tension between leisure, the market, and its alleged disdain of community. While the Parks and Recreation Movement is often credited as giving rise to modern day leisure scholarship and practice, leisure has always maintained a private, commercial aspect. In this way, a public-private, citizen-consumer dichotomy has always existed within leisure scholarship and practice.

Building on the historical and general disdain for consumption as it relates to leisure pursuits and practices and questioning the issue of relevance in leisure research and practice, Arai and Pedlar (2003) recently challenged leisure scholars to examine communitarianism as a means by which recreation and leisure may enhance community life. In their call for a communitarian perspective, Arai and Pedlar argued that, while ideals surrounding community and public good drove the development of the recreation profession in North America, the study of leisure evolved to focus on individualism stressing independence, autonomy, and personal benefits and constraints. As a result, leisure scholars (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Parr & Lashua, 2004) continue to argue that public leisure service delivery and research has promoted individualism and consumption at the expense of community.

While the critiques associated with postmodern consumptive practices and the rural-urban continuum, expressed by Tönnies (1887) and his contemporaries, continue to play a major role in the study of community and consumption, modern life is not completely devoid of “*Gemeinschaft*” opportunities. Instead, leisure and social scholars have been, until recently, inhibited by a focus that leisure, community, culture, and consumption conflict rather than converge (Cook, 2008; Slater, 2002). Indeed, Cook

(2008) noted, “the economic perspectives on markets and exchange leave no space wherein culture, meaning, sentiment and everyday practice can be brought to bear on the study of social life” (p. 2). In a society typically characterized by an impersonal, ephemeral population, occasions exist in places of consumption for interpersonal involvement between and among individuals, thus creating diverse communities within (post)modern society. These opportunities, consumptive in nature, often occur during leisure time in everyday places of living, including third places, urban parks, shopping malls, markets, back yards, and front yards.

2.3.3 Consumption Communities

In their paper introducing the concept of the “Third Place”, Ray Oldenburg and his colleague Dennis Brissett suggested that “much recent social commentary has focused on a general malaise among the American people” (1982, p. 265). More than 25 years have passed and similar rhetoric remains. Notably, Putnam (1995, 2000) argued that there is a diminishing sense of community in the United States. He suggested that the depletion of social capital has created a society where individuals are less connected with one another and their community. As previously discussed, however, new types of community may be forming in the postmodern epoch and it is not unreasonable to suggest that perhaps people are joining these groups instead of the civic groups whose membership declines have been lamented by Putnam (Mansvelt, 2005). Expressing his concerns about industrialization and urbanization and lamenting the loss of community within the United States, Etzioni (1993) recognized this possibility:

There are new, nongeographic communities made up of people who do not live near one another. Their foundations may not be as stable and deep-rooted as

residential communities, but they fulfill many of the social and moral functions of traditional communities. (p. 121)

In this sense, non-traditional forms of community are prevalent in (post)modern society.

Indeed McAlexander et al. (2002) noted that, “with no more than a cursory look at contemporary society, we can identify communities whose primary bases of identification are either brands or consumption activities” (p. 38). These communities are often based on shared interests of almost any product, brand, or philosophical idea.

In an effort to defend consumption as a possible contributor to community, Cook (2006a) suggested that leisure scholars have only examined consumption through an individualistic framework, “consisting of hedonistic, corporate inspired acts of individual pleasure-seeking, consumption” (p. 457). From this perspective, according to Cook, “leisure as consumption...is clearly counter to any sense of community (or community in leisure)” (p. 457). Instead, Cook acknowledged that consumption practices may be self-indulgent and individualistic (as argued by Arai & Pedlar, 2003), but also that consumption may be done for others’ benefit, as an altruistic act. From this standpoint, it is the context in which consumption occurs that distinguishes it as an individual or communal act. Put simply, not all consumption is good for community, not all consumption is bad for community.

Although relatively unexplored in the leisure literature, the idea of communities based on consumption is not new. In his discussion of community versus society, Gusfield (1978) noted that while society is composed of deliberately formed associations for the rational achievement of mutual goals, communities are naturally developed forms of association which have intrinsic and non-logical values to them. In this sense,

members of a community feel a connection to other members based on who or what they do as individuals – where and what is consumed may act as this connection. Indeed, Muniz and O’Guinn’s (2001) work on brand communities highlighted a “specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand” (p. 412) – a consumption good.

In their discussion of “new consumption communities,” Szmigin and Carrigan (2003) highlighted a continuum that represents the dominance of marketing values that exist in postmodern society. “Branding”, which remains the dominant paradigm in the market, is at one end, while “community” takes position at the opposite end. The “community” end of the continuum represents “new consumption communities.” While Szmigin and Carrigan were not necessarily critiquing “branding” as a dominant marketing paradigm (and image creator), the authors suggested that some consumers do, indeed, focus on how the items they consume are actually produced. Borrowing from Muniz and O’Guinn’s (2001) work on brand communities, Szmigin and Carrigan suggested there is a shared component among members of consumption communities. These shared components incorporate similar notions to Etzioni’s (1995) conception of community, including:

- a) A consciousness of kind: a collective sense of connection to the brand (or place) but more importantly to one another;
- b) Shared rituals and traditions: that come about through shared consumption experiences and help to form and maintain the culture of the community; and
- c) A sense of moral responsibility: this is a sense of duty to the community and to the members of that community. (p. 8)

In this respect, Muniz and O'Guinn argued that "it is no longer a requisite to believe that members of society are of necessity more lost or homeless in their consciousness simply because the social organizing objects in question happen to be commercial" (p. 415).

From this perspective, communities of consumption not only exist, but symbolic consumption may well serve as the beginnings of new social movements.

In his chapter outlining consumption as a form of social exchange through which community is actualized, Shields (1992) suggested:

Many consumers are now ironic, knowing shoppers, conscious of the inequalities of exchange and the arbitrary nature of exchange value...As social actors, they attempt to consume the symbolic values of objects...while avoiding the inequalities of exchange. They resort to browsing through stores as leisure practice, shoplifting, the purchase of cheaper imitations...and by reclaiming the sites of consumption through a crowd practice which returns these (usually private) spaces to the public sphere of market square and street behaviour. (p. 99-100)

Indeed, it may be misguided to suggest that individuals remain passive consumers, easily persuaded by empty marketing campaigns and advertising gimmicks, which essentially equate to normative rhetoric.

In his work concerning consuming places, Urry (1995) suggested that people interpret and interact with places of consumption in a variety of ways and as a result these places may be resisted, subverted, or accepted. For example, "mallingering," (Kowinski, 1985, p. 26) the act of lingering in a mall for economic or non-economic social purposes has become the focus of sociological research (e.g., Hopkins, 1991). In this sense,

individuals who do not purchase consumer goods, but use a place of consumption to socialize and “mallinger” challenge the dominant discourses of consumerism – that is, that consumption and its link to specific places (i.e., a mall) is an individualistic act and inherently bad for community (Hopkins, 1991; Mansvelt, 2005).

Consumption is indeed a medium through which people can create and exhibit their individual and communal identities. Although a harsh critic of consumption-based practices, Bourdieu’s (1984) work suggested that identities may be formed through the purchase of commodities. Bourdieu (1984) focused on the “identity value” of commercial goods to indicate how differences and similarities are enacted through processes of consumption. His central concept, *habitus*, is a structure of dispositions (classifications, rules, expectations) that predisposes the individual to certain choices and actions. *Habitus* is learned through family and community experiences of class structure. Consumption is a means by which “symbolic codes of stylized behaviour” (Shields, 1992, p. 14) may be expressed. Like Veblen (1899), Bourdieu believed that consumption is social. Accordingly, consumption practices may be used to indicate and reproduce status, class, and community. Thus, consumption becomes important in maintaining the basic structures of power and inequality in the capitalist, neoliberal society (Schor, 1999). Given Bourdieu’s argument, consumption encompasses more than an individual act; it has the potential to make and create community.

Rooted in the work of Maffesoli (1996), the concept of neo-tribalism argues that society is actually experiencing a decline in individualism (Muniz & O’Guinn, 2001). Accordingly, neo-tribalists argue society is composed of small collections of individualists – “the ‘little masses’ of Maffesoli’s analysis are heterogeneous fragments,

the remainders of mass consumption society, groups distinguished by their members' shared lifestyles and tastes (Shields, 1996, p. x). Often unstable, such neo-tribes, according to Maffesoli (1996), are characterized by fluidity, intermittent meetings, and dispersion. Unlike conventional, territory-based communities neo-tribes are not clearly definable in spatial terms, however, community dimensions are maintained in a local sense of identification, religiosity, syncretism, and group narcissism (Cova, 1997).

Generally, consumption communities are sustained around a sense of community (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001) and may be developed through a shared interest, such as local food production, a specific brand, or engagement in an organized "buycott" (Friedman, 1996). Although more often situated around other attributes of community such as "consciousness of kind" (Szmigin & Carrigan, 2003), consumption communities may be based on spatial attributes. Indeed, most consumption communities maintain a spatial component, although the physical space is not usually what the community is formed around. Muniz and O'Guinn's study of brand communities revealed that while the communities were formed based on loyalty to Saab cars or Macintosh computers, club meetings were often attended in a spatial setting (as opposed to a virtual setting). These spaces are often "everyday places" of consumption, such as car dealership parking lots, a community member's home, or a local restaurant.

2.4 EVERYDAY PLACES OF LEISURE AND CONSUMPTION

Much of the initial work on places of consumption and leisure spaces has focused on visible and spectacular places (Mansvelt, 2005). The characteristics of these places including theme parks, casinos, hotel complexes, and major sporting events, are

disconnected from “wider social spheres, centred around leisure, consuming and simulation, regulated by disciplinary technologies of surveillance, gatekeeping and crowds” (Mansvelt, 2005, p. 59). Ritzer (2005) referred to these places as “enchanted spaces” or “cathedrals of consumption – that is they are structured... to have an enchanted, sometimes even sacred, religious character” (p. 7). Similarly, in the leisure literature, the contexts in examinations of place (including place attachment and sense of place) are often grandiose, such as national parks and modern tourist attractions.

Although Thrift (1997) noted, “we live in places” (p. 160), in examinations of these constructs little consideration has been given to everyday spaces and places such as backyards, local parks, and the home (see Havitz, 2007; Stokowski, 2002 as notable exceptions). Studies of community, therefore, must necessarily consider everyday places of living, leisure, and consumption.

More than consumption and the act of consumption, this research is about *places* of consumption. I argue here, that the everyday places, spaces, and geographies of consumption are increasingly important to consumer society and community, in general. Mansvelt (2005) noted that buying, using, and disposing of commodities connects us to other people and places. Similarly, Mort (1998) suggested that consumers should not be examined in relation to the act of consumption alone because the extended networks through which consumption goods travel and the cultural and social rituals associated with consumption are also important in sociological inquiry. In this sense, space and place are not “passive backdrops to human relations” (Mort, 1998, p. 891) but are imperative in the formation of the social self, individual, and community (Mort, 1995; 1998; Shields, 1992). Thrift (1997) summarized:

...people mean places. But, in turn, places also mean people. Places form a reservoir of meanings which people can draw upon to tell stories about and thereby define themselves. Thus place and identity are inexorably linked. (p. 160)

In this sense, the growing importance of everyday places of consumption should be given greater attention in the sociological and leisure literature. Indeed, while it is readily acknowledged that consumption often takes place in space, it is also important to consider that place is produced through matters of consumption.

In his edited work on consumption and everyday life, Hugh Mackay (1997) suggested that the term “everyday” is complex and used with various meanings. It may be assumed, however, that a focus on “everyday places” is related to a focus on ordinary places. In this sense if “everyday life is characterized by small, local communities, with close emotional ties, connectedness between people, caring, spontaneity, immediacy, participation and collaboration” (p. 7), then it stands to reason that ‘everyday places’ are those areas that encourage such interactions.

2.4.1 Space and Place

Most leisure opportunities, leisure pursuits, and acts of consumption are inherently spatial. It is generally recognized that many of the social and contextual factors deemed to be important and influential in determining leisure behaviour, leisure preferences, and often community, incorporate a spatial perspective (Marans & Mohai, 1991; Smale, 1985, 1995). Though historically, social researchers have given the appearance of not being interested in space (Gieryn, 2000), there is no doubt that today leisure researchers are struggling with the incorporation of space and place in treatments of social constructs (e.g., Gieryn, 2000; Mowl & Towner, 1995; Nicholls, 2001). Indeed,

Smale (2006) noted, “only relatively recently has place, and to a lesser extent space, been considered in the leisure studies literature as an important contextual factor influencing behaviour, shaping perceptions, and defining experiences” (p. 370). Smale (2006) continued by acknowledging that place is important because “it facilitates the realisation of human capacity, which ultimately, we strive to celebrate and understand” (p. 380). It must be acknowledged, therefore, that if we seek to understand leisure, community, and consumption, we must also consider the spatial context in which these concepts are pursued.

The distinctions between space and place are also important to consider. In this respect, it has been argued that geographic location maintains both absolute and relative dimensions (Relph, 1981; Tuan, 1977). Considered to be absolute, space has physical and objective boundaries. Space can be systematically measured, it has specific limits, and can be identified as a physical property on a map or in person. Alternatively, place is considered to be relative. The dimensions of place are subjective; they are perceived and socially constructed (Mowl & Towner, 1995). Rather than space (and physical geographic location), it is place that is central to community research. While space is commonly associated with distance, direction, size, and shape and is isolated from cultural and social interpretation (Gieryn, 2000; Hillier & Hanson, 1984), place is interpreted, understood, perceived, felt, and imagined (Soja, 1996). Understanding the way communities and individuals perceive and experience different spaces and places will result in a more complete and contextual representation of consumption and its relation to community. To be sure, recognition that social behaviour is related to space and place is important in understanding how individuals and communities “act and react

to the different socio-cultural settings in which they perceive themselves to be” (Mowl & Towner, 1995, p. 103). Understanding everyday community life and its relation to consumption, therefore, means understanding the natural and built environment in which a network of people may be situated.

2.4.2 Public Space

As already noted, for much of the 20th century the “loss of community” dominated sociological thought about consumption and public places in urban areas. For classical philosophers such as Marx and Durkheim, the transformation to an urban, industrialist society coincided with the loss of community life. In this sense, the emergence of modern society “inevitably meant a decline in the significance of local forms of social organization and a concomitant erosion of both social and sentimental ties to place” (Hummon, 1990, p. 11). In *Urbanism as a Way of Life* (1938), Wirth argued that increasing “numbers of population, density of settlement, (and) heterogeneity of inhabitants” creates an individual whose collective notion is replaced by “competition and formal control mechanisms” (p. 191). From Marx (1887) to Wirth (1938) and Jacobs (1961) to Sennett (1992) discussions of urban alienation and “loss of community” are often related to both the privatization of public space and consumption. While the rise of consumption and commercialization is often held responsible for the loss of community, in general (as discussed), the decline in collective activity (e.g., community) and the rise of consumption are also implicated in the demise of public space, and urban public space, in particular. In this way, these constructs are all inextricably linked. This section outlines the relationship between consumption and the loss of public space (or the privatization of public space). Through the examination of “third places,” I argue that in quasi-public

spaces, where consumption activities maintain a primary role, community life may be enacted, enhanced, and/or created. Furthermore, it is not a coincidence that the context for this discussion is urban public spaces. As noted, there is a long standing belief in the sociological literature that rural areas harbour community, while urban areas suppress community (e.g., Tönnies, 1887; Wirth, 1938). To the contrary, however, this research, suggests that community may be enacted, enhanced, and created in urban areas.

People and places are interrelated and inseparable and more often than not it is public places that are acknowledged as creating this interrelationship. Yet, public places are increasingly viewed as threatened by the forces of modernization and as a result, social scholars have lamented the loss of public space for years. Scholars have associated the loss of public space with globalization, neoliberalism, consumption, and capitalism (Taylor, 2003) – the characteristics commonly connected to modern industrial society. Friedmann (1987), for example, suggested public streets must be recovered for use by people because “their place is being taken by private shopping malls” (p. 373). Some scholars have further argued that under the current system, citizens have been reduced to consumers – “public space has been privatized and evacuated” (Taylor, 2003, p. 7), thus reducing sense of community through privatization of public places and the creation of consumption spaces. For Sennett (1992), public space is “not only a region of social life located apart from the realm of family and close friends, but also...the realm of acquaintances and strangers” (cited in Goheen, 1998, p. 479). Others define public space as an unconstrained space where political movements can organize and expand into wider arenas (Mitchell, 1992) or as areas of “open space for recreation and entertainment, subject to usage by an appropriate public that is *allowed* in” (Mitchell, 1995, p. 115).

Regardless of how public space is defined, there is no doubt that “public space in the modern city is charged with meaning and controversy” (Goheen, 1998, p. 479).

For Berman (1986), “implicit in our basic democratic rights...is the right to public space” (p. 477). Despite this conviction, public space is increasingly viewed as a commodity. Indeed, Mansvelt (2005) suggested that changes in consumption over the past century have created changes in social-spatial relations. In recent years, for example, the increase of quasi-public space, constructed and controlled by private enterprises, have become commonplace in North American cities (Byers, 1998). “The types of businesses and the price of goods found in such places often eliminate many groups of people based on interest and affordability...Quasi-public spaces often encourage social homogeneity, because they are subtly coded for middle- and upper-middle-class consumers while screening out low-income and minority populations” (Byers, p. 189). Byers noted pedestrian grade separated systems (such as skyways and tunnels) as examples of such quasi-public spaces, however, such spaces also come in the form of malls, entertainment venues, recreation complexes, and restaurants.

An often cited critique of urbanism is that it suffers from an absence of public life because of the disappearance of public space (Krieger, 1995). Indeed, public space and public leisure spaces, in particular, are valued because they are viewed as important in the process of creating citizen involvement (Warpole, 1997), citizenship, and community. Public parks, for example, are a practical resource used everyday that all community and neighbourhood residents can (presumably) easily access. Therefore, parks and other public places often function as forums for community involvement and regeneration (McInroy, 2000). Furthermore, public places help create a sense of place, sense of

belonging, and place attachment for local neighbourhood residents (Low & Altman, 1992). Critics who regret the loss of public places in contemporary urban cities (e.g., Byers, 1998; Mitchell, 1995; Sennett, 1977; Zukin, 1995), however, are often more concerned about the loss of the *public sphere*, in general, as opposed to the reduction of physical spaces for the enactment of community, citizenship, and democracy.

Habermas (1989) introduced the concept of the “public sphere” as a domain separate from government and economy where public opinion can be formed and is open and accessible to all. Mackay (1997) described it as “the place where people come together to form a public – dealing with matters of general interest and developing ‘public opinion’” (p. 291). Habermas (1989) suggested three criteria must exist in the public sphere. In his words, areas “may have differed in the size and compositions of their publics, the style of their proceedings, the climate of their debates, and their topical orientations,” however... “they are all organized discussion among people that tended to be ongoing” (p. 36). Accordingly, the criteria he identified are: disregard of status, domain of common concern, and inclusivity. Combined, the three criteria create the public sphere. In this sense, while *public space* is the physical space utilized by the general public, the *public sphere* is a social space where discussions inherent in democratic societies occur. Habermas, however, lamented the decline of the public sphere due to consumer culture and mass media outlets. To Habermas, the public sphere has been replaced “by a media which is not a forum for public opinion, by politicians working in soundbites, and by public relations” (Mackay, 1997, p. 291). In this sense, according to Habermas (1989), the growth of consumer culture limits the use of the public sphere.

Critics of Habermas have argued that the public sphere assumes a homogenous public who maintain similar viewpoints. Young (1990), for example, suggested that truly public places are active media for the exercise of human relations, where citizens encounter strangers with diverse interests, opinions, and perspectives. In this way, ideal types of public places rarely exist. Goheen (1998), for example, noted that public space is:

[space] which the public collectively values – space to which it attributes symbolic significance and asserts claims. The values attaching to public space are those with which the generality of the citizenry endows it. Citizens create meaningful public space by expressing their attitudes, asserting their claims and using it for their own purposes. It thereby becomes a meaningful public resource.

(p. 479)

By this definition, however, public space may consist of consumption-based activities. Accordingly, the dichotomy between public and private space should be viewed as a continuum, rather than exclusive definitions. Indeed, Krieger (1995) has noted that despite the tendency to view community places as either “public” or “not”... “there are many thresholds for public intercourse.”

Although you are there at the management’s discretion, many citizens may feel more comfortable in a private shopping mall than in a public library. In a mall, one can walk and stroll and sit and dine. One can gaze, preen, and flirt. The hours are good. You can go there on weekends. In the most sophisticated malls you can visit your dentist and, soon, surely pay your real-estate taxes or renew your driver’s license. In a public library, by contrast, one has to be quiet. (p. 76)

While it was not Krieger's intent to support malls over libraries, the argument certainly challenges the public nature of seemingly private places and the tendency to view community places or public spaces as inclusive and accessible.

In describing the public and private characteristics of goods and services, Savas (1987) argued that all goods and services can be classified based on the exclusion and consumption characteristics of the product or service. On one hand, exclusionary products or services are those where the potential user may be excluded from their use unless he/she meets the necessary conditions: "in other words, the goods can change hands only if both the buyer and the seller agree on the terms" (p. 35). On the other hand, consumption refers to whether or not consumption of the product by one individual prevents consumption of the same product by another individual. While a fish may only be consumed by one person, the local news may be viewed by multiple people. Savas (1987) illustrated his typology of the public and private characteristics of products by the matrix in Table 1:

Table 1: Four kinds of goods in terms of their intrinsic characteristics (adapted from Savas, 1987)

	Easy to deny access	Difficult to deny access
Individual consumption	Private goods	Common-pool goods
Joint consumption	Toll goods	Collective goods

Savas described private goods as those typical market place goods – consumers demand the goods, entrepreneurs recognize the demand and provide it for a "mutually satisfactory price" (p. 44). Common-pool goods are not produced by a supplier for consumption. Instead, such goods are often produced in nature. Ground water is an example of a common-pool good. Like private goods, toll goods are supplied by the marketplace, but

can also be supplied by all levels of government. A toll road is a good example of a toll good. Finally, collective goods are the closest representatives of a true public good. These goods are publicly provided and competition rarely exists for their consumption. National defence, broadcast television, and lighthouses are good examples of collective goods.

Conceivably, the “publicness” of places may be defined by a similar typology or continuum. As mentioned, ideal types of public and private places rarely exist, and most privately owned and operated places maintain some form of public access (e.g., a shopping mall or coffee shop). Indeed, Smith and Low (2006) suggested that it “is important to recognize that many constituents of public space are privately owned, managed, and regulated elements of the public sphere” (p. 5). As such, the distinction between private and public places becomes easily blurred. Instead, places may be defined by jurisdiction (e.g., who controls the place) and accessibility (e.g., who can access the place). Table 2 outlines four categories of places based on accessibility and ownership.

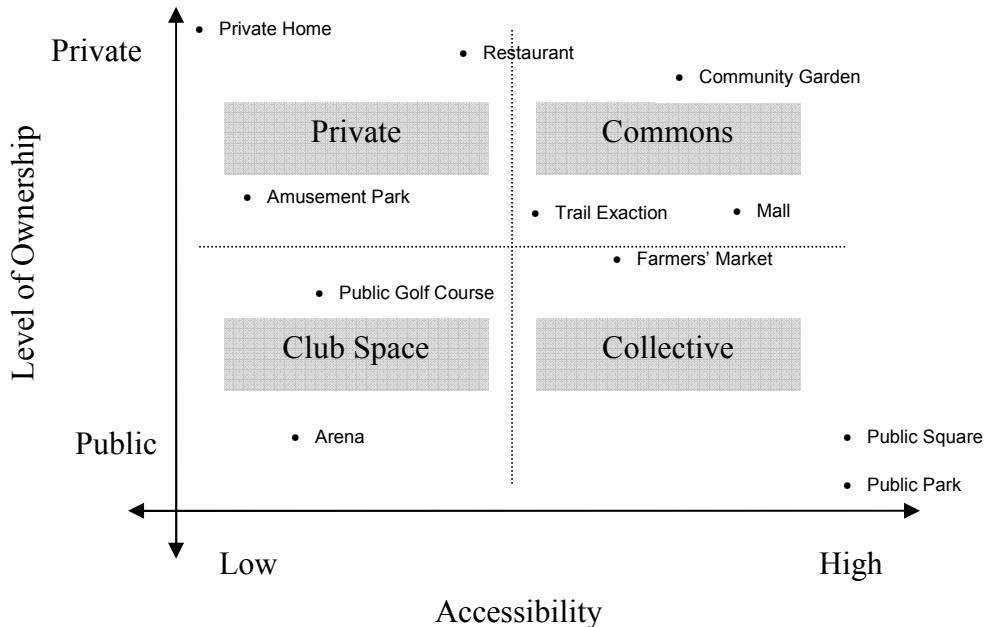
Table 2: Four kinds of places in terms of their intrinsic characteristics

	Easy to deny access	Difficult to deny access
Private ownership	Private	Commons
Public ownership	Club	Collective

Examined from this perspective, different levels of “publicness” (or “privateness”) may be exhibited in and by different spaces and places. In this sense, a *private place* may be someone’s home because homes are privately owned and access can be easily denied. Conversely, a *collective place* may be the local park because parks tend to be owned and operated by the local government and generally do not prevent access by way of locked gates, posted hours, eligibility requirements, fees, or active security. Places such as

nursing homes, arenas, theme parks, national parks, markets, malls, and restaurants fall between the extremes of private homes and local parks. Community gardens, for example are often privately owned (e.g., by a housing development), yet it is difficult to deny access. Such gardens, therefore, may fall under the *commons*. Furthermore, while some places may be publicly owned, accessibility barriers such as posted hours, the requirement to book the space, and dress code make these places less accessible to the general public. Ice arenas may be a good example of a *club place*. How community is enacted in these places, therefore, does not only depend on the “publicness” of the place, but also depends on the accessibility to the place. In this sense, it is not only *who* controls the place, but *how* the place is used that must be considered. As Smith and Low (2006) attested “public space is traditionally differentiated from private space in terms of the rules of access, the source and nature of control over entry to a space, individual and collective behaviour sanctioned in specific spaces, and rules of use” (p. 3-4). Table 3 outlines examples of the public and private aspects of places. These examples simply illustrate varying types of places. Levels of “privateness” or “publicness” in a community garden, for example will vary based on the specific garden. As such, while for the purpose of this project this table remains static, these places should not be considered restricted to the given quadrant.

Table 3: Ownership and Accessibility Properties of Urban Places



The reason for classifying places in this manner is because a multiplicity of divergent meanings is attached to the terms “public” and “private.” Although a place may be privately owned and operated, a public dimension may still exist. Speaking to the social centrality of urban places, for example Shields (1992) noted:

The enclosed mall environment of shopping centres attempts to reproduce the vicarious pleasures of the market square or hall, presenting itself as the continuation of the tradition of public spaces...These people, so-called ‘shoppers’, but in reality a heterogeneous crowd with diverse purposes, are not actors paid to simulate the interaction of a public space...While an urban built-environment can be simulated in plaster board and plastic, social centrality only occurs if a space is appropriated as public by people. (p. 104)

Here, Shields (1992) acknowledged that it is not who owns the place that matters, but rather how the place is interpreted by its users. Shields further noted that privately

operated places recognize the importance of fostering community by hosting community events such as music festivals, bake sales, and charity events. Social commentators, however, continue to express concern about the decreasing ability of people to connect with their communities and the people who live within in public places (e.g., Putnam, 2000). Third places - quasi-public spaces - however, are places privately owned, but publicly accessed. These places often replace public places and play an important role in social centrality and, therefore, community creation.

2.4.3 Third Places

Social commentator and author of *The Great Good Place*, Ray Oldenburg (1999) expressed concern that neighbourhood gathering places are disappearing, thus leaving little or no opportunity for urban residents to connect with the people of their community or exchange ideas, beliefs, and values. While previous research has shown that leisure, recreation, and parks are a fundamental part of the informal organization, social activity, and cultural norms of diverse groups within the urban community, for many urban residents, particularly those with limited or no private space (e.g., no backyard, apartment dwellers), leisure and recreation occur in third places. Such places represent one of the few “public” gathering spaces in which urban residents can informally connect with family, friends, or community members. In this sense, Oldenburg’s “great good places,” are potential sites of community development and building and are important to urban residents outside of work and home.

Place is a social construct (Frumkin, 2003; Lefebvre, 1991), and third places are meaningful because of the memories, experiences, and emotions experienced within. As Lloyd and Auld (2003) noted, “without a space conducive to social life, community

relations cannot prosper and grow" (p. 345). In this way, leisure researchers must examine how individuals use and perceive third places in the urban environment. Defined as places other than home or work "the third place is a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work" (Oldenburg, 1999, p. 16). However, unlike traditional public spaces such as parks, community gardens, and town centres, third places are often consumption-based (e.g., cafes, pubs, restaurants). In this sense, the concept of the third place suggests that places of consumption may build community.

Oldenburg's conceptualization of the third place examines the benefits that arise from the patronization of places outside of the workplace and the home. Simply, he argued that participation in third places provides individuals with feelings of connectedness and community. Accordingly, third places are characterized in terms of sociability. Oldenburg (1999) indicated:

The "fun" function of third places is better seen, perhaps, as the entertainment function... In third places, the entertainment is provided by the people themselves. The sustaining activity is conversation which is variously passionate and light-hearted, serious and witty, informative and silly. (p. xxii)

Third places, in this sense, provide opportunities for members of the greater community to create and sustain relationships and experiences unavailable in the realms of work and home.

Among the opportunities provided in third places is sociability. Oldenburg borrows the idea of sociability from Georg Simmel (1950, 1972). To Simmel (1972)

association is the key to society. As such, society (and I would argue community) can only exist where and when a number of individuals (i.e., more than one) interact. Sociability, a form of association, results because of a desire for interaction and a sense of its intrinsic worth beyond immediate purposes. Thus, Simmel defined sociability as, “the play-form of association,” created by “amicability, breeding, cordiality, and attractiveness of all kinds” (p. 158).

While sociability is found in virtually all types of interaction and association, Simmel (1950, 1972) argued that people require, and therefore seek out, *pure* sociability – a form of sociability that encompasses no ulterior motives, aside from being in the company of others. For Simmel, this creates “the great problem... since sociability in its pure form has no ulterior end, no content, and no result outside itself, it is oriented completely about personalities” (p. 255). In other words, all other forms of sociability and association consider individuals in terms of positional importance. In cases where pure sociability exists, however, individuals’ interactions are not judged based on social qualifications (e.g., occupation or income). In such situations individuals are acknowledged as different, and each guarantees that maximum sociable values, such as joy, relief, and vivacity (Simmel, 1950, 1972) to the other. Shields (1992) suggested that sociability “refers us back to the power of the collective, the sense of being together, the urge to ‘get by’ and the injunction ‘to get along together’” (p. 106). Thus, third places provide avenues and possibilities for pure sociable participation in quasi-public places.

A similar concept to Simmel’s (1950, 1972) “sociability,” Lofland (1998) discussed the importance of “public realm” relationships. Public realm relationships are interactions between persons who are strangers to one another or who are familiar with

each other only in terms of occupation or through impersonal relations. Such relationships often occur in the public places of urban centres. Interestingly, Lofland's public realm is not synonymous with public spaces. While Lofland defined the public realm as social territory, public space was defined as physical territory that is easily accessed regardless of ownership. In this sense, the public realm may be associated with place as opposed to space; the public realm is socially constructed as such, regardless of ownership. According to Lofland, the public realm in cities encourages interaction among a greater diversity of people, creating an extensive range of relationships between and among community members. In this way, bars, restaurants, commercial establishments, or third places, in general, provide informal settings that encourage interaction and relationships among the community (Rosenbaum et al., 2007).

Essentially, Oldenburg (1999) argued that every society must have the ability to promote and celebrate community. He believed "the examples set by societies that have solved the problem of place...suggest that daily life, in order to be relaxing and fulfilling must find its balance in the three realms of experience. One is domestic (home), the second is gainful or productive (work), and the third is inclusively sociable, offering both the basis of community and celebration of it" (p. 14). In this sense, people engage in third places to enjoy the company of other members of the community.

Few scholars have explored social interactions within third places (Glover & Parry, 2008; Lofland, 1998; Mair, 2009; Oldenburg, 1999; Oldenburg & Brisset, 1982; Rosenbaum et al., 2007). As a result the benefits of third places in urban communities have not been thoroughly examined. Furthermore, little is known about the benefits of third places in urban communities, specifically. Despite roots in urban research and urban

recreation provision, to this point there has been no critical mass of scholars focused on urban research within the field of leisure studies. Specifically, research on urban leisure has primarily been limited to analysis of catchment areas (Jansen-Verbeke, 1988), urban tourism as an economic strategy (Pearce, 2001), or commercialisation of leisure resources (Lloyd & Auld, 2003). Nevertheless, urban areas remain major sites of leisure engagement, and the benefits of third place provisions within this context should not be ignored.

Third places contain a mixture of public and private notions – they are commercial in as much as they are privately owned. However, they are treated as public places by their most loyal and consistent patrons. In this way, commercial culture has greatly shaped the public life of modern cities. Indeed, urban spaces and places have formed around department stores, restaurants, and theatres, all of which have the potential to be third places. From this perspective, a traditional farmers' market is an excellent example of the hybridity of the public and private nature of an urban place. Markets are, generally, publicly provided amenities where private interests and consumption are prevalent. Furthermore, while the primary motivation for attending a market is to purchase vegetables, meats, crafts, and baked-goods, secondary incentives, such as to purchase local or organic goods or mingle with friends and acquaintances are also common.

2.5 COMMUNITY MARKETS

Well-established institutions, community markets have been a constant feature of North American culture since industrialization established urban areas and separated

individuals and communities from their food source. Today, markets containing anything from fresh produce and meat to flowers and crafts can be found in almost every urban centre. Although the increasing concern over food safety, origin (e.g., local food), and quality are often cited as primary motivations for choosing community markets over conventional supermarkets (Holloway & Kneafsey, 2000; Macnaghten & Urry, 1998), related research suggests that other important characteristics of markets include the experience of getting to know the farmers, availability of reliable product information, supporting local farmers, sense of community, and social interaction. The primary purpose of this project is to explore the concept of community as a key attribute of an urban community market, a place of consumption

One of the most unique aspects provided by urban markets is the opportunity for people within a community to gather and interact in an informal environment. Indeed, Fletcher (1997) suggested that markets bring people out in a common space, thus creating and fostering community ties. Unlike conventional supermarkets, people have the opportunity to not only connect with farmers, but with neighbours, acquaintances, family, and friends. Fletcher (1997) acknowledged that today's markets are comparable to the town square of earlier times because:

The... market provides a place to congregate...I often see couples, friends, or families with young children happily strolling in market together...In contrast, supermarket shopping is almost always a solitary experience, or an unpleasant experience shared by a parent and a cranky child. (p. 13)

Through the creation of spaces designed to encourage individuals to interact and socialize markets help create and establish a sense of community.

Despite general acknowledgement that community markets promote and establish community (e.g., Fletcher, 1997; Szmigin, Maddock, & Carrigan, 2003), leisure scholars have yet to recognize the significance of community markets as third places, including related consumption activities. Indeed, the food system occupies a central role in human existence; food is a basic human need and in Western Society the attainment of food is commonly a communal act. There is no doubt that a market setting is a social setting. Hinrichs (2000) for example noted, “markets promise human connection at the place where production and consumption of food converge, an experience not available either to consumers shopping at ‘superstores’ or ‘hypermarkets’ or to farmers selling through conventional wholesale commodity markets” (p. 295). In this way, markets combine elements of consumption (including, but not limited to food consumption), private activity, public space, and leisure activity – all of which contribute to the enactment of community.

The revival of urban and community markets reflects the growing awareness among consumers of the environmental and social consequences associated with mainstream consumption. Community markets often attract consumers who consider the environmental and social consequences of their consumption choices and therefore evaluate their purchase choices and locations to take their own consumption philosophies into consideration (Connolly & Shaw, 2006). However, despite this recognition and overt attempts to evade the prevalent free market structure, community markets remain ingrained in the capitalist economy. As Hinrichs (2000) noted, markets are “firmly rooted in conventional exchange relations, where asparagus and sweet corn can be purchased when available for the going price of the day” (p. 301). Accordingly, despite recognition

of the opportunity to consume consciously in a community market space, consumption of food commodities is the primary activity associated with community markets.

Given these considerations, community markets may be one example of what urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg (1999) termed a “third place.” The idea of “third places” has received modest attention in the leisure literature. Oldenburg identified third places as public places on neutral ground where people can gather and interact. In contrast to first places (i.e., the home) and second places (i.e., the workplace), third places encourage individuals to set aside their concerns and enjoy the company and conversation around them. Although Oldenburg described third places as “public”, there is no doubt that private elements exist, including private ownership and commercial activity. In this sense, analysis of the farmers’ market is important to furthering leisure scholarship on (and about) community, leisure consumption activities, and third places.

A dichotomy between public/active and commercial/passive is prevalent in the leisure literature (Coalter, 1998). According to Cook (2008), however, the economic (and I would add individualistic) “perspective on market exchange leaves no space wherein culture, meaning, sentiment and everyday practice can be brought to bear on social life” (p. 1-2; cf. Zelizer, 2005). Community markets are one space where culture, meaning, and sentiment converge to create and enable community. Accordingly, this research rejects the current dominant discourse within leisure studies and instead seeks to determine how everyday places of consumption, such as community markets, create and enact community.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Community and consumption are well-established concepts in social research. While modern society continues to consume at the expense of society, leisure has been heralded as a solution to the negative effects presented by consumer society, such as the loss of community, public space, social capital, and civic engagement. The relationship between community and consumption, however, has not been thoroughly examined in the leisure literature. This chapter provided an overview of the key concepts pertinent to the current research project, including community, consumption, place/space, public places, and third places. The remaining chapters present the procedures used to conduct the study, the results of the analysis, and a discussion of the results.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of community in a place of consumption from a culturally specific perspective based on a social constructionist epistemology. The methodology used for this study was visual ethnography; photo elicitation, face-to-face interviews, and observation were the methods used to inform the purpose. Based on Crotty's (2003) framework, this chapter outlines the four elements of social research: conceptual framework (i.e., epistemology), theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods.

3.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

We can, and I think must, look upon human life as chiefly a vast interpretative process in which people, singly and collectively, guide themselves by defining objects, events, and situations which they encounter... Any scheme designed to analyze human group life in its general character has to fit this process of interpretation.

~Blumer, 1956

The task of a scholar is clear: to represent the world of others to others. A seemingly simple task, perhaps, but the problem of representation continues to dominate social sciences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Duncan & Ley, 1993). How we represent our world and to whom we represent our world become fundamental questions in discussions surrounding ontology, epistemology, axiology, theoretical perspective, and methodology; these generate a “basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba, 1990, p. 17) as researchers. Accordingly, researchers make ontological claims about what is knowledge, epistemological claims about how we know, axiological claims about ethical values that guide our research, theoretical claims that inform a range of methodologies, and methodology claims about the research process (Creswell, 2003; Crotty, 2003; Lincoln &

Guba, 2000). These beliefs guide how a researcher interprets the social world, and ultimately direct the approach of a study. We have witnessed, as a result, many major modes of representation within social research. Crotty (2003) identified three prevailing epistemologies, including objectivist, constructionist, and subjectivist. The history of leisure research is defined by these prevailing epistemological perspectives. These modes of representation move in phases and tend to dominate theoretical perspectives and methodologies (Crotty, 2003).

From a North American perspective, the first and perhaps most dominant mode in leisure studies is objectivism (Jackson, 2003). Most leisure theories were developed from objectivist research and based on the basic assumptions of objectivism – that is, the meaning of the world exists external to the knower and independent of individuals (Lakoff, 1987) and only “verifiable claims based directly on experience could be considered genuine knowledge” (Patton, 2002, p. 92). The second mode, constructionism, acknowledges the role of the interpreter (i.e., the researcher) and is based on the assumption that “truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities of the world” (Crotty, 2003, p. 8). A final mode of representation is subjectivism. Subjectivism is based on assumptions of postmodernism; it is “anti-foundational in that it explicitly rejects the totalizing ambitions of modern social science” (Duncan & Ley, 1993, p. 3). Each mode of representation/epistemology influences the theoretical perspective and methodologies chosen by the researcher. In this sense, no study can go “unchallenged by proponents of contending paradigms” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 191) and every researcher will approach the problem/issue/question from varying perspectives.

As a researcher, I value concepts such as theoretical development, hypothesis testing, operational definitions, objectivity, replicability, causality, and deductive research. These issues, I believe, are important in social research. In this sense, a post-positivist perspective often matches my own research agenda. More recently, however, I have explored the idea that meaning and reality are socially constructed, that “the world of human perception is not real in an absolute sense” (Patton, 2002, p. 97). Schwandt (1994) described social constructionism as:

The world of lived reality and situation-specific meanings that constitute the general object of investigation is thought to be constructed by social actors. That is particular actors, in particular places, at particular times, fashion meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction involving history, language, and action. (p. 118)

This epistemology approaches research under the premise that meanings are co-constructed by human beings (actors) as they engage in the world they are interpreting (Crotty, 2003). Under this epistemology, knowledge and reality cannot have an objective or absolute value – at least I have no way of knowing this reality. Instead, reality is made up of interactions and relationships in individual lives.

Social constructionists value theory and theory development. However, unlike objective (e.g., positivist) epistemologies, where theory is generated by logical deduction from *a priori* assumptions and seeks causes and explanations, in constructionist epistemologies value is placed on inductive strategies of theory development. Constructionist theory emphasizes “emergent, multiple realities; indeterminacy; facts and values as inextricably linked; truth as provisional; and social life as processual”

(Charmaz, 2006, p. 126-127). Indeed, constructionism recognizes that “knowledge consists of those constructions about which there is relative consensus” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 113). According to Denzin (1989) two basic approaches structure the use of theory in ethnography. While the first approaches theory from an *a priori* perspective (i.e., theory leads to inquiry), the second “commits the researcher to writing the theory of those studies” (p. 177). Under the second approach the researcher assumes that behaviour in the social world (or community) is guided by a theory. “The ethnographer’s task is to listen to that theory and to write it” (p. 177). Here, theory results from general observations and noticeable patterns.

This research focused on the lived experience of a small group of individuals who participate weekly in a local urban farmers’ market. As a researcher, I am concerned with understanding the meanings associated with participation in the local market. In this study, therefore, deductive, *a priori* approaches to theory generation and development were inconsequential – these methods do not match the mode of representation. Instead, inductive methods of inquiry begin with specific observations that allow general patterns to emerge (Patton, 2002). Interpretivism, therefore, drove the methodological inquiry, while ethnographic research offered an orientation to understand the process and structure of a social setting; it allowed me to understand the everyday meanings and activities of people in a specific setting based on specific observations.

3.2 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The theoretical perspective of this research was based on the philosophy of anti-naturalism: “Anti-naturalists claim that the study of social phenomena cannot/should not

be undertaken using the same methods of inquiry and with the same goal and modes of explanation that the natural sciences employ to study natural phenomena” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 8). From this perspective, this research considered the theoretical perspective of interpretivism, which is viewed under a constructionist paradigm (Creswell, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

3.2.1 Interpretivism

Interpretivism is viewed as informing a research methodology and design that seeks to gain meaning and understanding through inquiry (Crotty, 2003). Interpretivism emphasizes that “to understand meaning one must interpret it” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 119). The interpretivist approach “looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world” (Crotty, 2003, p. 67). Essentially, the interpretivist perspective explains human action through interpretation, by giving it meaning – for interpretivists, humanity and society are embedded with meaning. Taylor (1992), for example, stated:

The fact that words and other signs have meaning can seem incredibly deep, enigmatic, difficult to understand. The sense of depth comes from the very pervasiveness of meaning in our lives. We are, in a sense, surrounded by meaning. (p. 258)

Based in a constructionist epistemology, the interpretivist perspective acknowledges that individuals construct understandings of their surroundings through interaction with others and their environments. Interpretivism recognizes that the social world cannot be described and understood without investigating how people use history, culture, language, and symbols to construct social practices. In this way, there exist multiple

meanings of events and occurrences. Individuals, as a result, assign meaning and significance based on social interaction as well as their own unique experiences. In this research, I acknowledged that the social world consists of individual interpretations or experiences, behaviour, action, and meaning (Crotty, 2003; Schwandt, 2007). Schwandt (1994) suggested that the focus is not “on the meaning-making activity of the individual mind but on the collective generation of meaning” (p. 127). Meaning, in this sense, is co-constructed. According to Schwandt (2007), interpretivism refers to several social theories, including symbolic interactionism, phenomenological sociology, and ethnomethodology. “These approaches are also often called hermeneutic because they accept the premise that interpretation or understanding is the fundamental way that human beings participate in the world” (p. 159). Accordingly, interpretivism stands in distinct contrast to positivist perspectives (Crotty, 2003).

Although the primary philosophical perspective associated with interpretivism is making sense of the experiences associated with individuals, other assumptions consistent with the epistemological underpinnings of constructionism are important considerations in interpretive research. First, interpretivists invoke inductive reasoning. In this sense, rather than establishing research hypotheses, the researcher considers meaning from interviews with participants and participant observations. Secondly, interpretivist inquiry requires observation. According to Denzin (2001), interpretivist inquiry “asserts that meaningful interpretation of human experience can come only from those persons who have thoroughly immersed themselves in the phenomena they wish to interpret and understand” (p. 46). Consequently, the researcher must observe the research participants’ behaviour as well as the context/setting of their social interactions. Finally, in

interpretivist inquiry, the researcher is the primary instrument for both data collection and analysis. Blumer (1969) suggested, the researcher must actively engage with research participants in the context of the research to “see the situation as it is seen by the actor, observing what the actor takes into account, observing how he interprets what is taken into account” (cited in Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 124).

The emphasis of interpretivist inquiry on observation and active engagement with research participants requires research methodologies consistent with these perspectives. Although many qualitative methods embrace an interpretivist perspective, the methodology of this research was ethnography. Ethnography, is characterized by “prolonged time in the field, generation of descriptive data, development of rapport and empathy with respondents, the use of multiple data sources, [and] the making of field notes” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 96). In this respect, ethnography, as a methodology, embraces the constructionist epistemology and interpretivist theoretical perspectives (Denzin, 2001).

3.3 METHODOLOGY

Methodology dictates the researcher’s choice and use of specific methods (Crotty, 2003) – it is a theory of how inquiry should progress (Schwandt, 2007). According to Crotty (2003), methodology is “the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes” (p. 3). Theoretical perspective informs methodology, while methodology informs methods. In the present research, the chosen methodology

was informed by interpretivist perspectives and constructionist epistemologies. This methodology was ethnography.

3.3.1 Ethnography

Ethnographic research offers a theoretical perspective to understanding the process and structure of a community, social setting, or lived experience. Brewer (2000) described ethnography as:

The study of people in naturally occurring settings or ‘fields’ by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally. (p. 6)

The examination of local culture, Spradley (1980) suggested ethnography is “the study of both explicit and tacit cultural knowledge” where culture is the understanding community members use to “interpret experience and generate behaviour” (p. 8). While community members are consciously aware of explicit cultural knowledge and can communicate accordingly, tacit cultural knowledge is implied without actual awareness. In this sense, community members may know and understand ideas about their culture, which they cannot express through formal communication. Methods incorporated in ethnography, therefore, must “make inferences about what people know by listening carefully to what they say...by observing their behaviour” (Spradley, 1980, p. 11) and by interacting in their place.

Ethnography has been a feature of social science research throughout much of the twentieth century and is popular among a wide range of disciplines, including leisure

studies (e.g., Johnson, 2005; Skeggs, 1999). Brewer (2000) noted that ethnography is not one specific method of data collection, but instead is a style of research that is distinguished by its objectives – to understand social meaning, activities, and phenomena of people in a particular setting. Ethnography “is premised on the view that the central aim of the social sciences is to understand people’s actions and their experiences of the world, and the ways in which their motivated actions arise from and reflect back on these experiences” (Brewer, 2000, p. 11). In this sense, Brewer further noted, “ethnography has a distinguished career in the social sciences” (p. 11).

Van Maanen (1988) noted that in anthropology “fieldwork alone sets the discipline off from other social sciences” (p. 14). While anthropologists may be considered the first group of social scientists to conduct fieldwork and produce ethnographic accounts, most social science disciplines are now familiar with ethnographic methods and methodologies, including fieldwork. Ethnographic based fieldwork often involves the study of various social systems, behaviours, and practices of different populations. As Denzin (1994) suggested:

If we are to understand the complexities of what is happening in social situations we need to employ an ethnographic approach, which captures and records the voices of lived experience... contextualizes experience... goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances... presents details, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join one person to another. (cited in Jeffrey & Troman, 2004, p. 536)

Although observation and participation are the primary methods used in ethnographic research, fieldwork involves the use of a variety of methods including interviews, visual and textual materials, and narratives.

In particular, the research methodology used in this study was visual ethnography. By combining participant observation, in-depth interviews, and photo-elicitation, visual ethnography is the “production and analysis of still photos, the study of art and material culture, and the investigation of gesture, facial expression and spatial aspects of behaviour and interaction” (Jacknis, 1994, p. 33). An increasingly popular method in social science research, visual ethnography utilizes visual materials as the major source of data. Denzin (1989) noted:

[visual ethnography] struggles with the problem of how observers see and record what they perceive. What is perceived and then recorded with the camera is structured by cultural and contextual meanings (Hall, 1986). The information that is read off film is also shaped by cultural and contextual processes. Accordingly as a method of research, visual [ethnography] deals simultaneously with grammars of vision, perception, and interpretation. (p. 210)

Indeed, photographs convey a variety of meanings and interpretations. Such meanings may depend on the perspective of the viewer, but also depend on the perspective of the individual capturing the photo. In this sense, visual ethnography is one way to capture the lived experiences of the community or cultural group.

Denzin (1989) noted the need for visual ethnography is twofold. “First, everyday life is structured and given meaning by visual records... Second, visual representations are interactional productions” (p. 211). As Becker noted, “pictures do not simply make

assertions... rather we interact with them in order to arrive at conclusions" (cited in Denzin, 1989, p. 211). In this sense, photographs are not pictures of objective reality, but instead represent numerous messages, meanings, and interpretations. Thus, photographs help the researcher understand the lived experience, by taking the subject's point of view: to see and record the world as the subject sees their world (Denzin, 1989). Furthermore, participants are not limited to the questions posed by the researcher, but instead shape the elicitation process with the images they capture.

For this study, I adopted a visual ethnographic interpretation of the Kitchener Market using photo-elicitation methods, in-depth interviews, and participant observation methods. Photography acted as an artistic medium by which participants expressed emotions, social concerns, cultures, and sensitivities. In this sense, the use of photographs in this research performed both a form and a function to record and reproduce the meanings associated with experiences and social worlds associated with the Kitchener Market. Associated co-constructed meanings appeared in the photograph itself, as well as the explanation or narrative that was associated with the picture.

The purpose of this research was to understand how community is enacted in a place of consumption. Participant-driven photography, therefore, allowed participants to illustrate and/or narrate cultural images, perceptions, histories, metaphors, and interactions. Consistent with the tenets of social constructionism Hall (1986) suggested that "every culture creates its own perceptual worlds... This means that every culture must be seen in its own terms" (cited in Denzin, 1989, p. 210). Photographs, are not pictures of objective reality, but represent cultural and contextual meanings. In this sense, photographs and visual ethnography must be grounded in the interpretive context and co-

constructed meanings. Visual ethnography (and its associated methods) allows the researcher to see what the participants observe and to capture what they perceive (Denzin, 1989).

Visual Ethnography is a process comprised of many overlapping steps that combine to create a representation of a community group based on shared culture. Given this position, underlying assumptions about ethnographic research must be addressed. First, emphasis was placed on exploring, documenting, and describing the actions of a limited number of participants from the cultural group (Adler & Adler, 1994). Second, interaction between the researcher and the participants facilitated understanding of the day-to-day actions of the cultural group, the market community (Creswell, 1998). As Denzin (1989) noted, a central assumption of ethnography “is that the investigator shares as intimately as possible in the life and activities of those under study” (p. 160). However, the researcher must be able to act as both researcher and group member. Indeed, the ethnographic approach recognizes that knowledge is something that is personally experienced and, therefore, must be understood from an insider’s perspective (e.g., emic). Third, ethnography also acknowledges an etic perspective is necessary to gain access to both explicit and tacit knowledge. Brewer (2004) has argued that ethnography is a “style of research rather than a single method” (p. 313). In this way, multiple sources of data and a variety of techniques to collect data were used to explain, describe, and understand the market community, including photo-elicitation, in-depth interviews, observation, literature reviews, member checks, and secondary sources. As such I, as the researcher, maintained many roles including detached observer and participant.

3.4 METHODS

3.4.1 Photo-Elicitation

Essentially a process by which photographic images are used to trigger discussion and guide an interview, the photo-elicitation method was developed by anthropologists who used photographs of activities as the basis for exploring cultural activity and meaning (Purcell, 2007). However, it was John Collier, a researcher and photographer from a multi-disciplinary research team, who is credited with first describing the photo-elicitation technique in a published manuscript (Harper, 2002). Collier (1957) created a photographic survey to evoke memories and responses from respondents who did not respond according to traditional survey methods.

Today, there are many techniques designed to integrate image-based research within the constructionist paradigm. Photo-elicitation methods can be used for a wide range of purposes and are either researcher-driven or participant-driven (Clark-Ibanez, 2004). Considered to be a more deductive approach, in researcher-driven photo-elicitation methods, the researcher takes, develops, and organizes the photos for presentation to the participant. Using this approach, all participants view and comment on the same photographs. Participant-driven, or self-directed photo-elicitation, is a more inductive approach where researchers ask the participants to take their own photos for discussion in a proceeding interview. The specific method aside, photography has been used as a research tool in a wide range of disciplines and to engage diverse individuals and communities (Clark-Ibanez, 2004). Using varied photo-elicitation methods, researchers have: investigated farmers' attempts to explain and change their farming practices (Beilin, 2005), analyzed hikers and canoers' photos to identify important views

and places (Chenoweth, 1984), studied attachment to high amenity places (Stedman, Beckley, Wallace, & Ambard, 2004), and examined mental health among rural Canadian Maritimers (Collier & Collier, 1986).

This study employed a participant-driven, photo-elicitation technique (e.g., Chenoweth, 1984; Stewart et al., 2004). Photo-elicitation is based on the concept that “photo interviews yield different and often ‘richer’ data than that obtained from verbal interviewing alone...because informants tend to respond in a more mindful fashion” (Dempsey & Tucker, 1994, p. 61). According to Pink (2001) photographs are extra tools the researcher may use to obtain knowledge and insight about the phenomenon in question. As Harper (2002) noted:

In-depth interviewing in all its forms faces the challenge of establishing communication between two people who rarely share taken-for-granted cultural backgrounds... There is the need, described in all qualitative methods books, of bridging gaps between the worlds of the researcher and the researched. Photo elicitation may overcome the difficulties posed by in-depth interviewing because it is anchored in an image that is understood, at least in part, by both parties. (p. 20)

In this sense, photographic images may be used to bridge two distinct cultural worlds – that of the researcher and that of the participant. Through the use of photo-elicitation visual methods, I was able to comprehend meaning – to recognize, describe, and understand the farmers’ market community. Such meaning may not have been uncovered through interview techniques alone.

For the purposes of this study, participants were provided with cameras and asked to photograph social and structural aspects of the Kitchener Market that they considered desirable and undesirable. The landscapes and interactions that serve as the subject of the market participants' gaze were diverse, including sites of consumption, objects of consumption, subjects of consumption, processes of consumption, and social interactions. The diversity of images was important in terms of representing the diverse values of community members. The use of photo-elicitation allowed the participants to explore the market and the specific features that are meaningful and important to them. The participants and the researcher examined the photographs together to gain insight into how groups and individuals perceive, use, and interact in the Kitchener Market and how community is enacted.

Photo-elicitation provides the means through which research participants can narrate their values, beliefs, and experiences (Glover, Stewart, & Gladdys, 2008). As such, participants were not given prescriptive instructions about what they could/could not and should/should not photograph. Instead, participants were asked to photograph desirable and undesirable aspects of the market. Furthermore, participants were informed that the photographs could incorporate any aspect of the Kitchener Market that is meaningful to them, including social or structural aspects.

3.4.2 In-depth Interviews

An additional technique for data collection employed in this study was in-depth interviews. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) described the interview as "a purposeful conversation, usually between two people...that is directed by one in order to get information" (p. 135) from the other. The primary focus of the in-depth interview is to

understand the informant's perception of the phenomena under examination (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As a methodological technique, interviewing maintains several unique and beneficial characteristics. Interviews, for example, provide the researcher with large amounts of data (Marshall & Rossman, 1989), allow the researcher to probe for additional information (Ray, 1997), and the researcher can document nonverbal communication and maintain a better understanding of the person's psychological commitment to the question (Ray, 1997).

Interviewing complemented the photo-elicitation process and acted as the main source of qualitative data. In this study, I developed an understanding of and interpreted the research participants everyday lived experiences through interviews. Interview methods allow the researcher to understand the world from the participants' point of view and help uncover the meaning of individual and community experiences (Kvale, 1996). In this sense, in-depth interviews allowed me to uncover the lived world and everyday life experiences of market participants. Furthermore, as Patton (2002) noted, "we cannot observe everything" (p. 341). In other words, interviews allow the researcher to uncover feelings, thoughts, intentions, and the meanings or emotions associated with the phenomenon (Patton, 2002). In this way, the interview technique allowed my research to be culturally specific.

By conducting in-depth interviews, I recognized that meanings, understandings, and interpretations cannot be standardized (Denzin, 2001) and, instead, are socially constructed. As such, the inherently subjective and socially constructed nature of the phenomenon itself (i.e., leisure, community, consumption, and place) was better captured through in-depth interviews. As Howe (1988) suggested:

If leisure is conceptualized as a dynamic, multifaceted, and subjective phenomenon...then attention to subtleties is essential to a fuller comprehension of the meaning of leisure in the lives of people...qualitative interviewing as a systematic conversation provides a way of capturing such subtleties. (p. 321)

The in-depth nature, flexibility, and conversational style offered by the informal interview technique allowed me to understand the enactment of community from an emic perspective and to describe the behaviour or phenomena in terms that are meaningful to the research participants. According to Denzin (2001), “the interviewer must be a skilled asker of questions as well as a skilled listener” (p. 66). Interviews allow the researcher to ask questions to gain more specific insights, without disrupting the flow of the conversation. As such, I was able to integrate probing questions into the conversation. Such questions included, “why?”, “how so?”, and “how do you feel about that?”

After the respondents took the photographs, one-on-one, face-to-face interviews were conducted. The interviews used the respondents’ photographs as a basis for discussion about the consumption and community aspects of the Kitchener Market. Because it was anticipated that each participant will take different and varying photographs to illustrate their market experience, an interview guide was not incorporated into this research. Instead, interviews were unstructured and began with general questions about each photograph: why the participant took the picture, what the picture means to the participant, what the picture represents, what they like/dislike about the picture, or what they would like to change about the picture. This informal, conversational interview (Patton, 1990) approach allowed respondents to fully discuss their issues and interests, which provided information about the market and how it contributes to the enactment of

community. Zepnuk (2003), for example, noted that data sources must be varied and inclusive of observation including relatively informal conversation. For this reason, the ethnographic interview process used in this research was not grounded in deductive science, where pre-determined ideas already existed. Accordingly, in-depth interview data collection methods in this study were:

Unstructured in the sense that it does not involve following through a detailed plan... nor are the categories used for interpreting what people say and do pre-given or fixed. This does not mean that the research is unsystematic; simply that initially the data are collected in as raw a form, and on as a wide a front, as feasible. (Zepnuk, 2003, p. 4)

However, I asked probing questions specific to the nature of the study and the associated, pertinent theoretical issues. Examples of these questions included, “do you consider this space public or private?”, “do you feel comfortable in this space?”, and “do you share your market experiences with other people?” A final, open-ended question concluded most interviews: “why do you come to the market?”

3.4.3 Participant Observation

Associated with fieldwork, one of the most popular and widely used research methods in ethnographic research is participant observation. Participant observation is the involvement of the researcher in the activities of the people in the community and/or culture in question. To Denzin (1989), participant observation “is a commitment to adopt the perspective of those studied by sharing in their day-to-day experiences” (p. 156). Different observation methods, however, exist in ethnographic research. These methods vary based on the extent to which the researcher/observer participates in the cultural

setting (Patton, 2002). Patton noted that participant observation may be viewed as a continuum between complete immersion in the setting as full participant to separation from the setting as a spectator. Furthermore, Pike (1954) suggested two perspectives may be used in the study of a cultural system: etic and emic. While the etic perspective incorporates extrinsic concepts and categories that are meaningful to the researcher, the emic perspective focuses on the intrinsic cultural distinctions that are meaningful to members of the community in question (Pike, 1954). According to Patton (2002) “a participant observer shares as intimately as possible in the life and activities of the setting under study in order to develop *an insider’s view* of what is happening” (p. 268). This is the emic perspective. In this way, data collected through participant observation is useful for developing a contextual understanding of the physical and social environment that captures the participants’ experiences and meanings within the culture (Denzin, 1978). Indeed, interpretivists seek to interpret the meaning of human action and understand the social world in which people live (Zhao, 2001).

For the purposes of this research, I was the only researcher conducting participant observation and, considering my prior involvement as a market participant, I was able to fully immerse myself in the market culture. According to Barunek and Louis (1996), researchers “who are insiders to a setting being studied often have a view of the setting and any findings about it quite different from that of the outside researchers who are conducting the study” (cited in Patton, 2002). However, I acknowledged that my level of participation was likely to change over time and I was not able to begin the research process as a full participant. Instead, I shifted between field roles along a continuum between “active” and “passive” observer, where as a passive observer I interacted as little

as possible within the community and as an active observer I maximized participation to gather data (Burgess, 1986). As such, data was collected through acts of observing, listening, conversing informally, and asking questions.

Brewer (2000) noted that there are two main ways in which participant observation is used in ethnographic research: “to understand the world as it is seen by those acting within it; and to reveal the taken-for-granted, common-sense nature of that *everyday* world itself” (p. 60). For many participants, spending a Saturday morning at the market is simply part of their weekly routine. In this sense, participants often wondered or questioned why I had such a keen interest in their Saturday activities. Participant observation, therefore, allowed me to gain further insight into routine activities that participants may otherwise take for granted.

Participant observation has many advantages for ethnographic research. The main advantage is it allows the researcher to obtain a deeper insight of the activities in which the community members are engaged. Participant observation also allows the ethnographer to discover the practices and meanings the community members may take for granted and, therefore, not disclose during an interview (Denzin, 2001). Furthermore, the observer may discover meanings and interpretations that may not otherwise be given attention (Patton, 2002). Another advantage is interaction with the participants allows the researcher to be “open, discover oriented, and inductive” (Patton, 2002, p. 262) because preconceived notions of the culture may be dispelled.

The data obtained through participant observation and informal conversation was recorded in my field notes. Spradley (1979) suggested observers take four separate types of notes: 1) a condensed account, or summary of what has occurred; 2) an expanded

account where details are filled in; 3) a field note journal, where I can quickly record my thoughts, reactions, and ideas about what I have observed; and 4) a running record of analysis and interpretation (cf. Kirk & Miller, 1986; Silverman, 2005). With good intentions to follow Spradley's (1979, 1980) field note collection methods, I was unable to keep four separate types of notes. For this research, data collected using observation methods was recorded in a journal (Spradley, 1979; Stake 1993).

I used my journal to record general notes, observations, insights, and potential questions for one-on-one interviews. I carried a notebook that was kept in a canvas shopping bag, so while it was not necessarily my attempt to remain inconspicuous as a researcher, it is also not unusual to see people at the market carrying similar bags. Immediately following any interaction I had with a market participant I made notes to remind me of what occurred and what was said. More often than not, these notes were written while I enjoyed breakfast and/or coffee at one of the market tables in the upstairs area. In other words, I did not necessarily record my notes immediately upon completing an interaction with a fellow market community member. Often I wrote down conversations and interactions as a story as opposed to verbatim, thus I interpreted the conversation as immediately as possible. For example, on my first official day of observation I arrived at the market at 6am. Upon parking my car in an outdoor parking lot, I struck up a conversation with a market vendor about the availability of parking around the market. I did not record this conversation immediately, but rather waited until I was inside the market building. By the time I had recorded my initial conversation I had already interacted with other vendors and members of the market. Because I recorded most interactions as stories, I did not further expand my field notes by transcribing them

into a formal market journal upon leaving the study site for the day. Although the interpretation process is ongoing, I used the market journal to accumulate deeper interpretations of what I observed and engaged in at the farmers' market. Primarily, however, my field journal was used to provide examples to participants in our one-on-one interviews. For example, when I witnessed a peaceful protest at the market, and the protestors were asked/forced to vacate the market property I was able to use this experience as an example of public space versus private space in subsequent interviews.

Fieldwork and participant observation played an important role in my research. The ability to become part of the culture of the Kitchener Market benefited my understanding of how places of consumption enable the enactment of community. By engaging myself in the culture of the market, I was able to conduct more meaningful and insightful in-depth interviews and analyses. Furthermore, because participants recognized me as a member of the market community, they were more comfortable, and therefore, willing to talk about their market experiences.

3.4.4 Methodological Triangulation

Consistent with tenets associated with ethnography and qualitative methods, in general, I used a combination of several research methods to examine the same phenomenon. Accordingly, I relied on different, yet complementary methods to explore the creation and enhancement of community in the Kitchener Market space. Photographs, in-depth interviews, informal conversations, and participant observation (recorded as field-notes) with different actors and members of the market community created an understanding of the complexity of the Kitchener Market community to increase credibility and validity of results through triangulation (Denzin, 2006). Triangulation

required me to interpret the data gathered using several different methods. While my interpretations were primarily based on data gathered from twenty in-depth interviews, complementary methods supported my interpretations of the phenomenon. For example, participant photographs allowed me to “see” the market and the market community from the perspective of participants. Through the incorporation and combination of observations and photographs I obtained a better understanding of the market community and culture. In this way, interviews, photo-elicitation, observations, and informal conversations were mutually confirming and provided a more detailed and balanced understanding of the market community.

3.5 THE SETTING

The purpose of this research was to examine how community is created or enacted in urban places of consumption. In this research, I was primarily interested in urban places/spaces that combine both public and private activities. The Kitchener Market offered an excellent study site because it exhibits characteristics associated with third places (Oldenburg, 1999) by most regular Saturday customers. By examining the social interaction that occurs in the market atmosphere, I have gained a better understanding of the ability of a place of consumption to create/enact community. I believe that by creating places in which urban residents and community members may interact informally, markets have the potential to strengthen a neighbourhood’s understanding and sense of community. Andreatta and Wickliffe (2002), for example noted that “markets help build cultural ties between farmers and consumers” through

social interaction (p. 168). This kind of interaction is not only important to creating a sense of place, but ultimately community engagement and development.

3.5.1 The Kitchener Market – “Your Kitchener Market”

An urban Saturday market, the Kitchener Market offers meat, vegetables, fruits, dairy products, herbs, roots, fish, cheese, and flowers to local residents. While many of these products are locally produced or organically grown, the Kitchener Market is not exclusively a local food market. However, the market remains a proud tradition in the community as a public space. The City of Kitchener has offered and managed some variation of a community market, in one form or another, for more than 130 years.

The history of the market begins with the first Mennonite settlers to the Waterloo region. Beginning in the 1830s, farmers who were able to produce more than their families consumed held outdoor markets in the Village of Berlin (now the City of Kitchener) to sell their produce and products to town residents. While these make-shift markets lasted for over thirty years, the first permanent market structure was built in 1869 when town council approved the expenditure of \$7,000 to construct a two-storey town hall to house the farmers’ market, Council Chambers, a public library, and a post office. From the beginning, the Kitchener Market was viewed as a public institution, owned and operated by the city and open and accessible to all residents. By 1872, the market had become the main source of produce, meats, cheeses, and baked goods for the local community. As a result, the original market site became over-crowded and a new building was required. Constructed in the heart of the city, adjacent to the town hall, this building housed the market for 35 years and was replaced in 1907 to accommodate a growing population and demand for market products. In 1973, the Market Square

building, a downtown Kitchener shopping mall, became home to a new market. A 1972 brochure announcing the market's anticipated move made a commitment to residents stating: "There'll always be a market in Kitchener...the Kitchener Farmers' Market will not close this year, next year – ever."

In response to a growing demand for space, the need for a new market building, a desire to incorporate non-traditional market vendors, and the recognition that a new market may contribute to the downtown revitalization effort, the City of Kitchener committed over 20 million dollars in 2004 to build a new, modern market building in the heart of the downtown area. Today's Kitchener Market is an urban market that is more modern than traditional market spaces. Although the market is incorporated in a new and modern building, all of the sights, sounds, and smells patrons have come to know and love about the traditional market continue to attract community members to the space. In this way, the market combines the long history and heritage of the farming community with modern uses of urban market spaces (City of Kitchener, 2009).

True to the history of traditional farmers' markets, the Kitchener Market, as a community market, is an important gathering place. It is a multicultural crossroads, embodying the spirit of the community. Indeed, the newly constructed market was officially named "Your Kitchener Market" in 2004. This name change reflected the city's desire to convey the communal nature of the market and create a sense of community around the traditional and modern market activities.

The Kitchener Market offers an interesting setting to examine community and consumption in a third place. Like most urban and community markets, the Kitchener Market joins commercial and public interests. While the City of Kitchener owns the

building and decides who or what business can operate within, private vendors take advantage of the opportunity to create commercial establishments. Today over fifty vendors sell their products on the main floor of the building, while thirty artisans share second floor space based on a rotating schedule. In addition, eight restaurants operate five days a week in upstairs area of the building the building. While the market may attract visitors/tourists, it is widely known as a local market. In this sense, market patrons are regular customers who depend on the market for local and/or organic produce, meat, cheese, baked goods, multicultural food items, and social interaction/community.

3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

3.6.1 Participants

Participants included twenty regular market participants, defined as those individuals who attend the market an average of once a month or more. Two market vendors also participated in one-on-one, in-depth interviews, but did not take photographs. It was necessary to recruit participants for in-depth interviews who were familiar with the market culture, and considered themselves to be a member of the market community. Because the market is a public place, market-shoppers may come and go at will; no membership is required and attendance is not tracked. As such, different levels of participation exist. Market participants, therefore, may be placed on a continuum based on their market experience and behaviours. At one end of the continuum are those individuals who use the market to buy produce and other market goods exclusively. At the opposite end of the continuum are those individuals who use the market as a social gathering place – while these individuals purchase their produce and related goods at the

market, a primary motivation for market participation is the social aspect that occurs in a community setting. For participation in the photo-elicitation process and in-depth interviews, I examined *regular* Saturday market participants exclusively, because it is these individuals who are familiar with the market culture – whether they use the market for shopping or social purposes, or a combination of the two.

Recruitment flyers were placed around the market (on established bulletin boards) to encourage individuals to participate in the study (Appendix B). Individuals interested in participating in the project contacted me by phone or email. The sampling procedure was purposeful since I had access to regular market participants and had previously identified the type of person who matched my criteria (i.e., regular market participants). As such, I recruited individuals who matched my established criteria (e.g., through recruitment flyers) and used snowball sampling procedures to recruit more participants. Participants were asked to recommend other market participants who may be interested in participating in the study.

Using qualitative data methods I brought together data from observations and interviews to clarify patterns, concepts, categories, properties, and dimensions of the phenomena. Although a specific number does not exist, it was essential to sample enough individuals to generate themes (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). In total, I recruited twenty participants. All of these participants completed one-on-one, in-depth interviews with me at various locations. However, not all participants used photos for their interviews. Of the twenty participants, ten participated in the photo-elicitation process, ten did not participate. Nevertheless, the interviews, photos, observations, field notes, and

informal conversations I conducted did allow me to determine and establish meaningful themes.

In addition to qualitative interviews participants responded to demographic questions (Appendix C). Participants' ages ranged from 26 to 75. This wide age range is consistent with my observations at the Kitchener Market; the market appeals to people of all ages, including families and seniors. Of the twenty participants seven were male while the remaining thirteen were female. While some participants were new to the market, others indicated they have been attending the Saturday Kitchener Market (in its various locations) their entire lives. As such, length of attendance ranged from six months to more than 50 years. All of the participants, however, identified themselves as regular market shoppers. All participants indicated they attend the market at least once a month, while seventeen participants attend the market at least once a week (on Saturday). Of the twenty participants, just two frequent the market on days other than Saturday. Sixteen participants live in the City of Kitchener; eleven self-identified the location of their home as "Downtown Kitchener" while seven participants regular mode of transportation to the market is walking. Table 4 outlines participant demographic information.

Table 4: Profile of Participants

Variable	Valid N
Sample	20
Age	
Under 30	1
31-40	6
41-50	2
51-60	6
60+	5
Gender	
Male	7
Female	13
Market Attendance	
At least once a week	17
Twice a month	3
Mode of Transportation to Market	
Car	11
Bus	2
Walk	7
Home Location	
Downtown Kitchener	11
Other	9

3.6.2 Data Analysis and Interpretation

According the Cresswell (2003) “the process of data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data” (p. 190). Many layers of data exist in this research, including photographs, interviews, informal conversations, observations, and field notes. Data analysis was an ongoing process that involved reflection and questioning. A formal aspect of the research process, these data were prepared for analysis and analyzed according to interpretive, ethnographic methodologies. All recorded data were transcribed, including field notes and observations. Detailed analysis began with a coding

process, whereby data were organized into categories, before being given meaning (Cresswell, 2003; Rossman & Rallis, 1998). According to Miles and Huberman (1994) “coding is analysis. To review a set of field notes...and dissect them meaningfully, while keeping the relations between the parts intact, is the stuff of analysis” (p. 56). While data were coded according to theme, for me, it is not the words themselves that matter, but rather the meanings attached to those words. I began my analysis by deconstructing the transcribed texts of my conversations with participants into common themes through an open-ended process. Themes were identified because they related to the role of the market in creating and building community. After the first round of analysis, I identified twenty-five themes, including:

- advertising and promotion
- atmosphere
- buyer-buyer relationships
- community
- consumption
- continuing deficit
- design of the market
- disappointment
- diversity
- experience
- family space
- leisure
- local's market
- local food/ethical food
- parking issues
- place attachment
- producers versus distributors
- public space
- possibilities
- social space
- traditional market
- unique
- urban revitalization
- utilitarian
- vendor-buyer relationships

The coding process was used to generate a description of the community and categorize the themes for further analysis (Cresswell, 2003). I organized the themes under broader, more inclusive headings to facilitate a more accessible knowledge transfer. The broad themes I chose were: (1) the people, (2) the place, and (3) the activities. Consistent with the tenets of qualitative inquiry, the analysis was recursive and began at the outset of generating data.

The interpretation of the data drew on social constructionism, the perspectives of interpretivism, and ethnography as a methodology, all of which seek to gain an understanding of the phenomenon through inquiry and the process of meaning making (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). According to Feinberg and Soltis (1998) meaning is “determined by the way the act is interpreted” (p. 85) by both the researcher and the participant. The interpretive mode of inquiry, therefore, is concerned with the meaning of the experiences, events, and behaviours that occur in the research setting, in this case, the Kitchener Market.

Social context is best captured through the use of interpretive methods that focus on the individual meanings people assign to their experiences and how people understand phenomena in their own lives. As such, the results reported in this dissertation were based on my interpretation of the experiences of participants involved at the market. From the data gathered by interviews, photographs, observations, informal conversations, and field notes, I identified main themes and trends. During analysis, emergent themes were recorded and considered in further data collection and analysis; these themes (discussed above) were identified at all points during the data collection process.

To capture the phenomena, I turned to the last three steps in Denzin’s (2001) interpretive process: bracketing, constructing, and contextualizing. Using collected data (i.e., interviews, photos, observations, informal conversations, field notes) these steps guided the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the enactment of community in places of consumption, and more specifically the Kitchener Market.

3.6.2.1 Bracketing the phenomenon

Bracketing challenges the researcher to explore the phenomenon outside of the world or culture where it occurs. Bracketing involves analyzing the results as a separate occurrence or document apart from the standard meanings associated with the phenomenon in the existing literature. According to Denzin (2001), “those preconceptions, which the researcher has isolated in the deconstruction phase, are suspended and put aside during bracketing...the researcher confronts the subject matter...on its own terms” (p. 76). Bracketing involves five main steps:

- 1) Locating within the personal experience story or self-story, key phrases, and statements that speak directly to the phenomenon in question;
- 2) Interpreting the meanings of these phrases, as an informed reader;
- 3) Obtaining the subject’s interpretations of these phrases, if possible;
- 4) Inspecting these meanings for what they reveal about the essential, recurring features of the phenomenon being studied; and
- 5) Offering a tentative statement about or definition of the phenomenon in terms of the essential recurring features identified in step 4. (p. 76).

In the bracketing stage of interpretation and analysis, researchers set aside all previous judgments to understand a phenomenon. To do this, I first identified my biases, prejudices, and preconceived notions about *my* market experience. These experiences were then bracketed so the market was experienced again, from a fresh perspective. Bracketing the data involves confronting the subject matter on its own terms. In the bracketing phase of my research, I focused on the key reoccurring phrases and statements in the stories, experiences, observations, and photos that the market participants shared

with me about their market experience. A bracketed reading of stories, narratives, and experiences helped me develop an interpretation of key themes outside of my own experiences. Although difficult, the ability to experience the phenomenon as if for the first time is an important consideration in interpretive data analysis; it substantiates the validity and soundness of the methodology. Other measures I took to bracket the phenomena included attending the market at different times of the day and week from my former, regular market experiences and discussing all aspects of the market with participants, rather than those that were meaningful to me, alone.

3.6.2.2 Constructing the phenomenon

In the construction phase, the essential elements that were drawn out of the text are reassembled back into a coherent whole. In this sense, construction builds on bracketing (Denzin, 2001). According to Denzin (2001), “the researcher’s goal in constructing the phenomenon is to re-create experience in terms of its constituent, analytic elements” (p. 78). The steps involved in this stage include:

- 1) Listing the bracketed elements of the phenomenon;
- 2) Ordering these elements as they occur within the process or experience;
- 3) Indicating how each element affects and is related to every other element in the process being studied; and
- 4) Stating concisely how the structures and parts of the phenomenon cohere into a totality. (p. 78)

I gathered and grouped the lived experiences that related to the phenomenon – the enactment of community at the market. In this stage of interpretation, the bracketed information was reconstructed to illustrate how the phenomenon was experienced and

produced. I used all sources of data to re-create the experience “in terms of its constituent, analytic elements” (Denzin, 2001, p. 78). In this way, I was able to better understand how the Kitchener Market acts as a place for the creation and enactment of community.

3.6.2.3 Contextualizing the phenomenon

Contextualizing involves reconnecting what was learned in the previous two steps to the life stories of those experiencing the phenomenon. “In contextualizing the phenomenon, the researcher attempts to interpret those structures and give them meaning by locating them back in the natural social world” (Denzin, 2001, p. 79). Essentially, it reveals how the phenomenon is experienced by ordinary people. Contextualizing involves four steps:

- 1) Obtaining and presenting personal experience stories and self-stories that embody, in full detail, the essential features of the phenomenon as constituted in the bracketing and construction phases of interpretation;
 - 2) Presenting contrasting stories that will illuminate variations on the stages and forms of the process;
 - 3) Indicating how lived experiences alter and shape the essential features of the process; and
 - 4) Comparing and synthesizing the main themes of these stories so that their differences may be brought together into a reformulated statement of the process.
- (p. 79)

Here, I selected excerpts and quotations drawn from individual stories and experiences to illustrate the three specific themes. The goal of this phase was to show how lived experiences alter and shape the examined phenomenon (Denzin, 2001).

3.7 RESEARCH EVALUATION

3.7.1 Role of the Researcher

Researchers maintain many roles. Generally, the primary role of the researcher is to collect data that considers participants' interpretation of a specific phenomenon – that which is under examination. In qualitative research and analysis, the researcher plays an important role in establishing reliability and credibility, while attempting to describe the structure and provide findings of an inquiry. It is also important to focus mainly on the participants' experiences and how they interpret and interact with the phenomenon. It is through these experiences that I, as the principal investigator, examined the meaning of the phenomenon, in this case, how does the Kitchener Market create/enact community? As Denzin noted, "the world does not stand still, nor will it conform to the scientist's logical schemes of analysis" (p. 46). I, as an observer, discovered meaning through participation in the social world under consideration. In this sense, as an interpretivist, I "participated in the social world so as to understand and express its emergent properties and features more fully" (p. 46). I recognized that I cannot ignore my strong attachment towards, and affinity for, the Kitchener Market. In this sense, I entered this research with a preconceived notion of what the results would entail. Indeed, I was/am biased. While the interpretive process (Denzin, 2001), as discussed (e.g., bracketing, constructing, and contextualizing) asks me to set aside all prejudgments to understand the phenomenon, I

did not deny my own personal history and experiences with the market and the members of the market community.

Prior to this research, I attended the local market as often as possible, and frequently planned my weekends around a Saturday morning market visit. It was through my connection with the Kitchener Market that I realized places of consumption may serve as spaces for the enactment of community – I see, recognize, and interact with the same group of people every Saturday, and although other individuals come and go from this community, the core community remains. From my interaction within this community, prior to conducting my research, I understood that there exists a commitment to a set of shared values, norms, and meanings, as well as a shared history and identity – there is a shared culture which outsiders may not readily recognize.

In this research I brought both “insider” and “outsider” perspectives to the results. While I am recognized as a regular market customer and shopper, in my role as a researcher I was often viewed as an expert. For example, participants often contacted me following our interviews to ask questions about the market, though in reality I did not have any connection to the everyday management of the market space. I anticipated that such a perspective could potentially inform or constrain my research objectives (Kanuha, 2000). As such, this tenuous position required me to take a reflexive approach to my research. As Dupuis (1999) noted, “the role that our human selves play throughout the research process and how those selves subsequently shape our products” (p. 44) is an important consideration in all qualitative research as it was in this research. I reflected daily on my own involvement in and commitment to this research and I was cognizant of my position as a member of the market community.

3.7.2 Criteria for Judgment

A common debate surrounding qualitative data analysis and collection is evaluation methods. Such issues of evaluation generally surround matters of validity and reliability and their sub-categories including credibility, trustworthiness, transferability, authenticity, and criteriology. Lincoln and Guba (1985) for example, indicated that there are four questions concerning trustworthiness for qualitative research. First, how do I know whether to have confidence in the findings?; second, how do I know the degree to which the results apply in other contexts?; third, will the findings be repeated if the study was conducted again in the same manner?; and fourth, how do I know the degree to which the findings emerged from the context and respondents, and not from the researcher(s)? Each epistemology has developed its own set of criteria for addressing these questions; the same criteria, therefore, does not apply to objectivist perspectives and constructionist perspectives. For example, Creswell and Miller (2000) noted that criteria for determining validity depend on two factors: the lens used by the researcher and the paradigm assumed by the researcher.

This research examined the lived experiences of market participants. The crisis of representation (cf. Denzin, 1997) has challenged the assumption that “a genuine valid account of lived experience exists and that such an account can be understood, captured and/or represented by scholars” (Parry & Johnson, 2007, p. 122). The crisis of representation is characterized by reflexivity in the research process and based on the assumption that qualitative analysis cannot fully capture the lived experience of the individual or community (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Despite such claims, however, this research was subject to scrutiny at many levels. I, therefore, subscribed to Richardson’s

(1994, 2005) metaphor of a crystal as an image for research evaluation. Richardson suggested that crystallization is a collaborative process between researcher and participants because all sites are examined from different perspectives. As a researcher I engaged many different participants to establish completeness. In this sense, the goal was not to establish confirmation of correctness, but rather ensure multiple voices and meanings were represented.

Related to crystallization, disconfirming evidence is regarded as a means to establish validity. Creswell and Miller (2000) suggested this research evaluation method is consistent with research conducted under a constructionist paradigm. Essentially, disconfirming evidence is “the process where investigators first establish the preliminary themes or categories in a study and then search through the data for evidence that is consistent with or disconfirms these themes” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127). This non-systematic method of research evaluation relied on my own lens of interpretation, but multiple perspectives were considered. In this sense, I am taking responsibility for the authority over the text – ultimately, I interpreted the data and created the results.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In summary, based on a constructionist epistemology and interpretivist theoretical perspective this study used photo-elicitation, in-depth interviews, and observation methods to create an ethnography. Participants at the Kitchener Market were interviewed, observed, and engaged with to produce a holistic picture of the market as a place of consumption with particular emphasis on everyday experiences of participants. Participants were asked to take photos of desirable and undesirable aspects of the market;

these photos were used during the interview process to provide the means through which research participants narrated their values, beliefs, and experiences associated with the market. Emergent themes (from all sources of data) were explored in an iterative and interactive coding, analysis, and interpretation process.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews data related to the research questions posed in Chapter One: *what roles, if any, do places of consumption, particularly third places, play in the everyday lived experience of community? And how do places of consumption create and build community?* Based on a social constructionist epistemology, findings presented in this chapter create an understanding of community in a place of consumption from a culturally specific perspective. The data were collected using techniques associated with an interpretivist theoretical framework and ethnographic methodologies. The findings presented, therefore, consist of themes identified from my observations, in-depth interviews, informal conversations, and photos (my own, as well as participant photos). I identified these themes through the iterative and connected processes of data collection and analysis. These themes and sub-themes represent the explicit relationship between the Kitchener Market as a place of consumption and the everyday lived experience of community.

Three major themes are presented in the following pages including connection to 1) *the people*, 2) *the place*, and 3) *the activities*. Multiple minor themes comprise the three overarching major themes, which ultimately combine to create and build community in a leisure place of consumption. Consistent with traditional notions of community, the consumption community surrounding the Kitchener Market is complex and consists of many interrelated characteristics. The themes presented here suggest that market participants share a collective sense of connection to the market as a place, the people who form the community, and the activities that occur in the space. Connection to

the people, connection to the place, and connection to the activities, therefore, are important characteristics of the market itself as well as the market community.

4.2 CONNECTION TO PEOPLE

According to Oldenburg (1999), “the third place is a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work” (p. 16). Consistent with Oldenburg’s third place concept, the Kitchener Market acts as a place to connect and interact with individuals and communities as well as a place to exchange ideas and share news. In this way, connection to people is an important characteristic of consumption communities. Examples of this first theme were evident in the market data I collected and analyzed, including observations, interviews, conversations, and photographs. Individually, every participant spoke about the unique connections between the members of the market community. This theme is composed of two minor themes: 1) commitment to the community, and 2) unique interactions. Taken together these themes reiterate the distinctive nature of the market community as a unique community based on consumption.

4.2.1 Commitment to the community

This theme is encompassed by a sense of moral responsibility to the community as a whole, as well as individual members of the community. Duty to the community is necessary for the social cohesion of the group and is required to enact collective action if the community is threatened. A main issue encompassed in this theme is the community’s obligation to the Kitchener Market, especially in comparison to other market communities (e.g., St. Jacobs Market) and retail shopping experiences. This theme is

represented by the participants' commitment to fostering the Kitchener Market community and the recognition that local, everyday people create and build the market community.

4.2.1.1 Promoting the market community

While members of the Kitchener market community viewed themselves as different from other market communities (specifically the St. Jacobs market), there was a sense of obligation to invite and recruit new people to the market to maintain the vitality and success of the market and the market community. Due to funding concerns, community members recognized the Kitchener Market as threatened and identified recruiting new members as a possible way to prevent closure. Inviting people to the market or talking about the market with strangers was viewed as a way to maintain the market as a public resource and commodity.

Members of the market community believed the market management and the City of Kitchener did little to promote the market. Darla for example complained:

They should have ads. Last year they had... when the Waterloo Market was open, they had an ad in The Record, but nothing about the Kitchener Market. In the produce section, you know how they have that recipe section? Waterloo was there, but Kitchener wasn't. That is amazing to me.

Similarly, pointing to his photo (photo 1) as an example, and expressing his frustration, Walter stated:

One of the things [I] have really felt about the market is that it is poorly advertised. A sign does not cost that much money. And what they've got on the face of it (the market), people don't look up that far to see the sign. There's no

signage down the side of Cedar St. so when tourists come into the city they've got no idea there's a market there. And when people are walking on the street and you say "oh, the Kitchener market is just down there" and for us it's been a mainstay – I mean we just know, but for all the tourists, and we've sent (local) people too, they come away (and say) "we couldn't find it."



Photo 1: "See the Sign" (Walter)

As a result, many community members independently engaged in an activism role. Jillian, who is in charge of compiling the newsletter for her neighbourhood association, believes the market is a valuable and important asset in her neighbourhood. Jillian explained that she has approached the Kitchener Market management for information about events, but usually receives little help or direction. Instead, by searching out information, Jillian creates her own advertising for the newsletter. She said, "*You know, (I just) add a little blurb on the Tuesday performers. Or tell people that on Wednesdays there's music, you know?*"

In addition to formal advertising, participants also invite friends and strangers to the market. Molly, for example, explained that she and a group of friends have been going to the Kitchener Market every Saturday for a few years. As Molly explained:

We started doing it as neighbours, because we have young families and we don't see each other (often). So we thought we'll crack off the chores, we'll have a little visit and we get to spend time together... We've been doing it for four years now and it's good. Sometimes it's the only time I see my neighbours... Somebody left (the group), and someone else has now joined us [because] it's important to maintain that community and the group...

When I asked Molly if she told people about her group of friends and their market rituals she explained that even though people she meets at the market are not necessarily part of her group of friends it remains important to see these community members regularly. In Molly's words, "*we see the same people all the time, it's interesting, it's a community, right?*"

It was also important to participants to be recognized as part of the Kitchener Market community, and this included inviting outsiders into the community. Hilda, for example, described how, despite being retired and divorced, she has many friends and family members to keep her company. She explained how she invited two friends to the market because, unlike her, they were alone and isolated from their community. About her friends, Hilda said:

He is blind and she is very alone and very isolated....And when I found out, I invited them to come with me to meet friends of mine at the market....I invited her

to our group. So, now we go together. They are very isolated and very, very alone all the time. And, my friends, they embraced them, so I am glad.

Upon further probing about the market as a space for the enactment of community, Hilda admitted she would like to see more seating options. She explained that she would feel more comfortable inviting friends and other people to the market if she knew there would be space for a larger group to sit and enjoy the market space and community.

The majority of the participants indicated that it was important to tell other people about the market. About encouraging other people to go to the Kitchener market Duncan commented, “*I don’t think we’re evangelical about it... But if it comes up in conversation... I actually will try to encourage people to go there (Kitchener) instead of St. Jacobs.*” Like Duncan, most participants believed the Kitchener Market was a better market for local people than the St. Jacobs Market. Similarly, Walter expressed his concern that local residents choose the St. Jacobs Market over the Kitchener Market. As a result he makes sure to tell people, including friends and neighbours, about the Kitchener Market. Walter said, “*I can say that it’s the best market, even compared to what’s going on out in Waterloo (St. Jacobs) – it is a better market, the prices are better, the produce is better, it’s local, I just started bragging about it because it means so much to me.*”

Indeed, participants recognized the unique nature of the Kitchener Market and most attributed their experiences to the market community. Karrie said, “*yeah, the food is a bonus, but it’s not what makes this place so great. It’s a bigger thing than that. It’s the people. I wish we could do more to capture that but I think people have a hard time getting their heads around that.*” Most of the participants recognized that the market community was unique and this contributed to their overall market experience. As a

result, participants felt it was their duty or obligation to foster the market community as an important asset to the greater community.

4.2.1.2 Local's market

Connected to the conviction that the Kitchener Market is distinct from the St. Jacobs Market, participants emphasized the local nature of the market. Unlike the St. Jacobs Market, which was viewed largely as a tourist destination, members of the market community suggested the Kitchener Market acts as a place for local gathering and interaction. Participants stressed they enjoyed seeing and interacting with the same group of individuals every week. Darla, for example, recalled an episode of the CBC television program “Being Erica” where the lead character, Erica, visits the St. Jacobs Market. Darla was disappointed because there was no mention of the Kitchener Market. However, once we spoke about the reasons for this oversight, Darla concluded the St. Jacobs Market is a tourist destination where “*people like to go and see the Mennonites.*” Unlike the Kitchener Market where “*there’s a sense of community... because you see the same people week after week.*” Many participants held a similar conviction and pointed to the differences in participants between the two markets. Duncan, for example believed, “*the Kitchener Market compared to the St. Jacobs Market, it (St. Jacobs) doesn’t feel like a real market, it feels like, it (Kitchener) doesn’t feel like a plastic thing...it feels like real people go here to do actual shopping.*” To Duncan, the association and interaction with “real people” helped contribute to the market community and feelings of belonging.

Participants associated taking pictures of Mennonite people and horses, buying maple syrup, inexpensive produce, and eating apple fritters as tourist activities more likely to occur at the St. Jacobs Market. Susan’s story may best highlight the contrast

between the two markets and illustrates how members of the Kitchener Market community identify themselves as a community. I asked Susan if the market was important for tourism in downtown Kitchener. She responded:

I think it's very important for the local people..., I know a lot of people who go every week. We don't necessarily go to linger for three hours, I can go and I'm focused, I hit my booth and I leave. But I think it's really important for local people...I happened to run into a couple from Toronto last year, or two years ago when we were parking on Scott [Street] and walking down market lane. And they opened it up and were allowing cars through at one point and it was bumper to bumper and this couple rolled their window down and asked "is this the market? Is this the Waterloo Market?" I said, "no it's not, this is the Kitchener Market." And they said "oh, is it worth us parking?" I said, "well I think so." [They said,] "Are there Mennonites?" "I don't know. There might be. I think there's men inside selling summer sausage who might be Mennonite. I'm not sure." ... And they asked if it was worth driving out to Waterloo, and I said it is, but it's very touristy. And they asked if this is where the local people go. So I told them that I don't go to Waterloo. If you want produce and you don't want someone ramming a wagon into your ankles, come down here (to Kitchener). The Waterloo Market is much more geared to tourists, so I explained that to them but I never saw them (in the market).

Susan's story illustrates the difference between the individual markets and the shoppers, but more importantly it positions the Kitchener Market as a local's market – a contributor to the local community. Ellie also captured this sentiment when she compared the two

markets. She said, “*I used to live in Waterloo and I went to St. Jacobs and I just felt that there was a few people, well there’s so many people there for so many different reasons. It’s a tourist venue more than anything else and it’s very difficult to sort of have that ‘old lady’ experience.*” For Ellie the “*old lady*” experience was the opportunity to shop early in the morning with experienced market consumers who know their way around the market and the products. Ellie spoke about gaining knowledge from these women who know how to pick a decent melon and can explain the differences between Yukon Gold potatoes and Russet potatoes. Ellie attributed this experience to the local charm of the market – the ability to converse and feel comfortable with community members.

In a conversation with Jillian, I explained to her that when I have company from out of town I often take them to the St. Jacobs Market as part of the tourist experience. Jillian agreed and said, “*that’s right, I did trips with international students and we’d always go there. But we’d never go to Kitchener... there’s nothing touristy there.*” Similarly, Rebecca suggested that when her in-laws visit they will likely go to the St. Jacobs Market because she wanted them to have a “*touristy*” experience. Avid market goers, the conversation I had with Rebecca and her partner, Duncan, revealed their affection for the Kitchener Market as a local’s market:

Rebecca: When Duncan’s brother and sister-in-law are coming here in September for two weeks, I doubt we’ll take them here (Kitchener Market), we probably will take them to St. Jacobs.

Amanda: Because it’s a tourist destination?

Rebecca: Yeah.

Amanda: That’s what people expect to see when they come to this area, right?

Rebecca: And this feels like “oh, do you want to come with us to the grocery store?”

Amanda: Right, even though you love it, right?

Rebecca: Yeah, definitely

Duncan: I don’t know, I think we could go (to the Kitchener Market).

Rebecca: You think so?

Duncan: Only if we go there for breakfast.

Rebecca: Yeah. Maybe, yeah for breakfast more than buying things.

Amanda: Yeah, so have breakfast and then go to St. Jacobs after?

Rebecca: Yeah, maybe, but I hate going to St. Jacobs. All the people and the flea market, oh I just don’t like it.

Amanda: Yeah. It’s such a different experience between both places.

Rebecca: It is, yeah.

Amanda: It’s very interesting, because when people think about the market in this area they think of St. Jacobs.

Duncan: Mmmhhmm.

Rebecca: I ask my students sometimes, I teach newcomers to Canada. Often they’ll say they go to the market and I think it’s about half and half. Like half will say they go to St. Jacobs and then like, if they say they go to the market when they go to St. Jacobs it seems like an outing, it’s something to do, and the ones that go to Kitchener go to get their groceries.

For Rebecca and Duncan, identifying the Kitchener Market as a local’s market contributes to the feelings of community associated with the market space.

Participants spoke about the sense of community at the Kitchener Market and contributed it to the “regulars” who return week after week. Feelings of community and seeing the same faces made participants feel comfortable in the market space and facilitated conversation. Darla for example said:

I was there (at the market) about a month ago with my friend and she saved a table while I went to get coffee and that sort of thing. And then when I was sitting there by myself I saw some people coming from the Mexican restaurant and I said, “oh, what’s that like?” And they said, “oh, it’s really great we come here all the time.” ...and we’re missing that (interaction) in our community. Especially people living in the outlying areas because there’s no connection there. There’s no human connection. Like that whole area, I never even go to that Wal-mart, that Sunrise Centre scares me.

Darla explained that she felt a connection to her community at the market and she believed only a few physical places remained in the city that contributed to feelings of community. Indeed, the welcoming atmosphere and feelings of community may be exclusive to the Kitchener Market. According to Hilda, the market “*is very unique in that respect. It’s, like you said yourself, there are so many different people there, ones who are new to Canada are coming there. And it’s a nice way to meet people and talk in a comfortable place. I don’t think you can have that many other places.*” Participants clearly enjoyed seeing and interacting with local people and members of their community every Saturday.

4.2.2 Personalizing the Experience

This theme is encompassed by the community, itself. Personal interactions between members are what distinguish the market community as a consumption community – relationships formed between members of the market community surround acts of consumption. These interactions are exclusive and occur between buyers and sellers. All participants spoke about the relationships they have formed with other members of the market community. Furthermore, the participants believed these social interactions are unique to the market. Alyssa, a vendor, talked about the impromptu conversations she shares with community members. She told me she has “*regulars that aren’t necessarily customers, but are regulars that come and chat and many words of wisdom have been passed on... I love it. And you can always take something out of someone’s story.*” Several examples of this theme were represented in the data, including vendor-buyer interactions, buyer-buyer interactions, and cultural diversity.

4.2.2.1 Vendor-Buyer Interactions

The relationships established between the vendors and the buyers may be one of the most unique characteristics of the market community. Often participants compared their experiences at retail stores and grocery markets to their interactions with vendors at the market. When I asked Macy if it was important for her to interact with the vendors she replied:

It’s not particularly important to me, although there is one or two that I know, but I like to see that kind of ease, that there isn’t that line drawn. It would be pretty unusual in a supermarket...I think the most interaction you’d get (at a

supermarket) is that there's not what you want on the counter and you ask someone in the meat department if they could go behind and get it for you.

When I asked Macy if this sort of interaction is unique to the market, she replied, “*it is. And I think it creates a really nice ambience. It makes it more enjoyable.*” Similarly, Melissa suggested that she receives information she would not get in the “*regular grocery store.*” Melissa told me:

I'm interested more in things that have to do with the actual produce that they have. The types of stuff that they have, the ones that they have that I like, and why don't they have butter lettuce, which I just love. It's really hard to get those, and I've talked to various lettuce vendors about why I can't get the butter lettuce. And it helps me to hear them give the explanation why. So, it's those kinds of things...that kind of information. I mean, let's face it, it brings me, the purchaser, one step closer to the gardener, to the farmer, to the grower.

This form of interaction is an exchange that goes beyond market or commodity exchange (i.e., money in exchange for butter lettuce). Instead, such interactions create knowledge and relationships between members of the community. Through interviews and my own observation at the market it is quite clear these relationships, interactions, and exchanges are unique to the Kitchener Market. However, not only are they unique, but these types of relationships are sought through consumption at the market.

Peter offered an example of the unique relationships between vendors and buyers. He told me, “*another thing about the vendors is that, well they are people too. Like when you go to Zehrs or something and that's the relationship that you have, okay I'm here to serve you, or cash you through, or answer your questions, and then I'm out of here. But*

at the market it's more of a personal relationship." Peter recognized this relationship as a unique aspect of the overall market experience and spoke at length about his interactions with specific vendors. When Peter and I discussed buying and eating locally produced food as a benefit of the market, I asked him if accessible local food was the reason he went to the market. He responded, "*Part of it is. You know, a big part is that. It's also the vendors. Like we know the vendors.*" Indeed, Peter spoke about his relationships with the different vendors with affection. He knew most of them by name and always recognized when one of his favourite vendors was absent from the market. Speaking about these experiences and relationships, Peter told me about the heart attack his favourite apple vendor suffered:

Like the apple guy that I go to, Jon and Les, uh, Jon had a heart attack... And you know Les had to tell us about it. And then I found out that Les was kind of a quiet guy and he wasn't sure if he wanted to come back because he really didn't want to answer a lot questions, he just wasn't up to that... So, it was sort of a funny situation (because Jon and I were so friendly). Les probably told the regulars that this guy had a heart attack. It's too bad.

Similarly, Darla spoke about the individual relationships she has at the market and the extra consideration she receives as a result. Darla is very particular about which vendors she patronizes and purchases only from the local producers. About her relationship with a specific vendor, Darla pointed out a photo of an older woman (photo 2) and said:

I only shop at the local vendors and I've gotten to know them and they recognize who you are and we chit chat. In fact I don't even know their names, isn't that awful? But the lady there... I just bought, my husband and I, we just bought a

house so we put a garden in the back. So, I wanted to plant things that are easy to take care of. I really like garlic, so I started talking to her about growing garlic. So, she brought me some speciality bulbs last year.

Darla continued her story by telling me the garlic was beginning to grow and she discusses the progress with this vendor every Saturday.



Photo 2: Local Vendor (Darla)

While not all participants enjoyed established relationships with the vendors, most recognized the familiarity of their interactions. Ellie, who admitted to being a little shy with the vendors, spoke about her weekly bread purchase. Pointing to her photograph (photo 3) Ellie spoke fondly of her relationship with the bread vendor:

So this girl, this would be, well it's the German bread bakery... So, that's where I get bread every week and she's usually there. She's a bit younger than me so there's sort of a recognition of life stage or whatever... We're at the same place, I guess... So she will usually come over and serve me, or if I'm in the back of the line she'll acknowledge me. There's sort of a nice thing about that. I always get the same thing and she knows that I just get one and she doesn't ask me if I need a bag anymore. So, it's not - do I have a relationship with her? To a certain degree,

yes because my bread experience is not necessarily as pleasant when it's with one of the individuals that I don't know as well.



Photo 3: Familiar Face (Ellie)

The interactions between the vendors and the buyers create a positive atmosphere and overall experience. Don, a honey vendor and bee-keeper, spoke about this relationship as important to the success of his business and the market, itself. He told me, “*the patron and the vendor have a real intimate relationship and a market will not be successful without either one of those things, you've got to have them both.*” From this perspective the relationships formed between the vendors and the buyers create a unique community based on the consumption of a product, or in some cases an idea. As Molly said, “*We have this relationship. You know, it's a little community, it's kind of like going to a little small town.*” For Molly the market community fills a gap in her social world. She explained: “*It's kind of nice because you're here early in the morning. It's a nice feel. We've lost that from the supermarkets and those types of places but I think that's what our parents probably experienced more than we did.*” Accordingly, the market provides a place where people can shop, linger, and mingle. Community members interact with

vendors, friends, family, and other shoppers thus creating an enjoyable experience out of an often mundane activity.

Macy's photograph may best capture the unique interactions between vendors and buyers at the market (Photo 4).



Photo 4: "The Biggest Conversation" (Macy)

About this photograph Macy said "*these two were having the biggest conversation, I don't even know what it was about, it doesn't even matter really.*" Indeed, the conversation may have been about celery, parsley, or even the weather, but clearly the topic is not what matters to this community. Instead the market community cares about the ability to interact with other individuals. According to participants, such interactions help create and build community.

4.2.2.2 Buyer-Buyer Interactions

Interactions with other members of the community are as important for social cohesion and connectedness as the relationships formed with vendors. These unique interactions personalize the market experience and contribute to community. According to Ellie:

You know you're standing at the meat counter and somebody comes up and says "oh, they've got the best meat and you want this cut and when you make it you should make it like this." It's not only the vendors that are like that, but also the shoppers. You'd never get that in a grocery store because someone would think you're nuts.

Indeed, without interactions like those described by Ellie the market could hardly be considered a community. The interactions that occur between market community members may be subtle or overt. Many participants, for example, spoke about friendly smiles exchanged between strangers or familiar community members while others mentioned full conversations, sharing hints, tips, tales, gossip, and stories.

Ellie suggested that at other shopping venues people are not interested in small talk and rarely smiles are returned. Ellie told me, “*it's okay to, well if someone smells the fruit or whatever, you can say “is it good?” or “what do you think?”, “how do you pick a nice melon?” You know people talk to each other. And that's... that's an important part of the experience as well.*” Ellie appreciates the knowledge and experience she receives from other shoppers – she openly seeks information about the best cuts of meat or where to buy organic strawberries. Similarly, Peter and I discussed how the market creates a comfortable atmosphere to engage in informal encounters with community members. Peter enjoys these meetings: “*Like if someone is buying something I don't normally buy, but I've often wondered, I'll ask them how they cook it. And they will always answer me with more information than I originally needed.*” For Melody a Downtown Kitchener resident who does not work outside of the home, the market is a unique social opportunity. Melody told me, “*we... go every other week to make sure we see people. For*

me, it's really nice to be able to get together and gather with people because I'm alone a lot." Such interactions which occur while waiting in lines or moving about the market are frequent and widespread. For many of the participants these interactions are what make the market a unique and enjoyable experience.

Macy and I talked about how we enjoyed meeting people at the market who we recognize from other places. Macy pointed to a photo (photo 5) of a group of people who were engaged in deep conversation. She told me, "*I could have been part of a group, because it is such a rarity that I would ever go to market and not meet somebody that I know either from the neighbourhood or somebody that I haven't seen for a long time.*"



Photo 5: Running into Friends (Macy)

Macy continued by telling me it takes her longer to do her grocery shopping at the market because she always meets people she knows, but the "*social and community atmosphere*" is worth the extra time it takes to make her purchases. Most participants agreed that a main motivation for shopping at the market as opposed to a supermarket is the opportunity to interact with friends, acquaintances, and strangers. These interactions are sometimes planned, but are often impromptu meetings and exchanges.

According to most participants, social interaction is a missing and important component of the downtown area; the market, as a result, fills this recognized void.

Penelope, for example, drives to the market, but commented on how she enjoys seeing the young families walking towards the market building. She said, “*...every(one) coming and going, we see a tonne of people walking there...And when we go and have breakfast in the morning there are tables full of young people there. And I just love seeing that, you know they all meet on Saturday morning, they have their breakfast... it's a nice tradition and it's a real social space.*” Darla suggested the market community offers human connection that is missing from newer neighbourhoods. “*We're missing that in our community. Especially people living in the outlying areas because there's no connection there. There's no human connection.*” To illustrate this point, Darla pointed to a photo of a group of women discussing yarn and knitting (Photo 6). Although these individuals may not know each other personally, Darla suggested they make conversation based on shared knowledge and characteristics. Indeed, the market acts as a medium for social interaction. These interactions are important to create social cohesion and form a consumption community.



Photo 6: Shared Knowledge (Darla)

4.2.2.3 Accepting Difference

Most participants commented on the cultural diversity at the market. These participants believed the diversity that exists at the market is not prevalent in the rest of

society. To exemplify the cultural diversity at the market Macy took a picture (photo 7) and titled it “O, Canada.” She said about the photo:

“(at) the Kitchener market, particularly, you see diversity in every capacity. They’re just the regular customer and here they’re talking - sometimes an ethnic group and a lot of times one or two of them with whoever else is at the market and I just think that’s one of the things that I love about Canada. Maybe it doesn’t exist everywhere but I don’t know, I think that’s really important. (At the market) there’s a real acceptance, as if there was not a difference.”



Photo 7: “O, Canada” (Macy)

Participants believed the market is an important venue for Canadian newcomers. Most suggested that food is universal and markets are prevalent in most countries. Accordingly the market acts as a port of entry for newcomers and is a unique place for recent immigrants to experience feelings of home and also meet other newcomers as well as established Canadians. According to Alyssa the presence of many multicultural groups is important for the community. She said, *“I think it’s important for community too. You know, like a lot of Croatian people will just come and sit in front of Croatian Cuisine and same with Caribbean Kitchen... People here are pretty accepting... It puts a smile on your face.”* The market provides a welcoming atmosphere that allows diverse groups to

interact. Jillian also believes the market is an inclusive space. She said, “*it’s a wonderful place... like multiculturally, I think it is. I’ve run into new Canadian friends and it’s... I guess that’s common across cultures, the market and selling food. So, that would be inclusive for sure... I think for most groups it’s welcoming.*”

The market is a valuable resource for all cultural groups. Furthermore, participants acknowledged that the market is a safe and comfortable place for everyone. Karrie, a downtown neighbourhood resident and active community advocate, uses the market as a way to convince newcomers to make their home in the downtown core. She said:

I’ve used the market as a way to try and convince them (newcomers) that this was a community that they should settle in because they wouldn’t be looked at because of where they came from, they would be supported. And they would have easy access to really affordable food... And a lot of unique food that they may not easily find elsewhere because I can’t imagine moving to a new country and not know where to go... These people have nothing, so...you know coming from a country that is nothing like here, nothing is the same, not the weather, the people, there’s nothing. There’s absolutely nothing that is the same. Food is the only universal.

Macy pointed to a photo two women talking, one Canadian and one a newcomer (photo 8).



Photo 8: Canadian Newcomers (Macy)

About this photo, Macy supposed, “*as I watched these two ladies it was certainly clear that the gal in pink here was one of the helpers, or whatever they call them, for new Canadians....to kind of take her through the market. Well, I think it’s a wonderful thing to see them coming. And I’m sure from the basis of their travels it may be actually be a little more of what they are used to than a supermarket. I’m happy to see representations of everybody there.*” According to the participants everyone is treated equally at the market, there is no overt discrimination, and everyone is made to feel welcome. Hilda for example claims people just like to talk to her, that she is very approachable. She explained a conversation she had with a Canadian newcomer at the market. She said, “*people seem to like to talk to me...these are from all kinds of backgrounds, everyone. Saturday, I think it was, a man came up to me and he was only here two months. He spoke very broken English. And he came up to me and asked me who I work for and how long I’m here. And then I just talked with him.*” When I asked Hilda if this was an important part of her market experience she replied, “*yes. You know you can learn so much from everyone. If you only stay in your only little area, you will never appreciate that.*” Indeed, the market atmosphere and experience is similar for everyone, from all

cultures. Accordingly, these interactions are important to the creation of a heterogeneous community.

4.3 CONNECTION TO PLACE

A strong connection to the place was evident in the data I collected and analyzed. According to Hiss (1990), “places have an impact on our sense of self, our sense of safety, the kind of work we get done, the ways we interact with other people, even our ability to function as citizens in a democracy” (p. xi). In this sense, the Kitchener Market itself, as a space and a place, affects the creation and continuation of the consumption community. Individually, every participant spoke about their unique connection to the market as a place. This theme is composed of two sub-themes: 1) public space and 2) threats to the market. Taken together these sub-themes reiterate the distinctive nature of the market space as a unique place based on consumption.

4.3.1 Public space

The public space theme reinforces the accessible nature of the market space. The publicness of the space was viewed by the participants as necessary to create a heterogeneous, diverse community. Indeed, many participants commented on the unique nature of the Kitchener Market as one of the few remaining spaces that “*brings something unique to the community*” (Melody) and the City of Kitchener.

Many participants believed the market provided a comfortable community space that was inclusive and accepting for everyone. When I asked Hilda if she believed the market was a comfortable space for the community she replied, “*I hope so. I go almost every Saturday and I haven’t seen anybody who is uncomfortable. You know you can tell*

when people are uncomfortable. I haven't seen that at all." Indeed, individuals, friends and families frequent the market because it is a unique public place, unlike any other space in Kitchener. For Karrie, for example, "*the market offers everything. There is nothing this market can't offer. I mean that's the beauty, that was the goal of this market, that it could be all things to all people, to any people.*" Ray captured this sentiment with his photo (9). He said, "*if they didn't have the upstairs as a social spot, there's no reason to linger there. It's the lingering that draws me to the market.*"



Photo 9: Social Space (Ray)

Ray's photo illustrates many people engaged in different activities in a small space. Some people are eating; some people are sitting and socializing, while others are listening to the entertainer and local celebrity, Erick Traplin. Similarly, Seamus indicated that the market is a familiar spot. He said, "*there's a bit of an, almost like family atmosphere to it, where you're familiar with who is there*" (Photo 10). According to participants, as a public space the Kitchener Market offers a comfortable, accepting, and accessible atmosphere.



Photo 10: Family Space (Seamus)

Some of the participants spoke about the possibility of privatizing the market.

Considering the current economic condition and the fact that the market space is heavily subsidized the issue of privatization was a genuine concern among participants. When I asked Jillian about the possibility of privatizing the market she replied, “*I like it public. I like the feeling of it. It would feel different if it were privatized. So, yeah, I like the public support and the community support and to allow the farmers to access it.*” Similarly, Don, a vendor, suggested the goals of a private market are much different than a public market. He said, “*this is supposed to be a resurgence of how people can improve their lives by buying local, by changing how we use our highways, gasoline all that stuff. And that's what the whole idea of this is, eh, not to make money.*” The space provided by the market was recognized by participants as unique and the “publicness” of the space was viewed as a major contributor to the feelings and sentiments surrounding the market.

Karrie suggested the market space is the essence of public life. On non-market days (i.e., Tuesday through Friday), Karrie holds community meetings at the market. She said, “*I will even hold a community meeting here, with kids and everything. We set up in the corner over here so the kids have the freedom to run and they are not disturbing anybody and then the adults have the ability to sit down and have whatever the*

discussion they are going to have." Unlike many other publicly funded and operated spaces in the City of Kitchener, according to participants, the market space exhibits a genuinely public atmosphere.

Despite the feelings of publicness in the market space, participants drew the distinction between public and private interests. Peter, for example, recognized that private individuals and businesses generate a profit at the market. However, Peter suggested that private businesses operating within the market space benefit the entire community. About this conundrum Peter said, "*the flip of that, and it's a very big flip side, is the public has a say in what it's to look like. So, okay, do you want to pay for a fountain or do you want to have something that everyone benefits from? And the public benefits from the market, right?*" Similarly, Susan talked about the people she sees at the market who do not necessarily make purchases, but are present every Saturday. She said:

There are people you see from week to week that just sit and watch people and once you're going on a regular basis you'll kind of notice the same people in the same spots and I think they just go to be around people or to people watch...because in that area (of Kitchener) there are probably a lot of people who don't have many places to go...where they're around a lot of people and things like that. So I think that's very good. I think that's very important... So even though individuals make money it's still a public space.

Participants, therefore, recognized the public nature of the space depended on the involvement of private interests. The private businesses are what bring people to participate in the space. About the private-public dichotomy, Jillian may say it best, "*I wouldn't like it private at all. I like the public, open for everybody, and just sort not*

money making per say. I know people there are making money, but that's not the primary object of the entire market." Like Jillian, many participants suggested the purpose of the market goes beyond buying carrots, garlic, and apples. According to Walter, "*(The market) is so much more. It's the same as [a] community centre. It's a community place where people feel comfortable and want to be.*"

From my perspective, however, the market management does not recognize or foster the public nature of the market space. Two security guards stroll through the market five days a week, and while they portray a friendly presence, they also maintain a position of power. The private position of the market space may be best represented in the following conversation with Molly. The Saturday prior to my interview with Molly, I had witnessed the removal of peaceful protestors from the market space by security guards.

Amanda: They had posters that said, "Missing: Have you seen this theatre?"

They were talking about the King Street Theatre that just closed down. I noticed them upstairs when I was having breakfast and then about two minutes later a security guard came over and asked them to leave.

Molly: Oh.

Amanda: And I thought wait a second, this is public space.

Molly: Yeah, absolutely.

Amanda: But I'm sort of torn because you don't want protestors disrupting people, but they weren't even saying anything. They waited for people to approach them and ask.

Molly: It was sort of a passive approach?

Amanda: Yeah, exactly. But they went out to the sidewalk by all the vendors out there. So I asked them why they were asked to leave. And they told me it was private space.

Molly: Not really.

Amanda: Yeah, exactly. So I asked, "are you sure about that?" They were very gracious and they said they weren't there to put up a fight or make a big scene. So I suggested they have just as much right to be in that space as they do on the sidewalk. It's all taxpayers dollars.

Molly: Mmhmm.

Amanda: It was very interesting.

Molly: It is interesting because often between the newspaper guys and the flowers you often see a table set up promoting a cause.

Amanda: Yeah, they must obviously have permission to be there.

Molly: Yeah, exactly. But you know you kind of wish the causes and the sort of organic causes were sort of the same. I remember when I was at university because Marxist Leninists are sort of always all over the university, and I was always like I'm glad I live in a place like... I don't necessarily want to become a Marxist, but I'm just glad they are there.

Amanda: Yeah, they are able to be heard.

Molly: Yeah, that's not my way, I try to work within the system, but I'm quite happy there's that opportunity.

Amanda: It's nice to know that we have those spaces.

Molly: Yeah.

Amanda: So that kind of disappointed me about the market, getting back to a real community space and why people actually go there. So I asked them “where else could you go, where else could you make this point?” Like if the market is not public space then what is in downtown? And there was a man and a woman and the man said, “well, we could go to the front of City Hall, that’s public space.” So I said, “why don’t you go there?” And he said, “there’s nobody there.”

Molly: It’s so true.

Amanda: Yeah, just the fact that they said there’s nobody at City Hall and the market was where the people are. That just speaks volumes about the market.

Molly: Yes.

From my perspective, the market space is one of the few places in Kitchener that may actually be conducive to such forms of demonstration. The market management, however, clearly did not agree. Ironically, the demonstrators considered City Hall to be the only public space in Kitchener (aside from sidewalks). However, as these protestors pointed out, the City Hall space is not conducive to public gathering. In this way, the market was recognized by participants as a unique, genuine, and public gathering space.

4.3.2 Threats to the market

Although the market has maintained an active presence in the City of Kitchener, it does not exist without controversy. While Kitchener boasts one of the oldest continuously operating markets in Ontario, the move to the new building created tension among constituents and called into question the overall purpose of the market. Although I have not been able to confirm the original cost of the new market building, by talking to residents and local politicians as well as by consulting public records, my best estimate

suggests that it cost the City of Kitchener over 25 million dollars to construct the new building. Coupled with an annual subsidy of over 750,000 dollars, it should come as no surprise that many tax paying residents question the very existence of the market. Members of the Kitchener Market community, however, believe the market is important and worth subsidizing. In fact, many people believe the market is threatened and participated in my research solely to share a positive voice in support of the market. Susan, for example goes to the market to support the local economy and community. When I asked Susan if she believed the market was supported by the local residents she replied, “*They don’t seem to appreciate what they have... I think its (the market) days are numbered and it makes me very sad.*”

While many participants were disappointed to know that the market required extra tax dollars from the city, the generous subsidy was viewed as necessary to preserve the public, social, and community aspects of the Kitchener market. When I asked Macy if she was bothered by the city subsidy she responded:

Yeah, it does (bother me). I feel really sorry about that because we’re all taxpayers. And I feel sorry too because I want it to be a success because I think there are a lot of good healthy things and social things there that we don’t want to lose... if they’re going to run a deficit too much and then there’s an uproar – well they can’t shut down so we won’t even talk about it.

Like Macy the majority of participants believed the market should be able to at least “*break even*” (Don) because the Saturday market is very successful. However, when the issue of subsidization was discussed further, participants suggested that if necessary the

market should continue to be subsidized. When Jillian and I first discussed the market subsidy she suggested the market should be operated more like a business:

No, I think they should be concerned about it (the subsidy) because I think that it's a business... and most businesses don't operate at a loss. I mean the community stuff is important and it's good for the whole community, but, no I think they could do better.

However, when I asked Jillian if she believed the market was important enough to the community that it was worth subsidizing, she responded, “*I guess so. I think if it's that or nothing, then yeah they should do it.*”

Unlike many services the city continues to subsidize, participants recognized that the market acted a community space for all residents, regardless of age, race, or income. As Molly suggested:

I don't think it's a class thing. I think it's all cultures, I think it's all incomes... it's one of those things that should be subsidized. I mean you've got the Kitchener Rangers, you've got the Centre in the Square, those are things that serve a small population. I think the market is very diverse. So I think that's what we should want to be doing with our community dollars... The bottom line is that it is worth subsidizing.

Pointing out that the city subsidizes many social services Karrie stated:

I think the market is a wonderful spot, I always have. I think markets are profoundly important to neighbourhoods. I think that the city supporting this market is profoundly important. I think that we are crazy and we are barking up a tree whining and bitching about the amount of money that the city pours into it.

Because when I take a look at what they've supported, there's not one single mention about hockey, I don't play it, I have no interest in it, but would I sit back and complain? Not in a million years.

From my experience as a member of the market community, I certainly agree with the participants. While many were uncomfortable with the market subsidy the positive aspects of the market outweighed the negative aspects. However, while we, as a community, believe in the larger purpose of the market, it is clear that more can be done to help the overall cause and promote a stronger community.

Participants expressed concern that the market was not maintained to a proper standard and many issues prevented people from: 1) coming to the market for the first time, 2) enjoying the market as much as possible or 3) returning to the market. These matters concerned the participants because the market "*is just too important to lose*" (Penelope). Furthermore, participants felt ownership over the market as a place for their community. Unlike a larger retail supermarket, community members felt personally responsible for maintaining the market as a community space. Rebecca, for example, took a photo of a blank wall and a garbage container (photo 11).



Photo 11: Underused Space (Rebecca)

About this photo Rebecca said, “*I took a picture of this because this is what really worries me about the market. When I see things like this I feel very nervous because the market is really important to us and we worry about how it’s going to sustain itself.*”

Rebecca suggested this part of the market is not welcoming and worried about what newcomers to the market might think about the space. According to Rebecca, “*it’s just empty space. Like there’s nothing there and it’s wonderful space to be used but [it isn’t.]*” Seamus expressed similar concerns about the use of the market space. He illustrated his concerns with a photo of the fish monger that had moved out of the market space. Seamus said, “*I know vendors come and go from the market, that can’t be avoided, but to replace my favourite fish vendor with a garbage can, that’s just not a good use of this space... This just makes it the whole market space look unkempt and it’s not good*” (photo 12).



Photo 12: Missing Vendor (Seamus)

However, instead of simply ignoring such issues, participants vocalized their concerns. For example, while I observed on numerous occasions market participants approaching the management regarding specific issues. One incident involved a small barely noticeable leak in the ceiling. The individual spotted water on the floor and asked staff to put a barricade or warning sign around the water to avoid a potential accident.

When I discussed the issue with this individual he responded, “*well it would be a real shame if somebody slipped and fell there.*” When I asked him if he would undertake the effort to tell the staff at a “*regular supermarket*” he replied “*why would I bother?*” (informal conversation, February 7, 2009). Indeed, members of the community market feel ownership over the space.

Most participants agreed the market space was not used effectively or efficiently and this poor use of space deterred from the overall experience and prevented people from using the market. Ellie, for example, loves to be outside in the summer months. She was disappointed that the large patio area in front of the market was not made more comfortable for sitting and lingering. She said, “*even if there were a few tables out there I think it would be more enjoyable... that would make it more pleasant and it would be nice to have a place to go and enjoy watching people and have a coffee.*” Similarly, about the patio area Duncan said, “*Well, it's not a warm space, it's just not a place you want to be.*” Walter proposed that the patio area should be fixed up with street furniture and seating and suggested there is no reason why the patio can not act as a gathering space. “*There's ways to anchor the furniture down. I mean like in parks they do it. There's lots of places faced with these situations. Like in Toronto there's all sorts of great spots to sit and things can't get moved.*” To Walter, there was not a valid excuse for what he viewed as inappropriate use of the space (photo 13).



Photo 13: Cold Space (Walter)

Often it was smaller issues that bothered community members the most. For example, tables are often in short supply and people expressed concern over waiting for a table to be vacated. Frequently while I was waiting for a table I would talk to people about how difficult it is to find a spot to enjoy breakfast and the company of others. Many people felt rushed to leave because others were waiting for their table. Duncan was especially concerned about the seating (Photo 14). He said:

It's kind of strange because we see all these tables and chairs crammed into this one little section and then right here it's empty. We should have taken photographs of the other side, but it's totally empty too. Whenever we go for breakfast we'll walk around a while looking for a spot... And it's also awkward because you sort of feel like you're lurking over people.



Photo 14: Crowded Space (Duncan)

Simply, many participants believed the space could be better designed to incorporate positive interactions among community members. Some participants believed the market management does not appreciate the role of the market space as a community gathering spot. As Don stated, “*what the people wanted was a place to congregate. But they blew it by putting in all those stairs which made it non-accessible to the people that wanted to congregate. And management just doesn’t get it.*” In other words, Don believed the design of the space did not reflect the purpose of the building. Furthermore, Don suggested the management, including city councillors, did not recognize the potential of the market. He added, “*well, you know, that’s exactly what we’re talking about with the city councillors, why they don’t patronize or shop here. You know come and see what’s going on, you know, be a part of the community. Sit around and...and have a coffee.*”

Parking was another source of frustration for participants (photos 15 and 16). While the market offers free underground parking, it is a source of anxiety for many community members. As Macy stated:

Well, I do not go into that parking garage. If you want to know one thing I really, really, really hate about the market it’s the parking. I don’t go into that (parking lot) anymore because even though we drive cars that aren’t very big... I just found it difficult. For the number of times that I headed to the elevator there were people in the most foul temper and it was evident to anybody there it’s because they have so much trouble finding and getting into a parking spot. It’s just so frustrating.



Photo 15: No Parking (Ray)



Photo 16: Tight Squeeze (Walter)

The parking situation was a major concern to participants who worried the ability to park in a convenient and easy location could deter potential shoppers as well as themselves.

About the parking, Duncan indicated, “*They are trying to get people downtown and it feels like there’s a big sign “Go away – we don’t want you here.”*” While most participants mediate their personal parking troubles by parking further away and walking the short distance to the market, many believed the lack of parking acted as a major deterrent for newcomers as well as people who may have difficulty walking the extra distance. As Penelope suggested, “*There is lots of parking but you have to walk two or three blocks. If you go to the old parking lot from the old market there, that’s three blocks away. And to carry your groceries for three blocks, it’s not easy.*” Accordingly, to

Penelope the tendency for market management to suggest that there is a lot of parking within walking distance is not an excuse for poor parking facilities.

Community members were sensitive to any threat to the market. As Rebecca indicated, “*we’d like it (the market) to be self-sustaining for its own safety, so it’s not at the whim of the politicians.*” Participants recognized that for the market to be self-sustaining many of the smaller issues must be considered and the corrected. In other words, the market must be a place that is easily accessed by all members of the community, because it is a “*community resource*” (Peter). Consequently small issues become major threats to community members because they view the market as a fragile community resource.

4.4 CONNECTION TO ACTIVITIES

Important in any community, shared activities were evident in the Kitchener Market community. Created by the market community and encompassed by the market space the connection to these activities in the Kitchener Market community manifested through shared consumption experiences. Two examples of this theme were discovered in the data including, 1) conscious consumption and 2) leisure outings. The Kitchener Market community is bound by these activities which create shared rituals and traditions. Members exhibit these activities in the market space as a means of maintaining and perpetuating the market community.

4.4.1 Conscious consumption

Various activities occur within the confines of the Kitchener Market including buying, selling, consuming, interacting, and socializing. For many participants, however,

the Kitchener Market acts as a space where activities associated with resistance to mainstream consumption characteristics may occur. Specifically, participants suggested the market enables community members to purchase ethically, locally, environmentally, and organically produced grocery products. In other words, the market is recognized as a location for conscious consumption. Indeed, many participants viewed their participation in the market community as a conscious and positive choice related to movements associated with the environment, accessible food, organic food, and local food. The conscious consumption of such products is a unique characteristic of the market community.

Don, a producer and market vendor, made the distinction between a market shopper and a non-market shopper.

The way we shop, I mean a lot of people like the convenience of the one stop, go to Zehrs and everything is there and Wal-mart now, and I can see the attraction.

But ultimately there's a lot of folks that want to support farmers and they want to use this as a place to gather. Not just with their immediate family but with friends and new friends that they meet. But, ultimately they want to support the farmers.

Don takes pride in knowing his customers and although I spent only a limited amount of time with him, these relationships were evident. Community members appreciated the time Don spent to explain his products and share his knowledge. Knowing the process and the producer of the food (in Don's case, honey) is important to members of the market community.

From the perspective of knowing where her food comes from, Ellie talked about the market as one of the few locations where the consumer can interact with the producer.

She said, “*(to know) that someone who grew the produce, took care of it, and is now giving it to me. I take their creation, their product and enjoy it... I just get so much more out of my food when I know where it comes from.*” The connection to the producer of the product is important to members of the market community. Similarly, Karrie believed Canadian society has forgotten the entire process of growing and producing food. To Karrie shopping at the market helps maintain the connection to the land and to the farmer.

If we are going to ensure that this country remains one of the top producers of food then we have to understand that (process). Because these people, these farmers are so important to that understanding... it's a direct connection to the food supply. And I think you have to understand that... you know where does this food come from?

Participants spoke about the anonymity they experience at a grocery store and the contrast between market experiences. As Melody stated, “*(The market is) very vibrant and organic.... you know people need that. You know you go to the grocery store and you don't feel that. You get your metal cart and you walk around and nobody looks at you.*”

About the Kitchener Market Melody continued, “*I just kind of like the idea of buying local, you're buying fresh, and you're supporting farmers.*” Given this philosophy, the Kitchener Market provides a place where conscious consumption choices occur. To illustrate this point Molly talked about her photo of a local butcher shop (photo 17).



Photo 17: "Good Deli Meat" (Molly)

About this photograph Molly said:

*Now this one, I thought this is a good picture because a couple of us have kids...
the group [I shop with] is also very diverse, I have three kids, and I have to feed
five people a week. Somebody else has one teenager, so they don't have meals.
And so one of the reasons we go to Cressman's is because they have good deli
meat and that's sort of one of our motivations for going there and we buy it
because it's got less stuff in it. And I think that's one of the reasons we go to the
market. Is it pure? Is it perfect? No. Do I know my mango is not from Ontario?
Yes. But do I think I gain more than I do from the supermarket? For sure.*

As Molly pointed out, members of the market community recognize the differences between a grocery store experience and a market experience. For many participants (and community members) the market offers a space to make conscious choices connected to various philosophies surrounding food consumption.

Related to the ability to interact with the producer, participants pointed to the market as a place to purchase locally and organically produced foods and consumer goods. While participants recognized the difference between local farmers and distributors selling produce obtained from the Toronto Food Terminal, most made a

conscious effort to buy local. As Ellie stated about her favourite place to purchase in-season produce:

They sell sauerkraut and jams and that sort of thing. So they have, like when they get their beans in they are so wonderful, and their sugar peas are out of this world. Their corn is great. And you know they're this farm where they get something in and they have it for two weeks and then that's it. And then for the rest of the year they have cabbages and rutabaga and carrots.

Similarly, the ability to purchase local food was important to Macy. Like other participants, Macy took a photograph to distinguish between local producers and distributors (photo 18).



Photo 18: Local Farmers (Macy)

About this photo Macy said:

Now, I took this because these folks are from New Dundee, you probably know that, but anyway they are. They just have their root vegetables over the winter, they strictly bring what they have. And I won't say I do the hundred mile thing, I do buy pineapple as you know. But I try to buy root vegetables more than I would generally in the winter. And I always get them from these people because they are very local and their produce is good.

Macy represents the majority of the participants' views on local and organic food. While most like to buy locally produced and grown food, there is a clear recognition that purchasing local and organic is not always possible. As Molly stated, "*I try to buy things that are local and in season, but the kids they do like the variety. Like mangoes, they do like the mangoes. I try not to buy tomatoes in January, but like mangoes we don't grow mangoes in Ontario.*"

Rebecca does the majority of their shopping at the Kitchener Market. Strong proponents of buying local, they recognized different reasons and motivations for shopping at the market. Rebecca used a photograph to illustrate the different types of vendors (photo 19).



Photo 19: Different Vendors (Rebecca)

Rebecca explained the differences between producers as vendors and vendors who purchase their food from another source. She said:

Here you have these guys, like they're organic, but they are not local in any way. They import all of their stuff from the States, they are a small producer but they charge a lot of money for their food. And then you have these guys who sell grapefruit or strawberries or grapes and it's not local, it's not organic, and it's not anything. So I feel like that those two groups are really in tension. Like people

like us, we're looking for local produce and organic produce, we're willing to pay more for our food if we're comfortable with the sources.

For many participants, although local and organic are important, there is recognition that the market also depends on distributors and non-organic vendors to maintain strong community support. As Rebecca continued, “*there's a lot of people who see the market as a source of cheap food, because it often is cheap. And they're not interested in the food source, so, like, I don't know, that's just how it is. And I wonder if it's that way in a lot of markets or if that's kind of unique to this market. Or if that's even a problem...*”

Rebecca was clearly conflicted about the types of shoppers at the market and the overall purpose of the market as a public space.

Susan shared a similar perspective to Rebecca. Susan shops specifically for local and/or organic produce and believes the market should emphasize the local producers, specifically. Accordingly Susan said, “*I think that they need more local producers. Not local as in New Hamburg [a neighbouring community] necessarily, but people from Southern Ontario or within our region. And I think they make it a huge emphasis and maybe even give a cost break to vendors who are producers.*” Local food was also important to Walter, however, he believed local produce is not well advertised. As Walter said, “*that would be a recommendation I'd make for them, for those people who sell at the market, to advertise that they are local. And honestly, not lie about. Let's be honest about it and identify for everyone what's local.*” Clearly, members of the market community believe locally produced food is important to the continuation of the market in general, as well as the community. Participants believed in the market as a place to enact alternative consumption choices and to interact with like-minded individuals.

Not as well supported by the participants, but certainly important to many was the opportunity to utilize the market as a place to obtain ethically produced meat and eggs and environmentally friendly products. Macy pointed to her photo (20) and said:

This is really important to me. This matters. I don't know about taste, probably it's better that I don't know, but once you become a little bit better educated about the conditions that some of the animals and here in this case, chickens, you know the way that they are kept jammed into cages with each of their beaks clipped so they can't peck each other, this kind of thing. I don't think anything we eat can justify those kinds of conditions, so I will even pay a little bit to get the free run, as I understand it is that they are allowed to run free inside the barn.



Photo 20: "Cage Free!" (Macy)

Similarly, Darla told me the first thing she does when she arrives at the market is buy her eggs. She explained that not only is she loyal to her egg vendor but she purchases only "free farmed" eggs. According to Darla:

Okay, when I go to the market I first have to go buy my eggs... I think they still grow their produce and stuff in the Wellesley area, but I'm not sure... And I actually started going to them, I think it was his grandparents or her great-grandparents who passed away a number of years ago... Yeah, third generation, I

think. And I know their daughter also works at the market. So, yeah, I feel really loyal to them. I always go there first... (for) my free farmed eggs.

Many participants spoke about the opportunity to purchase ethically and/or organically farmed meat, eggs, and food. Rebecca spoke about eggs (“*we buy free range*”), Ellie used the market to obtain free range and organic meat (“*I couldn’t imagine an animal that suffered that I then ate*”), and Peter suggested that the market is a good place to buy organic (“*...Maple syrup... at least you know here it’s from the trees up the road or around the area... and it’s organic*”). According to participants, if nothing else, shopping at the market offers choices related to conscious consumption. Participants recognized these food options as unique and worth supporting.

The final act of resistance supported by the market community is environmental awareness. Although cloth bags have become standard issue at most grocery stores and for most shoppers, the market community not only embraces cloth bags but also a sense of environmental ethic, in general. From my observations, the majority of market shoppers use their own cloth bags or backpacks. Although market vendors do not charge a fee for plastic bags (unlike supermarkets in the region) market shoppers remain dedicated to reducing waste. For example, although the restaurants use paper plates and plastic cutlery, many “regulars” bring their own re-usable plates from home. Similarly, Macy shops at the market because she is able to choose products that create less waste. Illustrated with a photo (21), she said:

Now this I took and it could have been any one of the meat displays, I didn’t take it for that particular one...But as [I say], no Styrofoam or plastic wrap. And that’s important to me too. The less packaging and also the type of packaging. I

I think Styrofoam and plastic are not what we need to be doing. And, now at market you will get plastic bags. They will put something in plastic and then give you a plastic bag, but they kind of know me and others too, they know I don't need a bag. I've got my bag. I usually have my recycled plastic bags, but I also have my cloth bags as well. Actually, the meat would usually be in butcher paper, which is waxed but it is more like paper. And then if you have your own plastic bags, they'll do that. And then I don't need a second one. I try to keep plastic to a minimum.



Photo 21: Less Packaging (Macy)

Melody also emphasized the negative environmental impacts of consumption. Although she believed shopping at the market is a good first step to waste reduction, she also stressed more could be done. She said:

I like to think of the market as being very organic and people being very environmentally conscious. So I would like at the market for it to be very easy to be green. I would like all the plastic to be gone from the market, like no one, even the vendors, should use plastic bags...most people don't anyway.

Being “green” was certainly emphasized and demonstrated by members of the market community. Indeed, many participants spoke about choosing to shop at the market

because of the opportunity to interact with farmers and to make conscious consumption choices. For Alyssa, a five-day-a-week vendor who sells local art and eco-friendly products, the market was a logical location to start her business because “*(the) people shopping here are already somewhat conscious consumers.*”

Indeed, members of the market community choose the market as a place to resist mass consumption and consumerism. Such resistance may be exhibited through buying local or organic, buying free range eggs, or using cloth instead of plastic. About such conscious consumption, Duncan said:

We’re going to have to (start buying local). I can see the whole global economy building, kind of building infrastructure for this stuff, so if we can make a demand for local food then people will produce it and then when we need to have local food it will be available to us. But if we don’t go that way then we’ll need local food because we can’t afford to cart it in from Argentina or wherever it is.

Members of the market community recognized the importance of conscious consumption and used the market as a place to exhibit behaviours associated with resistance against mainstream and conventional consumption. Peter suggested that shopping at the market is about the choice to consume in a specific manner. As Peter indicated:

I get what I want and what that does is, it’s not just going to the market to pick up a few things, it’s also a feeling of whether it’s for yourself or to feed your family, you can say okay, I’m getting some good stuff, stuff that I choose. Stuff that my family will enjoy, I will enjoy, and we’ll be better for it. But that also it’s a special meal. And so it’s like that sort of that same thing as the community connectedness, but also the whole process is connected. You go to the store and I remember

going to the grocery store, most of the people just dump their stuff onto the conveyor, but I remember this one woman ahead of me, every single item she placed with care on the conveyor and she packed it the same way. That's what it's about, it's caring about what you buy.

Members of the market community and participants indicated that the market is a unique place to consciously consume market products. These consumption practices bind the shoppers together as a community based on shared beliefs and values.

4.4.2 Leisure Outings

The market space is a leisure place. Although market shopping is associated with utilitarian needs, as Macy pointed out, “*it’s an outing for most folks, it’s more than a shopping trip.*” Indeed, while often the primary purpose for going to the market is to purchase grocery products, most participants recognized the leisurely nature of the market experience. Participants spoke about leisure activities including shopping, socializing, eating, relaxing, reading, or listening to live music – all of which occur in the market space. Often participants contrasted the leisurely experience of shopping at the market to a regular grocery store. As Melody explained:

Sometimes I really don’t like going grocery shopping... it is my role (in my household). But at the market it (grocery shopping) is fun, it’s a leisure activity. There is something for me as the shopper for the family and as a stay at home mom, there is something for me about paying each vendor and having that contact. Sort of knowing where my food comes from in that way, so I know I am providing the best for my family.

To illustrate this point, Melody pointed to a photo (22) of fresh capons. She explained that the day she took this photo she and her family were going to be celebrating a family birthday. A market capon was purchased specifically for the family meal.



Photo 22: Special Meal (Melody)

Penelope viewed shopping at the market as much more relaxing than shopping at a grocery store. Penelope said, “*We like the routine of it, we like the fact that it’s relaxing. It’s not push, push, push, like you get in the grocery store where everybody is in a hurry and you line up...*” Clearly Penelope chooses to shop at the market because of the overall experience. For Penelope going to the market is about more than simply buying carrots and peppers. Instead for Penelope (and many other participants) shopping at the market is a leisure experience.

When I asked Molly if going to the market was more like a leisure activity than a chore, she responded by comparing her market shopping to her daughter’s involvement on a hockey team:

I just, you know because of time constraints, if I can find something socially that needs to be done, it’s nice. It doesn’t seem like you have enough time to do all these things, especially with having kids. I’m doing their things. The one weekend I took Addie to Toronto (for a hockey game) it was funny because I said I needed

a jersey to go to the market because that's my time, that's my team. I just need my 7:15 every Saturday morning, that's all I need. We should call it the "Your Kitchener Market" team to get the point that that's my team that I play on every Saturday morning.

The leisure activities engaged in at the market vary for each participant. However, most spoke about leisurely aspects of market shopping. Many participants equated market time with relaxed, unhurried time. In my observations at the market it was not uncommon to see one or two people sitting together reading the newspaper and sipping a coffee.

Walter, for example, pointed to his photo of the newspaper stand (photo 23) and said, “*Saturday morning – that's our time. And we buy the newspaper and we'll sit and have breakfast together. We'll chew on what's the latest greatest in the world right now. We'll talk about all kinds of stuff. But it's kind of like, well I look forward to it, because it's sort of a no agenda time.*”



Photo 23: Leisurely Reading (Walter)

Similarly, Ellie spoke about having extra time on the weekend to purchase and read the newspaper. Ellie said, “*I guess there's that feeling of... a paper to me is weekend indulgence. I have time to sit and take the time to have a slow breakfast and read through the paper. So I feel like having the newspaper vendor there, it's... I don't know it just*

adds to the weekend and this sense of quietness.” Although the market is often crowded and busy with people, the sense of slowing down and quietness Ellie spoke about is evident in the way people interact with each other and linger over breakfast or coffee.

For Hilda going to the market provides an opportunity to interact with her friends. Although Hilda does not do her grocery shopping at the market, she goes every Saturday specifically to socialize. In Hilda’s words, “*I do enjoy going (to the market). I go there with another couple. And then we meet more friends, we have coffee, and we have conversation...For me, it’s the coffee and the conversation.*” Indeed, on Saturday from six in the morning until two in the afternoon people use the market space the way Hilda spoke about – to socialize and interact with friends.

Karrie who considers herself a market regular said, “*those of us who are regulars here, those of us who know (the market), we love it. We just come here to sit and socialize and watch people. You know, it’s unique to be able to sit and watch and socialize.*”

Members of the market community and participants indicated that the market is a unique place to experience and engage in leisure. As Peter said about his market experience, “*it’s a leisure activity but you’re doing things you need to do. And that’s part of the awareness, I think. So that sort of awareness and getting two things done at once I enjoy... I kayak. Why don’t I run on a treadmill? Because it feels like work. Kayaking is enjoyable, but it also gives me exercise. I want the market to be a leisure activity, not feel like work and it is (leisure).*” Although most participants admitted the primary reason they go to the market is for the produce, baked goods, and meat, the leisure opportunities and laid back atmosphere make their experience rewarding and relaxing.

4.5 CONCLUSION

According to Cook (2008) the dominant perspectives on consumption and capitalism rarely consider the ways in which culture, meaning, sentiment, and everyday practice are reflected in social life. However, leisure time, leisure activities, and leisure spaces largely surround matters of consumption. Results presented in this chapter indicate that acts and places of consumption should be considered in relation to social interaction, resistance, and community development. Indeed, as a place of consumption, the Kitchener Market plays a formative role in forwarding the enhancement of community life. The proceeding chapter furthers the discussion of the relationship between acts of consumption, places of consumption, and community, in general. As Cook (2006a) argued, “the tendency to view consumer society as an outright and necessary hindrance to realizing community rests on a thin, stylized conception of consumption as essentially an individual act” (p. 457). Specifically, the following chapter will deepen our understanding of communities of consumption in the context of third places, public spaces, and leisure.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The discussion presented in this chapter is guided by two research questions: *what roles, if any, do places of consumption, particularly third places, play in the everyday lived experience of community?* And *how do places of consumption create and build community?* Based on the findings presented in chapter four, discussion surrounding these questions is important to further develop our understanding of communities of consumption in the context of third places, public spaces, and leisure. The findings emphasize two areas that require further discussion to underscore the significance of places of consumption for community, in general. To inform conversations of community in leisure studies, consumption communities and everyday places will be considered in relation to the findings presented in chapter four and the questions guiding this research.

5.2 CONSUMING COMMUNITIES, CONSTRUCTING COMMUNITY

The social attributes and unique characteristics of community markets are well documented in the sociology, rural studies, marketing, and geography literature. Positive attributes of community markets include the ability to get to know the vendors, availability of information about products, and opportunities to sample the products and support local farmers (Szmigin et al., 2003; Youngs & Holden, 2002). The data I collected and presented in chapter four reinforce the results of previous studies of markets. Indeed, participants addressed many positive experiences associated with the Kitchener Market, such as interacting with community members, vendors, and farmers, supporting the local economy, and participating in a leisure activity. Beyond the reasons

to patronize a community market, however, this research is about the creation and reinforcement of community in places of consumption, particularly third places. There was considerable evidence of a consumption community at the Kitchener Market, examined as a third place. This evidence was observed in the face-to-face interviews with participants, participant photographs, and my own observations and informal conversations.

Historically, there has been a tendency to view community as either place-based or place-free. In the context of this research, the community formed in the market is bound to the place and the ideas encompassed within. While the market community occurs within the confines of a geographic space (i.e., the market building), the community itself is formed around the ideas, activities, and interactions incorporated in the space. However, it is the market space that facilitates this interaction. Thus, while the ideas and values incorporated by the market community may occur in other spaces (e.g., coffee shops, book stores, or daily markets) the Kitchener Market as a space forms and enhances the ideas and the community encompassed therein. Maffesoli (1995), for example, argued spaces, as much as activities, are important sites of cultural encounter and community processes. For the purpose of this research, therefore, I felt it was not beneficial to ask “what is community”, but rather “when is community” and “how is community.” As such, I examined the “when’s” and “how’s” of the Kitchener Market community, based on the socially constructed relationships within. Although these community relationships may be formed in and around a specific geographic location, community is not necessarily a fixed place or space. Instead community occurs when people come together to form relationships based on shared identity, interdependence,

mutual responsibilities, and consumption activities. Similar to Lysloff (2003), whose online ethnographic research acknowledged that “online communities...are as ‘real’ as those offline” (p. 236), findings in this study suggest the market community is about more than geographic boundaries – it is about the socially constructed relationships created within the space. These relationships are formed around joint consumption practices that occur in the market space.

The market community shares characteristics associated with traditional notions of community. While there may be a multitude of ways to define “community”, Etzioni (2004) asserted that communities are social entities defined by two compatible, yet distinct elements. First, community members have complex interrelationships with other community members that are both reinforcing and supportive. Second, the community members have a commitment to a shared set of values, norms, and meanings. These elements of community were evident in the market data. Among participants (i.e., community members) these elements were discussed as important markers of the market community. These fundamental characteristics of community encompassed essential aspects of the group’s joint and individual behaviours and social processes. As Karrie, one of the research participants, acknowledged, community members have “*vendors that know their names, they’ve got vendors that know what they want, now that’s community.*”

The first element described by Etzioni (1995, 2004), complex interrelationships, was evident in the findings presented in chapter four. Complex interrelationships are a collective sense of connection to the community and individuals encompassed in the space and the place itself. Furthermore, this element of community suggests a sense of moral responsibility or duty to the community as a whole as well as individual members

within the community. This element of community was exhibited in the market community's sense of connection to the people (i.e., other members of the community) and connection to the place. The complexity of relationships in the market space was demonstrated in four ways: oppositional loyalty, community/public space, complex relationships, and social capital development.

Oppositional loyalty was exhibited in members of the community acknowledgement of the Kitchener Market as different from the St. Jacobs Market (a year-round market located not more than 15 kilometres from the Kitchener Market). This finding is similar to Muniz and O'Guinn's (2001) recognition that community members create community through opposition to competing brands (or, in this case, places). For example, participants in this study emphasized the Kitchener Market as a community of local people as opposed to a group of tourists. Members of the Kitchener Market community derived important aspects of their community identity from their joint opposition toward the St. Jacobs Market. As Walter said, "*...it is a better market, the prices are better, the produce is better, it's local.*" In this way, loyalty to the Kitchener Market community was often demonstrated in negative accounts of the St. Jacobs Market. Participants, for example, spoke about the St. Jacobs Market as a place for *tourists* and described the market experience as *plastic* and *fake*. Members of the market community also positioned the Kitchener Market in contrast to supermarket chains and other traditional retail stores. Participants stressed the difference between the overall experiences at both venues and their commitment to the market community.

Oppositional loyalty was also demonstrated in the members' commitment to the Kitchener Market community. Many members felt obliged to invite and recruit new

members to the Kitchener Market and went out of their way to explain the differences between the Kitchener Market and the St. Jacobs Market. In this way, community members fostered and perpetuated the Kitchener Market community, specifically, rather than markets in general. This finding is consistent with Unruh's (1979) social world typology. According to Unruh, a social world is a culture area or sphere of interest. Although social worlds have many different forms and sizes, Strauss (1984) emphasized specialized subworlds and segmentations occur based on spatial distinctions, skill differences, or based on philosophies or ideologies. People who identify strongly with their social world are referred to as "insiders." Insiders are deeply familiar with the intimate details of their social world (Unruh, 1979). As such, inviting people to the market or talking about the market with friends and strangers was not only viewed as a way to maintain the market as a public resource, a commodity, and a community, but also as a way to establish themselves of Kitchener Market community "insiders."

A second element of complex interrelationships, establishing community space, was a process by which community members celebrated the market space as public and accessible space. A strong connection to the market space as public and community space was evident in the data presented in chapter four. As McInroy (2000) recognized, urban public places function as forums for community involvement and regeneration. In this sense, public places like the Kitchener Market create a sense of place, sense of belonging, and place attachment for local residents (Low & Altman, 1992). Most participants viewed the market space as a true public space. Furthermore, participants contrasted the market space to other publicly managed space and emphasized the differences in accessibility, social interaction, and feelings of community. Community members' commitment to the

market space, specifically as a public community space, was evident in how threats to the market were defined, acknowledged, and mediated. Members of the community felt a collective sense of connection to the space, the people in the space, and the activities encompassed by the space. Indeed, many participants acknowledged the market as a community resource – as a result, a sense of moral responsibility to the space and the people in the space was shared by members of the community.

Relationships were manifested at the Kitchener Market through the space, the activities, and the community. Relationships formed within the community suggest a shared understanding of the types of people who are members of the market community and feelings of commitment to these members. Community members, for example, believed they knew other market participants (or community members) well enough to engage in informal conversation. Such conversations often surrounded issues pertinent to market participants (e.g., how to pick a ripe melon, parking complaints) but also included conversation about everyday issues (e.g., the weather, politics). Furthermore, members expressed concern for specific vendors (e.g., the spice lady closing her shop because of her ongoing battle with breast cancer) and other community members (e.g., people in wheelchairs that are unable to climb the stairs to the upper level). These relationships suggest a collective sense of connection to other members of the community.

Social capital development was addressed as a connection to members of the market community. Defined by Putnam (1995), social capital is considered to be “features of social life – networks, norms, and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (p. 664-665). An indicator of community, social capital was exhibited in the market space to create and maintain

mutually supportive relationships. Community members actively sought information and relationships from other members of the community. Darla's exchange with her garlic vendor may be the best example of social capital within the market community (*I started talking to her about growing garlic. So, she brought me some speciality bulbs last year*). However, social capital was evident in most market interactions and participants spoke about gaining knowledge from and creating relationships with other members of the market community.

The second community element described by Etzioni (1995, 2004), shared values, norms, and meanings, was also evident in the findings presented in chapter four. This element may best be described as the market culture. Specifically, market culture was exhibited in the members of the market community's sense of connection to the activities and perpetuated through two activities: acts of resistance and leisure experiences.

Acts of resistance were exhibited in consumption activities. Shared values, norms, and meanings were created through collective consumption experiences which helped to form and maintain the culture of the market community. Members of the market community shared culture surrounding consumption of organic produce and meat, free range chickens and eggs, and local food, in general. Often described as the primary reason for participating in the market community, these acts of resistance (whether intentional or not) helped create and maintain the culture of the market community. Members of the market community also spoke about their purchases to non-community members thus supporting the community culture outside of the community space (e.g., Susan said, “*and even with co-workers and stuff we'll talk, “oh, I got the best peaches”*” and “*where did you get them?” “Oh the peach people,” “oh, I bought mine here”*”).

Leisure experiences were also related to the market culture. Leisure helped create this element of community by providing the community with meaning and establishing the market as different from other leisure based communities. While most participants viewed the market as a leisure site there was recognition that participation was both leisure based and work based. The combination of the two activities is a unique feature of the market community. It is interesting to note that the majority of participants who commented on the leisure-work balance in the market space were female. Consistent with previous research, the data presented here suggest shopping is an important aspect of women's lives, whether shopping is viewed as leisure or as a mundane activity (Scranton & Watson, 1998). Furthermore, for both men and women, leisure experiences help to not only delineate what the market community is, but also what it is not. Here members of the market community recognized that not all participants at the market are necessarily members of the community. For participants, the leisure and social aspects of the market were a prerequisite for membership in the community and reinforcement of the community culture. For example, many people attend the market to purchase their weekly groceries and do not participate in the social or leisurely aspects of the market. Although these people do engage in and interact with the market community and share similar values and norms surrounding food consumption, they are not necessarily active participants in the market community. In other words, these individuals do not necessarily identify themselves as part of the community. The leisure and social opportunities engaged in by members of the market community, therefore, differentiate members from non-members and are distinguishing features of the market community.

Recently, leisure scholars have criticized acts of consumption and places associated with consumerism as fundamental challenges to the enactment of community (e.g., Aria & Pedlar, 2003; Hemingway, 1996; Stormann, 2000). As noted by Muniz and O'Guinn (2001), "the growing centrality of the individual consumer and his or her growing materialistic desires were (and are) said to be part and parcel of the loss of community" (p. 413). However, the Kitchener Market community encompassed and exhibited those essential community elements suggested as by Etzioni (2004). In this sense, these elements of the market community support the argument that communities based on consumption maintain similar characteristics as traditional communities.

Although consumer culture is often accused of depleting community and social cohesion, (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 2003), results of this research suggest acts of consumption contribute to community. As Muniz and O'Guinn argued "it is no longer a requisite to believe that members of society are of necessity more lost or homeless in their consciousness simply because the social organizing objects in question happen to be commercial" (p. 415). This viewpoint may be particularly relevant to farmers' markets because they are consumption based, community spaces.

Gusfield (1978) noted that while society is composed of deliberately formed associations for the rational achievement of mutual goals, communities are naturally developed forms of association which have intrinsic and non-logical values. In this sense, members of a community feel a connection to other members based on who or what they do as individuals. This research has revealed that in a place of consumption both where and what is consumed by individuals act as this connection, thus creating community. Indeed, consumption at the Kitchener Market is not only an individual performance, but

one associated with acts of resistance, conviviality, and sense of community. Findings presented in chapter four, therefore, suggest that communities of consumption not only exist, but symbolic consumption may well serve as the beginnings of these communities. Accordingly, the view of consumption as a barrier to community currently upheld in the leisure literature is not supported by this research.

5.3 EVERYDAY PLACES

While work on places of consumption and leisure spaces has often focused on visible and spectacular places (Mansvelt, 2005), this research suggests that everyday places, spaces, and geographies of consumption are increasingly important to leisure and community, in general. Cultural geographers, for example, have explored everyday places of consumption as sites of social centrality where people interact and engage in community. Furthermore, the realm of cultural geography examines how everyday places reflect the cultures that created the space, the meanings attached to places, and the ways in which places and cultures shape each other (e.g., Glennie & Thrift, 1996; Mansvelt, 2005). Dickinson (2002) explained how the study of everyday spaces differs from that of exceptional space:

Spaces like museums, national parks, art installations and memorials are often visited precisely because of their symbolic importance. While everyday spaces, like coffee shops, are filled with symbolic visual and material elements, these elements are less obviously symbolic than those that make up a memorial or a museum. The force of an everyday space arises out of the subtle interconnected ways in which the spaces are “accidentally” constructed and, just as importantly,

in the ways that these banal spaces of the everyday are visited in nearly non-conscious ways. (p. 6)

Under these terms the Kitchener Market is an everyday place. Participants in this study did not regard the market space as extravagant or extraordinary. Rather, participants spoke about visiting the market space as a routine and ordinary experience. From this perspective, unlike exceptional spaces which are often considered disconnected from “wider social spheres, centred around leisure, consuming and simulation, regulated by disciplinary technologies of surveillance, gatekeeping and crowds” (Mansvelt, 2005, p. 59), the Kitchener Market space should not be examined in relation to the act of consumption alone.

As an everyday place, the market space encompasses a complex combination of utilities and supports a variety of behaviours and acts of consumption. Participants in this study acknowledged the relationships formed around consumption, including social and cultural rituals associated with consumption in the market space. The extended networks of consumption processes evident in the market space, therefore, not only contribute to the greater community but create and maintain a market community based on both consumption and leisure. Indeed, the relationships and rituals formed in the market emphasize the importance of places as imperative in the formation of the social self and community (Mort, 1998). These everyday spaces, therefore, transcend discussions of “cathedrals of consumption” (Ritzer, 2005, p. 7).

This research contends the market and the ideas encompassed in the market space are important in the formation of community. Indeed, the market and similar everyday spaces should not be considered “passive backdrops to human relations” (Mort, 1998, p.

891). Instead these spaces are characterized by local community “with close emotional ties, connectedness between people, caring, spontaneity, immediacy, participation and collaboration” (Mackay, 1997, p. 7). As Lefebvre (1991) suggested, space has the potential to recreate and reproduce social relations. In this sense, people create places, but places also create people (Thrift, 1997). As an everyday place, the Kitchener Market creates and builds community by providing a place for social interaction, joint consumption, and leisure. The relevance of this research, therefore, is a comprehensive understanding of the implications of everyday places of consumption in the creation and enactment of community.

5.3.1 Placemaking

Placemaking is the process of creating spaces that people experience in a positive way. According to Schneekloth and Shibley (1995) placemaking is “the way all of us as human beings transform the places in which we find ourselves into places in which we live” (p. 1). Placemaking is recognized for its potential to create public places that promote people’s health, well being, and happiness (PPS.org). Often attributed to everyday places, the process of placemaking contributes to feelings of community and social cohesion. As participants in this research suggested, the market is a place where members feel connected to their community. This research indicates that consumption of the market product(s) is imperative to the creation of the market as a third place, a public gathering place, and a community place. In this case, the consumption of market products, and the coming together of individuals around these products, characterizes and makes the space a place. The space, in turn, contributes to meaningful relationships formed between and by members of the market community. In this sense, the third place

as a consumption space brings the community together, and placemaking is informed by this process. Results of this research, therefore, suggest space is organized to represent the values, meanings, and culture of what occurs in the space (Roy, 2001). The space, in turn, shapes values, meanings, and cultures experienced within (Harvey, 1993). In this way, placemaking creates everyday spaces that are spirited, spontaneous, vital, and inclusive (Chase, Crawford, & Kaliski, 2008).

This research reveals places and spaces such as the Kitchener Market are important for community and community development. Placemaking is important in this process. Participants, for example, attributed feelings of community to the publicness of the space. Karrie, perhaps the biggest proponent of the market as a publicly accessible space, believed the space could be “*all things to all people, any people.*” Karrie’s statement reflects the culture of the market as a diverse and public space. Furthermore, members of the market community, like Karrie, expressed a commitment to making the market space a better place. In this sense, and related to placemaking, the market space does not simply exist; instead it is made, maintained, and manipulated by those who interact in the space. While participants spoke about their relationships with the physical space of the market, the place also creates relationships between the people who occupy the space (Schneekloth & Shibley 1995). The act of placemaking in the Kitchener Market space, therefore, creates and builds community.

This research supports the work of urban geographer Harvey (1990) who stated “spaces are constructed and experienced... as intricate networks of social relations” (p. 314). Indeed, the social process of placemaking is evident in this research. Identified by the three major themes presented in chapter four, participants acknowledged relationships

with people, relationships with the place, and activities as main contributors to feelings of community at the market. These relationships and activities coincide to create the place and develop community. Many participants, for example, discussed the poor layout and design of the market space. Participants spoke about parking and seating availability, neglected spaces, and elevation from street level as detrimental to the market experience. Yet, despite such negative sentiments about the physical space, participants acknowledged the community building and community development potential of the market as a place. In this case, while the configuration of the space could certainly be improved upon, the mere fact that the space exists for exchange of market products is crucial to shaping social bonds and creating community. Results of this research, therefore, support Tuan (1977) who argued places of intimate human exchanges can not be deliberately designed to guarantee the success of genuine human exchange. In other words, the physical design of the space does not guarantee meaningful place or community experiences. Instead, placemaking occurs through the establishment of human relationships based on common experiences, rather than physical design alone. In this research, the place is made through consumption exchanges and common acts of resistance. The market space, therefore, only facilitates community relationships. Community, however, is not formed around the physical space, but rather who and what occurs in that place.

While most leisure opportunities, leisure pursuits, and acts of consumption are inherently spatial, results of this research suggest it is how these spaces are interpreted that is most important. Therefore, if we seek to understand leisure, community, and consumption, we must also consider the spatial context in which these concepts are

pursued. According to Edelman (1995), spaces serve symbolic functions that “take on different meanings for different people” (p. 74). Members of the market community interacted with the market space for different reasons, however, a recognition of the importance of the market as a place of consumption was reiterated by all participants. The market space is created around consumption and the acts of resistance associated with consuming market products. Understanding the way communities and individuals perceive and experience public places of consumption will contribute to a better understanding and contextual representation of consumption and its relation to community.

5.3.2 Third Places: Beyond Dichotomies

It is generally recognized that many of the social and contextual factors deemed to be important and influential in determining leisure behaviour, leisure preferences, and community, incorporate a spatial perspective (Marans & Mohai, 1991; Smale, 1985, 1995). Indeed, most leisure opportunities and pursuits are inherently spatial. More than consumption and the act of consumption, this research is about *places* of consumption. Results of this research suggest that places of consumption are increasingly important to the construction of community. Mansvelt (2005), for example, noted that buying, using, and disposing of commodities connects us to people and places. This research reveals that everyday places of consumption should be given greater attention by leisure scholars.

The data presented in chapter four reveal that third places and everyday places of consumption bring community together. According to Hiss (1990), “places have an impact on our sense of self, our sense of safety, the kind of work we get done, the ways we interact with other people, even our ability to function as citizens in a democracy. In

short, the places where we spend time affect the people we are and can become” (p. xi). Everyday places, such as third places, therefore, represent public gathering spaces in which residents can informally connect with family, friends, or community members. Accordingly, “the third place is a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work” (Oldenburg, 1999, p. 16). Third places provide a place to connect with people in the community as well as a place to exchange ideas, experiences, and stories. Results from this research suggest the Kitchener Market is a third place for members of the local community. In addition, the market space is important in downtown Kitchener as a place that creates and builds community.

The majority of the participants in this research expressed the importance of local, organic, affordable, and ethical food and identified the market as a place to purchase these goods. However, most participants also acknowledged the importance of the Kitchener Market as a community place – one where they feel comfortable and to which they are attached. This raises the question, how much of the market popularity and attachment to the place is really about the consumption of a product or service provided within the confines of the space? Oldenburg (1999), for example, suggested third places act as neutral ground for people to meet. According to Jacobs (1961), neutral ground is public and it facilitates social interaction because it provides a space for people to gather. In this sense, although it may be acknowledged that spaces differ in their purpose, space is often treated as a container in which other activities occur; the space facilitates and influences the activities that occur within. The Kitchener Market, therefore, may have been designed as a space to promote local food consumption, however, as a neutral,

everyday, and public place the market influences the organization and behaviours that characterize everyday living and community.

Oldenburg (1999) suggested conversation is the main activity in a third place and regulars to third places are not attracted by the actual consumption product but rather the people, or fellow customers. Although it is the interaction between the people that creates third places, results of this research suggest consumption is a defining characteristic of the market as a community space. Furthermore, as a consumption driven third place, the Kitchener Market is reflective of a commodity and service culture. Indeed, most participants suggested they attend the market for the consumption and service products first, while the community aspect is a secondary issue. As Jillian stated, “*when we’re going there Saturdays, it’s for food, like for produce and stuff...but like various friends will meet you know at the market because it’s a nice meeting place.*” In this research therefore, the market is a community space because of the consumption opportunities provided within. Without the option to purchase local, organic, ethical, accessible, or culturally diverse food and products the market would not necessarily function as a community space. However, what is sold and how it is sold is important to members of the market community. In this sense, the community space provided at the market is dependent upon acts of consumption.

Oldenburg (1999) suggested there has been a drastic disappearance of third places in (North) American Society. Furthermore, Oldenburg contributed a diminishing sense of community to the disappearance of third places. Although the point of this study was not to determine the paucity or abundance of third places, the concept of the third place warrants further consideration as it relates to this research. While the leisure literature

remains critical of consumption based, commercial and private leisure spaces, this research recognizes a specific third place for its potential to be a community space. The Kitchener Market contains a mixture of public and private notions – it is commercial in as much as the sales stalls and restaurants are privately owned and individuals make a business in the space; however, as a municipally managed space it is treated as a public place by the most loyal and consistent patrons. Third places, as quasi-public spaces where consumption activities maintain a primary role, therefore, have the potential to enact, enhance, or create community life.

5.3.2.1 Private space, public space

Although leisure scholars often regard consumption and places of consumption with a great deal of trepidation and skepticism (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Hemingway, 1996; Stormann, 2000), results from this research suggest there is no doubt commercial culture creates leisure spaces and greatly shapes public life in modern communities. Indeed, as Cook (2006a) noted, “leisure pursuits can never be divorced completely from economic pursuits. The social meanings of leisure, recreation and entertainment in no way exist apart from the economic system and social arrangements from which they have arisen, but must be understood as derived in some way from them” (p. 309). Indeed, the social relevance of leisure is often exhibited in third places and private spaces; results from this research indicate the market space contributes to community development through inclusion, heterogeneity, and sociability. Third places similar to the market, therefore, have the potential to strengthen community ties and promote sense of community, despite primarily being places of consumption. Place is a social construct (Frumkin, 2002; Lefebvre, 1991), and third places are meaningful because of the

memories, experiences, and emotions experienced within. This research suggests that community is fostered within the confines of the market space because individuals seek communal association based on consumption practices.

An often cited critique of urbanism is that it suffers from an absence of public life because of the disappearance of public space (Krieger, 1995). Indeed, public space and public leisure spaces, in particular, are valued because they are considered important in the process of creating citizen involvement (Warpole, 1997), citizenship, and community development. People and places are interrelated and inseparable and more often than not it is public places that are acknowledged as creating this interrelationship. Yet, public places are increasingly viewed as threatened by the forces of modernization and as a result, social scholars have lamented the loss of public space. Scholars have associated the loss of public space to globalization, neoliberalism, consumption, and capitalism (Taylor, 2003) – the characteristics commonly connected to modern industrial society. Sennett (1992), for example explained that public space is important because it is “not only a region of social life located apart from the realm of family and close friends, but also...the realm of acquaintances and strangers” (cited in Goheen, 1998, p. 479). The Kitchener Market, however, is a primarily commercial establishment where community members engage in social discourse, provide assistance to one another, and interact in the realm of both acquaintances and strangers. These interactions serve to create, build, and strengthen not only the market community, but the local community as well. As such, for market participants it is not who owns the place that matters, but rather how the space is interpreted by the surrounding community. This research supports Goheen (1998) who suggested meaningful public space is:

[space] which the public collectively values – space to which it attributes symbolic significance and asserts claims. The values attaching to public space are those with which the generality of the citizenry endows it. Citizens create meaningful public space by expressing their attitudes, asserting their claims and using it for their own purposes. It thereby becomes a meaningful public resource. (p. 479)

In this sense, spaces the community collectively values (whether private and consumption based or public and “community” based) become meaningful places where community is enacted and created.

Results of this research suggest that ideal public and private spaces rarely exist. Indeed, the market was viewed by participants as both private and public. However, it was clear in my discussions with participants that distinctions between public and private at the market were blurred. Instead, participants recognized the importance of accessibility, diversity, social interaction, and consumption as important aspects of the market space, regardless of ownership. Lloyd and Auld (2003) recently noted that “without a space conducive to social life, community relations cannot prosper and grow” (p. 345). In this regard, the Kitchener Market provides an everyday place that contributes to social cohesion and ultimately acts a space for the enactment of community. How community is enacted in the market, therefore, does not only depend on the “publicness” of the place, but also depends on accessibility, diversity, and social interaction. In this sense, it is not only *who* controls the place, but *how* the place is used that was important to members of the market community.

5.3.2.2 Civic consumption, civic consumers

In the leisure studies literature ideas surrounding community and consumption possess an underlying moral and ethical aspect whereby any action, research, or policy connected to community and the “vilification of consumption” (Cook, 2006a, p. 456) is assumed to be equivalent to ethics, values, and the public good. Arai and Pedlar (2003), for example, argued the social relevance of leisure has diminished over the years due to the domination of consumption in leisure research and practice. The focus on consumption, they suggested, has resulted in neglect of community and the common good. Similarly, Hemingway (1996) argued acts of consumption are centred on individual self-interest and contribute to the loss of the public social sphere and community, in general. Putnam (2000) has further suggested that commercialization has reduced opportunities for civic participation and community involvement. Such conceptualizations, however, equate leisure to freedom, contemplation, and shared meanings, thus venerating leisure and vilifying consumption as an individual act external or leisure and/or community. Results of this research, however, suggest acts and places of consumption should not be categorized in the manner suggested by Arai, Pedlar, Hemingway, and Putnam (as well as others). Instead, the data implicate places of consumption as active sites of resistance, civic consumption, and community development thus supporting Cook’s claim that “we must fight the seductive tendency to vilify consumption and to long for a return to some Disney version of community” (2006a, p. 465). I would add we must also expand our current conceptualizations of leisure beyond spiritual, experiential, and perceptual freedom.

Results of this research support Cook (2006a), who argued that consumption is not necessarily “an individualistic, self-indulgent activity but rather can incorporate the values and sentiments of love, caring, mutuality, and social connectedness” (p. 459). Participants in this research addressed feelings of social cohesion, social connectedness, and community attachment associated with the Kitchener Market as a consumption site. Recently Coalter (1998, 2000) discussed a “normative citizenship paradigm” to refer to negative sentiments about consumption and the associated implications for citizenship, community, and leisure. Under this paradigm consumption is considered a passive action and is vilified because it is assumed the individual fails to make a positive contribution toward his or her community. As such, participation in private, consumption-based leisure activity is not recognized as a virtuous expression of citizenship or community. The data presented in the previous chapter support Coalter’s (1998) criticism of the “normative citizenship paradigm” for being a “crude dichotomy between public/active and commercial/passive” (p. 34). Instead, this research suggests how, why, and where people consume may be better indications of the nature, role, and significance of consumption and places of consumption in the provision of leisure, citizenship, and community development opportunities. In this sense the construction of community and its relation to places of consumption should not be overlooked but critically examined based on motivations for consumption.

Results of this research and Coalter’s (1998) expression of a “crude dichotomy” surrounding leisure scholars’ interpretations of commercial and consumption-based leisure provision lead me to acknowledge an alternative method by which to acknowledge acts of consumption as they relate to creating community and leisure, in

general. This method must recognize participation in private, consumption-based leisure spaces and places as possibly contributing to an honest expression of community. While I recognize the Kitchener Market may be just one unique example of a community-oriented consumption place, results of this research suggest consumption communities, including third places (Oldenburg, 1999) and brand communities (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001), must be critically examined in the leisure literature as potentially serving the public good and contributing to community development.

The results of this research suggest places of consumption are associated with community development and citizenship. Bauman (2001) suggested individuals may be looking for a sense of belonging and civic participation because they have become physically isolated from community. Active consumption may be one way to create a sense of belonging and participation in community. Indeed, results of this research support a move beyond the normative paradigm outlined by Coalter (1998, 2000). Furthermore, Cook (2006a) has articulated similar concerns about the essentialist views of consumption, leisure, and community that are common in the leisure studies literature. He suggested the “tendency to view consumer society as an outright and necessary hindrance to realizing community rests on a thin, stylized conception of consumption as essentially an individual act” (p. 457). While Cook, Coalter, and Glover (2002) acknowledged active citizenship and passive consumption as end points on the citizenship-community-consumption debate, most participants in this study may be best described as “civic consumers,” thereby suggesting the dichotomy between citizenship and consumption is false. Instead, people can be active citizens, passive consumers, or both. Results of this research suggest leisure scholars should not simply discount

consumption as individualistic and damaging to community. Instead, consumers may be described based on consumption type, place of consumption, and motivations for consumption.

Participants in this study patronized the Kitchener Market because they were motivated by the availability, ability, and desire to purchase local, organic, ethical, and environmentally conscious food and market products. Participants recognized their own conscious consumption of such goods and distinguished between the market and mainstream grocery stores and retail outlets for products available in accordance with their own value system. Participants and members of the Kitchener Market community may be considered civic consumers because they deliberately choose products and places of consumption (i.e., the Kitchener Market) that enhance community and contribute to their own ideals and political philosophy. Members of the market community are keenly aware of the types of products available to them and the results and consequences of consumption of these products. As a space, the Kitchener Market, therefore, facilitates civic consumption.

Civic consumers recognize that places of consumption, such as the Kitchener Market, provide contexts for the creation of social self, social interaction, community, and civic engagement to emerge. In this way, interactions necessary for carrying out food consumption practices are important to the construction of community. Thus, the set of practices that combine consumption, leisure, individuals, and community has the potential to create community around a shared culture and set values. Alternatively, by acknowledging sites for civic consumption I also recognize that not all places of consumption and leisure participation possesses a necessary political or community-

based element. Instead, there are various levels of engagement and consumption type. To be sure, for many the act of grocery shopping remains a common, straightforward commercial activity. However, given various participant motivations for consumption, it is hasty and naive to characterize consumptive leisure practices and their associated sites as individualistic and inherently harmful for community and civic engagement.

Despite claims that consumption promotes individualism (Arai & Pedlar, 2003), “forecloses democratic, collective and community activity” (Stormann, 2000, p. 167), and diminishes emancipatory potential (Hemingway, 1996), this empirical work suggests consumption places can create opportunities for community development, social cohesion, social interaction, sense of place, and citizenship. While I recognize that not all consumption promotes community or actively engages consumers, there is no doubt that participants in this study recognized the political and civic potential of their consumption choices and the Kitchener Market, itself.

5.3.2.3 Places of resistance

According to Mannell and Kleiber (1997) leisure is an experience that is intrinsically motivated and freely chosen. In this sense, leisure incorporates elements of freedom and self-determination (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). Defined in this way the Kitchener Market encompasses elements of leisure – although participants recognized the need to purchase market goods, the market experience was deemed freely chosen and intrinsically motivated. Macy, for example, described her market experience as “*an outing*.” Beyond this, Shaw (2001) recognized that leisure may act as a form of resistance. For Shaw, leisure and consumption are related because of the assumption that “leisure practices are linked to power and power relations” (p. 186). Participants in this

study pointed to the market space as a place where conscious consumption occurs.

Members of the community intentionally chose the market as a place to engage in acts of resistance associated with mainstream consumption and capitalist expenditures.

Resistance, therefore, is realized through and enacted in, consumptive, leisure places such as the Kitchener Market.

In the leisure literature, resistance is viewed as a personal or collective struggle against institutionalized power (Shaw, 2001). Shaw, for example, suggested that leisure “behaviours, settings and interactions can challenge the way in which power is exercised, making leisure a form of political practice” (p. 186). While much work has been conducted on leisure as a form of resistance, including Glover and Bates’ (2006) examination of the *First String* baseball league for African American youth and Green’s (1998) study of leisure as a source of resistance for women, few scholars have critically examined *leisure places of resistance*. As a notable exception, results from Glover’s (2003) examination of the Queen Anne Memorial Gardens suggest that communal projects (such as a community garden) provide spaces for which collective and deliberate resistance occurs. Such communal projects necessarily involve a tangible product, such as space and/or place. However, as Glover noted, communal projects have received little, if any, attention as “leisure related forms of resistance” (p. 207). Smale (2006) suggested, “only relatively recently has place, and to a lesser extent space, been considered in the leisure studies literature as an important contextual factor influencing behaviour, shaping perceptions, and defining experiences” (p. 370). Results of this research, however, support Gieryn’s (2000) contention that “place is not just a setting, backdrop, or stage for something else that becomes the focus of sociological attention” (p. 466). Indeed, this

research suggests the market, as a tangible place, enables and promotes acts of resistance. While all acts of resistance are emplaced, leisure scholars must continue to acknowledge place as important factors in leisure studies.

Cultural geographers, such as Harvey (1990), have noted that places do not simply exist. Places are social constructions; they are made, manipulated, and maintained by the individuals, communities, and cultures that interact within. Harvey, for example, argued:

Places are constructed and experienced as material ecological artefacts and intricate networks of social relations. They are the focus of the imaginary, of beliefs, longings, and desires... they are an intense focus of discursive activity filled with symbolic and representational meanings, and they are a distinctive product of institutionalized social and political-economic power. (p. 314)

The Kitchener Market, as a place, facilitates various activities including buying, selling, consuming, interacting, and socializing. For research participants, however, the market provides a space where purchases related to resistance of mainstream consumption objects can and do occur. Specifically, results of this research suggest the market as a place enabled participants to purchase ethically, locally, environmentally, and organically produced consumption products. In other words, the market was recognized by participants as a location for conscious, active, and civic consumption. Indeed, many participants viewed their participation in the market community as a conscious and positive choice related to political or philosophical movements associated with the environment, accessible food, organic food, and local food. The conscious consumption of such products is a unique characteristic of the market community.

Shaw (2001) considered three conceptual issues in relation to resistance: individual versus collective resistance, outcomes of resistance, and intentional resistance. These issues may also be examined when considering places of resistance. Both collective and individual resistance occur in the market space. While an individual may engage in independent acts of resistance associated with food production and consumption (i.e., purchasing free-range eggs), this act may influence or affect others in similar situations. For example, Hellmann's recently introduced mayonnaise made exclusively from free-range eggs. In this sense, as individual shoppers become aware of health and animal welfare issues and act on these beliefs through purchases, the collective society (or community) is influenced. The market, in turn, provides a place to perform these individual and collective acts of resistance.

Outcomes of resistance activities at the market result in individual and community empowerment. The market space provides a place to act out conscious consumption choices. In this sense individuals and communities are empowered to make politically and philosophically motivated consumption choices. For most participants in this study, patronizing the market as a place of resistance was intentional. Acts of resistance through consumption were deliberate in the Kitchener Market. Participants spoke about the market as a place where they could make food purchases that most closely aligned with their food consumption philosophies.

Previous research has shown leisure opportunities enable individuals and groups to challenge dominant ideologies. Shaw (2001), for example explained, "women have used leisure to challenge their own lack of power or their dissatisfaction with societal views about women's expected roles and behaviours" (p. 187). Leisure and leisure

spaces, therefore, offer potential ways for people to resist dominant ideologies surrounding food production and consumption. However, leisure scholars have yet to explore how leisure spaces, such as the Kitchener Market, support individuals and communities who resist mainstream consumptive practices. This research suggests the Kitchener Market acts as a place of resistance where dominant ideologies surrounding food consumption are challenged.

5.4 CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Results of this research suggest everyday places of consumption and leisure are socially constructed to enact, build, and create community. Members of the market community and other places of consumption, therefore, should not be examined in relation to the act of consumption alone. This research considers that the social networks through which market produce and goods travel as well as the cultural and social rituals associated with consumption at the market are important in the everyday enactment of community.

The growing importance of everyday places of consumption should be given greater attention in the leisure literature. According to Dickinson (2002), “our most pressing and constant concerns are not with formal politics or large philosophical problems, but with the daily habits of eating, drinking, conversing, working and all the myriad of other activities that make up our lives in the everyday” (p. 5). In leisure studies, the contexts in examinations of place are frequently grandiose, such as national parks, museums, and modern tourist attractions. Often, these sites are visited particularly because of the inherent extravagance and symbolism connected to such novel places. For

leisure scholars, in examinations of place constructs, little consideration has been given to everyday spaces and places such as backyards, local parks, coffee shops, farmers' markets, and our own homes. However, results of this study confirm Thrift's (1997) assertion that "we live in places" (p. 160). Furthermore places of consumption are not merely "passive backdrops to human relations" (Mort, 1998, p. 891) but are imperative in the formation of the social self, individual, and community (Mort, 1995; 1998; Shields, 1992). Everyday places, such as the Kitchener Market, reflect and build community through association with a belief, idea, or culture. Such sites are implicated in our understandings of ourselves, as well as the larger community. Results of this research, therefore suggest that studies of community and community development must necessarily consider everyday places of living, leisure, and consumption. As Dickinson asserted, "it is in the interstices of the everyday, it is in the littlest actions of our daily lives, that we most thoroughly materialize ourselves" (p. 7). These same places create and build community.

Given the results of this study, I argue that the popularity of informal gathering places deserves further scholarly attention in leisure studies. Everyday places serve as sites where people gather, speak freely, interact, and mingle with other members of their community. Examination of how these sites relate to sense of place, community attachment, social capital, and community development is warranted. Notably, examination of everyday and third places may be most relevant to studies of social capital. Recently, Putnam (1995, 2000) argued that there is a diminishing sense of community in Western countries. Putnam pointed to the disappearance of a variety of social activities (such as bowling) and suggested that the depletion of social capital has

created a society where individuals are less connected with one another and their community. Results of this study, however, suggest people do connect to form community, albeit not in traditional forms of engagement suggested by Putnam (and leisure scholars, in general).

For participants in this study, the Kitchener Market acts as a social gathering place and the hub of community. New, non-traditional types of community are forming around places of consumption and results of this research suggest that people are joining these communities. Such consumption communities are based on a structured set of social relations around consumption instead of traditional social activity and civic groups whose membership declines have been lamented by Putnam (Mansvelt, 2005; Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001). In contrast to “bowling alone” (Putnam), sites such as the Kitchener Market provide a place where individuals can “consume together.”

In expressing his concerns about urbanization and industrialization Etzioni (1993) recognized the possibility of non-geographic communities. Etzioni stated:

There are new, nongeographic communities made up of people who do not live near one another. Their foundations may not be as stable and deep-rooted as residential communities, but they fulfill many of the social and moral functions of traditional communities. (p. 121)

New forms of communities, therefore, not only exist but satisfy the same needs as traditional, territory-based communities. Such communities form around shared and mutual interests; data presented here suggest consumption and acts of consumption could represent and facilitate a mutual interest group or community. Communities based on joint consumption practices are not new forms of social organizing. For example,

McGrath, Sherry, & Heisley (1993) examined a farmers' market community, whereby participants united around consumption of market products and the creation of "authentic" market experiences (p. 309). In their ethnography of bikers, Schouten and McAlexander (1995) suggested that consumption activities serve as the basis for interaction, social cohesion, and community development. Similarly, Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) acknowledged that brand communities exhibit traditional markers of community, including shared consciousness, rituals and traditions, and moral responsibility. Accordingly, participation in everyday places of consumption as sites for the enactment of community and social capital necessitate further consideration from leisure scholars.

Future studies should also consider and investigate Oldenburg's (1999) criteria for third places. While the Kitchener Market met most of Oldenburg's third place criteria, results from this research suggest everyday places of consumption are important in facilitating community; not all such places, however, are necessarily "third places." For Oldenburg, regulars to third places are not attracted by the actual consumption product but rather the people, or fellow customers. Accordingly, it is the interaction between the people that create the third place – it is the regulars who make the space a third place. Results from this research, however, suggest members of the market community choose the consumption product first and the community second. In this case the community results from joint consumption based on similar values and ideals. In part, it is the consumption of a product that creates the interaction between the community members. Bagozzi's (1975) marketing-as-exchange theory supports the idea that an individual (or customer) may engage in consumption based exchanges to gain social or psychological benefits. Rosenbaum (2008) also suggested that customers can obtain six types of social

support from other customers, including intimate interaction, social participation, physical assistance, feedback, guidance, and material aid. Such interactions contribute to and build community in a place of consumption. These ideas, therefore, should be considered in enactments of community in places of consumption. Future studies of everyday places of consumption should consider whether Oldenburg's third places are relevant or whether places of consumption warrant their own definition and/or concept.

5.5 PHOTO ELICITATION – USE OF THE CAMERA

Photos and photography are increasingly used to view the social and economic realms of different groups, including youth (Strack, Magill, & McDonagh, 2004), disenfranchised individuals (Moffitt & Robinson Vollman, 2004), and recent immigrants (Gallo, 2002). In this research I used a participant-driven method of photo-elicitation (e.g., Chenoweth, 1984; Stewart et al., 2004) – participants used their own photos to represent their Kitchener Market community. This method is based on the idea that “photo interviews yield different and often ‘richer’ data than that obtained from verbal interviewing alone...because informants tend to respond in a more mindful fashion” (Dempsey & Tucker, 1994, p. 61). Indeed, in this research the use of photos was a meaningful method to engage participants and gain knowledge and insight about the Kitchener Market community.

Given the ethnographic nature of this research, the photo-elicitation method helped to bridge the differences in both culture and meanings experienced at the market by myself and the participants. In other words, while I considered myself to be familiar with the market community the participant photographs allowed me to “view” the market

from different and diverse perspectives. These differences and meanings were not always uncovered through one-on-one interview techniques alone and, as a result much of the data presented in chapter four weighs heavily towards those interview participants who used photographs to illustrate and explain their market experience. While ten participants did not take photographs, results of this research suggest those who did participate in the photo-elicitation process provided richer and more perceptive data. In this research, the use of participant photographs encouraged people to share their perspectives and become excited about the topic and/or the market. This is especially relevant given that I did not use an interview script for any of the twenty interviews. Instead, the photographs acted as the script, enabling participants to discuss their own photographs from their own perspective. In short, during the interviews I was able to facilitate a better and more meaningful dialogue with those participants who had used pictures to accompany their narratives of and experiences in the Kitchener Market.

Despite recognition and evidence of the advantages of photo elicitation in this project, this visual method was not without its drawbacks and shortcomings. In the present research, these weaknesses may have affected the results. Evidenced throughout chapter four, participants believed the market was an everyday place for “local” people. As such, most participants believed it was unusual to take photographs at the market. In other words, it is rare to see people taking pictures at the market because it is an everyday place and not a site that is often documented in photographs. In this sense, participants believed they stood out and were out of place in the market while taking photos. Indeed, most participants felt uncomfortable taking pictures of vendors and other market patrons. Ellie who expressed this sentiment said, “*I just felt a little odd...taking pictures.*” When I

asked Rebecca whether she felt awkward taking photographs at the market she responded, “*I wondered about how people would feel about it because it’s not a place to do that, right? If we were at St. Jacobs it would be different.*” Such comments raise interesting questions about the use of photo elicitation in an everyday place. Throughout the project I often found myself wondering if participants felt comfortable taking photographs whether my interpretation of the data would change. Further exploration on this subject is certainly warranted.

Participants also expressed concern that it was almost impossible to capture noises, smells, and emotions in photographs. These senses are significant elements in the overall market experience. In an email Macy articulated this concern:

Hi Amanda, Just to let you know that I took a few pictures this morning but I'd like to take a few more, likely next week, before sending them on. Surprising (to me) that the ambiance and energy, the up-beat spirit that I sense at market just doesn't come across in the pics. Backgrounds are kind of bleak- yet market doesn't feel that way! I realized too that without sound a lot is missing. This morning a young Dad was singing to his toddler as they made their way up the stairs - can't capture that. I have more respect for professional photographers as well. I wanted to get the vendor who threw back her head and laughed uproariously with a customer - but of course by the time I pointed and shot, the moment was over...

Macy’s sentiment was echoed by other participants in our conversations. Although I was able to mediate these concerns by talking to participants about issues that were not represented in the photographs, I can not help but wonder how much of taking the picture

is related to confidence in their own photography skills. Participants, for example, commonly expressed anxiety that their photos “*were not good*” (Darla). This leads to two issues that may have affected the conclusions presented in this document. First, how many potential participants did not take part in this research because of fear or anxiety surrounding taking and presenting their photographs? Second, how much was missed because participants did not feel comfortable about presenting and representing their photographs. In interviews, for example, participants would often flip quickly through what they considered to be “poor” photographs. Although I did not judge photos on their artistic appeal, it was clear to me that participants experienced trepidation in taking and displaying their photographs.

5.6 IMPACTS ON ME, THE RESEARCHER

The Kitchener Market is my local market. I go religiously every Saturday and prior to beginning this research I had some understanding that this market represents my community. I have the same market rituals, habits, and traditions. My favourite donuts, long johns, from the Norris Bakery are my first stop. I tally the number of people I think I will be seeing that particular morning and purchase enough long johns for the group. The woman at the Norris Bakery recognizes me and often comments on the amount of long johns I am requesting or whether or not “*you’re late today*.” She, quite obviously, acknowledges my fetish for long johns. Based on the fact that hundreds of long johns are sold every Saturday (and I know that if I do not arrive before 11am I may go without a long john) I have a feeling she has a lot of customers like me. The market is over 150 years old, and it only takes a quick visit to understand that it is not just me who holds an

established relationship with the place. There is a strong farming heritage in the Kitchener area and a strong connection to the market as a result. So, I embarked on this research with an understanding that I am a member of the market community and an understanding that the market is about more than simply long johns.

My involvement in this research has allowed me to further establish a connection to the market community. I have met and conversed with many members of the market community over the course of this study. While these community members and I often shared similar values and traditions, I also learned and accepted new and different reasons and motivations for participating in the market community. Vendors, for example, differ significantly in their motivations and prior to conducting this research I strongly believed the market should be reserved for local and/or organic vendors only. However, it did not take long to understand that the vendors who sell their food from the Ontario Food Terminal are important components of the Kitchener Market. Vendors and customers discussed the idea that these vendors provide inexpensive produce that low income individuals and families can more easily access. It is because of these types of vendors that the market remains a culturally and economically diverse shopping destination.

My position as a researcher, “studying” this community was often difficult and I did not always feel comfortable in this role. In many ways, this position made my Saturdays feel more like work and less like leisure. In the observer role, I felt disconnected from the community. The market is a place for interaction, and while “people watching” does occur, recording notes is a conspicuous activity. Although sitting alone is common, any activity that remotely resembles work is not (though these are

ordinary and familiar activities at coffee shops and cafes). My formal observations quickly turned to informal observations and occurred as I interacted in the market space. I felt much more comfortable in this role and conversed with fellow market shoppers as if I were a “regular” shopper myself. It was in this role that I gained valuable, overarching data, and while I primarily presented results from formal interviews in this dissertation, informal conversations were important in establishing the overall sense of the market as a community space. It became apparent to me that these informal conversations are unique to community spaces.

Conducting this research was an exciting process. I learned a lot about the market community, food production, consumption, and issues of food ethics. It was interesting to see photos of community in this unique place of consumption. Most importantly, I was excited to talk about community as imperative to a struggling urban area and see images of the market community enacted to challenge issues of consumption. Indeed, the market community contributes to the larger community coming together around issues of consumption, urban decay, environmental activism, and community development.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This examination of consumption, community, and place provides new ways for understanding leisure and for directing future leisure research. First, rather than considering consumption places as points of exchange with little or no emotional sentiment attached, this research suggests these places have the potential to develop and create community as well as incorporate community values, sentiments, and culture. Third places, as everyday places of consumption, therefore, should be examined for their

potential to create, enact, and build community. Second, I believe the notion of consumption communities adds value to the larger discourse on leisure, consumption, individualism, and community development. In large part, this may be due to the submission that places of consumption may act as places of resistance, whereby community is created around joint consumption practices and philosophies. Ideas surrounding consumption communities also tackle the “normative citizenship paradigm” whereby acts of consumption and private leisure, in general, are associated with individualism and passivity. Instead, consumption communities suggest civic consumption goes beyond this dichotomy (Coalter, 1998). This research acknowledges that individuals have the potential to create and enact community through consumption choices and places. Finally, given the importance and contested notions of community in 21st Century society, the concept of consumption communities is particularly relevant. While the traditional ideals surrounding community continue to be contested and questioned, consumption communities are evidence of community in consumer culture and a continuation of community beyond geographic boundaries. I believe consumption communities are real and have the potential to create or enable civic consumption and active citizenship. Consumption communities, therefore are a generally good feature of 21st Century North American society that warrant further examination in the leisure and broader sociology literature.

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APPENDIX A – Consent Materials



UNDERSTANDING HOW PEOPLE EXPERIENCE THE KITCHENER FARMERS' MARKET

Information Letter

My name is Amanda Johnson and I am a PhD student at the University of Waterloo. Under the supervision of Dr. Troy Glover, I am conducting a study about the Kitchener Farmers' Market. The study is intended to help me gain a greater understanding of how people interact in and experience a farmers' market. The primary purpose of this study is to examine how community is enacted at the market and in an urban setting. It is my understanding that many people attend the Saturday market to socialize and interact with other members of the community and I would like to better understand this relationship.

As part of this project, I have asked participants to take photos that represent what the Kitchener Market means to them. These photos will then be discussed between myself and the research participant. With your permission, one of the study's participants would like to take your (or your child's) photograph because it reflects what their market means to them. Your photo may be used for the study and in research papers and presentations that arise from it, but your identity will remain anonymous. If you prefer that the photo not be used in reports or presentations, I will respect that as well.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me at (519) 888-4567, Ext. 35762 or by email at aj2johns@uwaterloo.ca. You can also contact my supervisor, Dr. Troy Glover, at 519-888-4567, Ext. 33097 or by email at tdglover@healthy.uwaterloo.ca. I would like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. However, the final decision about participation is yours. If you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Susan Sykes of this office at 519-888-4567, Ext. 36005.

Thank you for helping the research participants in this study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "ajj".

Amanda J. Johnson
Project Director



BUILDING A TALENT TRUST

UNDERSTANDING HOW PEOPLE EXPERIENCE THE KITCHENER FARMERS' MARKET

Consent Form

I have read the information letter concerning the research project conducted by Amanda Johnson of the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions and receive any additional details I wanted about the study. I acknowledge that all information gathered on this project will be used for research purposes only and will be considered confidential. I am aware that permission may be withdrawn at any time without penalty by advising the researchers. I realize that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo, and that I may contact this office if I have any comments or concerns about my involvement in this study.

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree to participate in this study.

YES NO

I give the researcher permission to audio-record the interview in which I participate.

YES NO

I agree to the use of anonymous quotations in any publication that comes of this research.

YES NO

I agree to the use of the photographs I take for this study in any publication that comes of this research.

YES NO

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B – Recruitment Materials



PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH ON HOW PEOPLE EXPERIENCE THE KITCHENER MARKET

We are looking for volunteers who attend the market on a regular basis (approximately once a month) to participate in a unique, participatory approach designed to engage citizens in the planning process.

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to:

- Take photographs of places and spaces in the Kitchener Market that you think are important, and
- Participate in a 60-minute interview to discuss the photographs you took.

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study,
please contact:

Amanda Johnson
at
519.888.4567, ext. 35762 or
Email: aj2johns@uwaterloo.ca

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics, University of Waterloo.



UNDERSTANDING HOW PEOPLE EXPERIENCE THE KITCHENER FARMERS' MARKET

Information Letter

My name is Amanda Johnson and I am a PhD student at the University of Waterloo. Under the supervision of Dr. Troy Glover, I am conducting a study about the Kitchener Farmers' Market. The study is intended to help me gain a greater understanding of how people interact in and experience a farmers' market. The primary purpose of this study is to examine how community is enacted at the market and in an urban setting. It is my understanding that many people attend the Saturday market to socialize and interact with other members of the community and I would like to better understand this relationship.

I am seeking to recruit regular market participants who use the market for a variety of purposes, including shopping, working, and socializing. The study is intended to help me, the research community, and the City of Kitchener gain a greater understanding of how market participants value the market atmosphere, building, and services. Because you regularly attend the Saturday market, I would appreciate an opportunity to speak with you about this project.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. Should you agree to participate, it would involve you taking photographs of the spaces and places that represent community at Kitchener Farmers' Market, followed by no more than an hour-long interview at a location and time that are convenient to you. There are no anticipated risks associated with this project. Nevertheless, although interview questions are quite general (for example, "why did you take this photo?" or "why is this place important to you?"), participants may decline answering them at any time during the course of the interview. During the interview I will chat with you about the photographs you took, but participants are welcome to withdraw their participation at any time before or during the interview or focus group session, with no questions asked. The cameras and processing of photographs will be provided free of charge, but you may also choose to use your own digital camera, if available.

To make the most efficient use of participants' time, I request that you permit me to audio-record the conversations so that we can concentrate completely on our conversation without having to pause to record every comment. The tape recording will be kept confidential, and once transcribed, will be stored indefinitely in a locked filing cabinet in my office. A transcript of our conversation will be provided to you once it has been completed to give you an opportunity to confirm, change, omit, clarify, or add any comments to it.

Pictures and direct quotations resulting from interviews may be reported in subsequent research reports or publication of the study. Results of this study will also be shared with the City of Kitchener and market management. At no time will the identities of participants be revealed, unless permission is given by them to do so. It is possible that the quotations used, though not explicitly attributed to certain participants, could be recognized by the reader as belonging to someone specific. However, no quotations will appear in the summary report, which will be provided to all participants. By signing the consent form included with this letter, participants allow me to use quotations with the provision there is no mention of their identity.

No photographs in which a person can be identified will be publicly presented in research papers or presentations unless written permission is received from that individual. Irrespective of public usage, research participants must obtain permission from a parent or guardian before taking a photograph in which a minor's (e.g., someone 16 years of age or younger) identity can be determined. Consent forms and information letters will be provided.

This project has been reviewed by, and received clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. If you have any questions or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, you may contact Dr. Susan Sykes, Director, Office of Research Ethics at 519-888-4567, ext. 36005. You may also contact me, Amanda Johnson, at 519-888-4567, ext. 35762 or <aj2johns@uwaterloo.ca>. Thank you for your assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "ajj".

Amanda J. Johnson
Project Director



BUILDING A TALENT TRUST

UNDERSTANDING HOW PEOPLE EXPERIENCE THE KITCHENER FARMERS' MARKET

Guidelines For Taking Photographs

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the Kitchener Market study. As noted in the information letter and during our correspondence, we would like you to take photographs of Your Kitchener Market. These photographs can be of people, places, or things – whatever, in *your* view, is meaningful and represents your market community. Through your pictures, we're hoping to get a better sense of everyday experiences at the Kitchener Market.

In taking photographs, please be sure to proceed with caution and avoid situations that could potentially compromise your safety or the safety of others. Please do not trespass on private property or participate in activities that could potentially be construed as illegal.

While you are welcome to photograph other people, for your own safety, be careful to consider people's reactions. In particular, avoid unnecessary or potentially harmful confrontations. Where appropriate (e.g., for people posing for pictures), you are encouraged to explain why you are taking the picture and provide the subject(s) of the photograph with information about the study. Before taking a photograph in which a minor's (e.g., someone 16 years of age or younger) identity can be determined, you *must* obtain permission from the minor's parent or guardian after supplying them with an information letter about the study.

All told, this activity is meant to engage you as an active participant in the research process, so have fun with this exercise! Be creative with your pictures and thoughtful about how they represent your market experience. I will look forward to discussing the photographs with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "ajj".

Amanda J. Johnson
Project Director

APPENDIX C – Demographic Survey



KITCHENER MARKET PHOTO PROJECT

We would like to gather an accurate profile of the people participating in this study. Please answer the following questions with the understanding that your identity will be kept confidential. If you think a question is too sensitive, please ignore it and move on to the next question.

1. Approximately, how long have you attended the Kitchener Market?
2. Approximately, how often do you attend the Kitchener Market?
3. Where do you live? (general area)
4. How old are you?
5. What is your primary mode of transportation to the Kitchener Market?

car

bus

bike

walk

Thank you!

APPENDIX D – Feedback Letter



UNDERSTANDING HOW PEOPLE EXPERIENCE THE KITCHENER FARMERS' MARKET

Feedback Letter

Dear [insert name here],

Thank you very much for participating in the Kitchener Farmers' Market study. I truly appreciate your support for the study and your willingness to commit time to sharing your views and thoughts with me.

All told, I entered this research project with two main goals: (1) to understand how market participants experience the Kitchener Farmers' Market; and (2) to examine how community is created in a place that combines consumption activities and leisure pursuits. Undoubtedly, your insights contributed toward my achievement of these goals. Your stories and opinions have already made a valuable contribution to the final analysis of the research project.

Results from this research suggest the Kitchener Market represents many things to many people. However, some common themes were evident in the data collected from twenty participants. Combined, these themes suggest that market participants share a collective sense of connection to the market as a place, the market community, and the activities that occur at the market. Connection to the place, connection to the people, and connection to the activities, therefore, are important characteristics of the market itself as well as the market community and should be considered in management decisions. Participants also expressed concerns about the vitality and success of the market. These concerns were related to disappointment and frustration surrounding market experiences. While these responses may be considered pessimistic and critical, the negative sentiments held for the market as a community space instead suggest a deep commitment to the overall success of the market. Combined these themes imply a strong community exists around the market and participants recognize the space as a vital, public resource worthy of investment.

Results of this research indicate the Kitchener Market is not just a place to buy and sell food. The benefits provided by the market space go beyond consumerism and commerce. This research suggests the benefits of the Kitchener Market are numerous. These benefits include: active public space, sense of community, social integration/social inclusion, urban revitalization, and support for the local foods movement. Given the benefits provided by the Kitchener Market, important implications for management were identified. Suggestions for management include: treatment of the market as a community

space first, the market is a vital and active public space and should be managed as a community resource, the market should be physically linked to the remainder of Downtown Kitchener, promotion and marketing are essential to the continued success of the market, and however small, all frustrations and criticisms surrounding the market are important to consider.

If you wish to receive further details about the outcomes of the study, please contact me by email aj2johns@uwaterloo.ca. A summary report is now available and will be presented to the market management in early May. I would be happy to share with you a summary of the completed project or any other materials which may interest you (e.g., final dissertation, journal articles for publication). Please remember that all reports and publications include pseudonyms in place of participant names.

As mentioned, this research project was reviewed by, and received clearance through, the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo. If you have any questions or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, you may contact Dr. Susan Sykes, Director, Office of Research Ethics at 519-888-4567, ext. 36005. You may also contact me at the email listed above.

Again, thank you for your assistance with this project. I look forward to seeing you at the Kitchener Market.

Sincerely,



Amanda J. Johnson
Project Director