

PLACE-MAKING AT AMERICAN RENAISSANCE
FESTIVALS

By

STEPHANIE ELIZABETH KOEHN

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Thesis Approved:

Dr. Alyson Greiner

Thesis Adviser

Dr. Allen Finchum

Dr. Jean Van Delinder

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Abstract: Where can you take a picture with a knight, eat a turkey leg, and shop for a fairy costume? All this and more are found at American Renaissance Festivals. In 1963, California hosted the first recorded festival, which was developed as a fundraising event. Today, there are around 230 Renaissance Festivals spread across the United States. Following geographers and other scholars who have researched different festivals, this study focuses on two American Renaissance Festivals: one near Kansas City, Kansas, and the other near Houston, Texas. Drawing on qualitative methods such as participant observation and just over 100 interviews helped to gain insight into the attraction and function of these festivals. These Renaissance Festivals are excellent examples of place-making because the environment, mind, and community come together to create a unique atmosphere promoting a sense of escape for the attendee and encouraging imagination, while bringing life back to historical periods of the past or to fantasy places that have never existed except in the imagination. Costumes, also called garb, of the attendees and workers play an important role inside the festival encouraging social interactions with each other and with the simulated past. The research reveals that the Renaissance Festivals use the environment, mind and community to create a place of escape, acceptance, and imagination causing people to engage in place-making.

Key Terms: place-making, Renaissance Festivals, costumes, environment, mind, and community

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Where can you take a picture with a knight, watch a joust, and shop for a fairy costume? All this and more can be found at American Renaissance Festivals. Today, there are around two hundred and thirty Renaissance Festivals spread across the United States. Following geographers and other scholars who have researched different festivals, this study focuses on two American Renaissance Festivals found in Kansas and Texas. Drawing on qualitative methods, such as participant observations and interviews, my research provides insight into the attraction and function of these festivals. Costumes, also called garb, of the attendees and workers play an important role inside the festival encouraging social interactions with each other and the simulated past. This environment aids in promoting a sense of escape for the attendee because they encourage imagination and bring life back to romanticized periods of the past or to places that have never existed except in the imagination.

Significance of Research

The research reveals that these places exhibit both historical and fantasy elements that allow the attendees to imagine a different place and time. Inside these Renaissance

Festivals a “safe place” has been created that results in people feeling free to express themselves through performances and costumes; by role playing, pushing boundaries, and experimenting with gender roles. The escape, both physically and mentally, aids in the whole experience of the Renaissance Festivals. The environment, imagination, community, and costumes all work together to create a unique place. My research will examine the nature of place-making at these Renaissance Festivals and what these festivals mean to the people who attend or work at them.

Study Areas

My research on Renaissance festivals focused on the Texas Renaissance Festival and the Kansas City Renaissance Festival. They were chosen for several of reasons. First, these festivals were chosen was because I had never attended either of them, which I felt would give me less bias during my research. Secondly, they are both permanently established festivals which allowed me to see the ways different festivals develop their landscaping and structures. Also these festivals both take place in the fall, which was during my allotted time to conduct field research. Size of the festival was also a factor taken into account because I wanted to see what differences there were between the two. The Texas Renaissance Festival was specifically selected because it is the largest Renaissance Festival in the United States, with 606,000 visitors annually (Renaissance Fairies and Festivals 2014). This allowed me to see how big a Renaissance Festival can get in attendance and how the festival accommodates those numbers. In comparison, the Kansas City Renaissance Festival is a smaller festival with 200,000 visitors annually (Renaissance Fairies and Festivals 2014) giving me a more modest example of a festival.

Lastly, these two festivals were chosen according to their driving proximity to Stillwater, Oklahoma (See Figure 1, 2, and 3).

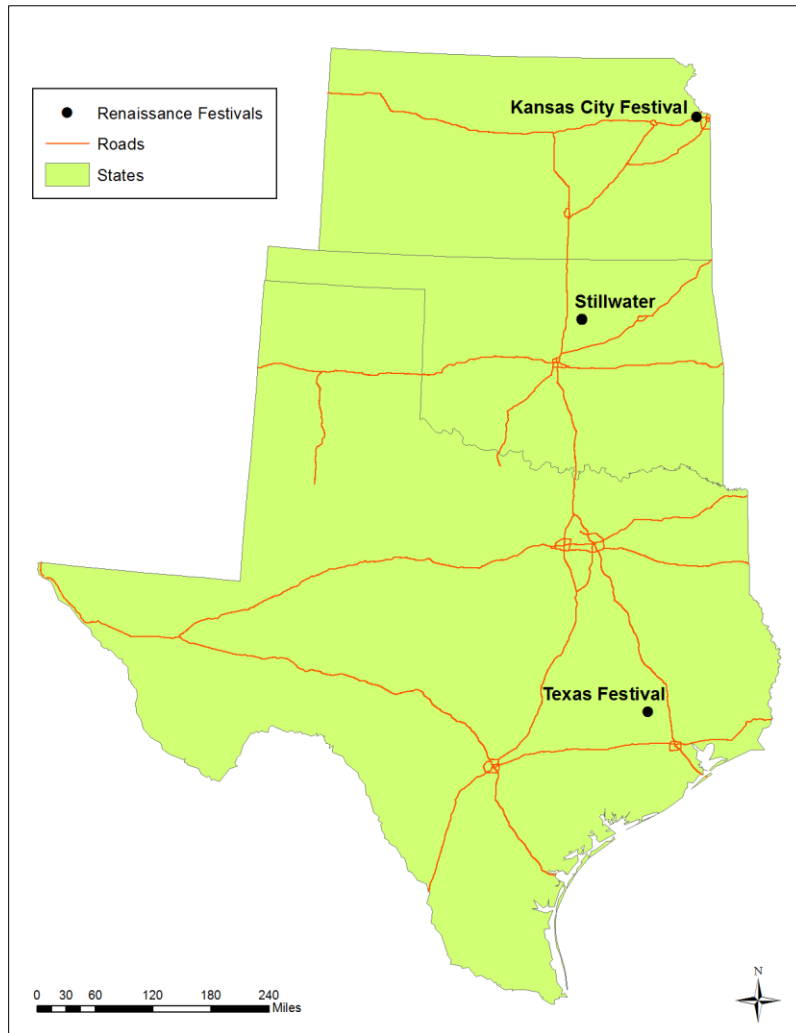


Figure 1- Location of Renaissance Festivals Map (Created by Stephanie Koehn)

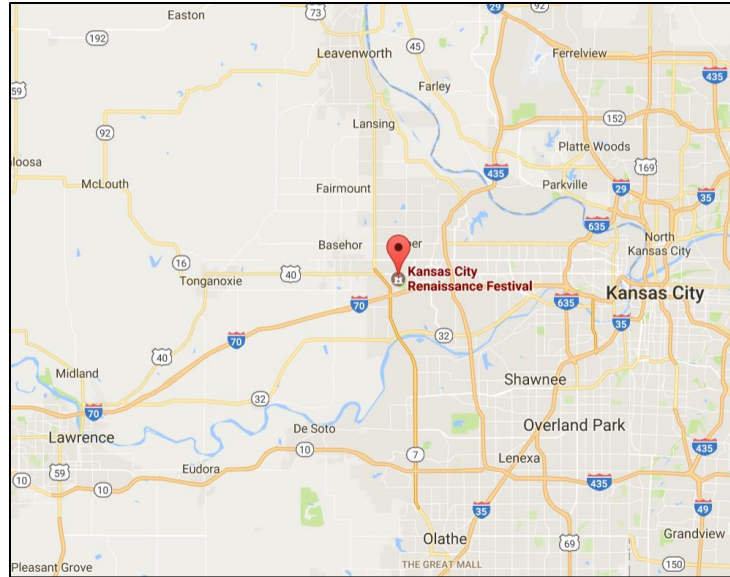


Figure 2-Surrounding Area of Kansas City Renaissance Festival Map (Courtesy of Google Maps 2017)

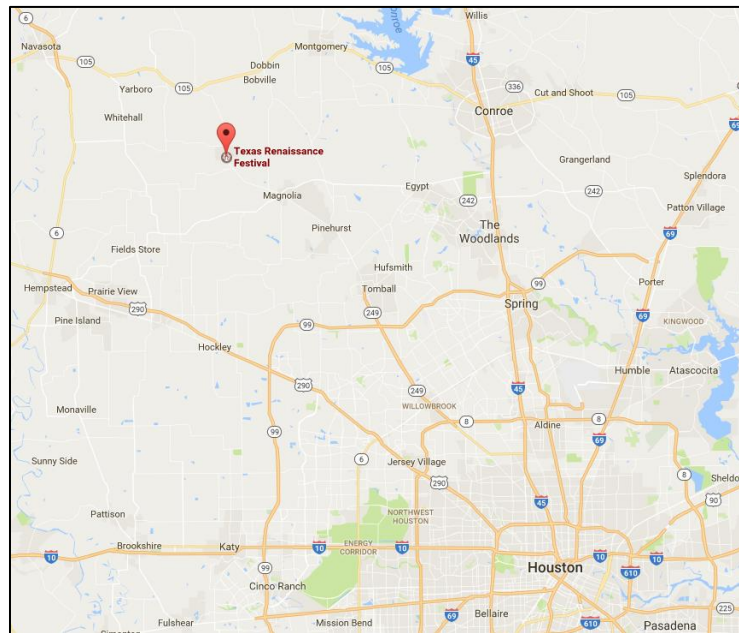


Figure 3- Surrounding Area of Texas Renaissance Festival Map (Courtesy of Google Maps 2017)

The cultural landscapes are very similar at both festivals but there are differences.

Almost everything is larger at the Texas Renaissance Festival. This means that the festival has wider streets, larger stages, and larger structures. For example, the jousting

arena at Texas was more impressive because of its size and structural design. The stone pillars and benches placed in an amphitheater-style around the jousting fielding provide everyone with a great view of the event and feeling of awe. The Kansas City Renaissance Festival jousting arena was much smaller with less seating and a smaller stage area. The background and seats were made of wood instead of stone and was not set apart from the rest of the festival like at the Texas Renaissance Festival. Most of the buildings at the Texas Renaissance Festival were like the Kansas City Renaissance Festival in that they have three walls and a facade that open up facing the street to attract attendees to shop inside (See Figures 4 and 5).



Figure 4- Kansas City Renaissance Festival buildings and shopping area (Photo by S. Koehn)



Figure 5- Texas Renaissance Festival shopping structure (Photo by Stephanie Koehn)

An important difference at the Texas Renaissance Festival is that they have a lot more cultures represented, for example, Germany with the Black Forest Inn, England with the Globe Theater, and the Orient with the Golden Dragon eating area. Each location served ethnic food and merchandise representing their culture, but the Kansas City Renaissance Festival keep with more of an English cultural theme with places called Yorkshire Wharf, Olde North Road, and White Stag Inn. Both Renaissance Festivals have fantasy locations, names, and merchandise spread throughout.

The community of vendors at both Renaissance Festivals was similar. The vendors at each were a close-knit community. Among the attendees, the level of acceptance and playful bantering was also similar at both venues. Significantly, the Kansas City Renaissance Festival had a more intimate feeling to it with the smaller streets, pathways, and sitting areas. The Texas Renaissance Festival had more places that

were showy and grand but still had some secluded areas that took you away from the crowds. Both locations provided great insight into the many facets of Renaissance Festivals.

Research Questions

How do Renaissance Festivals construct fantasy landscapes?

The physical landscape of the Renaissance Festivals reflects both fantasy and historical elements. The costumes, buildings and shops all come together to construct a landscape of imagination and escape. Costumes are a mixture of historical outfits and favorite fantasy characters from Captain Jack Sparrow, Tinkerbelle, Gandalf, King Henry VIII and Queen Katherine Parr. The whole landscape is a fantasy but inside of that there is the historical accuracy that takes place through the workers at the festival in their costumes, language, and stories they tell. There is also fantasy within the historical representation the festivals display. There are mermaid areas and fairy village contests along with costumes from favorite books, movies and television shows. There are areas that are devoted to educational purposes like blacksmith demonstrations, broom and paper-making, along with how to shoot a bow and arrow or throw an axe. Although the last two are in the gaming areas they still provide the chance for children and adults to experience something new to them. New and different experiences are all around at both of the Renaissance Festivals. This creates a place of excitement and enjoyment for those in attendance. Festival workers, vendors and attendees help create an imaginary world. During my research I used participant observation and interviews to answer this question and see how the historical and fantastical aspects work together to create a place that people enjoy.

How are bodies displayed at these Renaissance festivals?

To answer this question I will be looking at ways people adorn their bodies with costumes, body paint, jewelry, and other accessories like elf ears, and how they physically interact with each other. This will help to reveal the power of performance and identity at these Renaissance Festivals. Observing how performance is related to dress could reveal aspects of community and/or gender roles within the festival. It could also answer questions on identity, gender and performance through how people are interacting with each other and displaying possible gender differences inside the festival site.

Where do people go in their mind when they attend these Renaissance Festivals?

Learning where people think and claim that they are going is important geographically because it helps us understand how people think about place and express or represent their ideas about place through their interactions with others at the festival. This question will provide researchers with a new or at least better understanding of these Renaissance Festivals because it may show that the mind, specifically the imagination, is an important factor at these festivals. Also this question will aid in my research by revealing why people come to these festivals and what the appeal is, along with exploring the parameters of place-making.

How does the environment at Renaissance Festivals contribute to place-making?

This research question looks at the environment in terms of the atmosphere, arrangement, visual features, and interactions. For example the places, streets, landscaping, sensuality, people and other aspects all contribute to the environment at these two festivals. Examination of these aspects will aid in understanding the reasons

people attend them. It will also enable me to consider how fantasy became intermixed with the historical aspects of Renaissance festival. Questioning this allows for a better understanding of these festivals and the actions of the people at them. Also, this question allows me to research how sensuality helps create a fantasy landscape and contributes to the participant's experience. By observing the performances and interactions between people dressed in different types of costumes fantasy and traditional as well as those in costume and in street clothes supplementing those with open-ended interviews conducted at the festivals, I can better understand the personal opinions and perspectives' of the attendees. I used the work "Event-places in North America: City meaning and making" by Dennis Frenchman (2004) as a lens to understand the environment and how it relates to place-making. Looking at all of this will help understand how visitor's experiences contribute to place-making at these festivals.

Positionality

My first experience of a festival like this was in my youth when I went to the Medieval Fair in Norman, Oklahoma. Although this fair is different in some ways from the Renaissance Festivals, my familiarity with these kinds of events helped me plan my research and interviews. My prior experience also allowed me to know that people would be agreeable to taking interviews at the Renaissance Festivals because people were friendly and strangers tended to talk to each other more openly. My bachelor's degree in Humanities also aided my research because it helped me to better differentiate between fact versus fiction found within the Renaissance Festivals. It also helped my keep an open mind throughout the research process. This is something I had not thought about before, but now better understand.

This research did not ask interview questions involving ethnicity. Visually I fit in because most of the other attendees were or appeared to be white, like me. This allowed me to blend in more when doing participant observation and while interviewing. Often attendees were coming to me asking questions because they thought I worked at the festival. I always stated that I did not but it gave me the sense that by appearing what they believed a worker would look like (white, in costume, and carrying a clipboard) made people comfortable enough to approach me with questions or allow an interview. Also I feel that being a young woman made people feel more comfortable talking to me and sharing their feelings which allowed me to gain valuable insight.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Place-making involves many elements and is a subject of research in many scholarly fields such as geography, ethnography, urban planning, and architecture. To understand the term place-making first you have to define place. Place, according to the geographer Tim Cresswell (2004), is a word that is both simple and complex because it can be interpreted in different ways. The word “place” can be used to designate locations and to identify a connection or sense of ownership and belonging a person can have with a space (Cresswell 2004). Place-making also has different meanings. The literal definition of place-making can be understood as the creation of suburbs, towns, cities, etc. Another more abstract definition of place-making is the process by which people come to feel attached to a place, as if they belong in it. For the purpose of my research the literature review will be focused on three aspects of place-making that were relevant to Renaissance Festivals: the environment, mind, and community. Because terms such as “body”, “sensuality”, “performance”, “identity”, “gender”, “power”, “identity”,

“imagination” and “escape” are repeatedly found within works dealing with place-making, each will be discussed in order to more fully explore the concept.

Environment

Jane Jacobs, in her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), discusses the way people make places and what makes a place successful or not. Although the term place-making was not yet coined the idea of place-making is expressed throughout Jacobs’ book. The importance of people forming the city and the places inside it (neighborhoods, parks, streets, etc.) are discussed along with the benefits of places having multiple uses. Another dimension of place-making is the physical environment made by the people, and Jacobs expresses the value of that through her research examples of what makes a successful place and what can kill it (1961). For example, the lack of sidewalks or poorly planned ones, in a neighborhood can reduce interactions and in turn can lead to an unsafe environment because there are fewer eyes on the street (Jacobs 1961).

Dennis Frenchman’s (2004) studies on event-places, like Jane Jacobs’ book (1961), never refers to the term place-making. However, the discussion of event-places in his research goes hand in hand with the different aspects of place-making. An event-place is a location where people gather to celebrate or commemorate an event (Frenchman 2004). His work benefits my study on Renaissance Festivals because it provides a way to analyze place-making. He examines each event-place through seven characteristics: territory, intimacy, granularity, triangulation, movement, scale, and sensuality. These characteristics, when formed and executed correctly, result in a

successful event-place, according to Frenchman (2004). Frenchman looks for the appearance and structure of these characteristics to aid in assessing whether an event-place is successful (2004). According to Frenchman, territory development helps people feel a distinction between reality and the event-place, which can be seen as a type of escape because it allows for people to “separate themselves emotionally from everyday life and give themselves over to the event” (2004, 40). Intimacy happens when a person develops an emotional bond with the event-place and the people involved (Frenchman 2004). This was measured by what Frenchman referred to as the “bowl effect because a sloping topography may be particularly effective in allowing people to survey a scene as they are gently pulled to its center” (2004, 40). The formation of the space can facilitate intimacy by gathering and directing peoples’ focus on a particular activity or object.

Granularity happens when an event-place can accommodate many different nodes, for example, sites that allow for large and small group gatherings (Frenchman 2004). Triangulation deals with a “sense of community between two strangers in a public space [and] is encouraged by a third activity or object they can both share” (Frenchman 2004, 40). For example, live street performances, a fountain or even music different groups can hear count as triangulation (Frenchman 2004). Movement allows for the people attending the festival to move around the festival freely. Without movement none of the other characteristics would really be possible, because a person cannot experience anything but frustration at an event-place if you cannot move around in it (Frenchman 2004).

Scale is important because it keeps the other aspects in check (Frenchman 2004). For example, if an event-place is becoming too large or too small you could lose the

quality of the event-place and thus change the link between physical and social phenomena of the event-place (Frenchman 2004). Frenchman states that it is not always a good idea to move an event once the scale becomes too large but “it is often better to reconceive an event in place—by redesigning the event-place but retaining its scale” (2004, 42).

The last aspect is sensuality, which is examining the event-place through the five senses to help form a “shared sense of community” among event-goers (Frenchman 2004, 42). Sensuality, also according to Frenchman (2004), allows for a blending of the imagination and an emotional connection to the event-place through sights, smells, and sounds. His examples are of costumes, wood burning, and music (Frenchman 2004). Sensuality will be discussed in more depth later in the paper. All seven of these aspects work to promote place-making in an event-place. Frenchman (2004) chose events to study like Waterfire in Providence, Rhode Island, Mardi Gras, and New York City’s Halloween Parade. The similarities of these events to Renaissance Festivals as places to gather and enjoy make these concepts applicable to my research.

Body

The works of Stewart (1994) and Simonsen (2005) both give credit to Henri Lefebvre for his contribution to the academic world on space and the body. Simonsen’s (2005) work discusses body, performance, sensuality and imagination, all elements also relevant to place-making. Stewart (1994) writes that Lefebvre believed that bodies create spaces through the use of gestures. Thus, gestures would be a type of bodily performance that can be seen physically in the world. The ability to create space or produce it is a

power that people have every day, according to Lefebvre (Stewart 1994). The power people have to create is an important element in place-making. People can create both physical and imaginary places. Although not discussed in these articles, the imaginary side of place-making is also important and will be discussed later.

Simonsen also discusses aspects of the production of space, such as “social practice, bodily creativity and poetry, Eros, sexuality and desire” (2005, 4) that are connected to Lefebvre’s concepts of the body. Lefebvre is also discussed by Michael Landzelius (2004), who highlights the many different definitions used when dealing with the body: physical, active, and social. The physical body would be the actual human body and its movements, speech, etc. The social body deals with gender, ethnicity, sexuality, illness, and age (Landzelius 2004). The physical, active, and social body are relevant to place-making because they affect how people experience places, relate to others, and express themselves.

Authors such as Franklin and Crang (2001) discuss the body without reference to Lefebvre, but rather focus on dealing with the bodily experiences to be had when exploring the world. Franklin and Crang believe tourism is showing a global trend of people seeking more physical activities while on vacation because “some major areas of tourism show that tourists are seeking to be doing something in the places they visit rather than being endlessly spectatorially passive” (2001, 13). Activities like dancing, skydiving, and helicopter rides are all different ways of experiencing place (Franklin and Crang 2001). These experiences are important to place-making because they affect how people feel about places, how they remember them, and how they feel about themselves.

Performance

Performance covers a wide range of human actions and studies. Kristina Ackley (2013), in her article, focuses on place-making in the modern Oneida Native American culture. She goes so far as to state that performances are a kind of place-making because performances, in effect create place (Ackley 2013). Ackley discusses the performance of tribal women acting out important historical Oneida women, from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to educate attendees on the history and traditions of the tribe (2013).

Also, both actors and spectators can be seen as performers. As people we play or perform in response to one another's actions and reactions in order to communicate or accomplish something (Butler 1993). Butler (1993) also states that performances are repeated to reinforce a set of norms or even discourage a certain behavior. An example of repetitive performances shaping others would be gender roles, because they can be performed, challenged, and enforced through behavior (Butler 1993; Lewis and Pile 1996; Nash 2000). Festivals such as Rio Carnival and Renaissance Festivals have females participate who tend to expose more skin than what is normally considered socially acceptable. These types of performances are discussed by Lewis and Pile (1996) as a power struggle and a symbolic line between nude versus naked. Lewis and Pile state that: "Bodies are dressed in meanings which are produced and reproduced in and through the practices of authority" (1996, 26). This acceptance of more skin being shown by people in the area both by businesses and spectators is a performance of approval. Performance also can bring in business to a place, which then involves money and once again promotes a power struggle between business owners, politicians, and consumers (Lewis and Pile 1996).

Susan Smith emphasizes music as performance, because it gives power to both the musician and the audience that is not only creative but “brings a space, people, and place ‘into form’” (2000, 618). Sounds during performance, according to Smith (2000), help create emotional spaces and places that allow a person to imagine, create, and engage in the world around them. Music, like dance, is another aspect of performance which can enhance a place and is part of the place-making process. These qualities can also help draw people into a place according to Gibson (2009), whose work will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

Jeffery Mason’s (1996) study on street fairs is insightful to my research, because he chose to observe the participants who attend fairs, as well as their performances with each other, strangers, and vendors. Instead of focusing on performances that were intentional like a band or dancers, Mason (1996) researched discrete performances that happened all around the fair. He observed both the vendors’ and the participants’ interactions as performances. The vendor would “read” the performances of the visitors/participants at booths and would choose whom to interact with to produce a sale. In turn, the visitors/participants would choose which booths to enter based on the environment, vendor, and product inside the booths. This example reinforces Butler’s (1993) idea that performances often profit from one another. Mason’s (1996) research brought to light a different view of the performances that happen at fairs. He discovered there is a wider range of acceptable behaviors at fairs than in normal everyday performances (Mason 1996). People who attended the fair could be who they wanted to be to a certain extent (Mason 1996).

Crouch and Desforges (2003), in their research, help others understand tourists as performers as well as individuals. They find that performance not only can encourage ritual behavior but it can also do the opposite by disrupting it (Crouch and Desforge 2003). As stated above, people participate in place-making through their performances. A place where people are choosing to escape or let go of conventional behavior will create a very different type of place than one where people are acting according to normal codes of performance. Crouch and Desforges (2003) discuss this performance of the individual with ties to sensuous tourism. Sensuous tourism emphasizes that the way people experience places involves more than just what they see. It involves all senses (Crouch and Desforges 2003).

Sensuality

We use our senses to discover and examine the world around us, which is the reason why they are an important part of place-making. Without sensuality one could not truly comprehend a place or the performances found within it. Essentially, sensuality is discovering how the five senses interact with and affect the people in a place (Crouch and Desforges 2003; Frenchman 2004; Gibson 2009; Pink 2008; Pocock 1993; Simonsen 2005; Su 2010; Tuan 1998). Sarah Pink states that “walking, eating, imagining, drinking, photographing, and audio-and video-recording” (2008, 175) are all part of the sensory experience and place-making. According to Pink, place-making is a “universal and constant human activity (and/or outcome of human practice)” (2008, 179) which means the researcher and the research participants are also part of the place-making process.

Chris Gibson's (2009) article does not specifically use the word place-making but is discussing it when referring to tourist encounters and sensuality that can be found within a place. Gibson believes that tourism is how a person can "make sense of the world and their place in it" (2009, 522) and a large part of doing this is through sensory data. Sensuality is important because "the senses trigger specific bodily and emotional responses and encourage human interactions, from festival parade to the nightclub" (Gibson 2009, 524). Senses also connect to performances like eating and drinking because they aid in "consumption of place" (Gibson 2009, 524). Gibson (2009) uses the example of music to bring people into a place because it allows one to feel invited in. According to Frenchman (2004), sensuality not only brings together experience and imagination but also a sense of community between the participants. In tourist situations or special events, such as in the case of Renaissance Festivals, people tend to communicate and interact more with strangers than in normal circumstances. Pink's (2008), Frenchman's (2004), and Gibson's (2009) insights are valuable to my research because they emphasize the importance of sensuality to place-making.

Mind

The mind is a powerful thing and an important part of place-making. How people experience and perceive places is key to place-making. Place-making involves aspects such as gender roles, power, identity, imagination and escape which in some ways all reside in our minds.

Gender, Power and Identity

Joanne Sharp's (2004) article on feminism does not explicitly discuss the mind but references the connections of gender, power, body and identity which all have aspects of the mind involved. According to Sharp (2004), Foucault made the connection of power's relationship to bodies but without the gender concept. Foucault stated that different bodies emerged from not only different forms of power but also different forms of knowledge (Sharp 2004). Power and knowledge are both aspects of culture, which not only shape a body but also aid in performances given by the body. All of these can guide men and women to "particular identities, roles, and practices" (Sharp 2004, 75). This can also aid in the changing of gender roles according to Sharp (2004). Gender influences play a role in place-making because gender is a cultural/social aspect that people bring into a place. Changing gender roles can alter a place because it changes the performance of the people therefore influencing the place-making.

Setha Low's (2000) research was focused on public space. Specifically, she revealed the cultural and political impact on public spaces of the Latin American plaza. Low (2000) found that individuals developed their own personal meanings about the public space. Low (2000) goes into great detail about the people and their actions inside the plaza towards each other and the surroundings. She observed, in the space, gender performances, movements of people, politics and much more. Through observation, narratives, and ethnographies she concluded that plazas were essential to the politics and culture of the area because of the types of events and actions that took place at the plaza. She stressed the role of individual, city and state in manipulating the spatial meanings of public space (Low 2000). An example of this would be a city advertising a space in a

certain way to create results they want inside that space but the individuals already in the space have formed a different spatial meaning. This would be another example of power and how it can be tied to space and the representation of it. Low's (2000) research was partially a study on place-making in the Latin American plazas because she gathered data on the identity, gender relations, performances, and power inside them. Her study methods are beneficial to my research because of these similarities.

Festivals are also seen as a way to connect to one's personal ethnic identity (Alba 1990; Gans 1999). Richard Alba (1990) discusses the fascination Americans often have with their European ancestors. In his view, Americans do not see their different European ancestries as social divisions, but as social bonds because of their related background of immigration into America (Alba 1990). The people participating in ethnic events like festivals, parades and cooking are purposefully gathering to share a collective identity (Alba 1990). By combining performance and identity in these ways, they develop a sense of community, if only temporarily. Sports fans are a good example of this power of performance and identity because a bond will sometimes form when fans gather or meet each other in all sorts of settings. Herbert Gans (1999) uses the term "symbolic ethnicity" to describe a renewed interest in recent generations to connect to their ethnic origins and gain individualism, again striving for the discovery of ethnic identity. Renaissance festivals reflect both Alba's (1990) and Gans' (1999) research in the way they provide opportunities for attendees to try on and take on different personas or identities. Renaissance Festivals are places where people attempt to temporarily try different identities symbolically or even express their actual ancestry through clothing and actions.

Joy Adams (2005) in her research specifically studies German identity at Texas festivals. She found that at these festivals the “symbolic German ethnic identity temporarily became more permeable, even for some participants of color” (Adams 2005, 21). The non-Germans were more accepted at these festivals if their actions were in the spirit of Oktoberfest celebration. They became more socially accepted and part of the festivities. The German festivals not only show the connection of people through their common identity but it also shows the construction of an identity about German heritage and celebration for those who do not have German ancestry. Adams’ (2005) research is relevant to my study because she stresses the importance of performance and identity at these German heritage festivals, which in turn help shape people’s experience of places.

Imagination

Places can also have the effect of stirring the imagination. In Fettes’ and Judson’s article, “Imagination and the Cognitive Tools of Place-making” they define place-making as “the active engagement of human beings with the places they inhabit” (2010, 124). For example, part of place-making is “our mental reaching out to grasp the possibilities of a place, its past, its future, its meaning for us, that really shapes the relationship” (Fettes and Judson 2010, 124). Imagination to Fettes and Judson is key to place-making and there are three aspects that are involved: “emotional engagement, active cognition, and a sense of possibility—are all hallmarks of imagination” (2010, 125). The emotional engagement and active cognition will be discussed more later in the paper because they also deal with the sense of community. The “sense of possibility” according to Fettes and Judson is when “there is more to a place than meets the eye” (2010, 124). It allows for the imagination to develop a sense of wonder and curiosity of what can be in a place.

Fettes and Judson (2010) state that imagination is a quality that enhances opportunities to feel, experience, and think. Imagination can also be limited by people who lack it (Fettes and Judson 2010). Another author who sees place-making and the role imagination plays in it is Pink (2008). Pink refers to imagination and the fact that “collective imagination” (2008, 183) can be formed when people have the same sensory environment such as verbal discourse, embodied practices, written text, and material objects. For example, at Renaissance Festivals, costumes, discourses, performances, wares sold, and buildings are all things that would aid in creating a collective imagination.

Xiaobo Su (2010) studied the ancient city of Lijang with emphasis on imagination and sensory experience like Pink (2008) but did not relate it to place-making, although his article touches on many of the qualities of place-making. According to Su (2010), tourists actively shape the production of a place through their performances, the money they spend in the place, and the images the media and the tourists construct of the place (Su 2010). The media does have a strong influence on how people perceive the world, so it is logical that media would also have a powerful influence on place-making. For my research on Renaissance Festivals the works of Su (2010), Pink (2008) and Fettes and Judson (2010) are valuable because each has a spatial element and includes place-making in the forms of imagination, performance, sensuality, and media influence.

Escape

The mind can also lead a person to escape from their current situation. When the body, sensuality, identity, power, gender, performance, and imagination work together they can create, in some circumstances, an escape for the participant. Tuan (1998) terms

this “escapism.” Escapism happens when a person escapes from their routine of living by experiencing something different (Gibson 2009; Su 2010; Tuan 1998). Although place-making is not explicitly discussed in *Escapism* by Tuan (1998), the content in his book includes many aspects of it. Tuan (1998) uses the example of architecture and entertainment at the Disney kingdoms and their ability to make one feel as if they are in a fantasy land. This feeling of escape is something a place can have when place-making allows for it. For example, the Disney kingdoms use performance and environment to help shape visitors’ perception of the parks. Another example of escape might include the experiences of participants at a street fair. An ordinary site, in this case the street, is transformed into a new place by the decorations and celebratory atmosphere which allow one to escape from the ordinary town into a new place for just awhile (Mason 1996). Franklin and Cragg (2001) credit performance for allowing one to escape because it allows a person to transform or change into another character and state of mind. Renaissance festivals provide an environment that can produce performative behaviors as well as places that provide interactions that can contribute to a sense of escape.

Gibson (2009) and Su (2010) both emphasize escape through tourism. Gibson even goes as far as to say that travel is more than just an escape because it is a way to explore by leaving your “safety bubble” (2009, 522). I would take that a step further and say that it is not only leaving the “safety bubble” (Gibson 2009, 522) physically by going to a new place but also mentally because you could be potentially exposing your mind to new concepts of reality, identity, and gender. Escape happens when a place has promoted sensuality, performance, and the idea of being somewhere outside of your everyday life. It allows a person to be “brought in” to the place. Miles Richardson calls

this being brought in “becoming” (1982, 88) because through the actions/performances of the people inside, the place is constructed. Richardson’s (1982) research is an ethnographic study in Spanish America over what being-in-the-world means. He suggests that you can move from just being-in-the-market or plaza to “becoming” part of it through social and physical interactions (Richardson 1982). Although Richardson (1982) is focusing more on how to become part of a place and not escape, it still applies because a person can start to become part of a place when trying to escape. It is important to stress, however, that not all place-making or performance can lead to escape for the individual.

Escape can also be seen in the “imaginary twin or double place” (Laroque 2005, 197) that the plays of the Renaissance period by Shakespeare display. An example of a double place would be in the play *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* through the city of Athens as one place and the woods, another place, that held fantastical creatures and magic (Laroque 2005). Similar to *As You Like It*, there is a court and then a forest (Laroque 2005). Laroque suggests that these double places play off one another and reveal the escape that can be found in the magic of green places because Shakespeare depicts them as “sanctuaries for the refugees and rites of passage for the young” (Laroque 2005, 197). These geographies of Shakespeare involve the imagination and provide an escape into the magical world of fairies, witches, and golden fleeces. This escape that can be found in imaginary geographies can also be seen at the present Renaissance Festivals. The mind provides the link to escape from reality and to imagine different worlds within the same place.

Community

Community is something that is in the mind but also can be physically seen in the world. If place-making is done effectively there will be at least some sense of community and/or relationships that are formed. Fettes and Judson (2010) believe imagination and place-making go hand in hand, but emotional engagement and active cognition are part of community building. Emotional engagement deals with a person's "sense of belonging" (Fettes and Judson 2010, 124) and the community they feel within the place along with providing identity. Emotional engagement is important because people need to feel a connection with the natural world and the cultural community (Fettes and Judson 2010). Active cognition happens when a place exists because of the effort people put into actively forming it together (Fettes and Judson 2010). Imagination is a part of both of these but so is the sense of community that is involved during the place-making process. Hyrapiet and Greiner also refer to a "sense of belonging" and the role it plays in building a community and note that "the people, their interactions, and relationships also contribute to the development of a sense of belonging in and connection to the city" (2012, 419). Place-making can be formed through the work and the routines of daily life and, in the case of rickshaws-pullers in Calcutta, provide a sense of safety for community (Hyrapiet and Greiner 2012).

Triangulation, as previously discussed, is a concept that Frenchman (2004) used to describe a sense of community within a public space. Triangulation happens when an activity or object allows for two or more people connect on some level resulting in a sense of community (Frenchman 2004). Frenchman (2004) used "Waterfire" which was a fountain and fire display as an example of what draws people to a place. This is a much

smaller scale of community but in essence it involves something that brings people together and forms a bond. That bond could be watching a water show or laughing together at a street performer. Pink (2008) discusses not only the important role the senses have in place-making but also how people share their activities and experiences together when walking, eating, drinking, and other activities. Although the word “community” was not used, it is relevant because it is a type of triangulation with people interacting through an activity or object. Community is important because people like to form bonds and feel connected to people as well as places which is why it is an important part of place-making.

Renaissance Festivals

Previous studies have been conducted on American Renaissance festivals but not on place-making at them. They look at aspects of Renaissance Festivals through tourism, performance, authenticity, identity, sensuality, escape and community (Pontiff 1986; Kim 2004; Gunnels 2004; Korol-Evans 2009). Brenda Renee Pontiff’s (1986) research covers multiple Renaissance festivals. It provides information on the creation of these festivals, and the administrative structures and activities that are found there (Pontiff 1986). Her thesis reads as an informative piece that includes aspects of performance and sensual experiences through the descriptions Pontiff (1986) gives of the festivals. The purpose of Pontiff’s (1986) research was to understand the actual working of the festivals through surveys but unfortunately the author did not receive very many replies so her work was based on research and few surveys.

Hyounggon Kim's (2004) research is specifically on the Texas Renaissance Festival, one of the sites of my research, and deals with aspects of escape, authenticity, gender, identity and tourism. His study is over the seriousness of tourists and the nature of their participation, experience and leisure at the Texas Renaissance festival (Kim 2004). Methods of participant observation and in-depth interviews were used to obtain data for his research (Kim 2004). Serious tourists, according to Kim, look for a "sense of belonging and participation by forming unique social ethos around the chosen leisure activity" (2004, 13). The results of Kim's study suggested that the serious tourists are in search of escape from their everyday life and believe that it can be found at the festival (Kim 2004). Kim suggests that it goes beyond that to an actual search for an "alternative to their lives at home" (2004, IV). Similar to Richardson's (1982) concept of "becoming," he suggests that serious festival participants are in the process of "attaining [an] existential state of being in response to diverse sociocultural conditions" (Kim 2004, IV).

Gunnels' (2004) research focuses on individual and community identities that can form through the performances at these festivals. She discusses the potential these festivals have of changing how individuals view themselves, their history, community, and performances (Gunnels 2004). Gunnels (2004) conducted interviews, observations, and gathered brochures and programs to support her research. Her experience of the festivals was not only as a researcher but also as a worker at the Michigan Renaissance Festival whose jobs included street musician, lady of the royal court, supervisor of the food booths and hawker (Gunnels 2004). This gives her research of community an insider aspect because she has experienced it first-hand.

The book *Renaissance Festivals: Merrying the Past and Present* by Kimberly Tony Korol-Evans (2009) is another example of scholarly work that has been done on these festivals. This book is an ethnographic study over the Maryland Renaissance Festival on performance and historical elaboration “considering both the tactile nature of these performances and the importance of embodied knowledge to their representation, while analyzing the difference between living history and historical elaboration” (Korol-Evans 2009, 1). The book also has a chapter on the sensescape aspects of the festival and what they add to the culture of the festival. The author defines these “sensescapes” as “an environment in which sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch combine to create an overall atmosphere distinctive to that particular type of theatrical event” (Korol-Evans 2009, 69). This has been discussed previously in the literature review and was referred to as sensuality. Korol-Evans (2009), like Gunnels (2004), also actively participated at the festival as an actress during the conduct of her research. This allowed her to be a part of the community and enabled her to learn information that would have been kept from a perceived outsider (Korol-Evans 2009). Although these previous studies on Renaissance festivals have aspects of place-making, none of them looks at place-making specifically. Their studies are also not from a geographical perspective. My thesis aims to add insights about how place-making occurs at Renaissance Festivals and makes them places that people enjoy and continue to visit.

The attachment and emotions people form with a place cause a sense of belonging and are a cornerstone to place-making. Place-making is a continuous process that is forming and reforming a place constantly (Fettes and Judson 2010; Pink 2008; Wood 1997). It can happen regularly because people are constantly changing, which means so

are the performances, identities, and sensory environment. Wood's definition of place-making is that it "involves a continual process of shaping identity and expressing social relationships" (1997, 58). In place-making, the environment is important because it physically makes up what a place is whether that be the people's bodies, performances, buildings or the way the five senses are affected. The mind provides the lens through which people perceive and make a place what they want or need. Imagination, escape, gender, power, and identity are all mental constructs that come from the mind and are constructed and expressed during the place-making process. Community gives people a feeling of purpose and belonging to a group of people and is a crucial part to place-making because without it people would feel out of place and not be drawn to visit again. All of these features come together to in place-making and can potentially affect whether a visitor has a positive or negative experience.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

To address the research questions stated in chapter one, I conducted qualitative research using participant observation, key informant interviews, and opened-ended interviews with workers. During the field research I visited the sites and conducted interviews in street clothes and costumes. The key informant interviews were conducted with organizers of the festival, workers at the festival, and vendors that worked in their own booths or for someone who owned the booth. All interviews were conducted with men and women 18 years and older and followed the Institutional Review Board protocol approved for this study. The selection process of interviewees was random. The data was collected at the two festivals during the fall of both 2012 and 2013. After wearing both street-clothes and a costume I discovered that people responded to me more positively and I even had people ask to have interviews done when I was in costume. This meant that most of my interviews were gathered while in costume. My costume, I found, gave me as the researcher more legitimacy and provided a good way to start conversations with potential interviewees. Also, the costume, I was informed by

different interviewees, told people I was more serious about being a part of the festival and in turn made vendors and patrons to the festival more open to talking with me.

Participant Observation

Participant observation allows for the researcher to soak in the essence of a place and learn about what takes place there, who comes, and how people use the space (Emerson 1995 and Low 2000). In my case, I observed to learn general knowledge about the festivals as an aid in answering my research questions. Some of my guidelines for how to observe came from Setha Low, and her work *On the Plaza: The politics of public space and culture* (2000). For her research she would sit for a period of time in one spot and record everything she saw and then move around the plaza to observe from a different angle and repeat the process (Low 2000). Low (2000) would return to the same spot at different times of day and on different days to repeat the process to obtain a more complete picture of the space and the interactions of the people in it.

During my participant observation, I recorded my observations in a field notebook. The festival sites are large and it was impossible to observe every important spot for long lengths of time because of my time constraints. Instead I picked key places, both random and planned, because of the opportunities they provide for observing interactions, for example the entrance, jousting arena, different performance stages and food areas. Most of my locations were already appointed areas like the entrance, food booths, and the jousting arena. These areas could be found at both festivals which is another reason they were chosen to provide a base for me to compare. Also, I observed in secluded places, such as the small areas to relax and get away from the crowd like the



Figure 7- Participant Observation Locations at Texas Renaissance Festival Map (Courtesy of TRF 2016, with adaptations by the author)

I also referred to *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*, by Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) for methods on what to observe and the stages of observation. First, there is the initial impression of the place where you record physical setting, ethnicity, genders, atmosphere, dress, etc. to the extent possible without knowing or speaking with the people (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995). This is what I did during my 2012 field research. I tried to take in as much as I could and record what buildings looked like, how the streets were designed, what type of costumes I saw, and what the atmosphere of the place I was in was like. For example, while at the Arborhouse Restaurant, at Texas, I noticed that surrounding area buildings had a resemblance to German architecture and that the food in the surrounding area was different types of German food like Black Forest cake, strudel, sauerkraut and wiener schnitzel. The actual structure of the restaurant was designed as a vine-like plant that covered lattices and created shade and a

fun atmosphere for eating and listening to polka music. Even in 2013, I still recorded many of these things because it had been a year since my first visit and I needed to be focused once again so it was a good way for me to begin my research at each festival and become aware of changes that may have taken place. Also the festivals were big areas so I wanted to cover as much as possible so I would move around and repeat these types of observations along with looking for new locations at each place.

Secondly, according to Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) you need to look for what is significant or unexpected. The more I did participant observation the more I saw patterns and this raised many questions. For example, I started noticing during my observation that there were lots of whites at both of the festivals but rarely did I see African Americans. I saw Hispanics, especially at the Texas Renaissance festival and other ethnicities but the majority of attendees and vendors appeared to be white. Unfortunately, I did not have race or ethnicity as a question in my interviews so I could not ask to confirm my observations. If I did further research I would definitely include such a question to see if there was actual evidence to support this observation.

As far as observing things unexpected, I found that every time I attended I would see something or find out something unexpected. Every time I would think nothing could top this and then I would go the next weekend and be shocked once again by something new. For example, one of the women wearing a barbarian costume had her actual rear end exposed with only a fox tail and two painted hand prints to cover it. The first time I saw her I was shocked and looked around to see if others were reacting like me but no one acted like it was indecent or asked her to cover up. She was running around in a group of barbarians who were also wearing little clothing, so maybe that took the shock

effect away since they all were showing more skin than even the normal festival-goer. My last example was of a breast-feeding mother who was walking down the street with her child strapped to her, nursing on her fully exposed breast. For one, I had never seen someone walking and breast-feeding at the same time, and secondly, I personally never had seen someone not cover the baby while feeding in public. This did receive notice by more than just me and I ended up having a long conversation with an older lady who worked there, about the benefits of breast-feeding and how the doctors back in her day tried to make everyone use formula saying breast-feeding was bad. By the end, of my research I decided I would most likely have to do field work for a few more years before I stopped seeing things that were unexpected.

The use of participant observation at the festivals opened up opportunities for me to interact with more people because we would share the different things that we had seen that day which led to more conversations and often to an actual interview. It also allowed me to gain more information about people's thoughts and opinions about the festivals. For example, I would ask if they had gone to other Renaissance festivals and if they had I would ask how they felt the Texas and Kansas festival compared.

The next step in participant observation according to Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) was to observe the things, reactions, and experiences that were important to and significant to the people in the setting. In my case, I was really able to start looking for these after I had done many of my interviews because through them I discovered what was important to the people who were there. Their responses caused me to more closely observe the actions and interactions between costumed attendees and vendors.

The fourth aspect to observe is “how routine actions in the setting are organized and take place” according to Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995, 27). After attending both festivals multiple times these routine actions stood out more and I found myself comparing how the Kansas City Renaissance festival compared to the Texas Renaissance festival. A routine action that I did observe that was helpful for my research was noticing the pattern of when attendees came to the festival. The attendees tended to be few in number for the first hour or two of the festival and then around noon to midafternoon there would be tons of people and then it would taper off again toward evening. Once this was observed I was able to more effectively conduct my interviews because in the morning I could get many vendor interviews done because they were just waiting for people to come and would talk to me more readily. Then around lunch time I would be able to get attendee interviews done because there were many people to choose from in one area so I did not have to waste time walking around looking for interviews and I learned that people seemed to be more willing to talk if they were sitting down, eating, or doing both.

Lastly, Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) said to look for patterns and narrow down the focus of your observations. For example, I looked more closely at some of the things I thought might be significant that I discussed above, like level of costume and the different interactions. I also observed groups of people together in costume as well as groups together in matching themed costumes. I discovered that the groups who attended in a matching theme drew more attention and had more positive reaction from people at the festival. Since I had two willing participants (my sister and mother), I decided to test my idea and we all dressed up in similar costumes. Although this is only one example, I

did find that we received more attention dressed in themed costumes. I also noticed that I did not see a lot of cell phone usage and so I started to try and keep a tally of how many cell phones I saw being used, which was very low considering the amount of people in the area and how much usage I see in a normal day. This was a fascinating observation that I wish I could have continued to research but time did not allow it. I also, as stated before, noticed the lack of other ethnic groups at the festival, so I started to try and keep an eye out for other minority groups and recorded them in my field notebook. This was a component of my field research that I feel could have really developed more and had even more promising results if I had more time to continue researching but I did the best I could in the allotted time.

Along with participant observation, I also found that active participation at the Renaissance festivals was both informative and unavoidable. I realize that just by attending the festival I was a participant but when I say “active participation” I am referring to those times when I made an effort not to just sit down and observe (which I could have done all day) but to be a more active participant in my environment. The workers at the festival, both vendors and festival workers, interacted with visitors, which included me, by inquiring about clothing, informing me about the history of the time period being represented and by joking and acting silly with attendees. Attendees at the festivals tended to be friendly and often we started conversations about our costumes or things we had seen or eaten. The workers and attendees’ interactions with me made me feel welcomed and like I was more a part of the festival. Dressing in both costume and street-clothes also showed me the different degrees of active participation. During my research I had three costumes I would rotate between. My favorite costume was the one I

called my princess outfit (See Figure 8) because that is how it made me feel while wearing it. The costume had two skirts one blue and the other gold with long sleeves and a brown corset with blue embellishment.



Figure 8- My princess interview costume (Photo by Stephanie Koehn)

I found that when wearing this costume I got the most compliments and interviews. The fox costume was fun to wear and consisted of tights, green long sleeved shirt, corset, fox ears and tail. This costume started a lot of conversations because people wanted to know where they could buy fox ears. The last costume was a long light blue dress that I would

put a comfortable stretchy corset with for the days I was observing and participating. However, I did not do any interviews in this outfit. When I was in costume attendees, vendors, and workers tended to interact with me more because according to them I was saying I “came to play”. Personally, I received many compliments on my costumes and did find that the more I was in costume (meaning not just wearing a corset but a full outfit) that more people at the festival interacted with me. For example, my most elaborate costume, the princess one, was the one I received the most attention with and had the easiest time starting conversations in. And, of course, what I mentioned above about testing out group-themed costumes would also fall under active participation.

For comparison reasons, I also watched some of the same shows at each of the festivals, including the joust and bird shows. During my interviews, I had attendees tell me things that I had to do or try, like watching the Arsene show, a Magic comedy skit at the Texas Renaissance Festival, and different food or drink that I had to try. So I tried to experience as much as I could while still writing in my field journal and conducting interviews. Being an active participant was a fun but exhausting part of the festivals. With all the time I spent at the two festivals I still did not experience all the food, rides, and shows that it had to offer. Overall, I spent more than sixty-four hours recording observations at each of the festivals. In the end, participant observation was much like my coding process that you will read about below. I first gathered and looked over what I had observed, then I went back to the festival and looked for patterns, and lastly themes. In a perfect research world, I would have been able to do each stage in order but research in the field is at times chaotic and almost always out of your control so I had to observe what I could when I could.

Key Informant Interviews

The key informant interviews were gathered from two different groups at the festivals, the vendors and the festival workers. The vendors are people who have rented or own a building, booth, or tent in order to sell their products. The festival worker interviews were with people in positions of authority at the festivals; for example, a media director, director of the fae (the boss of the fairies and other mythical creatures), media gate workers (welcome media people to the festival and answer questions), and a past builder who all actually worked for the festival. These interviews gave me not only information but also great connections at the festivals. These interviews helped me confirm the numbers of people who attend and gave advice on optimal places to obtain attendee interviews. During my field experience, I found some of the things said during my interviews with vendors and attendees outrageous or confusing. Being able to follow up with the key informants by asking questions to clarify or confirm some of my findings was extremely helpful. The key informant interviews in the end were more about reaching out and forming connections at the festivals, which also provided me with helpful information. I did not realize how just asking for an interview can open so many doors.

However, it was challenging to get the key informant interviews because these people were either extremely busy working the festival during the weekend or did not come to the festival when I was conducting my fieldwork because they worked all week to plan it. The media check-in points were the best place to get key informant interviews but I was also able to find a director working inside the festival too. Overall, I gathered

three interviews at each festival, which was less than I initially planned because of the challenges just described.

Vendor Interviews

Originally, I thought the vendor interviews gathered would be considered key informant interviews but as I interviewed people I found that, depending on the vendor and their experience at the festival, the interview could be more of an attendee interview. Vendors that travelled year round to the different festivals had great insight to why people came and history of the festival so they were in effect key informant interviews. Other vendors with less experience or who just worked one festival often gave interviews that were more like the attendee interviews because the same answers were given by both the attendees and vendors. Since the vendors rented the booths or owned them they had different rules they had to follow than the actual workers at the festival who sold food or picked up trash. For example, the actual workers of the festival had to have hats on at all times, at the Texas Renaissance Festival, because that was more accurate to the period and time of dress. The vendors did not have to follow the rules of accuracy like the workers and often wore clothing from a mix of periods along with a mix of fantasy and authentic dress. They also were trying to sell goods so would often wear clothing or items that they were selling. Overall, I found the vendor interviews to be very insightful and wished there had been time to gather more because of the wealth of information I was able to gain from each interview. In the end, I conducted eleven interviews, six at the Texas Renaissance Festival and five at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival.

Open-Ended Interviews

Open-ended interviews were the most conducive towards my research because they allowed me to answer my research questions of why people come to the festival, where do they go in their mind while attending, and how costumes affect their personality and experience at the festival. These interviews were the most time-consuming to gather because not only did I interview 101 people, but I also found that people like to talk about themselves, so a planned ten-minute interview turned, at times, into an hour. These interviews were gathered by the jousting arena, food areas, and other various locations throughout both of the festivals. Most interviews were gathered in both the jousting arenas and food locations at each of the festivals. These locations had the most people and seating which caused visitors to stay long enough for me to approach them and ask for an interview.

Often, I found that people told me information about themselves or thoughts about the festival that I had not asked in my interview. For example, I had multiple people tell me that this time period or the costume they were wearing was a representation of a past life that they were very happy in. I also had people tell me their religious affiliations like being a Wiccan or believing in a mix of Christianity and reincarnation. Even though some of the information revealed did not seem to apply, ultimately it gave me a better idea of people's reasons for coming, why they dress up, and their attachment to the place Renaissance Festivals. A survey would not have allowed this type of information to be shared, which is why open-ended interviews in my circumstance were a better means of gaining information about these festivals. It

developed a dialogue between me and the interviewee that allowed for more information to be shared.

In developing my interview questions, I drew upon the ethnic festival work of Adams (2005) and her research questions to examine German identity at festivals in Texas. Adams' work researched the symbolic ethnicity found specifically at a German festival and the concept of "German for a Day" (2005, 5). Her research questions to the participants and visitors focused on what motivated them to attend the event and helped to address the identity of festival goers and function of the event (Adams 2005). Adams' (2005) research helped me to focus questions to answer the above research questions but also aided in understanding how costumes assist in self-identity and performance of the attendees. The combination of all these methods allowed me to answer my research questions along with creating new ones for future research.

CHAPTER IV

INTERVIEW RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the coding of my interviews. In the process I identify the resulting categories and themes that emerged. I begin with a discussion of the number, gender, and age of those who were interviewed. Then I detail the coding system, categories, and themes that emerged during my analysis of the interviews.

Characteristics of Key Informants Interviewed

My interviews with key informants were limited because I had to interview who was available the days I attended. I discovered that the organizers of these festivals work year around and do not always attend every weekend of the Renaissance Festival. Often if they were there it was difficult to track them down because they were running around the festival. This is why the numbers or amount of people interviewed was lower than I had anticipated. Overall, I was able to obtain six interviews; three at each Renaissance Festival. I interviewed four males and two females. The age range of key informants was 18 to 55, with most being in the 26 to 35 category.

I tried to interview people employed in similar jobs at each festival for a better comparison. The results were interesting because the Kansas City Renaissance Festival interviewees had all been there at least four years; they loved their job and gave me the impression that they had a great sense of community. The people I interviewed at the Texas Renaissance Festival had at the most two years of experience (See Table 1).

Table 1:

Key Informant Interview Data

Jobs at Festival		
	<u>KCRF</u>	<u>TRF</u>
	Former builder	Media Gate
	Media Gate	Marketing Director
	Director of the Fae	Assistant to Media Gate
How Long they have Worked at Festival		
	<u>KCRF</u>	<u>TRF</u>
	4 years	1 year
	18 years	2 years
	6 years	1 year

Without conducting further research it is hard to tell if the difference in the amount of years worked at each of the festivals was because of a higher turnover rate at one versus the other or if it was just my sample. Personally, I got the feeling that the surrounding communities at Kansas City Renaissance Festival really supported the festival and had many loyal employees, whereas at the Texas Renaissance Festival I had the impression it was more of a corporate atmosphere with workers coming and going.

Among the key informants the Media gate workers were perfect people to interview because not only were they friendly but it was their job to answer questions along with keep track of who was coming to the festival and what was their intent. It also helped that the Renaissance Festivals both had a welcome center of sorts for the media. I

conducted most of my key informant interviews here because it was a nice quiet area. The key informants gave me insight to a different side of the festival. For example, how strict they are about the workers staying in character was one of the things I learned. We had to go behind a wall outside labeled just for employees for the interview so no attendees would see them out of character. One of the key informants was a former builder at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival who helped build the pirate stage that we were standing by during the interview. The varying job types in the key informant interviews provided me with better insight into the workings of the business side of the Renaissance Festivals.

Characteristics of Attendees Interviewed

The majority of my interviews were made up of festival attendees. I realized after my first two field experiences that I was interviewing more females than males (See Table 2).

Table 2:

Attendee Interview Data

Gender of Interviewees			
	<u>KCRF</u>	<u>TRF</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Female:	34	29	63
Male:	17	21	38
Total:	51	50	101
Age of Attendees Interviewed			
	<u>KCRF</u>	<u>TRF</u>	<u>Overall</u>
18-25:	13	3	16
26-35:	3	17	20
36-45:	10	5	15
46-55:	17	12	29
56-65:	4	8	12
66-Plus:	4	5	9
How Many Interviews each Year			
	<u>KCRF</u>	<u>TRF</u>	<u>Overall</u>
2012	14	9	23
2013	37	41	78

This could be because as a female myself I found it easier to start conversations with other females. Often conversations would begin about our costumes and that gave me the opportunity to ask if I could conduct an interview. Also, I realized that it was easier to find people to interview at Texas because the areas are bigger with more opportunities to approach people. At Kansas City the layout has narrow streets and small spaces which made it harder for me to stop people and interview them.

Going into this research I would have never guessed that the most common age bracket of those interviewees would be the 46-55 age range (See Table 2). After interviewing them and thinking about it, I believe that they have more time and money to attend the Renaissance Festivals. This group also had large numbers in the repeat visitors over the years so their high numbers could be because they are the ones who started

going in the beginning and have continued to support the festivals. This age group was great to interview because they could tell me how things have changed over the years. The insightful comments they gave helped me to better understanding why people come and why they dress up. The 56-65 age bracket, although smaller, showed me similar insights.

The 26-35 age group was the second largest group (See Table 2). I would argue once again that this group has a little more money to spend because they most likely have jobs and can afford to go out and enjoy the festival. In contrast, those in the age bracket below this (18-25) are either right out of high school or going to college or just starting their career, so they may have less money but still have a lot of options for free time because they have not settled down or started having a family.

The numbers interviewed in the 36-45 age bracket were slightly smaller than those above and below it. I would argue that possibly this group often has children with extra activities going on during the weekend, so fewer attend. Also I noticed that those in attendance frequently had their children along, making it difficult for me to get interviews.

The smallest age group was 66-plus. Still, I was actually surprised there were so many in this age bracket at the festivals. The majority of them were in costume and had been attending the festival for many years and revealed they had a sentimental tie to the festival. This connection was reinforced by the fact that many attended with their children and grandchildren, and expressed how much they enjoyed the tradition of coming together every year.

In 2012, learning the lay of the festivals and doing participant observation was my focus. Interviews were still conducted but not as many as in the following year (See Table 2). The more interviews I conducted the more efficient I became at not only interviewing but also transitioning between participant observations, writing in my field journal, and interviews. In 2013, being familiar with the layout of the Renaissance Festivals helped because I already knew the best places to get interviews, which allowed for higher interview numbers (See Table 2).

My results make it look like more females than males were in costume. As I stated above, I interviewed more females overall, so I do not think this represents a true showing of females wearing costumes more than males (See Table 3).

Table 3:

Attendee Interview Data Continued

Gender of Who was in Costume			
	KCRF	TRF	Overall
Female:	24	15	39
Male:	11	12	23
Total:	35	27	62
Age of Attendees in Costume			
	KCRF	TRF	Overall
18-25:	11	1	12
26-35:	2	8	10
36-45:	6	3	9
46-55:	11	7	18
56-65:	2	5	7
66-plus:	3	3	6
Total:	35	27	62

I would have to do more research with a more balanced sample to have a true idea.

Going into my research, I had hypothesized that the younger age group would be the ones in costume the most. My results did show the 18-25 demographic coming in second but

the top age group was actually the 46-55 (See Table 3). After interviewing I realized this age group was often the attendees who had been going for years to the Renaissance Festival and had emotional attachment to the event. They also had the time to put together costumes and could most likely afford the prices of the costumes compared to the 18-25 aged attendees. To know for sure I would need to add a question about income if research were to continue.

Characteristics of Vendors Interviewed

At times it was difficult to interview vendors because they were trying to sell their goods to make money. I found that they were much more willing to do interviews early in the morning while waiting for the attendees to come, or during rainy days when there are fewer attendees. Overall, I had a pretty even male and female distribution of vendor interviews (See Table 4).

Table 4:

Vendor Interview Data

Gender of Interviewees			
	<u>KCRF</u>	<u>TRF</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Female:	2	4	6
Male:	3	2	5
Total:	5	6	11
Age of Vendors Interviewed			
	<u>KCRF</u>	<u>TRF</u>	<u>Overall</u>
18-25:	1	1	2
26-35:	1	2	3
36-45:	2	3	5
46-55:	0	0	0
56-65:	0	0	0
66-Plus:	1	0	1

I had one more female interview because I had interviewed the worker of the shop but the female owner also wanted to give an interview.

Among the vendors I interviewed between the ages of 18-25 and 26-35, I found that some the vendors were working there as a fun hobby while others were working for the gypsy-like lifestyles and would move around to the different Renaissance Festivals (See Table 4). The largest group of vendors was the 36-45 age bracket. People in this age group often were the owners of the shops, and many had been working there for years. Like the previous group, several from this age bracket also traveled around to the different festivals. Since my interviews were random this may explain why no vendors of the ages 46-65 were interviewed. Potentially, it could be because the older vendors perhaps are less likely to travel around or to do all the work it takes to make wares, set up for the festival, and deal with the long days. I did interview one person in the 66-plus age bracket so it could be that I just never happened to interview anyone in the other two brackets.

All the vendors I interviewed were in costume. Often they were dressed in clothes or accessories that they were selling in the booth and had made themselves. They were very helpful if an attendee inquired about their costume and would even provide directions to their fellow vendors if needed. Not surprisingly, they often wore more of the peasant or merchant class garb but occasionally some dressed in fantasy outfits of fairies and wizards.

Coding, Categories, and Themes from Interviews

My research was a qualitative study that involved interviews with multiple people who attended and worked the Renaissance Festivals. Since the information obtained in the key informant, vendor, and attendee interviews was similar I chose to discuss the results together. Coding methods used were based on Saldaña's book *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (2009). The methods used were both inductive and a priori. Inductive codes are developed during the process of studying and analyzing the raw data gathered. A priori codes and/or categories are established before dealing with the gathered data. For my research purposes I first went through my handwritten interviews and typed them in an Excel file. Then I did an inductive analysis of my raw data picking out the key words and phrases to better comprehend it. I called the results preliminary codes (See Table 5). Next, I looked at my preliminary codes analytically to try and find if there were relationships between them. The similar groups of preliminary codes resulted in what I called the final code (See Table 5). This whole coding process was an iterative one in that I went back through my data multiple times until I felt confident in the final codes and categories. The final codes provided a better representation of what was being stated by the data and with them I developed the categories.

Table 5:

Sample of Coding Methods

<u>Raw Data of Question 2:</u>	<u>Preliminary Codes</u>	<u>Final Codes</u>	<u>Category</u>
What is your favorite aspect of the Renaissance Festival?			
Sword competition	Sword competition	Entertainment	Environment
Jousting	Jousting	Entertainment	Environment
Music, the entertainment, and in another world	Music	Entertainment	Environment
	Entertainment	Entertainment	Environment
	In another world	Escape	Mind

Categories are groups of similar codes that relate the same or similar meaning.

While writing my literature review and interview questions I developed a priori categories which were environment, mind, community and costumes. After completing the final coding I examined it with these four categories in mind. I found that every final code fit under one of these four categories.

The category “environment” was a result of finding a relationship in all of the codes that related in some way to the environment created at the Renaissance Festivals. The final codes were atmosphere, entertainment, shopping, shows, walking around, and eating/drinking. If the code contributed in some form to creating the environment of the Renaissance Festivals it was put under this category.

The “mind” category refers to the nature of a person’s thoughts when attending the festival. The final codes for this dealt with aspects of escaping and pretending. All the preliminary codes fit under these two final codes. There were other codes that dealt with the mind but it was in terms of the costume they were wearing which is why I put them under the “costume” category that will be discussed below.

“Community” as a category consisted of aspects that involved the people at the Renaissance Festivals. The final codes here were people, people watching, people interactions, traditions of attending with family or friends, and the creativity of the people. Many interviewees expressed the ideas that they just loved the people. For example, vendors expressed that meeting new people was their favorite part of working at the Renaissance Festivals. Attendees expressed that they come to the Renaissance Festival to interact with friends and family, people watch, or take pictures with strangers in costume. Community is a strong draw and important part to the Renaissance Festival.

The last category is costumes. The codes found within the “costumes” category could have been divided up and put with the previously mentioned categories. But the influence and impact of how much these costumes contribute to the Renaissance Festivals would have been diminished. Dress up for a reason was one of the final codes with the preliminary codes under it stating things like to be unique, true self, and show off. Other final codes were positive feelings, both physically and emotionally. The preliminary codes connected to these were that they felt pretty, sexy, confident, like a different person, enjoy attention, and connect better with others. The costumes contributed to the environment physically but also allowed a form of personal expression whether it was to pretend to be someone else or to express a hidden side of their personality.

After all my categories were finished I set out to make sense of them by developing themes. Themes are overarching ideas and concepts found within your research. Three themes emerged from my research. The first was an a priori theme that I had expected which was “escaping from reality”. The other two were inductive themes that emerged from the codes. One theme was a “strong sense of devotion, belonging, and

emotional attachment” and the other was “positivity”. Each of these themes helps answer my research questions plus relates to the importance of place-making.

Answers that revealed escaping from reality, which is my first theme, came from both street-clothed and costumed interviewees. It was not just the costumes that gave the sense of escape from reality but just being there also contributed. For example, those in costume were pushing body boundaries, experiencing past life times, pretending to be someone else or expressing their self-identity (although in their words they used “true self”). The interviewees made distinctions that they were not in a costume but wearing garb. The word choice shows that in their minds there is a difference between a Halloween-like costume and what the people are wearing at the Renaissance Festivals. It was something they put a lot of time and thought into and revealed a deeper sense of their self-expressions and thoughts. Some interviewees in costume expressed that coming to the Renaissance Festival was a great chance to dress up other than Halloween, but they were the minority. The street-clothed and the costumed interviewees both expressed that a huge draw to the Renaissance Festival was getting away from some type of present situation, for example, work, certain people, and stress in general. Escaping reality was what I thought the Renaissance Festivals was all about, but the interviews revealed that there is much more going on.

The strong devotion, belonging, and emotional attachment to the Renaissance Festivals also emerged as a theme. Those exact words were not codes or categories but were the ideas expressed. The love, passion, and familiarity interviewees spoke of showed the level of attachment that many had with the Renaissance Festival. It was more

than just something to do. For many it was a tradition to go to the Renaissance Festival, with some even making costumes for each themed weekend.

Another theme that emerged from my analysis is positivity. These Renaissance Festivals invoke a positive outlook of self-image, self-confidence and identity along with feelings of acceptances and belonging. The word “positivity” was a code found within the costumes category, but I discovered that this idea was also expressed in all of the aspects as an overarching theme. The positive atmosphere created by verbal affirmation made an environment that allowed for many types of self-expression and feelings of acceptance. The positivity felt at the Renaissance Festivals reveals why people keep going back year after year. They enjoy the positive environment, mental state (mind), and community these Renaissance Festivals have created.

All of these themes combine to help answer my research questions plus show how important place-making is and that when the elements all come together it can contribute to the creation of a place that many find wonderful. The contributions that attendees are able to give to the environment of the Renaissance Festivals through their role playing, costumes, and imagination help shape these festivals, and how people act and react to them. Everyone in attendance benefits from this type of place-making because it nurtures creativity and a sense of freedom.

The place-making found at Renaissance Festivals is special and unique. The themes and categories discussed above combine to create a historical and fantasy world of imagination. The environment, mind, community, and costumes come together to create a unique place that has special meaning to the people because they helped to create

it. Place-making happens because of the people and the connection they have created with a place.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

Introduction

Chapter four established the importance of the environment, mind, community, and costumes to place-making, and demonstrated the strong bonds and attachments that people form at Renaissance Festivals through their actions and behavior. In this chapter, I revisit some of these ideas as I discuss and reflect on the research questions that prompted this study. There are four research questions, each about different aspects of the festivals. As discussed in chapter four, environment, mind, community, costumes along with the themes of escape, belonging, and positivity all help to answer these research questions and exemplify the important role of place-making.

Research Questions

How do Renaissance Festivals construct fantasy landscapes?

The answers to this question come from the many hours of participant observation and the interview questions. There are different types of fantasy taking place at these Renaissance Festivals. First there is the escape from reality into a fantasy world. Many

aspects come together to create a place that can give people the sense of stepping into another world. There is the physical landscape of buildings that are modeled after buildings from the Renaissance and other time periods. For example one building at the Texas Renaissance Festival was created to look like the Greek Parthenon, and both festivals had buildings created to look like a pirate ship. Landscaping which created an atmosphere of seclusion and escape helped to create a feeling of being in a different place and time. For example, the English Garden found at Texas Renaissance Festival and the Chapel Grove at Kansas City Renaissance Festival made you feel as if you were taking a stroll in the past.

The attendees select or design the costumes they wear at the festival. The variety of costumes is stunning. There are limits on what is permitted, such as no full nudity. However, there were chain mail bikinis and barbarian outfits that leave little to the imagination. At the Kansas City Renaissance Festival they did have a restriction on Teletubbie costumes because of a past incident of college hazing getting out of hand, which does suggest that under certain conditions they will ban costumes. In short, the Renaissance Festivals provide experiences that are unique. It is not everyday people can experience being treated like a princess, wizard, or pirate and ride on man-powered merry-go-rounds and swings.

Inside the fantasy landscape the Renaissance Festivals have created there is historically accurate role playing and fantasy role playing. Historical role playing allows attendees to learn actual historical skills like how they made brooms, candles, paper and coins. Historical facts are also taught like how the longbow was required to be practiced every day at one point. On one visit, a worker dressed as an archer walked up to us and

asked my father if he had practiced his longbow for the day. This led to a unique and very personalized way of delivering a historical lesson.

The festival workers and vendors also informed attendees about the historical accuracy (or absence of it) in the costumes they wore. The festival workers at the Texas Renaissance Festival for example, always have to wear historically accurate clothing and all have some type of hat on their head because it was common for everyone during the Renaissance to have some protection from the elements. Granted because of my interview questions about costumes and my interest in them, I probably received more information and detail than most attendees. I did notice that if attendees showed interest, both the festival workers and vendors would educate them on the historical and fantastical elements of the costumes or garb, as they called it.

The fantasy role playing I observed in places like Mermaid Cove and the Fairy Forrest blended into the landscape seamlessly. Perhaps this is because the place is already a fantasy landscape so to see a king is no more out of place than to see a wizard or a fairy. It makes attendees feel like children again, believing in the magical and mystical. One of my interviewees told me that the mix of history and fantasy made sense because in the past when people did not understand something they would often turn to magic to explain what was happening in the world around them. Another interviewer told me that because the world and what happened in the past was often harsh and at times horrific that adding fantasy in the mix allowed for an easier way to deliver the history lesson to the festival attendees. Their example was the Black Plague and how horrible it was, but by adding the fantasy aspect to the Renaissance Festivals harsh lessons became easier to learn. Overall, most all the interviewees I asked, both vendors

and attendees, said the mix of fantasy and historical was fun for both children and adults. The combination added to everyone's experience of the festival and the landscape was enriched because of it. This construction of fantasy landscapes is a product of both the physical environment as well as the events and experiences people have at the Renaissance Festivals.

How are bodies displayed at these Renaissance festivals?

As the researcher I wanted to understand the behavior of the attendees and their choice of costumes. My research revealed that the costumes were more than just something fun to dress up in but often expressed people's true self, or were a reflection of what they wished they might be. The costumes became an extension of a personality they already had and wanted to exaggerate or the opposite of their usual personality. For example, wearing a mask allowed shy people to interact more with others and enter things like a costume contest, which was the case for the World of Warcraft interviewee (See Figure 9). This person describes himself as being "super shy", but loved making costumes. He would work all year on his outfit just for the Renaissance Festival. Despite admitting he was extremely shy, he gave me an interview and won the costume contest which, ironically, resulted in more attention and pictures. It was the one time of year he could be more of an extrovert than an introvert he said. I had other interviewees admit the same thing: that they were normally shy but at the Renaissance Festival they felt they could act more outgoing and get outside their comfort zone in a supportive and positive environment.



Figure 9- World of Warcraft Costume Contest Winner at Kansas City (Photo by Stephanie Koehn)

Performances at the festival are not limited to just attendees, but involve the vendors and the festival workers, too. Socially, the two festivals' workers and vendors both helped an attendee gain a different sense of place. This was helped by the fact that many vendors and workers spoke in an accent and used Old English. Different costumes and attire also helped. It allows the attendees and festival workers alike to feel like they are in a different time and place; promoting escape in the minds of those who were in attendance through the environment experienced.

Gender roles are also a part of the performances at these Renaissance Festivals. Many of the men can be found wearing armor, weapons, and swaggering around making manly comments and discussing fake battles they just fought, or real ones they just had

with friends, for example in the sword fighting arena. The barbarian outfits put their muscles on prominent display while they chugged pints of mead and watched the jousting tournament. As for the women many of the costumes put their femininity on display with corsets to enhance curves. The Renaissance Festivals displayed women in sexy, noble, and girly outfits both based on historical and fantasy characters. Traditional gender roles were often expressed by peoples' outfits and their performances.

However, the opposite was also found at the two Renaissance Festivals with men dressing in what are considered conventional outfits, colors, and fantasy creatures associated with women. For example, one nobleman at the festival was dressed in pink and carried a fan and parasol (See Figure 10). He was carried around the Kansas City Renaissance Festival by other males in a wooden litter. I also saw a male festival worker who was part of the Fae Court dressed as a blue fairy. One interviewee saw him and said, "good for him", approving of his feminine blue corset and choice of character.



Figure 10- Pink Nobleman Kansas City Renaissance Festival (Photo by Stephanie Koehn)

Female examples of this include women in manly barbarian costumes and lady pirates that often had a combination of male and female elements. For example, the lady pirates often had corsets which showed their curves off but wore pants and pistols. The women barbarians showed just as much skin as the men. The Storm Trooper in the interview I conducted ended up being a female, which surprised me because I just had assumed it would be a male like in the *Star Wars* movies.

Some people at the Renaissance Festival adhere to conventional gender roles but many others do not. These Renaissance Festivals provide a safe place to “try on” different personas and push the boundaries of social norms. This safe environment is

created by the positive atmosphere and feelings of acceptance that encourage people to reveal more of their inner self or to try out completely new identities; especially when dealing with gender roles and traditional acceptable amount of skin exposed. As noted by Low (2000) and Sharp (2004), the individual in a space has power to shape and change the meaning of that space, whether it is challenging gender roles, identities, or practices. For some attendees the costumes worn are expressions of “symbolic ethnicity” (Gans 1999), meaning through their costumes attendees are constructing and sampling different identities. In many cases the costume represents a connection to who the attendees want to be or pretend to be.

Where do people go in their mind when they attend these Renaissance Festivals?

An amazing thing happens to people when they attend Renaissance Festivals. They find or lose feelings, reality and sometimes even themselves. Attendees told me that at the festival they could escape their boring life and pretend to be someone else or somewhere else. Others told me that, when in attendance at the festival, they feel truly accepted for who they are and can express their true self inside this created world. I had one interviewee tell me this with such conviction and emotion that tears formed in her eyes. This was not something I had expected. The level of passion and attachment to the Renaissance Festival was real and explained one reason why people like to come back repeatedly. Truly feeling comfortable and accepted meant so much to these people that there was an emotional attachment to the place.

Some people told me that they dressed in a certain costume or attended the festival because it was one of their past lives. A Scottish Lady and a Spanish Courtesan revealed to me that they were reliving a happy past lifetime which is why they chose the

costume they wore. Many people told me they attended the Renaissance Festival and dressed the way they did so they could pretend to be someone completely different. In much the same way that some adopted different gender roles, others explained that they could feel pretty when they normally did not, or pretend that for the day they were a princess living in a fantasy world. This type of pretend is much like what Adams (2005) discussed with people attending the German Festivals and becoming “German for the day”. It did not matter if they had German heritage, they all celebrated like a German for the day. Not all of the interviewees expressed these sentiments but the sense of escaping their reality in some way, whether it was just to stop thinking of their job or to get away from the real world, was important for many. As discussed in the literature review escape not only lets you experience new places and things (Gibson 2009 Tuan 1998 & Su 2010) but can change the state of your mind and even your character (Franklin & Crang 2001). Feelings of escaping are something that the Renaissance Festivals encourage and is one of the attendees’ favorite aspects of the festival.

How does the environment at Renaissance Festivals contribute to place-making?

The environment plays a key role in place-making at the Renaissance Festivals. While conducting participant observations and interviews at the Kansas City and Texas Renaissance Festivals I looked for evidence that they were successful event-places according to the parameters set by Dennis Frenchman’s article “Event-places in North America: City meaning and making” (2004). Frenchman (2004) as stated in the literature review breaks down an event in terms of place-making although he never uses the term himself. Originality, inclusive themes, expanding scale, development role, and professional management are all aspects that need to be implemented successfully

according to Frenchman (2004). Each aspect along with the seven in the literature review will be discussed below in reference to the Renaissance Festivals and how they were brought out in the environment.

Originality is a way to keep the event-place unique and desirable; that may mean it uses an invented theme or it can connect older traditions that are reinvented or reinterpreted (Frenchman 2004). American Renaissance Festivals are event-places that draw on European history but have also incorporated new aspects like fantasy, and reinventing the past. Americans have drawn on their ideas of European traditions and developed them into something new.

The next aspect needed is inclusive themes, which simply means that there is a cultural or place theme that unifies the event-place (Frenchman 2004). These themes usually appeal to several different groups (Frenchman 2004). Although the Kansas and Texas Renaissance Festivals do have the inclusive theme of the Renaissance, many of the attendees and vendors dress and reenact that period differently. People's interpretations of the time period lend to the charm of these Renaissance Festivals because they thrive on the creativity of the imagination and it just adds to the theme.

Costumes also are a part of making an inclusive theme, because not only do they cover the Renaissance and Medieval periods they also include all social groups from royalty to beggars (See Figure 11).



Figure 11- Texas Renaissance Festival Beggar (Photo by Stephanie Koehn)

In addition, there are fantasy outfits like wizards and fairies, plus science fiction costumes like Storm Troopers and Star Trekkies (See Figure 12). Costumes are expected and encouraged inside of the event-place. Enough people are wearing costumes or at least some accessories that being in a costume, as an attendee, does not make you feel out of place; instead you fit in better. Many people attending do not originally come in costume but they leave wearing accessories or a full costume they bought that day. Inclusivity is not just about creating a unifying cultural theme, it is also about making people comfortable enough to want to participate. Franklin and Crang (2001) refer to passive observers and active participants in tourism. Wearing a costume or accessories inside the Renaissance Festivals is an easy way to become an active participant instead of

just an observer. It is ironic that to feel more like an active participant at the festival people dress to stand out. That is, they fit in by standing out.



Figure 12- Kansas City Renaissance Festival Captain Jack Sparrow, Elf, and Storm Trooper (Photo by Stephanie Koehn)

Expanding scale refers to the need of an event to be able to grow, whether it is the amount of attendees or the physical size. It is needed in a successful event-place because as awareness of the event grows the number of attendees and the size of the event also grows (Frenchman 2004). My research of the two Renaissance Festivals revealed that not only have they grown considerably since they began, but during the two years of my fieldwork they continued to grow. The Kansas City Renaissance Festival expanded physically and the number of attendees broke records at the Texas Renaissance Festival. Kansas City Renaissance Festival kept the average of 200,000 visitors annually and the

Texas Renaissance Festival, which had recorded 450,000 visitors annually in 2012, reached 606,000 visitors annually in 2014. This means which means that my research years of 2012 and 2013 were during years of growth (Renaissance Fairies and Festivals 2014).

Development role is the next successful aspect needed and deals with improving the cultural status, image of the area, or living conditions of the city that the event takes place in or around (Frenchman 2004). The Kansas City Renaissance Festival had an area near it that was relatively new and included different entertainment venues like Great Wolf Lodge with indoor water park, a race track, and the sportsman's chain, Cabela's, along with many hotels. One rainy day to avoid the weather we visited Cabela's. The proximity of the festival to the hotels and entertainment was convenient and caused us to visit a place we had never been before and spend money. It seems likely that other people might do the same. These developed commercial/retail entertainment venues benefited from one another financially because they were conveniently located.

In contrast, the Texas Renaissance Festival played a different development role. It was built in a more isolated location, but the surrounding towns benefit every year from the jobs it creates and the tourists it brings to the different hotels, restaurants, and region. For example, during my visits I stayed in two different towns and spent money that I would not normally have there. Some of the festival attendees and vendors stayed at the same hotel I was at. I knew this because I would encounter them already in costume at breakfast or coming back from a day at the festival.

The next requirement to a successful event-place is professional management. This is when an event becomes more commercialized, has more advertising, organizers, and volunteers involved such that “cities support the effort with services and parking and often substantial physical improvements to accommodate the event” (Frenchman 2004, 38). The small town of Magnolia that is near the Texas Renaissance Festival had the police force out directing traffic in the mornings to ensure that the flow of traffic kept going to get attendees to the festival and to help the locals still be able to get where they are going. In addition, traffic workers were at the front of the event helping traffic enter the festival and leave at the peak hours of opening and closing. At the Kansas City Renaissance Festival the police had a smaller role, but were at entrance to the festival helping people get in and out of the festival grounds. Both festivals benefited from this kind of professional management.

There is a balance that needs to be maintained when it comes to professional management, because the advertising and commercialization can detract from the theme of the event (Frenchman 2004). In my interviews, I found a number of the older attendees that had come since the beginning of the festival years ago felt that the festival had become too commercialized. Overall, the professional management at the festival helped to enhance the experience by making it easier to attend and to aid in advertising about the festival without taking away from it. The billboards and television commercials also aided in informing the public about the dates and location of the Renaissance Festivals. Then, once at the festival you did not find billboards but clever signs written in Old English. The only electronics seen were the devices vendors used to

for purchases, a few speakers at the shows, and ATM's that are concealed in structures that look like tiny buildings (See Figure 13).



Figure 13- ATM disguised at Kansas City Renaissance Festival (Photo by Stephanie Koehn)

The festival planners made a conscious effort to limit commercialization inside the festival in an effort to create a more authentic fantasy landscape.

Frenchman also has seven requirements for supporting a successful event-place, which were discussed in the literature review briefly. These include territory, intimacy, granularity, triangulation, movement, scale, and sensuality (2004). Through my research, evidence shows that each requirement was met and aided in place-making. Territory, according to Frenchman, is when an event has “the ability to create this sense of separation” (Frenchman 2004, 39). A successful event-place has territories that provide “defined edges, and can be separated in space or time from the common terrain” (Frenchman 2004, 39). Each of the Renaissance festivals researched had a defined

territory both physically and socially. Physically, the trees and other landscaping are used to visually block the real world from the people attending the Renaissance Festival. At the Texas Renaissance Festival, they even went so far as to plant rows of trees for people to park in between so that not even cars can be seen (See Figure 14).



Figure 14- Texas Renaissance Festival Tree lined walkway into entrance (Photo Courtesy of Google Images)

A path is provided between the trees to allow everyone to walk in and out of the festival, making the entrance to the festival a focal point and creating the feeling of coming out of the woods and into a town plaza during the Renaissance. The structures are also a large part of providing a defined territory. Both festivals' entrances have large permanent walls. Kansas has more of a wooden structure with plaster (See Figure 15), while Texas has walls built of stone with towers, depicting a fortified place (See Figure 16).



Figure 15- Kansas City Renaissance Festival Entrance (Photo Courtesy of Google Imagines)



Figure 16- Texas Renaissance Festival Entrance (Photo Courtesy of Google Imagines)

Inside the festival some buildings have thatched roofs or tile, and Texas even went as far as to build structures that reflected on the cultural influence of a specific group or region. For example, the Greek area, called the Agora, has white rounded walls with blue accents (See Figure 17) in contrast to the German area that has a Black Forrest Inn that consisted of wooden structures with thatched roofs.



Figure 17- Texas Renaissance Festival Greek Section (Photo by Stephanie Koehn)

Social territory was shown through the names of areas and costume types because groups of people in similar costume often gathered together in the same area. For example at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival there was usually a group of pirates around the Pirate Ship Stage or fairies around the Fairy Forest. At both of the festivals the bars, although a physical structure, are also social territory. The people gathered here were often friendly and conversed with one another, people watched, and relaxed while

drinking an alcoholic beverage. Both physical and social territories help provide a better sense of place and aid in place-making by providing loose boundaries.

Intimacy in an event-place happens when a bond between the people and event is created that is both social and emotional (Frenchman 2004). After interviewing all the groups I found this to be true for both festivals. I was surprised, however, by the depth of the bond. I had attendees inform me that they come to the festival every weekend that it takes place and meet up with friends to socialize. Often these were friendships formed through years of attending the festival, and sometimes it was the only time of the year they saw each other. Two different interviews of couples revealed to me that they had met at the festival and later held their marriage ceremonies at the Renaissance Festival. This social and emotional bond caused an intimacy with the Renaissance Festival for these couples because of the sentimental value that connects them to it. Another example of intimacy was shown through the change of the mermaid exhibit from the first year to the next. The first time it was set up with cloth walls, winding pathways and different mermaids along it, they acted standoffish and hissed. The second year the pathway had silly signs and decorations on your way to the mermaids. They were friendly and invited you to take pictures with them (See Figure 18). The mermaid in the water tank would splash at you instead of hiss, which the kids seemed to enjoy more and personally I did too. The second year the mermaid exhibit created a more intimate environment because of the social interactions with the attendees.



Figure 18- Kansas City Renaissance Festival Mermaid picture spot (Photo by Stephanie Koehn)

The intimacy among the vendors contributed to their sense of community. Many vendors have strong social bonds with each other and looked out for one another. Some were even part of a group that had an unofficial health insurance they called “RESCUE”. When one person became ill, they would donate money or goods they made to raise money for the ill vendor in need. The passion, belonging, and love expressed during my interviews allowed me to see the powerful intimacy and fierce attachment that these festivals invoked in all the groups I interviewed. The intimacy discussed here relates back to the place-making aspects of the mind and community and reveals how important they are to making the Renaissance Festivals special.

The next requirement to a successful event-place is granularity. This happens when an event is able to support multiple nodes of group participation and activities within the event (Frenchman 2004). Also a person should experience the event-place at different levels and scales because places are not monolithic but involve many facets (Frenchman 2004). For example, activities for adults and children, small sitting areas and large sitting areas, along with different things to experience like art, music, food, and shopping. The Renaissance Festivals both accomplished granularity through the many shops, food choices, small and large stages, children's areas, educational areas, and adult areas. The adult areas were clearly marked with signs stating that if you go past this sign attendees may hear things not appropriate for a younger audience. They both had quieter locations usually around gardens or small pathways in the woods, where people could sit and relax, and louder locations like the jousting areas that contained lots of seating and people-watching opportunities. This combination allowed for many people with different interests and ages to find something they enjoyed at the festivals, and it shows why granularity is important for a successful event-place and how the characteristics of an environment can make a difference.

Triangulation is another important part of a successful event-place and occurs when "a sense of community between two strangers in a public space is encouraged by a third activity or object they can both share" (Frenchman 2004, 40). The two Renaissance Festivals encouraged triangulation in many ways. First, the costumes people wore often prompted dialogues between strangers with questions like, "Can I take a picture with you?" or "Where did you get your corset?" In this instance costumes were the third object that brought people together inside the festival.

The shows performed at the festival also encouraged participation in the form of verbal answers or audience participation. The jousting really encouraged audience bonding, because the jousters would separate them into different teams to cheer on the different knights competing. Since there are many shows throughout the day, the first would usually establish a feud of some sort, and a duel would then be scheduled for later that day between the two parties so you could come back and cheer your knight on. The thrill of yelling “Huzzah”, as loud as you could while cheering on your knight with the audience caused a bond plus a competitive spirit between the other groups to see who could yell the loudest.

The festival workers also behaved in ways that promoted triangulation, because they would stop attendees and inform them of historical facts or the inaccuracy of their costumes, or conduct an activity with them such as an imaginary tea-time that would sometimes gather a crowd. These performances helped to form the intimacy discussed earlier on a smaller scale, and it helped draw attendees in and include them in the experience. My interviewees would often fondly refer to different workers who either made them a ring or had imaginary tea-time. Personally, as a participant observer I found that those extra actions made me feel special and like I experienced something unique at the Renaissance Festival.

Another important aspect to a successful event-place is movement. This means that the event-place is designed in a way that promotes the movement and participation of attendees (Frenchman 2004). The Texas and Kansas City Renaissance Festivals both promoted movement by providing a mixture of wide and small streets and winding pathways to encourage attendees to explore and discover what was around the next corner.

The food, shops, and educational booths are all dispersed throughout the festivals allowing the attendees to see the different things that the festivals have to offer in multiple places. The crowds of people in attendance never became overwhelming or stifling because the mixture of food and shops caused people to naturally split away from each other, and most of the destinations had more than one road connected which helped the foot traffic come and go easily. There were more crowded areas, for example, around the jousting locations, but in each festival the street there was wider. Kansas City Renaissance Festival did not have streets as wide as the ones at the Texas Renaissance Festival but that was part of the charm. Kansas City Renaissance Festival had many smaller paths in the woods to take you to the same location, and it felt more intimate. Also since trees and buildings were all around, it limited the distances you could see, which resulted in surprises of cute gardens, buildings, and activities. Texas Renaissance Festival had wider streets, but the number of people attending was much larger than the Kansas City Renaissance Festival so wider streets were needed to keep a good flow of foot traffic. The surprises around the corner were still there, but it was because everything was spread out and covered a lot larger area than at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival that the place felt less intimate. The festivals both encouraged movement and created an environment that enabled people to appreciate the setting and helped manage the flow of people.

Scale is also important to an event-place. According to Frenchman, “good event-places balance the size of the event and the place. When events get too large for their place, intimacy, granularity and triangulation can be lost” (2004, 41). Frequently, in North America, when an event outgrows a location they move it to a larger area to allow

for more people to attend. Frenchman (2004), as stated in my literature review, said that moving an event can be a mistake. As noted earlier, during my research both Renaissance Festivals showed growth but kept their location which Frenchman (2004) encouraged events to try to do. For example, Kansas City Renaissance Festival did not grow in actual size but redesigned an area, between 2012 and 2013, adding more inside that space to make it more efficient without changing the actual scale of the festival. The first visit to Kansas City Renaissance Festival had a stage, a few shops, and bar. The next year there was more shops, along with a larger bar with more seating and shade. Texas Renaissance Festival had more visitors but because of the already large areas and wide streets they did not need to accommodate the bigger crowds because they had already planned and prepared for a growth which allowed the scale of the festival to stay relatively unchanged.

In my interviews with both workers and attendees that had been attending for years, they revealed the festivals had added and expanded as they gained more popularity. Also, the festivals both take place on multiple weekends allowing for a greater number of people to attend without detracting from the intimacy. Although the scale of the Texas Renaissance Festival is larger, the buildings, stages and shows are all more impressive. An attendee cannot even see all of the festival grounds in a day, which makes you want to come back and experience what you missed. For the Texas Renaissance Festival, which is the largest in North America, the large scale was part of the attraction of the festival. The Kansas City Renaissance Festival is a smaller scale and still expanding and developing, but that is part of its charm. You can see it all in a day, and you feel more like you are in an old village off to the side of the road in England.

They have both handled growth well and not lost the charm and experience that people love.

Lastly, Frenchman discusses the importance of sensuality in an event-place. The five senses help to bring to life the event-place and help to blend imagination and experience (Frenchman 2004). The sensual experience for the individual is appealing, but when experienced within groups it can result in an emotional attachment and a “shared sense of community” (Frenchman 2004, 42). As the researcher, I had read this article before going into the field, and understood how having all of your senses played upon can enhance an experience but had not really comprehended how they can generate a sense of community.

Participant observation and interaction at the two festivals revealed to me that Frenchman is correct and that sensuality plays more than one role at the festivals. It aids in enhancing your experience of the performances around you and also allows you to feel more a part of the events and community at festivals. The sights of costumes, buildings, plants, shows, and wares all contributed to the visual experience that the attendees, vendors, and workers are also a part of as they express their own personalities through costumes and actions. The sense of smell included the different types of food, incense, candles, animals, and fresh air. Sounds of clashing swords, cheering crowds, laughter, music, and accents allowed for you to feel a part of the experience and spirit of the Renaissance Festival. The quieter areas, such as rest spots, allowed for reflection and peace from the busy-ness of the outside world. Touch was also important, because if, when you were in costume, you felt physical differences compared to your street clothes you were reminded today was different and unique in comparison. Then there was the

touching of animals at the petting zoo or leather and clothing goods to be bought to further your enjoyment at the festivals. The temperature outside could affect your enjoyment along with how many people attended the festival that day.

Lastly, taste aided in the sensual experience, because there was the typical fair food, like turkey legs and hot dogs, along with different cultural food and drinks like haggis, mead, different crepe combinations, gyros, egg rolls, etc. People interacted because smelling and looking at others' food led to conversation about where they found certain food and what was the best to eat. Then in and around the bar areas they gathered around to talk, drink, and make new friends like at a normal bar; the difference was most everyone was in some sort of costume, so you might be drinking with a pirate, fairy, and highlander while being served by a woman that actually looked like a serving wench from a movie. The laughter and conversations heard brought people into the bar. The weather also brought people together and keep them at the bar enjoying a drink or two waiting for the rain to stop. This example just used food and drink but it shows how sight, smell, sound, taste and touch can all contribute to or enhance a sense of community. All of the senses combined to form a type of adventure space because of the balance between the known and unknown or the familiar and the exotic that can be experienced within the event-place. Sensuality encompasses the environment, mind, and community aspects of place-making which is why it is important to remember when creating a place. It is important to note that along with sensuality people and their social interactions also add to a place. Frenchman does not stress enough the role people have in contributing to the sensuality of a place.

If an event-place balances all of these correctly it can bridge the gap in age, gender, and social class, allowing for different people to claim and share the same common place (Frenchman 2004). My research revealed that the Texas and Kansas City Renaissance Festivals qualify in all of these areas and my interview questions related that different ages, genders, etc. claim these Renaissance Festivals as a place they enjoy, find community, and feel like they belong. In the end, Frenchman (2004) states that a good event-place is a combination of private and public space and that the popularity that has developed is from Americans' desire for public life and community. These festivals are open to the public but are on private grounds owned by a person or family making them private spaces. Technically, these Renaissance Festivals are private spaces but the attendees and vendors (the public) feel an intimacy and emotional attachment to them making them feel as if they helped contribute to the space.

Frenchman (2004) discusses event-places in his article and all the aspects needed to form a successful one. In effect, he describes a kind of place-making. Successful place-making happens when the environment, mind, and community all work together to form a place that people feel is meaningful, which results in an attachment and sense of belonging. Frenchman (2004) focuses on the environmental aspects of an event-place but does not account for the social interactions and what people potentially bring to an event through dress, actions, and imagination. Place-making not only involves the setting or environment, but also the interactions, performances, and experiences that occur there. My research shows how successful place-making is at the Renaissance Festivals. Fantasy landscapes found at the festivals provide a physical and mental escape through the aid of the environment, mind, and community. Costumes enhanced the performances and role

playing at the Renaissance Festivals, reminding us that the mind is a powerful tool in place-making because how a person conceives the world around them contributes to how they feel and behave in a particular place.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Summary

To learn more about these Renaissance Festivals I chose to focus on answering four research questions. The first research question was to find out how the fantasy landscapes were created at the Kansas City and Texas Renaissance Festivals. I discovered that when you walk through the gates of the Renaissance Festival you immediately feel like you have stepped into another world. The physical environment was mixed with historical and fantasy aspects that create a unique place that encourages people to escape from reality, imagine different worlds, and pretend.

The second question dealt with how bodies are displayed at these Renaissance Festivals. The variety of ways bodies were displayed was stunning. People used the many different types of costumes and accessories to reveal what they describe as their “true self”, exaggerate personality traits, pretend to be someone else, push boundaries of social norms, and explore gender roles. The costumes worn and performances given while wearing them encouraged social interaction with strangers. To be more a part of the community inside the festival you wore a costume which paradoxically meant that

you fit in and you stood out more. My research on this question provided evidence about how powerful bodies can be in shaping a place. The bodies and performances help form the environment and community that make the festivals unique.

This brings us to the next question, where do people go in their mind when they attend the Renaissance Festivals? The bodies in these fantasy landscapes aid in creating the illusion of being in another world. People are escaping by reliving past life times, pretending to be princesses and wizards but more importantly they are feeling accepted and safe. This safe environment created allows for freedom in performance and of the imagination. This acceptance results in belonging and a level of attachment that cause people to want to come back every year.

The last research question deals with how the environment at these Renaissance Festivals contributes to place-making. The landscape, arrangement, visual features (like costumes, wares, buildings, etc.), sensuality, and people all play key roles in contributing to the environment of these Renaissance Festivals. Through this type of environment I could see how place-making was used to make these Renaissance Festivals successful. The Renaissance Festivals are very intentional about the environment they are trying to create and did a great job at providing the best possible environment for promotion escape and imagination.

The methods I used for this qualitative research consisted of data gathered through multiple visits to these festivals and many hours of participant research and interviewing. Interviews were gathered from key informants, vendors, and attendees. Methods in the coding process of the interviews were both inductive and a priori. The

codes resulted in themes of escape, strong devotion, attachment and belonging along with positivity. The work of Frenchman (2004) was also used as a guide in understanding the environment found at the Renaissance Festivals.

Renaissance Festivals are excellent examples where people actively engage in place-making in America. These festivals exhibit the importance of the environment, mind, community, and costumes coming together to create a successful event-place. Efforts and attention to detail combine with all of these elements provide a unique experience and atmosphere. The costumes help create a separation in the mind between reality and fantasy for the person wearing it. With a costume a person has automatic acceptance into the festival community and this level of acceptance results in a strong attachment and feelings of belonging towards the Renaissance Festivals. The created environment and community are positive and accepting which provides a “safe place” for experimenting with social norms and gender roles through peoples’ costumes and performances. In this environment many escape mentally from reality into different time periods and worlds, while others are just escaping from the stress of everyday life. There is more going on at these Renaissance Festivals than adults playing dress up. People are expressing self-identities, pushing boundaries, and reliving past lifetimes. The thoughts and details put into place-making at these Renaissance Festivals help explain why they are popular with repeat visitors, not only every year but sometimes every weekend. These Renaissance Festivals are worth a visit to learn not only about successful place-making but also to learn about yourself and how you react to the created fantasy world.

Limitations

There were limitations to this research, some of which were obvious and expected, and others that were not anticipated. For example, the distance of the two Renaissance Festivals put limitations on the frequency of my attendance. Also the times the festivals were conducted gave me limited time to conduct research. I did the best that was possible but with more time I could have experienced more of the festival and gained more interviews. The key informant interviews were harder to conduct than I anticipated because these people were either away when I was attending the festival or they were working the festival and not available for interviews. The weather at times also limited the amount of research I could do in one day. If it rained, which it did a couple of times, fewer people came. I could still do vendor interviews or participant observation but there were fewer people and things to observe. In spite of these limitations, I still gained valuable information and perspectives at the two Renaissance Festivals.

Recommendations for Further Research

The gathered data presented many interesting results and I had to choose what to focus on. Future research would add greatly to not only concepts of gender, emotional geographies, and place-making techniques but enable me to spend more time at the Renaissance Festivals gaining better insight. During my interviews I was informed that the Renaissance Festivals on the East and West coast were a little different than the two that I researched as they were considered Midwestern Renaissance Festivals. It would be beneficial to visit those coastal festivals to see if there is a real difference or possibly just to focus on one Renaissance Festival and the building of relationships there. After

conducting my interviews I realize that more information about demographics may have given better insight which is why I would add a questions asking what ethnic group people identify with, what was their highest education level, and level of income. Some people volunteered that they had Master's degrees and PhD's during the interviewing process and it made me wonder if many of the people I interviewed had higher education or not. The connection between imagination and higher education would be interesting to explore. Income could also be studied in relation to how much they made and how much they spent on their costume and at the Renaissance Festival in general. Emotional geography would also be another concept to possibly research. After conducting interviews I found that there was a much higher level of emotions and attachment towards these Renaissance Festivals than I had originally anticipated. Exploring these aspects I believe would lead to better understanding of the Renaissance Festivals and the place-making they involve.

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APPENDICES

Key Informant Interview Questions Form

1. Is your age between?
 - a. 18-25
 - b. 36-45
 - c. 46-55
 - d. 56-65
 - e. 66-plus
2. Gender of the interviewee.
Male or Female
3. My research showed that the number of the Renaissance festival attendees each year 200,000 (Kansas City) or 450,000 (Texas) is that true?
 - a. Why do you think so many people attend?
4. How did you get involved with the Renaissance Festival?
5. How long have you worked here?
6. What is your favorite aspect of the Renaissance Festival?
7. What is your least favorite aspect of the Renaissance Festival?
8. Did you make your own costume or do they provide one (if applicable)?
9. What does your costume represent (if applicable)?
10. What do you do to get into character before the festival starts (if applicable)?
11. How do visitors react to you when you are in character (if applicable)?

Vendor Interview Questions Form

1. Is your age between?
 - a. 18-25
 - b. 36-45
 - c. 46-55
 - d. 56-65
 - e. 66-plus

2. Gender of interviewee.
Male or Female

3. How did you get involved with the festival?

4. How long have you been selling goods here?

5. Why do you think people come to this festival?

6. What is your favorite aspect of the festival?

7. What is your least favorite aspect of the festival?

8. Did you make your own costume (if applicable)?
 - a. How long did it take you to make it?

9. How long did it take for you to put together your costume (if applicable)?
 - a. Did you get it all at once or piece by piece over the years?

10. Who or what is your costume representing (if applicable)?
 - a. Why do you choose a fantasy costume?
 - b. Why do you choose an authentic representation costume?

11. Why do you wear the body paint and or accessories (if applicable)?
 - a. What do these markings and/or accessories mean to you?

12. How does your costume make you feel when you are wearing it (if applicable)?

13. Do you think you act differently when you are in costume (if applicable)?

Attendee Interview Questions Form

1. Is your age between?
 - a. 18-25
 - b. 36-45
 - c. 46-55
 - d. 56-65
 - e. 66-plus
2. Gender of interviewee.
Male or Female
3. How many times have you attended this Renaissance festival?
4. Why do you come to the Renaissance festival?
 - a. If more than one reason why you come please include
5. What is your favorite aspect of the Renaissance festival?
 - a. For example: Dressing- up, food, entertainment, atmosphere, the people?
6. What is your least favorite aspect of the Renaissance Festival?
7. Why do you dress up to attend the Renaissance festival (if applicable)?
 - a. Do you dress up every time you come?
 - b. Is it always the same outfit?
8. Did you make your own costume (if applicable)?
 - a. How long did it take you to make it?
9. How long did it take for you to put together your costume (if applicable)?
 - a. Did you get it all at once or piece by piece over the years?
10. Who or what is your costume representing (if applicable)?
 - a. Why do you choose a fantasy costume?
 - b. Why do you choose an authentic representation costume?
11. Why do you wear the body paint and or accessories (if applicable)?
 - a. What do these markings and/or accessories mean to you?
12. How does your costume make you feel when you are wearing it (if applicable)?
13. Do you think you act differently when you are in costume (if applicable)?

Institutional Review Board Approval Letters

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Wednesday, October 10, 2012
IRB Application No AS12114
Proposal Title: Assessing Embodiment at American Renaissance Festivals

Reviewed and Exempt
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 10/9/2013

Principal

Investigator(s):

Stephanie Koehn	Alyson Greiner
337 Murray	337 Murray
Stillwater, OK 74078	Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI, advisor, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Shelia Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date Monday, September 09, 2013 Protocol Expires: 9/8/2016

IRB Application No: AS12114

Proposal Title: Assessing Embodiment at American Renaissance Festivals

Reviewed and Exempt
Processed as: Continuation

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Principal Investigator(s) :

Stephanie Koehn
337 Murray
Stillwater, OK 74078

Alyson Greiner
337 Murray
Stillwater, OK 74078

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modifications to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature. The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

- The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

Signature :



Shelia Kennison, Chair, Institutional Review Board

Monday, September 09, 2013
Date

VITA

Stephanie Elizabeth Koehn

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: PLACE-MAKING AT AMERICAN RENAISSANCE FESTIVALS

Major Field: Geography

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science/Arts in your major at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2017.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Liberal Arts in Humanities at University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, OK in December, 2010.

Graduated Class Marshal at University of Central Oklahoma in the College of Liberal Arts in December, 2010.

Experience:

Humanities Tutor at University of Central Oklahoma from 2008 to 2010.

Teaching Assistant for Cultural and World Geography at Oklahoma State University from 2011 to 2013.

Professional Memberships: Gamma Theta Upsilon Member

