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Home and Away? Creating Identities and Sustaining Places in a Multi-centred World

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Amenities and Mobilities

Imagine being able to 'travel the world without leaving home'. This is not the overblown promise of some high-tech, computer-generated virtual world, but the veritable promise of *The World*. Built and operated by a Norwegian company called ResidenSea and launched on her maiden voyage in early 2002, *The World* is a 191-metre-long 'global village at sea', boasting 200 sumptuous residential and guest suites (smaller units occupy 92 sq m and carry a price tag of a mere US\$2 million). In naïve but premonitory tones the company website announces: "'Citizen of the world' takes on new meaning when your address is *The World* of ResidenSea.' Indeed, what would it mean to live in the 'world's first mobile community'? What kind of community would surface in the mobile but ephemeral social relations at sea? And what would become of the territorially bounded, the less mobile majority who lack US\$2 million to spend on an ocean-going mobile home? How would the places they reside be affected by the flotilla of the fortunate who periodically grace their shores and streets?

The high seas may be the latest frontier in mobile living, but a more terrestrial and no doubt familiar (and affordable) form of mobilized dwelling can be seen in the throngs of retirees travelling the highways of North America and Europe, in some cases their recreational vehicles serving as permanent travelling homes (McHugh, this volume, Chapter 4). And while the archetype of residential mobility remains the seasonal migrations between multiple, fixed residences, even in this traditional form mobility takes on new patterns in the face of increasing globalization. With modern highways and skyways, the summer cottage is increasingly accessible year-round for short, intermittent stays. Further, recent advances in communications technology blur what remains of the distinction

between work places and vacation spaces. In sum, second-home ownership (landed, highway or ocean-going) and other amenity-seeking mobilities (e.g. ordinary tourism) are just a sampling of the various ways modern lifestyles may be anchored and mobile at the same time.

At first glance the prospect of travelling the world without leaving the comfort of home may seem like the crowning achievement of globalization, but it also hints at a more troubling psychological tension between the modern appetite for mobility and a nostalgic longing for rootedness. What is the significance of multiple residence, mobility and amenity-seeking migrations of various sorts for contemporary society? Is the apex of globalization the assimilation of home and away into one experience, one condition of existence? Are amenity-seeking migrations and second-home ownership among the adaptations modern people attempt in order to create a coherent identity from the muddle of mobility and globalization? Indeed, what does it mean to be a 'citizen of the world' and what obligations does such citizenship admit?

Beneath these questions lies the paradox of modern mobility and global-scale social relations. 'We are living today on a threshold between a history of alienated displacement from and a longing for home and the possibility of a multicentered society that understands the reciprocal relationship between the two', writes Lippard (1997, p. 20). Much of human history chronicles the struggle – in the form of pilgrimages, crusades and diaspora – for the stability and security of home, community and nation. Yet that same history also reveals a struggle for emancipation from the local hegemonies of ethnicity, religion, class and clan. In its modern guise, this struggle for home is often wrapped in a romantic but regressive pretext of ecological and social sustainability. For Lippard, however, the 'lure of the local' is not born out of wistful nostalgia for the stability and authenticity of place, community or nature. But neither is she eager to surrender control over the local to what is increasingly seen as the equally hegemonic alternative – the distant (state or corporate) power and placeless rationalism that exemplifies globalization. As Mitchell (2001) argues, Lippard holds out hope for a multicentred society in which control over cherished places can be both multicentred *and* democratic.¹

So much of social theory is predicated on the thesis of authenticity *versus* alienation that it has been hard to imagine a multicentred world in which movement and mobility play as much of a constituting role in society as more traditionally place-based notions of settlement, territory and community identity. This chapter emanates, at least in part, from the need for social theory to take up mobility, migration and amenity-seeking movements as ordinary and widespread adaptations to modernity and globalization. Globalization appears to have given mobility and rootedness new meaning, paradoxically both by empowering individuals to create multicentred identities and simultaneously imploring them to seek out and protect what remains of the authentic that modernity makes so elusive. But how does this work in actual places? Is amenity-driven development an effective way to protect and

maintain authentic landscapes or just another form of globalization reaching out into the hinterland, commodifying what it finds and wresting control from the locals? Are there perhaps more moderate positions between reactionary localism and placeless globalism? Is there any prospect for a multicentred society that is also democratic at multiple scales?

Starting from the premise that human relationships to places have been profoundly altered by modern mobilities, this chapter explores the dialectics of home and away, mobility and rootedness, from two overlapping vantage points. One perspective concentrates on the more descriptive question of how modern people construct identities in a restless, multicentred world. This perspective suggests that people need not locate their identity in a single place but, in fact, can flexibly invest themselves in a variety of places in a variety of times to suit a particular season, stage or sensibility. The second perspective examines the more prescriptive debate regarding the control over amenity-rich landscapes that are the targets of modern mobilities and identity-making projects. This latter view draws attention to the politics of place, focusing on how places are socially constructed and contested by amenity seekers, as people are lured to local places by an aura of authenticity seemingly lacking in places more conspicuously transformed by globalization. At the same time locals are often complicit in such transformations as they deliberately lure in the amenity migrants and tourists with the hope of restoring or sustaining the social and economic viability of the place. The result may be to widen the politics of place by expanding claims of authenticity or sustainability to a larger constituency.

homes are owned by residents from the nearby urban centres of Chicago, Illinois (approximately 640 km), Minneapolis, Minnesota (225 km) and Milwaukee, Wisconsin (545 km). The region remains a blend of traditional/rural and modern/urban lifestyles, with a history of German and Scandinavian settlement. These cultural influences are still strong in the Hayward Lakes Region as demonstrated by the American Birkebeiner Ski Race named after a similar race in Norway.

The advent of the railroad and the subsequent logging boom during the 1880s had a major influence on settlement patterns and development of the region. Immense stands of white pine were the major attraction for loggers. Not only did the trees provide good timber, they were also easy to transport through the waterways of the area. By the turn of the century, most of the pine was exhausted and the logging industry faced bankruptcy. As a result, local government and land developers heavily promoted agriculture in the area between 1900 and 1920, even though the land was not suitable for large-scale farming (Nesbit, 1973). Besides poor climate and soil conditions, the massive debris left by the logging industry made clearing the land extremely difficult.

After the dissolution of the logging industry and failed attempts at agriculture, the Hayward Lakes region turned to a new industry based on tourism, resorts and outdoor recreation, especially fishing. The seeds of tourism were sown in some ways by the logging industry, which brought people into the Northwoods where they discovered the beauty and enjoyment of the region. In fact, some of the first second homes were built by logging barons, but it was not until logging and agriculture failed after the 1920s that tourism began to flourish.

Recreation and tourism in the area prior to World War II was essentially restricted to the summer season and traditional activities (i.e. fishing and hunting). Improvements in highways and technological innovations such as the snowmobile had significant impacts on the area and, in conjunction with skiing, expanded the tourism season to the winter. These changes in lifestyles and transportation meant more and more people could afford their own second home and make more frequent, but shorter, trips. The small, rustic family-owned resorts, which had been the driving force behind the tourism industry prior to World War II, began to disappear. Many of the individual cabins that made up these resorts were sold off to become second homes. The result has been an evolution in the types of people with strong ties to this place to include local residents who live and work full-time in the area, tourists who visit the area for limited time periods yet develop lasting relationships through repeat visitations, and second-home owners whose ties to the region exhibit characteristics of both residents and tourists.

Turning to the question of how modern people construct an identity in the modern multicentred world, interviews conducted with second-home owners in the Hayward Lakes area² illustrate what Giddens (1991) calls the reflexive project of the self. This identity project involves living in a modern world in which localities are thoroughly penetrated by distant, global

influences. As a consequence, self-identity becomes a reflexive negotiation of several distinctive dilemmas that must be resolved in order to maintain a coherent identity narrative. These dilemmas are illustrated in two themes that emerge from the interviews. One theme involves seeking refuge from modernity in nature and a simpler life. The other entails overcoming modernity's disorienting and fragmenting quality by rooting oneself in the local.

Escaping modernity

A common story people tell involves escaping modernity by seeking refuge in nature, a theme frequently discussed in the second-home literature (Jaakson, 1986; Halseth, 1992). The setting of the cottage affords greater access to nature, in part because of its typically rural location, but also by virtue of the spaciousness of most cottage developments relative to suburban living. Immersion in the rhythms of nature appears to facilitate a mental adjustment and shift in awareness. When asked how his life was different at his second home compared to his primary residence in Minneapolis/St Paul, one interviewee responded:

It's just a totally different feel. I mean it's the woods, the trees, the lakes, the water, wildlife, birds, seagulls go by, yeah so I ... think you see things and feel things differently when you're here versus in the city. It's not that there aren't birds and trees in the city, it's just that you have a different focus. You're into working normally, where up here it's just the opposite. You're into relaxing and getting away from everything.

The second home serves as an oasis from the modern world and the normal, everyday life. While some work may follow the second-home owner to the 'cabin in the woods', many still speak of leaving work behind. Some homeowners describe a kind of 'mental cleansing' that occurs in conjunction with certain places during the trip to the second home. Specific landmarks act as subliminal suggestions to relax and shift the mental focus to another place and way of living:

There's probably two mental things that occur. [When] I get to a little town about an hour away from Minneapolis, I can pretty much rinse work out and that kind of thing. And then once we get to around Spooner [approximately 50 km from the cabin] it starts looking and feeling different.

Another facet of escape stories is the idea of living a simpler life, or at least a life different from the one at the 'primary' home. As one second-home owner described the second-home experience: 'It's like stepping back in time ... There's a sweetness and simplicity to it.' Another respondent who was asked to describe her second home echoes this sentiment: 'It's like the old days ... It's like 30 years ago for us, much more relaxed and laid back.'

Not only do schedules and obligations disappear, but leisure moves forward to assume primary significance. One respondent talked about how

leisure activities, even those as innocuous as reading, suddenly became acceptable to do at her second home whereas at her primary residence she feels guilty. Another respondent had a very similar experience:

I love the idea that I can stop doing all the things that I usually do at home ... I hardly know what time it is and doing what I want – spend hours at the piano and stuff like that. I just do things, so it's long-term here, whereas at home I have to live on a tighter schedule.

As mentioned earlier the Northwoods, as a mythic place, is routinely reproduced in the public discourse of what it means to live in Wisconsin and neighbouring states. Among residents of the upper Midwest (northern Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota) 'Northwoods' and 'Up North' refer to a distinct place that is symbolically 'a part of the ritual retreat from the city' (Bawden, 1997, p. 451). Bawden adds: 'To most, the allure of the northwoods is that it simply is what the city is not: pristine, wild, unspoiled and simple.' This is a pristine myth (the Northwoods were 'cutover' nearly 100 years ago); nevertheless, the area is still 'quite different from the cities, towns or dairyland countryside to the south' (Bawden, 1997, p. 451). Cottagers clearly experience this as they make their trek north. They note changing landscape elements like the composition of the forest ('all of a sudden the white birches become the predominant tree in the forest') and cultural elements like a style of barn. As noted earlier, many cottagers identify specific places en route that mark the transition. In one small Wisconsin town there is a monument on a large rock which proclaims to mark the spot as 'half way north', referring to its location at latitude 45 degrees north of the equator.

Using second homes to escape modernity through greater contact with nature and 'simple living' reflects two of Giddens (1991) identity dilemmas that modern subjects must negotiate to construct coherent identity narratives: efficacy *versus* powerlessness and personalization *versus* commodification. First, second homes give individuals greater power to appropriate various lifestyles and meanings from a wider range of possibilities for building one's identity narrative. At the same time, it also minimizes the need to transfer control of some aspects of life to the abstract or expert systems so prevalent in modern life. The modern home, for example, is the terminus for all manner of expert systems and technologies designed to efficiently deliver warmth, sustenance, rejuvenation, entertainment and information. Second homes are often perceived as more distant and removed from urban technology and expert systems and the ideal of a rustic cottage is, in part, to shun such technologies. Though modern technologies are surely making inroads on this ideal, many cottages still rely less on public utility delivery systems, particularly for water and heat. The remoteness and immersion in nature promotes a sense of escape from these modern systems and restores feelings of self-reliance and control over one's own schedule. Second homes give their owners a greater sense of control to express and restore meanings and sense of identity otherwise undermined, as Giddens (1991) argues, by globalization

and its expanding dependence on abstract systems of expert control and symbolic mediation.

Secondly, the second home offers a way to balance personalization with commodification. For all the choice and freedom in constructing the self, our personal appropriation of life choices and meanings is often influenced by standardized forms of consumption (and leisure), what Mathews (2000) refers to as the cultural supermarket. Modern culture delivers pre-packaged images and storylines. For the Hayward Lakes cottagers, these might include rustic Northwoods decor (e.g. black bears, moose, loons, rustic furniture, canoes, fishing equipment), Famous Dave's Legendary Pit Bar-B-Que, Al Capone's summer home, the Hayward Lakes fishing experience and racing in the American Birkebeiner. Rather than passively consuming these standardized narratives, modern subjects also exercise the capacity to actively discriminate among pre-packaged images and modify pre-fabricated storylines to suit their individual tastes. Certainly, cottaging may be variously experienced as manufactured and commodified or authentic and personalized (Williams and Kaltenborn, 1999), but it also affords symbolic expression of 'authentic' identity and allows for considerable personalization in construction and furnishings. For example, second homes are often given names (*Hideaway*, *Forest Home*, *Silver Lining*) that connote escape, pleasure or hobbies. They afford what Stebbins (1982) calls 'serious leisure', the long and practised commitment to certain lifestyle forms that give life a sense of purpose and meaning.

Continuity and sense of rootedness

To the extent that modernity thins the primary home of meaning, alternative mythic places such as second homes or favourite vacation spots may be cultivated to recreate a seemingly thicker place of attachment, identity, continuity and tradition otherwise undermined by modern lifestyles. In a globalized world that many experience as placeless, the cottage may serve as a centre of meaning across the life course even as people relocate their so-called permanent residence. The cottage provides continuity of identity and sense of place through symbolic, territorial identification with an emotional home. In the Hayward Lakes region, territorial identification occurs on multiple scales – from the cottage itself and its immediate surroundings as a sense of home – to the lake as a neighbourhood or community – to the Northwoods as a regional landscape that provides shared cultural values.

Compared to daily life in the modern permanent home, the second home provides for family togetherness that is quite distinct from the often-segmented individual lives and schedules characterizing most households (Jaakson, 1986). At the cottage the daily routines and projects of individual family members are less complex and geographically dispersed and more interwoven with other family members. One second-home owner contrasts his work life with cottage life:

[At the permanent home] I'm gone in the morning and I'll get back in the early evening [from work]. So, I have just evenings and weekends with everybody, and for me it's real nice just to be more relaxed. [At the cottage] we're all together all day long and doing whatever we feel like, so this is a real good time for all of us to just be together.

Second-home ownership offers the potential for continuity across generations within the family and across the life-course within a given generation. Many respondents verbalize this sense of continuity in contrasting their so-called permanent home to their cottage: 'We moved and owned 8 to 10 different [permanent] homes and so we've never had any sense of ownership that was worthwhile to have, anything that was going to be there.'

As the locus of important family memories, the cottage provides symbolic territorial identification for families across generations:

My grandfather built it in the 30s. This whole area had been logged and he was the original owner of the Lodge. It's still in my father's name, but my brothers and I come up here and take care of it too. [We are] trying to make sure that it stays in the family ... All six of us brothers still use it. And my folks come out here two to two and a half months a year.

When asked about future plans for the place, responses almost always include a reference to passing the place on to the children. Jaakson (1986, p. 381) suggests that this is rarely the case for the primary home, using the example of two college-aged brothers whose parents had died: 'They promptly sold the urban house where they had lived since childhood. But when asked if they would also sell the cottage, they looked aghast and replied: "We'd never sell the cottage!" ... The cottage was their emotional home, the city house a mere residence.'

Shared identification with neighbours or other property owners (particularly with other property owners around the lake) is also important. People seek a cottage with 'community spirit' and 'where everyone knows one another'. Most cottage owners, especially those with longer tenures, discuss neighbours by name and describe social practices such as 'puttsing' around the lake visiting neighbours and hanging out at taverns and restaurants located around the lake. A number of respondents suggested that they have more friends and more social life at the cottage than they do at their work home. Some interview respondents belong to families of the first people to build second homes in the Hayward Lakes area. One such respondent, whose family built their home in the 1930s, takes some pride in his long tenure as a seasonal resident:

We're old-timers up here for most people. Yeah, we're a little more stable [than] all those people from Illinois, and we're not just the typical tourist that come in and bought a place and come up for a few years and then it's on the market again. We clearly have been here for a long, long time.

The continuity and sense of rootedness made possible by a lifelong accumulation of experiences in a place illustrate how second-home ownership helps modern subjects negotiate two additional identity

dilemmas suggested by Giddens. One is the dilemma that an identity narrative must navigate between authority and uncertainty. As Giddens (1991) suggests, the dilemma arises from greater uncertainty as to what constitutes worthy sources of authority in the modern age. The dilemma may be partly resolved 'through a mixture of routine and commitment to a certain form of lifestyle' (Giddens, 1991, p. 196). The routines and traditions of holidays and family celebrations may similarly offer direction and purpose, but they may also be harder to maintain throughout an increasingly diverse and mobile life course. Thus, a second home offers family members a regular gathering place for maintaining routines and traditions and helps to forge a shared commitment to a place in what for many is otherwise experienced as rootless modern life.

Though cottage life offers a seemingly thicker place of identity, continuity and tradition, there is a contradiction in such efforts as suggested by Giddens' final identity dilemma. The dilemma of fragmentation *versus* unification in the context of owning a second home or cottage has been described thus:

[The practice of owning a recreation cottage] ... is a modern expression of the need to have an authentic, rooted identity somewhere, but also a concrete manifestation of a segmented, isolated self living in more than one place. On the one side, cottaging ... is an attempt to thicken the meanings we associate with places in response to the modern tendency for places to become thinned out. [Cottage use] ... inverts much that is modern against the modern tendency to separate and segment. It emphasizes continuity of time and place, a return to nature, and convergence of spheres of life such as work and leisure. On the other side, however, cottaging is very much an extension of modernity. Cottage use is motivated by and played out in the modern context of globalized cultural production and accelerated time-space relations. It is not only made possible by modernity, it necessarily re-creates the segmented quality of modern identities in the form of separate places for organizing distinct aspects of a fragmented identity. It narrows and thins out the meaning of each 'home' by focusing the meaning of each on a particular segment of life (i.e. work and subsistence of urban daily life versus recreation and rejuvenation of cottage life). It also segments identity around phases in the life cycle with youth and retirement focused more on cottage life than working adulthood.

(Williams and Kaltenborn, 1999, p. 227)

Unity *versus* fragmentation thus involves steering a course through and selectively incorporating the numerous contextual events and mediated experiences that modernity presents. According to Giddens (1991), organizing an 'ontologically secure' sense of self must be accomplished amid a seemingly fragmented and puzzling diversity of options and possibilities. The stories people tell about cottage life suggest as well that a diversity of available lifestyles may offer an opportunity to create a distinctive self-identity that positively incorporates elements from different settings into an integrated narrative.

The successful navigation of Giddens identity dilemmas would seem to benefit from a 'cosmopolitan' identity (see Gustafson, this volume, Chapter 2). The cosmopolitan person is often constructed as one who possesses the

distinct knowledge and competence to handle cultural diversity and who draws unique strength from being at home in a variety of contexts. While cautioning that the opposition of cosmopolitan *versus* local people is simplistic and carries elitist overtones, Gustafson suggests it can still be analytically useful. Thus, Mathews (2000) argues, for example, that in this globalized age even those who ostensibly belong to a particular (local) culture carry a significant burden to both construct an identity out of the information and identities available from what he describes as the global cultural supermarket and, in turn, present that identity as one that transcends the cultural supermarket.

The constructive acts of locals and amenity migrants, attempting to weave together coherent but multicentred identities, heighten the political challenges that come with trying to accommodate both global (cosmopolitan) and local (indigenous) senses of place. While perhaps sharing a deep attachment to place, locals and cottagers none the less are likely to perpetuate different myths of authenticity and pursue diverging views of how to sustain the place. The cottagers may seek to preserve the 'rustic idyll' (nature, refuge and simple living) against the forces of modernity, at least in their stories if not in their deeds. The cottagers may see it as a place where nothing should change. The locals, in contrast, may need to continuously adapt the landscape and economy to sustain their livelihoods if not lifestyles. In most amenity-rich locales the natives have to make a living, not only from the cottagers but also from the 'passing trade' of tourists.³ This sets up a politics of place to which we now turn.

Authenticity, Sustainability and the Politics of Place

Along with the idyllic lure as a place to find escape, coherent identity and sense of authentic landscape and culture is the lure of control, of staking and defending a claim on a particular locale (Mitchell, 2001). Amenity migration and second-home tourism involve making and resisting claims about what a place means and what constitutes its *true* character or sense of a place. In other words, the lure of the local involves the politics of place, for example, in the arguments over whether and how to make the place attractive to capital of various sorts (Stokowski, 1996). For amenity and tourist-dependent economies, the capital 'that places need to lure in is often itself highly fragmented, walking around, for example, in the pockets of fickle tourists, whose every whim, it seems ... dictates just how local landscapes are to be redeveloped – and who is to be squeezed out' in the process (Mitchell, 2001, p. 272). From this perspective, the lure of the local is not that it averts the transforming force of globalization, but lures it in. Globalization sets up a contest between the need to make a place viable for indigenous locals and the desire to preserve the authentic myth that lures in second-home owners and the passing trade of tourism.

Who then controls decisions about the direction and pace of local change: amenity migrants seeking out the seeming authenticity of a second

home in a rural idyll or the local power brokers (e.g. real estate developers and county commissioners) who put *their* landscape and culture up for sale in order to sustain indigenous ways of life? Or are there potential compromises that manage to celebrate the local and lure in the passing trade, all without sacrificing too much to an outsider's sense of the place?

The challenge of sustaining a sense of place, thus, can be likened to Lippard's goal of finding 'a way to create a *multicentered* society, in which control over the places in which we live our lives is likewise *multicentered* and *democratic*' (Mitchell, 2001, p. 272, original italics). Amenity locales represent a case in point for understanding the difficult challenges of simultaneously sustaining place identities and egalitarian ideals likely to beset 21st century democracies. How do we sustain a sense of place, which is increasingly contested in the everyday practices of place-making by amenity migrants and locals, each hoping to affirm a different sense of the authentic? Is there any prospect for Lippard's multicentred society that manages to sustain local identities and sense of place while advancing the universal egalitarian ideals deemed necessary for democracy?

This question has occupied the attention of political theorists and geographers alike. Among political theorists, Barber (1998) is wary of what is too often portrayed as a stark choice between the liberal-pluralist model, which associates place identities with the thin ties of private markets coordinating individual interests, and the communitarian model, which assumes thick and ineluctable bonds that presumably precede and condition individuality. As an alternative, Barber proposes 'strong democracy' founded on civic identity tied to citizenship. Political ties should build neither on libertarian voluntary private associations nor communitarian shared values and heritage. Rather, the ties of citizenship can come from a plurality of voluntary civic communities with common devotion to arbitrating 'differences by exploring common ground, doing public work, and pursuing common relations' (Barber, 1998, p. 37).

Among geographers, Entrikin (1999) has similarly tried to articulate the basis for a political commons in an increasingly globalized world dominated by plurality and difference. As he sees it the challenge is striking a balance between place as *ethnos* and space as *demos*, a balance requiring 'an uneasy mix of parochial attachments and cosmopolitan ideals' (p. 280). On the one hand, places as *ethnos* are rich and thick with cultural traditions and customs that make common inhabitation possible. On the other hand, stable, democratic political community would appear to require cosmopolitan conceptions of place that are 'rooted in the concreteness of everyday experience and practice', yet open to 'the potentiality of a common humanity striving to make the earth a better home'. Such places 'are dynamic, malleable, open to a world beyond the local, and conducive to practices supportive of the universalistic ideals of a common humanity' (Entrikin, 1999, pp. 279–280).

Models for how to balance the *ethnos* of concrete attachments and thick boundaries impermeable to the outside with the *demos* of plural identities and thin boundaries permeable to a world beyond the local have proved

contentious if not elusive. They range from the romantic and reactionary to the progressive. On the reactionary side, one model likely to resonate with cottagers and amenity migrants seeking to escape modernity is bioregionalism (Aberley, 1999). It represents a strand of environmental thought that locates the prospect for achieving a sustainable society, not in a hypermodern multicentred society, but in a return to a romantic ideal of place thought to have existed in the 19th century (Sagoff, 1992).

Originating within radical environmental thinking during the 1970s bioregionalism mixes ecological science and environmental ethics to argue that society should be organized around decentralized natural or 'organic' regions. Grumbine (1992), for example, argues that environmental problems are the product of a lost, forgotten, or 'atrophied' sense of place. The aim of bioregionalism is to restore a presumed authentic biocentric (natural) way of acting and dwelling in the world. It emphasizes a 'close linkage between ecological locale and human culture' in which humans 'not only alter environments but also adapt to them' (Flores, 1994, p. 5).

Similarly, a communitarian strand of political theory seeks to strengthen the local solidarities that create difference and boundaries between insiders and outsiders (Sandel, 1996). Just as bioregionalism tends to revere the local on the basis of an essentialist and organic interpretation of regionalism, communitarians tout the virtues of the local on the basis of their presumed thicker ties of tradition and custom as the basis for political unity. Communitarians are suspicious of global, multicentred society and long to recreate Tönnies' classic ideal of *gemeinschaft* or authentic community (Shurmer-Smith and Hannam, 1994). As an antidote to the homogenizing tendencies of globalization, and in stark contrast to the once prevailing view that regarded the local as a site of struggle and injustice Entrikin (1999) notes a growing acceptance of the local as the locus of human fulfilment to be preserved and protected. This view, he writes, 'is prominent in both anti-modernist nostalgia for traditional community and stable identities and the postmodernist valorization of situatedness, context and difference' (Entrikin, 1999, p. 272).

While some environmental and political philosophers are suggesting that a sustainable society lies in cultivating a sense of place or community others are highly sceptical of linking sustainability too closely to sense of place, and risk perpetuating local cultures and traditions that tend toward intolerance if not outright xenophobia. Marxist geographer Harvey (1996 p. 148) regards the discourse of sustainability as 'a debate about the preservation of a particular social order rather than a debate about the preservation of nature per se'. In expressing his disdain for both bioregionalist and communitarian thinking Harvey writes:

[T]here can be no going back, as many ecologists seem to propose, to an *unmediated*, relation to nature (or a world built on face-to-face relations), to a pre-capitalist and communitarian world of nonscientific understandings with limited divisions of labor. The only path is to seek political, cultural, and intellectual means that 'go beyond' the mediations such as scientific knowledge, organizational efficiency, technical rationality, money, and

commodity exchange, while acknowledging the significance of such mediations. The emancipatory potential of modern society, founded on alienation, must continue to be explored.

(p. 198)

Harvey clearly rejects bioregional and communitarian modes of political thought. In his words, they risk becoming 'inward-looking, exclusionary, and even neo-fascistic' (Harvey, 1996, p. 199). Such thinking builds on essentialist readings of local natural and cultural history with presumptions that 'bioregions are given by nature or by history, rather than that they are *made* by a variety of intersecting (social and ecological) processes operating at quite different temporal and spatial scales' (Harvey, 1993, p. 202). For Harvey it is naïve to believe that bioregional or decentralized communitarian societies will necessarily respect the positive Enlightenment values of human diversity, democracy, freedom and justice.

To avoid Barber's stark choice and balance Entrikin's *ethnos* and *demos*, a number of authors attempt to articulate some middle ground in the idea of sense of place without being reactionary and essentialist. In a way that anticipates Harvey's discomfort with communitarian place, Worster (1993), for example, suggests that what is needed is:

... a post-materialist view of ourselves and the natural world, a view that summons back some of the lost wisdom of the past but does not depend on a return to old discarded creeds ... a view that acknowledges the superiority of science over superstition but also acknowledges that all scientific description is only an imperfect representation of the cosmos.

(p. 218)

A leading proponent of a middle-ground position is Massey (1993, 1994a). She has developed the notion of a 'progressive' sense of place, which tries to give credibility to the human need for authenticity and rootedness, while recognizing that such sentiment need not be construed as a gated community. Massey proposes that a place can have 'a character of its own' without resorting to Heideggerian notions of essentialism and exclusivity that so worry Harvey. According to Massey, places represent unique, but unbounded, constellations of global and local processes. She notes that: 'what gives a place its specificity is not some long internalized history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of relations articulated together at a particular locus' (1993, p. 66). This is not to deny the importance of the past in shaping sense of a place but rather to emphasize that it has always been created and contested through interactions of the local with the more distant forces, some that go beyond the destabilizing role of capital. It is even possible to imagine alternative, progressive places in which capital doesn't always rule (Massey 1994a, p. 140). Actual place identities often lack the singular, seamless and coherent qualities frequently attributed to the idea of sense of place. Multiple identities can be, and often are, both a source of richness and conflict.

Others have built on Massey's approach. For example, Raffles' (1999) ethnographic study of one small village in the Amazon emphasizes the

importance of multi-scaled social networks in the process of making the Amazon.⁴ Because a place (or locality in Raffles' terms) is shared through social relations across space and time, it can be conceptualized as: '... a set of relations, and ongoing politics, a density, with which places are discursively and imaginatively materialized and enacted through the practices of various positioned people and political economies' (p. 324).

In this the case, multiple identities of a place involve among other things histories of science, exploration and resource extraction; global commodity flows; and local practices of conformity and resistance to these processes. Like Massey, Raffles illustrates how narratives and experiences of locals are negotiated against the narratives and experiences of others who passed through as travellers and explorers such that each narrative 'mediates the constitution of this particular place, its production as a locality, and its insertion in to a geographically and culturally wider world' (p. 324).

A final example of that middle ground (and the lost wisdom that Worster speaks of) comes through in Sagoff's (1992) writing about the importance of a sense of place in environmental ethics. In writing that is sympathetic to bioregional and communitarian arguments, Sagoff nevertheless draws some keen insights about how places navigate the turbulent currents of globalization. Places survive the vagaries of global competition, he notes, not because of greater economic efficiencies, but because people treat their surroundings with affection. Places survive globalization because their cultural and social institutions and community ties are strong. Through strong community bonds, effective institutions, shared memories and commitments that root people to a place, people are able to adapt to changing conditions in ways that respect nature and cultural traditions. Such affection, the theory goes, generates motivation among local residents to seek continuously some fit between nature and culture. 'The task is to regard nature neither as a basis for or refuge from economic activity but as our common dwelling place and earthly home' (Sagoff, 1992, p. 392). For Sagoff, a strong collective commitment to place is the best defence against capricious globalization.

Within such a model, amenity based economies could certainly represent a potentially interesting adaptation or fit. Rather than focusing on the presumed 'culture clash' between newcomers and long-time residents (critiqued by Smith and Krannich, 2000), Sagoff's notion suggests instead a basis for inclusiveness. Amenity migrants, tourists and locals may in some cases actually find common ground in an effort to protect the amenity features of the landscape (Blahna, 1990; Fortmann and Kusel, 1990). Thus an economy suited to a place, based on shared affection for the place, may be one that brings the global into the local to preserve and cherish what is already there, albeit with potentially different meanings attached to that place and different sources and levels of power.

Both Massey and Sagoff offer insights for the Hayward Lakes region. First, the region illustrates Massey's notion of the local being partially constituted from the global, in this case in the form of various urban

migrations associated with tourism and second-home use across the seasons. Secondly, it exhibits the multiple identities of locals (who make their living from logging and tourism), second-home owners (who commute between residences in nearby urban centres) and various summer and winter tourists.

Following Sagoff (1992) the Hayward Lakes region illustrates the problem of sustaining a sense of place while balancing the need for openness and inclusiveness. By noting a place can continuously adapt itself in response to more distant, global forces and long-term shifts in technology, Sagoff (1992) offers two lessons for how to think about sustainability. One lesson is that technological change and innovation often overwhelm well-intended efforts to conserve or manage resources in a particular way, rendering long-term planning for sustainability naïve in retrospect. He notes, for example, how New England agriculture declined through the 19th century when improvements in transportation made it possible to ship agricultural products from the Midwest, where they could be produced in greater quantities and more cheaply than on New England farms. With many of these farms reverting to pine forest, logging became the mainstay in the early 20th century, supplying containers (boxes, barrels and crates) for shipping goods on the railroads and canals. Because 40–60 years are required for trees to reach harvest maturity, the shift to production forestry mandated a long-term commitment of resources. Across such horizons, social and technological changes often negate even the most informed projections. In this case cardboard boxes began to replace wooden crates long before the trees were ready for harvest. By 1950 the county had abandoned forestry and put up summer homes. In more recent decades, the emergence of more mobile industries and tele-commuting practices (e.g. in the computer and telecommunications industries) has further transformed the region into a bedroom community serving nearby cities.

The other lesson Sagoff draws is that the challenge of sustainability is not primarily a problem of relating human beings to nature, as bioregional thinking would have it. Rather, sustainability is a problem of relating human beings to one another: 'We should look first not to economic or ecological but political theory to figure out how a diversity of human communities can survive together – since people must trust and depend upon one another at least as much as upon natural resources and ecological systems' (Sagoff, 1992, p. 365).

Much like New England, the Hayward Lakes region appears to have developed a sustainable amenity or tourism economy from the ruins of cutover forests and failed attempts at agriculture. That this may have been a conscious effort at sustainability is unlikely. Yet, just as Sagoff emphasizes commitment to place as the basis for sustainability, the Hayward Lakes Region appears to be the result of people living in a place they love and continuously striving for an economy suited to the place. The fact that they appear to have succeeded after a century of struggle illustrates their devotion, if not their intentions.

It is hard to know whether this second-home phase in the regional development of the Hayward Lakes region will prove to be sustainable in

the end. Still, the region appears to have achieved a certain level of suitability or fit with the place because it builds on a shared desire to sustain a particular character of the place. Perhaps some second-home developments achieve a level of success in creating more permeable and dynamic relationship to the larger world without sacrificing local sense of place, because the economic input and landscape orientations of the second-home owners produce a culturally sympathetic rural tourism. Cloke and Thrift (1987) makes similar observations about tourism in the English countryside. Rural tourism is frequently built on crafts, farm shows, antiques, etc., which, while attracting the passing trade of holidaymakers, are consistent with the values of locals and the second-home rural residents. Rather than the culture clash notion of conflict between locals and itinerant visitors and part-time residents, conflict arises, ironically, with the industrial farming sector, which increasingly employs technologies that detract from the pastoral myth that attracts the passing trade.

Identity, Sustainability and Globalization

Much of social and political inquiry of the past quarter century has emanated from critiques of modernity and globalization, with debates over the implications for sustaining places and forming identities figuring prominently in these discussions. Globalization surely arouses nostalgia for more stable and authentic places as witnessed by protests of the World Trade Organization and the rise of bioregional and communitarian movements. It is not surprising that ecologically minded critics of modernity would be drawn to a concept of place that seeks to affirm a lost art of dwelling in harmony with nature. But rather than sinking into nostalgia for more stable and authentic place it is important to appreciate the ways in which landscapes, places and regions are relational concepts, socially constructed and dynamic. The world was never as stable as we like to imagine it. Places change and must be prepared to change. The real challenge is how to function and democratically participate in a multicentred world that is simultaneously local and global.

Modernity presents a paradox: by unmooring meaning and identity from place, modernity (along with globalization) dilutes traditional/local sources of identity and amplifies the quest of modern people to actively construct a sense of who they are. The more we seek the authenticity of other places the more we contest and reconstruct the very authenticity that attracts us. Modern life increasingly involves circulating through geographically extended networks of social relations spread across a multiplicity of places and regions. By expanding our networks of social and spatial relations, globalization restructures our experience of home and away and ultimately how we go about constructing our identities and anchoring our sense of who we are and where we belong. The increased mobility and freedom of identity that come with modernity energize amenity migrants' search for thicker meaning and authentic place. In acting

on these expanded mobilities, however, amenity migrants and travellers of various sorts begin to destabilize and disrupt the very places that lure them.

This picture of the modern subject on a quest for identity and a secure sense of place and the image of local places under siege from global forces can be easily overdrawn. Without doubt the vast majority of the people in the world do not have the kind of mobility afforded by a luxury cabin on board *The World*, certainly not the amenity-maximizing kind that is the focus of this volume. Not all meaning has been displaced, not all social relations have been stretched and disembedded, and not all places have been thinned of meaning. None the less, many people in modern Western nations do have exceptionally high mobility compared with 50 years ago. And whatever one makes of Friedman's (2005) 'flat world' thesis, nearly everyone is affected by the global movement of goods and the mass consumption of distant and rapidly moving ideas and images, even if they have relatively little corporeal mobility.

Contrary to the view of mobility and migration as departures from the historical norm in need of explanation, rootedness and mobility have always been in tension. What has changed is that, where rootedness was once foreground and mobility background in premodern conditions, mobility has moved more to the foreground in the modern world. Given the modern condition of problematic firmness of place, many people seek to put down roots somewhere and modernity opens up more places and multiple options for doing so. But modernity also increases the individual's burden to accomplish this task with little clear direction from society. For those who have highly mobile lives, the lure of the local motivates them to seek out multicentred ties, to send out rhizomes into multiple places. Others may still find rootedness in modern, but conventional, home-making (Perkins and Thorns, this volume, Chapter 5). For them the traditional primary home can surely function as a central site for grounding what Giddens (1991) calls 'ontological security,' even in the heart of the modern world. But modern conditions make ontological security more problematic and challenging and therefore a more explicit task of modern life. Mobility both heightens the search for ontological security and opens up diverse ways of finding it. Tourism, second-home use and amenity migrations are among the diverse responses to these modern conditions.

The lure of the local nevertheless leaves amenity-rich places like Hayward prone to commodification and makes managing for social, economic and ecological sustainability more difficult. If there is any advantage to amenity-oriented adaptations as a basis for sustainable society, it might well be in the kind that draws outsiders more deeply into the place to celebrate common interests. To the extent that moderns reach across space to put down roots, build community and come to know the 'other' (whether that other is a local culture or a natural history), there is the prospect that some people may come to have greater regard for diverse and distant places, people and processes. Amenity-oriented migration in the Hayward Lakes region shows signs of such harmony. The region has not relied so much on manufactured attractions or large-scale resort

development, but on experiencing the Northwoods – something that both locals and itinerant residents and visitors value. Though it is a kind of dwelling which some urbanites find easier to achieve outside of metropolitan centres (implying some disaffection for and disinterest in urban centres), it also connects local peripheral areas to the larger global world. Though it is a very modern form of escape from modernity, amenity migration, in some forms at least, also appears to create beneficial economic and social transactions between the periphery and the centre. If the result is a meaning-filled place that gives locals and visitors identity and at the same time celebrates plurality and difference, then it resembles Massey's (1993) progressive vision for sense of place and may facilitate Sagoff's (1992) economy continuously adapting, yet suited to the place.

In the end, as Mitchell (2001) notes, Lippard's *Lure of the Local* is double-edged. Sustaining place involves not only the dilemma of finding ways to create and live in a multicentred society, it also requires a politics of place that is both multicentred and democratic and, as Entrikin (1999) reminds us, a politics that somehow manages to balance *ethnos* and *demos*. There are two unending moral challenges to finding such a balance. One has to do with the distribution and use of power to influence the course of change in a given place. Does the power reside with the mobile elites (capitalists or amenity seekers) lured to the local, locals trying to lure in amenity-producing capital, or in some negotiation between these various interests? There is much to be said for communitarian politics if it can give locals a stronger voice in shaping their own destiny in the face of indifferent global processes. Yet, even at the local level, power also excludes, as Harvey and Lippard remind us. The second challenge, therefore, involves how to deepen our sense of responsibility to all participants in this multicentred world, especially those lacking power such as future generations, distant neighbours and even strangers and non-human nature. This requires extending moral regard beyond the familiar local and present to the less familiar future and distant, a challenge made increasingly urgent by the globalizing tendencies of modernity.

Acknowledgements

Several people have made contributions to the work described in this chapter: Bjørn Kaltenborn from the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research; Susan Stewart of the North Central Experiment Station; and Norm McIntyre from Lakehead University. We would also like to thank Paul Lachapelle and Robert Snyder for their beneficial review and critique.

Endnotes

¹ We are indebted to Mitchell (2001) for highlighting a number of themes that emerge from Lippard's (1997) book, *The Lure of the Local*.

- ² The particular stories examined here come from interviews conducted by Susan Van Patten (see Van Patten, 1999).
- ³ The term *passing trade* was suggested by Norm McIntyre.
- ⁴ The connection between Massey and Raffles was suggested by Robert Snyder.

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Citation: Williams, D. R., & Van Patten S. R. (2006). Home and away? Creating identities and sustaining places in a multi-centred world In N. McIntyre, D. R. Williams, & K. E. McHugh (Eds.), *Multiple dwelling and tourism: Negotiating place, home and identity* (pp. 32-50). Cambridge, MA: CABI Publishing.