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# Leisure Negotiation and Amenity Migration for Gateway Communities

Pavelka, Joe

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## **Leisure Negotiation and Amenity Migration for Gateway Communities**

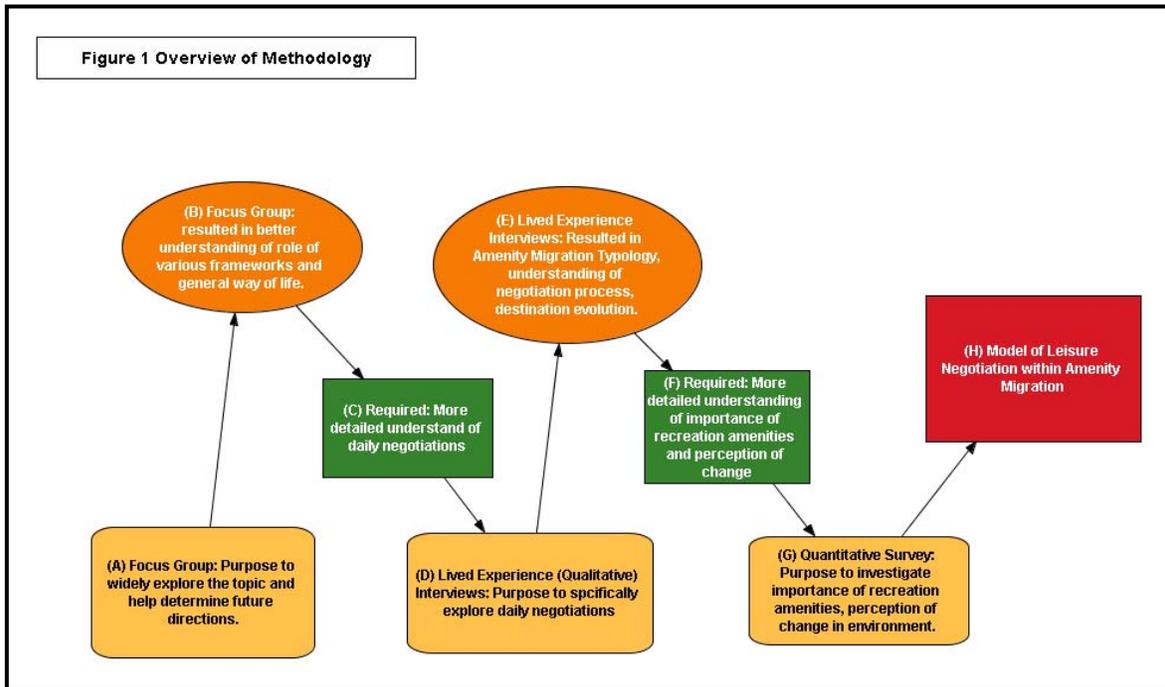
**Joe Pavelka – March 1, 2008**

Amenity migration refers to the movement of individuals, on a full or part time basis, to seek out places which are believed to possess extra-ordinary natural and cultural resources, that were not available within their previous place of residence (Moore, Williams, & Gill, 2006). Amenity migration is closely linked to tourism yet distinct because the goal of the amenity migrant is to reside, more so than to visit (Stewart, 2000). It is also closely linked to leisure and recreation as a motive for mobility and choice of destination and that enhanced leisure and recreation infrastructure is often a result of amenity migration within a destination (Glorioso & Moss, 2006). Amenity migration is reported to be a phenomenon that is witnessed globally, especially prevalent in the North American west, (McMillan, 2006) and in some cases it is said to be radically altering the rural landscape (Buckley, 2002). There are many factors cited as driving amenity migration. Most are related to the post war prosperity of 1950s North America and remain linked to measures of standard of living such as disposable income (Nelsen, 2006). More specific factors have been put forth that include an increased value of the natural environment, of cultural differentiation, and of learning, leisure, and spirituality, coupled with increases in discretionary time, wealth, and technology. Of these it is claimed that leisure is least understood (Price, Moss, & Williams, 1997).

### **Methodological Framework**

Grounded Theory was used as the overarching methodological approach for the investigation which was conducted over three distinct phases of data collection and analysis.

Figure 1 presents an overview of the methodology and for the purposes of this article, the



methodology will be explained in brief. The investigation began with the goal of exploring the way in which leisure is negotiated by residents within a tourism destination. The data collection phase consisted of a series of five focus groups with Canmore and Banff, men and women, each, and another with Banff seasonal workers which took place during the autumn of 2005. The purpose of the focus group component was to conduct an initial investigation using theoretical frameworks related to leisure negotiation to guide the inquiry and to determine what may or may not be important to residents including their motivation to live in the region. The result of the focus group analysis was a sound understanding of the environment within which they negotiate for leisure and basic negotiation processes among some different groups. An additional five interviews were conducted with second home owners as a part of the focus group phase.

The next phase of data collection consisted of a series of twenty two in-person semi-structured interviews to specifically explore the lived experience, or daily aspect of leisure

negotiation within such an environment. Interviews were conducted with participants of different groups, following a theoretical sampling procedure and determined by one's motivation to reside in the Bow Valley. Interviews yielded considerable understanding of the negotiation process among different these groups. Key findings included that what is negotiated is predominantly one's ability to sustain a satisfactory lifestyle within the Bow Valley more than the traditional notion of access to particular recreation experiences, a subsequent typology of amenity migrants in the Bow Valley and a unique understanding of the relationship between leisure constraints and recreation coping models within negotiation. Furthermore, that mobility or absolute displacement out of the region is an important negotiation strategy that affects the nature and character of the development of recreation amenities which further fuels the arrival of particular types of residents amenable to the evolving recreation and structural environment. A better understanding of the way that residents view recreation amenities and changes within their broader recreation environment (including social and structural elements that impact daily life) was needed to situate the particular phenomenon of leisure negotiation.

The final phase of data collection consisted of a quantitative survey conducted throughout the Bow Valley resulting in 363 usable surveys and a response rate of 31%. What emerged from the survey analysis was support for the idea that different groups value recreation amenities differently, and that overall respondents view changes to the environment in keeping the model, that is, urban-types of recreation amenities have increased while those related to backcountry recreation have decreased. Quantitative analysis consisted of a multi-phased approach involving...The sum of qualitative and quantitative data provides sound support for the model as presented.

Throughout the investigation a variety of theoretical frameworks were used to guide the analysis of the emergent data. Initially, and throughout, the leisure constraints model and

recreation coping model were used to situate the negotiation process. As the investigation progressed literature and concepts associated with human and behavioural geography, such as amenity migration, destination evolution and place attachment were required to understand and organize the emergent data into a cohesive model.

## Results – Model of Negotiation within Amenity Migration

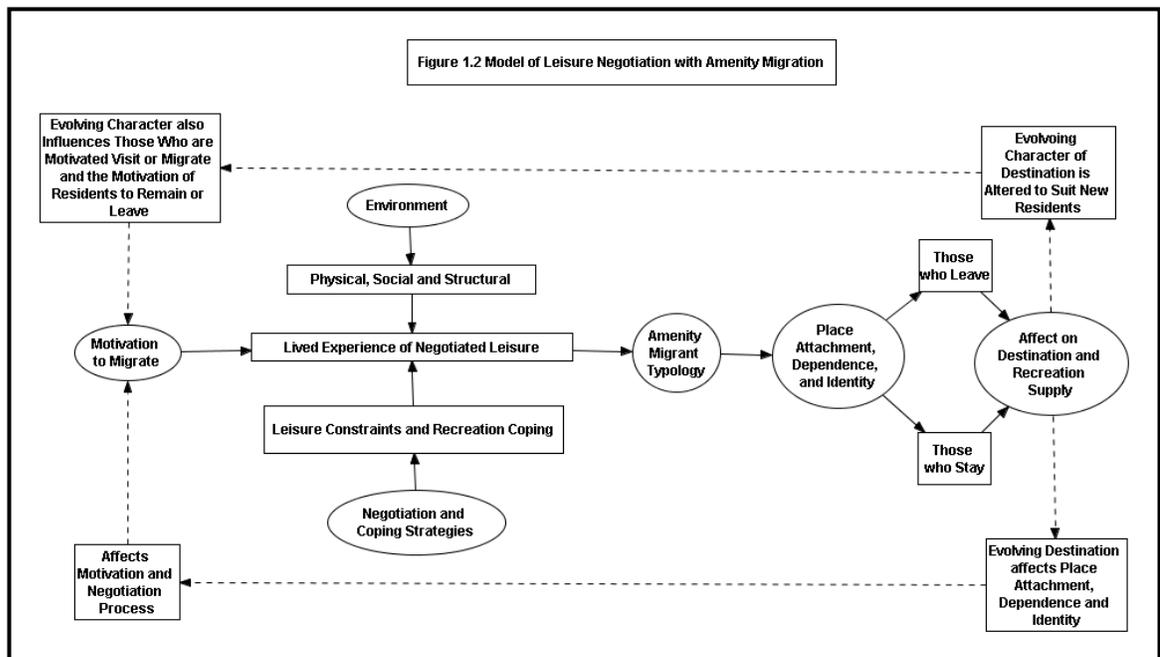


Figure 1.2 presents the proposed theoretical model of negotiated leisure within amenity migration. The model represents the conceptual entirety of the work of this investigation and thus selected results will be presented in conjunction with explanation of the model. The model is an interdisciplinary interpretation of the human-environment relationship within behavioural geography as applied to a specific setting of a high recreation amenity destination. Each component of the model will be briefly discussed beginning with the motivation in the far left.

### Model of Negotiated Leisure within Amenity Migration

Motivation. Individuals are attracted to a particular destination based on a variety of factors such as one's personal traits and leisure and travel motivation grounded within a broad conceptual push-pull scenario (Suvantoal, 2002). Leisure and recreation are important motives for amenity migrants (Moss, 2006). This model contends that motivation to reside specific to the Bow Valley include a desire to balance a mountain recreation lifestyle with work, to be with a friend or partner, to escape, to purchase a second home, to be in a place suits one's values, to be next to the (aesthetic lifestyle) mountains and to pursue a career in tourism or parks. Factor analysis results revealed two factor components labelled To Live and To Escape. The former included to pursue a career in tourism, hospitality or parks, to start a business, to balance work with a mountain recreation lifestyle and just to be with a friend or partner while the former included to own a second home and to escape.

Lived Experience of Negotiated Leisure. The leisure negotiation process is framed by the human-environment relationship and remains dynamic due to constant evaluations of the one's ability to negotiate aspects of a changing environment with one's personal resources. The lived experience component of the model includes the element of leisure and recreation behaviour. Behaviour is important as it is postulated here that leisure/recreation behaviour imprints the destination through the expression of demand. For example, the persistent behaviour of mountain biking may result in the development of additional mountain trails, a built mountain bike park, or even the banning of mountain biking from certain or all trails. Likewise, the presence of upper middle class urban dwellers may bring about a perceived demand for up-scale restaurants and cafes. Or the presence of families with children may bring increased demand for traditional recreation facilities such as pools and ice arenas. Recreation behaviour is an expression of demand which is likely to impact supply thereby altering the environment.

Environment. The environment within a high recreation amenity destination can be characterized as having significant natural and cultural resources (Moss, 2006). It involves a strong social component of community and reference groups (Brehm, Eisenhaur, & Krannich 2004). The social element can also include detractors such as crowding, congestion and other forms of conflict such as with recent and long time residents (Moss, 2006). It also includes structural components such as the economy, housing, roads and health and educational infra-structure which all contribute to the negotiation (Robertson & Stark, 2006). Physical, social and structural aspects of the environment are assumed to act both as a facilitator to one's leisure goals, and constraint or stressor at different times. It is also assumed that over time the nature and character of the Environment evolves (dotted line) as the physical and social aspects of the destination evolve.

Negotiation and Coping Strategies. From a leisure and recreation perspective negotiation with one's internal and external constraints is widely understood within the Leisure Constraints model which includes three basic levels of leisure constraint of intra-personal, inter-personal and structural. The Leisure Constraints model is perhaps best suited to understanding what aspect of the internal (personal traits and motivation) and external (physical, social and structural) environments are being negotiated and how (Jackson, 2000). The Recreation Coping model is used to understand the way in which people respond to stressors within a recreation setting. The Recreation Coping model posits that individuals will respond using one of more of four possible responses to stress within a recreation environment they include two cognitive based responses of rationalization and product shift and two behavioural based responses of displacement and direct action (Miller & McCool, 2001). It is postulated that an individual will begin leisure and recreation negotiations relying on typical leisure constraint negotiations for the selection and pursuit of activities and behaviours. With increased time at the site it is believed that an individual will rely more heavily on recreation coping strategies as various types of stressors (e.g. crowding, traffic)

persist and complimentary strategies are found. However, it is assumed that despite the shift in emphasis over time both leisure constraint and recreation coping negotiation strategies may be present at any one time.

Amenity Migrant Typology. Resulting from Motivation and the dynamic of the leisure centred human-environment negotiation is a typology of amenity migrants based on the findings of this investigation. The typology is primarily based on the qualitative data analysis and appears in

- Box A – Amenity Migrant Typology**
1. Those who wish to pursue a mountain recreation lifestyle in the Bow Valley rely on it for their livelihood but can not negotiate the costs over the benefits and decide to leave;
  2. Those who wish to pursue a mountain recreation lifestyle in the Bow Valley and rely on it for their livelihood but negotiate to overcome the costs for the benefit;
  3. Those who live in the Bow Valley to pursue more urban recreation and hospitality & tourism careers within the area;
  4. Those who wish to pursue a mountain recreation lifestyle but do not rely on the Bow Valley for their livelihood directly (commute or remote work situations); and
  5. Those who wish to escape to the Bow Valley part-time (second home) and do not rely on the valley for their livelihood.

Box A. The typology is a result of different types (what is being negotiated) and levels (intensity) of negotiation within the human-environment. Various amenity migrant typologies appear in the literature (McMillan, 2006; Robinson & Stark, 2006; Purdue, 2004; Easterling 2005). Factor analysis results revealed four distinct factor

components based on importance of recreation amenities they include; backcountry, culture, recreation and entertainment.

Place Attachment, Dependence, and Identity. The relationship the individual recreationist develops with the place over time can be understood using the concept of place attachment including underlying concepts of place dependence and identity (Kyle, Bricker, & Wickham, 2004). Together, as place attachment, it is used to characterize the continuous manifestation of the human-environment negotiation as a relationship with the place (Johnston, 1989). Place attachment, dependence and identity are assumed to be strong predictors of whether an individual will stay or leave a destination. Some will leave and others will remain. Even those who leave the site impact the evolution of the destination as was their behaviour an expression of demand for the

tenure of their residency. Those who leave may be seeking other destinations more supportive of their identity, goals and personal resources. Those who remain impact the destination through their behaviour, and in other ways such as policy development, and through on-going, shared discourse that creates a collective understanding of place. Place attachment loops back (dotted line) to motivation as the individual's relationship with the place will be affected by the continuous negotiation process which is assumed to influence one's motivation to engage in future negotiations and in what manner. Place attachment loops back as an antecedent to the continuous negotiation process.

Affect on Destination and Recreation Supply. The final component of the models seeks to provide insight into how the leisure based human-environment relationship physically affects a high recreation amenity destination. It is postulated here that as population increases urban-type recreation supply increases and backcountry (outside of the townsite) generally remains stagnant or decreases. This general pattern has been previously observed. For example Glorioso & Moss (2006) discuss the rapid increase of urban amenities in the Santa Fe region during the 1980s to present in association with amenity migration. Moore, Williams & Gill (2006) report loss of recreation land adjacent to Whistler BC townsite as a result of residential and golf course development coupled with increased urbanization. As the destination evolves including the quantity and quality of urban and recreation supply this will result in an equally evolving image of the destination that will serve to attract different types of individuals. This is a simple displacement process similar the Plog's (2002) model, however based on tourists, whereby a destination evolves and as it does it attracts 'venturerers' at first then 'dependables' later on. Similarly, early, density-crowding-satisfaction models realized that within any one site varying conditions would attract different groups of people more or less comfortable with crowding conditions. The quantitative survey included a 27-item scale to assess whether residents perceived change in their recreation

and structural environment in the form of increases or decreases in urban-type recreation, backcountry recreation, tourism activity, and structural elements such as jobs, housing and cost of living. Factor analysis on the scale revealed seven factor components in accordance to where most change has been perceived (no particular direction of change) they were labelled as crowding, backcountry, urbane, town, outdoor recreation, and urban.

A five-cluster solution revealed that overall some factor components were perceived to have increased and others decreased. More specifically, overall factor components 'crowding' (seven crowding related items) and 'urbane' (four items related to cafes, restaurants, and bars) were perceived to have increased while 'outdoor' (four items related to trails, ski areas, festivals), 'backcountry' (four items related to more remote outdoor activity), was perceived to have decreased while 'town' (five items related to structural aspects and public recreation) has remained about the same. The quantitative results generally support the final component of the model whereby in-town recreation supply increases while backcountry recreation increases. Table 1, presents the results of cluster analysis on one of the four measures contained within the questionnaire. Table 1 presents the sub-scale means for each of the clusters, the composite mean for each cluster, a cluster label and the results of the Scheffe test. The scale for Q8 was a six point scale with the final scale item of 'don't know' recoded as missing therefore it is based on a five point scale whereby 1 has increased greatly 3 is has not changed and 5 is has decreased greatly. An ANOVA was conducted to determine if there were differences among the means of the clusters which yielded a p-value of .000 for each of the subscale items. A post hoc analysis of a Scheffe Test was conducted to determine which clusters are significantly different from which and in what direction. Numerous significant tests ( $p=.05$ ) were reported with the direction of difference indicated by the arrow. Additionally Classification Results(a) test reported that 97.2% of the originally grouped cases were classified correctly.

Table 1 results indicate that that overall some factor components are perceived to be increasing and others are perceived to be decreasing for example if a cut off point of 2.5 within the scale is adopted whereby that which is less than 2.5 is perceived to be increasing and that which is over 2.5 is perceived to be decreasing than overall respondents report that 'crowding' and 'urbane' components are perceived to be increasing while 'town' has generally remained the same and 'outdoor', 'backcountry' and 'urban' (only one item) have all decreased. Also, that the five clusters are different however some basic patterns emerge. With respect to the 'crowding' subscale, cluster 1 (nothing is different) is different from the others. Cluster 2 (crowded out) generally differs from the others with respect to the 'urbane', 'outdoor', 'backcountry' and 'urban' subscales. Overall, cluster 2 (crowded out, N=65) is different from others with respect to perception of change in the Bow Valley. In general, the exploratory findings support the assertion that change is occurring the direction of increased crowding and urban-type recreation amenities and opportunities with a perceived decrease in backcountry-type recreation amenities and opportunities.

The proposed model of Negotiated Leisure within Amenity Migration is intended to provide insight into the leisure based human-environment negotiated relationship within a high recreation amenity destination. The model is based on empirical findings within a Grounded Theory approach and conceptually supported by previous research.

**Table 1**  
Summary of Cluster Analysis for Q8, Perception of Change

Clu 1 and Mean	Clu 2 and Mean	Clu 3 and Mean	Clu 4 and Mean	Clu 5 and Mean	Total and Mean	Scheffe Test Results (p=.05)
Crowding 2.00	Crowding 1.23	Crowding 1.60	Crowding 1.38	Crowding 1.41	Crowding 1.55	(1<2,1<3,1>4,1>5) (2<1) (3<1) (4<1) (5<1)
Urbane 2.28	Urbane 1.36	Urbane 2.07	Urbane 1.76	Urbane 1.81	Urbane 1.85	(1>2,1>4,1>5) (2<1,2<3,2<4,2<5) (3>1) (4<1,4>2) (5<1,2>2)
Town 3.06	Town 1.75	Town 3.83	Town 2.23	Town 2.47	Town 2.50	(1>2,1<3,1>4,1>5) (2<1,2<3,2<4,2<5) (3>1,3>2,3>4,3>5) (4<1,4>2,4<3) (5<1,5>2,5<3)
Outdoor 2.91	Outdoor 2.09	Outdoor 2.86	Outdoor 2.80	Outdoor 2.86	Outdoor 2.68	(1.2) (2<1,2<3,2<4,2<5) (3>3) (4>2) (5>2)
Backcountry 2.97	Backcountry 2.31	Backcountry 3.23	Backcountry 3.10	Backcountry 3.25	Backcountry 2.90	(1>2) (2>1,2<3,2<4,2<5) (3>2) (4>2) (5>2)
Urban 2.68	Urban 1.80	Urban 4.44	Urban 2.43	Urban 4.21	Urban 2.72	(1>2,1<3,1<5) (2<1,2<3,2<4,2<5) (3>1,3>2,3>4) (4>2,4<3,4<5)
Nothing is Different	Crowded Out	Everything is Different	Mountain Types	Lost their Outdoor Rec		

### Theoretical and Applied Contributions

Firstly, this model has added to the understanding to the phenomenon of amenity-led migration by providing insight into the relationship between amenity migrants and the broader physical, social and structural environment from the perspective of leisure negotiation. Secondly, the model provides an empirically based framework for understanding physical changes within the destination driven by a recreation orientation. Practically the model provides managers (and residents) of such environments with a tool to conceptually map potential changes to the community based on current recreation and social patterns. There is ample opportunity to add to

the proposed with refinements, it is at its infancy. However, it provides an empirical basis of understanding of how these communities change and the basic human processes that drive such change.

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