

A Tourist Directed Simulation: Chemainus, B.C.

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THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department
of
Communication.

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

December 1994

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is about resource-based communities that have found new economic life in the form of tourism. The role of image as a basis for economic activity is a fundamental concept in this thesis. The recognition that images are the basis for economic activities in tourist-directed communities leads to the notion that tourist-directed communities are necessarily image-based: touristic communities must disseminate images that attract attention and prompt visits.

A significant difference exists between traditional resource-based communities that may have a popular image and tourist-directed communities that must be image-based, although they also may have a strong resource base. As we analyse this difference we find that existing community and regional studies are able to provide a selection of positivistic approaches for analysing resource-bases. On the other hand, these fields provide very little in the way of developing our understanding of the role of image. This thesis addresses this inadequacy by turning to communication studies, cultural studies and post-modern geographies.

Reviewing the literature has led to identifying concepts such as myth, simulation, hyperreality, time-space compression and sense of place. Each of these concepts is explored in the context of tourist-directed places and the concept of a tourist-directed place is developed in this thesis. These concepts and strategies are evaluated in a

case study of Chemainus, British Columbia.

As evaluated in this Chemainus study, concepts of mythification, simulation, hyperreality, time-space compression and sense of place provided significant insight into the character of this tourist-directed community.

A vital concern that has emerged from this work is the value of experience in the hyperreal world of simulation and the sustainability of a sense of place that would emerge from such experience. Concluding arguments address the experience of hyperreality and the impossibility of establishing a persistent sense of place based on such a non-pressing reality.

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PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

The tourist town differs significantly from the traditional resource-based town. Tourist-directed places do not simply rely upon their resource-base but must also establish an image-base. The physical situation of a tourist community does not by itself provide the basis for the economic activity. With tourist-directed communities image becomes the foundation of the community's reputation. A tourist-directed community's reputation must be able to attract visitors or else the touristic economic activity collapses. Therefore we can say that tourist-directed communities are image-based.

Perusing the literature on tourist communities from the existing fields of urban and regional studies, tourism and resource management, and urban geography quickly provides us with an array of concepts and approaches that can gain us insight into the workings of the physical infrastructure, economic processes and role of resources. But, when it comes to the role of image these disparate fields all come up short. This thesis attempts to complement these established fields of inquiry by surveying, identifying, and evaluating germinal approaches that show promise for expanding our understanding of the role of image. Approaches from communication studies, cultural studies and the generic body

of theoretical thought intimated by the term postmodernism will be explored. The role of image, the media and of local boosters are paramount and will remain a focus of this analysis.

From the literature review the following conceptual frameworks were identified for their promise to provide specific insight and for the promise they held collectively for providing a systemic understanding of image-based aspects of the tourist-directed community: mythification, simulation, hyperreality, time-space compression and sense of place.

The conception of myth advanced by Roland Barthes (1972) has proven itself most useful in our discussions of the way that tourist-directed communities construct images of themselves: images that eventually become an integral component of their economic base; images that are not necessarily connected to an external environmental or social reality. In this final instance, where the image of a tourist-directed place is no longer connected to an antecedent reality, the work of Jean Baudrillard (1983) becomes relevant. Baudrillard has contributed to our understanding of tourist places that have mythified themselves beyond referential reality and into the world of simulation.

As we contemplate the antecedent conditions that have set the stage for this simulation we must consider contemporary capitalist society especially the so-called "post-industrial society." David Harvey's (1989) concept of

time-space compression is designed to enable us to explain the mechanics and roles of the media and advanced technological environments in bringing all places and all times together at a convergent point. Joshua Meyrowitz (1985) describes the convergence that Harvey points towards as having "no sense of place." In the context of this thesis we can add to Meyrowitz's observation "and no sense of time." Reality is blurred through time-space compression.

Once distinctions and references are obscured and lost, we find ourselves in the world of simulation. Reality is supplanted by the hyperreal. Both Jean Baudrillard (1983) and Umberto Eco (1986) have discussed and popularized the notion that hyperreality and simulation have become the everyday experience of the "post-industrial" or postmodern being. Albert Borgmann (1992) directs our attention to one fundamental problem of living in hyperreality. Borgmann explains the central issue is that we can enter into and leave hyperreality effortlessly. Borgmann observes that unlike paramount reality (the reality we would commonly understand as real and inescapable) hyperreality is not "pressing." Such a world does not provide for lasting and meaningful experience, beliefs, or sense of place. The pliability of the simulacra provides us with few persistent and pressing aspects of reality upon which we can establish value and faith. Significance remains tenuous and temporary eventually slipping away as quickly as we slip into, and out

of, our hyperreal environments. Borgmann's point is critical as we focus on the lasting value of simulated experiences.

One objective of this thesis is the recognition that in the post-industrial era many traditional resource-based models and approaches cannot adequately explain the economic workings of communities. Throughout North America a common response to dwindling resources and deindustrialization has been the shift from resource-based activities to service sector activities particularly tourism. One factor that permits this shift is the pliability of tourism. Tourism is tied less to the rigid, physical, resource base of the community and is more strongly tied to the images that the community can generate and disseminate. Such a shift (from physical resources to image) entails the need for new models of analysis. This thesis illustrates that there are alternative methods that can be employed to properly understand and appreciate the tourist-directed place.

The usefulness of an image-based approach is examined through a case study of Chemainus, British Columbia. Chemainus has been chosen for a number of reasons including the fact that this community is a blatant example of a tourist directed landscape. As well, the author of this thesis has first-hand knowledge of this community before and after this community's metamorphosis from a predominantly resource-based community to a hybrid resource/tourism based community.

At Chemainus a new heritage industry has been developed and the resource that feeds this industry is the imagination of heritage promoters and developers. The aims of their efforts is the attraction and satisfaction of a day-tripping public. Heritage development at Chemainus bears little resemblance to anything from the town's past. Chemainus now has a heritage that was not part of the town's own past. Chemainus now is, what it never was, a historical simulation.

Heritage, rather heritage simulation, has become the basis for popular images of Chemainus. Through repeated representations in promotional literature and coverage by travel writers, Chemainus has become known as "The Little Town That Did." Now the widely held understanding is that Chemainus was rescued from imminent collapse by the mural painters, tourist promoters, and the new heritage industry they created.

This thesis illustrates the need and value of complementing traditional positivist models with concepts that can identify and articulate the role of image in tourist-directed communities, that is myth, simulations, hyperreality, time-space compression and sense of place. This thesis also suggests the sustainability of a sense of place predicated upon the simulation of a tourist-directed community is a key concern. Elaboration and application of Borgmann's conception of hyperreality leads us to suspect that a persistent and deep sense of place will not evolve from a simulated place such as touristic Chemainus. Constant

innovation and an imperative of change will thwart opportunities to establish long-term stable traditions. There will be little pressing reality to experience in the tourist-directed simulation and experience will remain as shallow as the town's many facades.

CHAPTER I

MYTHS, PLACES, SIMULATIONS, AND THE TOURISTIC IMPULSE:

A THEORETICAL REVIEW

In *Mythologies*, Barthes (1972) draws our attention to the role of myth as that of making knowledge that is historical appear as natural. Myth works to hide the historical circumstances of the production of meaning.

Mythification of Place

Myth colonizes place. Colonization has been for the last few centuries one vehicle of domination. As such, colonization has been based upon the notion of erasing the oppressed people's claim to their own sense of history and substituting in its place the myths of the colonizers, often myths which have been imbued with a strong sense of naturalism. The colonizer's history and imaginary geography are portrayed as natural and become the basis for erasing the colonized's history and imagined geography.

When mythification is at play in the colonization of place it is the history of a specific place or locality that myth typically engages. Barthes (1972) has shown the role that myth plays in bringing history into the service of a particular ideology. The physical features and meanings of places can be brought into the service of particular ideological programmes through myth.

Nowhere is this mythification more apparent than in the realm of touristic places. In these cases myths are constructed that become widely held definitions, or understandings, of a specific place. One example is Peggy's Cove, the quintessential maritime village, so the myth goes. But in reality Peggy's Cove enjoyed little or no attention until local tourist boosters decided to promote this small village's *maritimicity*. As Ian McKay (1988) aptly declares, "Peggy's Cove: The Invention of a Fishing Village."

At a time of severe economic and social crisis local cultural producers turned inward to celebrate the distinctive difference, or *other* of the maritimes. They focused on the rugged, sterile coastal region, keeping abreast of the emerging emphasis on "nature" and the "primitive" in international tourism trends. McKay points out that it was only after the brutal collapse of the industrial base in the 1920s that the earlier held idiom of progress began to recede to be replaced with the backward looking ideal of *maritimicity* -- essentially rural, traditional, and conservative. This was accompanied by the new mythical history of the 1920s and 1930s that celebrated isolated outports, fisherfolk, and the age of sail; all part of the emerging regional identity found in the distant, pre-industrial, and ossified past. A past, before industrialization, is conceived as: classless, romantically primitive, pastoral and utopian -- without the evils of industrialism and urbanism. The acceptance and promotion of

this mythic history has come as no surprise. At the time of economic collapse and severe depression the future would certainly be far less certain and comforting than the past. The past was certain and through myth it could be controlled to provide both the comfort and stability that neither the present nor the future could promise.

The mythical representation of the Maritimes takes over and suppresses the contemporary actuality of everyday life. Myth colonizes both the present and any other retrievals from the past which would tear at the fine fabric of the carefully woven veil. McKay reminds us that:

Given the pervasive power of this re-reading of history, across a wide cultural spectrum, it takes a real effort of will to remember that it, no less than its progressive antecedent, was a highly selective construct.

He explains that after the First World War, Nova Scotian fishers were far outnumbered by their industrial counterparts, and only a small minority of Nova Scotians lived in isolated outports. McKay suggests that it would have been appropriate to have selected as "essential" Nova Scotian the militant coal-miners and to have found the claim for regional difference in their distinctive traditions, but to do so:

would not have been in keeping with the emphatically petit-bourgeois perspectives of most cultural producers. The generation of these powerful symbols represented the choices and decisions of those in a position to impose these meanings upon the population at large: and this meant, essentially, Halifax cultural producers and externally-based travel writers, working closely in

tandem with each other. There is nothing unusual about a middle-class response to social crisis which, rather than launching a critique of the system, takes refuge from class conflict in a kind of integral nationalism, and this seems to be the key to the flowering of regionalism in the 1920s.

Problems raised by the mythical treatment of the past include not only the colonization and oppression of all other readings from history, but as well, the present itself is left on very shaky ground. Only those elements of the present which fall into the particular mythical past can be recognized, enthusiastically embraced and enjoyed. The chosen idioms dominate. Mythical history operates against the proper historical, modernist teleology (one that conceives the present as distinctively "other" from the past and therefore does not preclude but promotes historical transformations, progressions). Mythical history reverses the modern telos with idioms and identities being retrieved from the past and ossified as true, ideal and preferred. There need be no break with the past, in this mode, repetition is of the essence. The contingent relationship of the present to the past is obscured and confused.

According to Wright (1985, p.178), "As an essence that is embodied in such ceremonies the nation is immutable -- either it finds its witness in the present or it is lost and betrayed." Everyday contemporary life is factored out in the service of the myth of the Golden-Age. Without access to the realities of everyday contemporary life our opportunity to develop a deep sense of place is denied. When everyday

life is dominated by images in the service of myth it is impossible to develop a sense of place based in the practice of the everyday -- the quotidian.

Sense of Place and Time-Space Compression

David Harvey (1989) has noted that time-space compression always "exacts its toll on our capacity to grapple with the realities unfolding around us." Time-space compression is conceived as the convergence of different places in time and space. Media representation is the most widely available vehicle for time-space compression. According to Joshua Meyrowitz (1985) the impact of electronic media is that we now find ourselves in a world with "no sense of place." Through electronic media in forms from telegraph to telephone and from radio to satellite television the distances of our world have been effectively erased. Time has also undergone a conceptual reworking as the storage and retrieval of information have undergone radical change. Through media such as cinema and television we have gained access to representation of both the past and the future. These realistic representations are congruent with our present day expectations and understandings.

The separation of time and space is problematic. There is always an investment of time as we endeavor to overcome space. That invested time may take the form of travel-time, or time invested in the development of an increasingly efficient system of distribution. According to Harvey (1989)

a discernible system for marking and recording our temporal and spatial experience is a necessary condition for the development of a sense of place. When the distinctions of time and space are blurred to the point that we can no longer mark or record our experiences we lose our capacity to develop our sense of place.

Harvey uses the term time-space compression to describe the annihilation of space through time, a process that is sometimes referred to as the "shrinking" of the world. Harvey (1989, p.240) explains that the history of capitalism has been,

characterized by speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming the spatial barriers that the world sometimes seems to collapse inwards upon us... As space appears to shrink to a 'global village' of telecommunications and a 'spaceship earth' of global economic and ecological interdependencies... and as time horizons shorten to the point where the present is all there is (the world of the schizophrenic), so we have to learn to cope with an overwhelming sense of *compression* of our spatial and temporal worlds.

Locating ourselves along the compressed time-space continuum as described by Harvey is no easy feat. Yet, according to Bourdieu (1977) it is the symbolic ordering of space and time that provides us with the necessary framework to order the experience through which we learn who and what we are in society. He suggests that through the projection of our experience at every moment onto the time-space continuum common practice and representations are determined.

Jameson (1988) has used the term cognitive mapping to discuss his observations that each stage in the development of capitalism has brought about a new experience of place. Jameson argues that with each advancement of capitalism and the development of a specific technology there has been a distancing of the social. People have been increasingly removed from the economic system of production.

Trevor Walsh (1992) argues that as capitalism has advanced we have become increasingly distanced from both the social and the modes of production. Walsh argues that as a result we find it ever more difficult to locate ourselves in both time and space. Walsh (1992, p.151) notes that:

If placing oneself in time and space, and therefore gaining a sense of place, was difficult during the nineteenth century... then today, under the regime of multi-national capital, or 'late-capitalism, it must be virtually impossible. Even the nation-state has a limited existence in the truly global economy. It is the multi-nationals such as Ford and Unilever that call the shots in the post-modern world. People are refused the opportunity to place themselves into a definable time-space location.

Walsh explains that "places are constituted through the subjective recognition of 'time-marks'-- elements in the environment, both humanly and naturally constructed." He notes that these "time-marks" make time visible and people develop a sense of place through subjective engagement with these marks. According to Walsh (1992 p. 152),

throughout the period of (post-)modernity the power to control the timing of space, and therefore the manipulation of places, has been in the hands of a relatively small group of individuals and institutions.

The control of context that Walsh describes parallels our discussion of the myth process. As individuals we make things including place meaningful through a network of subjective filters. When we have little or no control of the context in which we make sense of the world, our ability to develop our own sense of place is curtailed. Instead of developing our own sense of place through the development of an understanding of place (through dwelling), institutionalized meanings are imposed onto space and we are given only the opportunity to produce artificial places or simulations. We are left with no sense of place.

Everyday Experience of the Simulacra

Increasingly the contemporary world is being described as simulacra, the result of the process of simulation. Jean Baudrillard (1983) has drawn our attention to the simulated nature of the post-industrialized world. Baudrillard describes simulation as serialized reproduction beyond the point where sight of the original referent is lost. The notion of simulation was also present in the work of Philip Dick (1962 and 1968) and the uncertainty that results from simulations is a constant theme in Dick's writing. In a short story Dick (quoted from Hebdidge, 1986/87, p. 69-70) reflects upon his own obsession with the simulacra.

Dick used to think a lot about simulation then. He could never forget the fact that he knew how to get from his apartment to Disneyland and that Disneyland was in some strange way the home of the

obsessions that drove him on to write. He used to worry a lot in those days about how to draw the line between reality and fiction, copies and originals, the authentic and the inauthentic.

The issue of originality draws the notion of certitude into our discussion. If we have no basis for declaring the certainty of the original than we must accept that all examples of a specific artifact are possibly copies, or when presented as originals are forgeries. Baudrillard makes the point that we are no longer required to make forgeries that claim to be authentic because the principle upon which authenticity lies, the principle of reality, has been undermined through the process of simulation. We have reached a point where all artifacts must always be accepted as copies, there can be no certitude over any claim of authenticity.

The simulated nature of our world is related to recent challenges to official history. Once history has been discredited it remains impossible to privilege any historical claim as the truth. Claims of authenticity are historical claims. It is the actual history in the item, the item's historicity that is at stake. The claim that this is the first one to have existed, all others are copies, is the basis of the claim of authenticity. Once we question history as a selective representation of the past with the entailments of necessary inclusions and exclusions of certain "facts" than we open the door to the generalized uncertainty that Baudrillard points towards as he describes simulations.

In his typical hyperbole Baudrillard dismisses the possibility that a properly modern history can be retrieved from the post-modern chaos wrought by hyperactivity in the regime of the sign. Society is consumed by the hyperactivity of the sign regime. Society can no longer sustain meta-narratives, truth claims defining reality, society or even history. Faced with generalized uncertainty Baudrillard (1990) does not judge the usurping of history by simulation. In his typical fashion, as a cool and detached observer, Baudrillard (1990, p. 16) explains that the point where history has ceased to be real

...may not even exist. It only exists if we can prove that previously there has actually been history -- which becomes impossible once this point has been traversed. Outside the realm of history, history itself can no longer reflect, nor even prove its own coherence. This is why we call upon every previous epoch, every way of life, all modes of self-historicizing and of narrating oneself with the support of proof and documentation (everything becomes documentary): we sense that in our era which is that at the end of history all of this is invalidated.

Tourist Simulations and Reified Signs

The tourist-directed landscape provides us with very clear illustrations of the simulated environment. As much as any built environment tourist-scapes must be imageable. The easiest means of acquiring and maintaining a strong image is to borrow existing images or idioms in order to take advantage of the efforts already invested in the popularizing of the borrowed images. By association, the symbolic

capital already invested in certain idioms is accessed. A quick survey of theme towns reveals the ways that these small communities have associated themselves through the process of theming with the symbolism already invested in their themes; themes that include: Western towns, European villages, the sea-side village, and fantasy escapes are commonly chosen for their quick recognition. These are all common tourist destination themes that have been repeated by several small touristic towns across the continent.

These familiar themes serve as examples of one way that small towns can be bigger than life in our imaginations. This study of Chemainus will present a more detailed study of the role of thematic association in the construction of a small town's image. Chemainus provides useful illustrations of the role and influence of major theme generators such as the Disney corporation and the motion picture industry.

When places are constructed through a myth system they become anything myth represents them to be. They become what Baudrillard (1983; 1990 p.10) has aptly described as simulacrum. They are a simulacrum precisely because myth separates the phenomenon from its own antecedent history. We can no longer be certain of the historicity of mythified phenomena, myth acts to supplant its subject's real history with a mythic history. Once we have accepted the mythic explanation we allow myth to stand as history. Myth is historical explanation without historical experience. There is no historicity in myth. Once emptied of history,

artifacts including the built environment can have new meanings attributed to them. In the case of tourist-directed places their new identities are often attributed through the themes associated with them as they are constructed as tourist destinations.

When places are mythified for tourism, such as in the case of Peggy's Cove, these places take on a life of their own. The images are circulated as if they are the accurate and authentic depictions of the essential historic nature of the place. This circulation of images can become quite frenzied in the quest for increased tourism dollars and through such presentations and representations a point is reached where little other than the serialized images are available for consumption. This is the point that observers such as Baudrillard and Eco have identified as the beginning of simulation marked by a loss of access to any referential reality. Once this occurs it is the images themselves which are taken to be the reality.

Baudrillard (1983, p.11) explains that once referential reality is lost we enter the age of simulation where the images become the equivalence of the real. According to Baudrillard (1983, p.146) in the age of the simulation reality is defined as

that of which it is possible to give an equivalent reproduction... At the limit of this process of reproducibility, the real is not only what can be reproduced, but that which is always already reproduced.

Once we enter the age of simulation there is little point to seeking out referential reality as it can not be distinguished any longer from the signs or images which are in panicked circulation. Umberto Eco (1986, p.7) has observed that in the situation described "the sign aims to be the thing, to abolish the distinction of the reference, the mechanism of replacement". Through such blurring we lose track of the fake and the original. Moreover, the distinction between fake and forgery is made irrelevant by the inevitable and unavoidable uncertainty. Baudrillard describes the process of simulation as a precession through which the distinction of things and the signs of things are ultimately blurred beyond distinction. In the age of simulations there can be nothing except more simulation.

Tourist-directed places are often simulations. These sites are known first and foremost through their image, and once they establish a reputation as an articulated idiom almost all future development and discourse must be congruent with the established idiom. Feedback in the form of media and audience acceptance ensures that only the chosen idiom is reproduced and distributed. The idiom with media credibility and audience acceptance dominates and gains legitimacy with each reiteration. The simulation reproduces itself as an endless serial.

Hyperreality of the Tourist-Scape

Umberto Eco (1986) discusses his "travels in hyperreality" that take him to the now obligatory postmodern stopover in California. California is the penultimate centre of simulation and hyperreal experience. California is largely responsible for the spread of our imagistic society. Hollywood and its motion picture industry is California. California is also home to Disneyland.

We often find ourselves in a state of anxiety and having to explain our existence. The outcome of the simulation process has been a great deal of uncertainty. The principle of reality has been undermined and in response to this uncertainty there is now a need to claim to be real.

The panic expressions of who and what we are goes beyond the individual and to include groups, communities, regions and even nations. Small towns, such as Chemainus, must also struggle to express who and what they are. With reality and truth claims in dispute any group that claims the ability to authentically define a specific social reality such as community identity is open to incessant challenge. Under these circumstances the claim of authenticity becomes a full-time activity.

Hyperactive representation of reality, necessary to create definitions that are persistent enough to be accepted as real, involves a great deal of effort. The products of this great effort, hyperreal simulations, are often over

produced. They have characteristics and features that are hyperactive. Features are often exaggerated and frequently display an imbalance or awkwardness. The features might be too bright, too colourful, too sensuous or just too perfect to be believable. The pushing of certain characteristics until they surpass reality has been referred to by Albert Borgmann (1992) as richness. Richness reinforces the truth claim of any simulation by drawing our attention to the characteristics that we would expect to experience.

Borgmann also describes hyperreality as brilliant. Hyperreality is brilliant in that it dominates our senses and allows virtually no opportunity for distraction by noise. In this instance noise can be conceived as any phenomenon that would demand the attention of our senses and would compete with the hyperreal phenomenon for our attention. Engagement in the hyperreal environment floods our senses thereby precluding our attention from wandering.

The simulation process results in serialization. Faced with this fact it becomes apparent that for any simulation to maintain a claim of uniqueness a great effort would be required. Through the great effort required to maintain their specious claims tourist-directed become hyperreal displays. In spite of their hyperactive display or spectacle the simulation process quickly undermines the uniqueness of the attraction. The tourist spectacle must increase the level of innovation to hyperactive innovativeness in order to generate the greater spectacle required to maintain the

vitality of the tourist-scape. As quickly as the innovation occurs it is again serialized through the simulation process.

All of this dynamic change occurs with little relation to historical or geographical antecedents of the tourist-scape. When the past of a locality is factored into a tourist-scape as would be the case with a heritage theme only limited features of the past are selected. Once selected these historical items are engaged by the myth system and begin an endless process of simulation. Through the process of simulation these items are separated from any actual history they once signified. These historical items once reified are nothing but vessels to transmit new and continuously revised messages.

Meditations on Place

There are places I remember all my life,
Though some have changed,
Some forever not for better,
Some have gone and some remain.

Place is a complex concept because it is not simply a thing, an objective reality. Place is, as Susanne Langer (1953) has put it, a "social thing." We do not just pass by places. To borrow a term from Levi-Strauss (1962) we do not value places because they are good to visit we value places because they are "good to think." Places are mental constructs based both upon a referent material reality outside of our head, and an image already in our head that we bring to this external reality. Therefore, we could say,

places are made *meaning-full*. Place, as a socially constructed concept, differs from the purely 3 dimensional Euclidean concept of space and, as well, the "geographical" concept of location or locality.

Geography, as a field of study, is interested in space as the "home of humanity" and this orientation entails not simply the study of space as a container but includes our social relationships to our spatial environment. Our making sense of the spatial environments that enclose us involves the ascribing of meanings to *space* to create *place*. Places are not just quantifiable abstractions, as space is, they are constructed through our thinking about them and living in them. According to Susanne Langer (1953):

a place...is a created thing, an ethnic domain made visible, tangible, sensible. As such it is, of course, an illusion. Like any other plastic symbol, it is primarily an illusion of self-contained, self-sufficient, perceptual space.

The Semiotic of Place

We can think of a place, then as the same kind of social-construct as *sign*. This correlation is illustrated by the following homology:

signifier / signified / sign
inscribed meaning / spatial entity / place

The relationship shown here between the sign (using de Saussure's theoretical representation) and place is presented as a potential method for engaging place. Places are

culturally significant and the meanings we ascribe to places are entailed by our cultural values or mythic frames. We can evaluate our mythic frames regarding places by considering what characteristics of places we value and what characteristics we negate. The coding of the terms of the sign have been given other expressions, such as those from Charles Sanders Peirce (quoted from MacCannell, 1975, p.109). Pierce notes that "A sign represents something to someone."

[represents / something / someone] sign

Dean MacCannell (1976), in The Tourist adapts this model to illustrate the construction of tourist attractions as:

[marker / site / tourist] attraction

By approaching "place" or regarding tourist attractions in this manner we engage these phenomena not solely as physical entities, but as physical entities which are always understood, or made meaningful, through social practice. Because we must consider social practice it is not enough to approach place as just an object. We must approach a place with the critical awareness of the mythic frames and cultural assumptions we already possess about the specific place. Our critical awareness ought to include an awareness of our myths and ideologies along with the intentions and interests of those with the ability to define communal meanings. Often, in the social-sciences, a logico-positivist approach is taken to the kinds of phenomena explored in this thesis. While

this particular approach has proven itself useful, the focus on the material nature of phenomena means that such work is always at a loss to explain the *meaning-full* side of things. A sign-approach or semiotic of place helps to integrate both the objective and subjective aspects of place.

Authenticity and Everyday Practice

Ted Relph (1976) suggested that being authentic in our relationship to place involved,

direct and genuine experience of the entire complex of the identity of places -- not mediated and distorted through a series of quite arbitrary social and intellectual fashions about how that experience should be, nor following stereotyped conventions.

Being authentic in our relationship to place involves being fully open to the place, engaging place, and allowing place to be. We must permit ourselves to develop strong, intimate, ties to place. It is through authentic practice such as that discussed by Relph that we begin to create authentic places.

Authentic places are not instant; designed in some remote studio and laid down in a matter of weeks by mass-produced construction techniques. Albeit, some instant developments may evoke sense of place for the few actually involved in their construction. More often, authentic places emerge over time and from day to day practice.

Yi Fu Tuan (1977) reminds us that we do not self-consciously create either authentic places or sense of place. Tuan terms the only authentic experience we can have with place rootedness. He explains rootedness as follows,

Being rooted in a place is a different kind of experience from having and cultivating a "sense of place." A truly rooted community may have shrines and monuments, but it is unlikely to have museums and societies for the preservation of the past. The effort to evoke a sense of place and of the past is often deliberate and conscious. To the extent that the effort is conscious it is the mind at work, and the mind -- if allowed its imperial sway -- will annul the past by making it all present knowledge.

J.B. Jackson and "Other-Directed Houses"

J. B. Jackson (1956), noted the "decay" and general degradation brought to the "American" landscape by development directed toward the automobile traveling public. Jackson was commenting on Bernard De Voto's condemnation of the emerging "longitudinal slum" which had sprang up along US Highway #1 through Maine. In *Harper's Magazine* (October, 1955), De Voto, in his column "The Easy Chair", described the longitudinal slum of Highway #1 as:

an intermittent eyesore of drive-ins, diners, souvenir stands, purulent amusement parks, cheap-jack restaurants and the kind of cabins my companion describes as mailboxes.

De Voto's condemnation by itself might not have been noteworthy, but it was not by itself. The "American Landscape" (Ian Nairn, 1965), had become "God's own junkyard" (Peter Blake, 1963) and Theodore Roszak (1972)

wondered "where the 'wasteland' ended." These types of accounts were drawing attention to the fact, that the American landscape, as seen from the car, was truly boring and not in the least exceptional or beautiful.

Not until Robert Venturi (1972) pointed out that there were lessons to be "learned from Las Vegas" did we start to look more carefully, and without so much disdain at roadside landscape. Donald Appleyard and Kevin Lynch (1963) provided an initial attempt to develop an understanding of the experience of the road and more specifically the experience of driving the road. From these germinal attempts to understand the experience of landscape we return to J.B. Jackson.

Jackson's (1955) essay redresses Bernard de Voto's observations and comments. Jackson's argument, that we attempt to understand the "longitudinal slum," rather than decry its existence, helps us come to a more comprehensive appreciation of the term landscape. Jackson directs us towards the view of the landscape from the road, a view of the landscape not simply as "blight," or as "blandscape" (a term used here to connote the leveled, mundane, character of the mass-produced and reproduced landscapes of, for example, strip-developments, malls and suburbs) but as a lived-in quotidian landscape of meaning, aspiration, and memory.

Jackson contemplates the redirection of landscape from resident to passer-by, an example being the roadside garage, store, or motel, with huge facade to catch the attention of

automobile drivers speeding by on the highway. He also brings to our attention some of the practice of living in an environment, a familiar environment. For example, the big facade was not needed to let your neighbors know the nature of your business (in small-towns everyone would be aware of this already, and without the billboard store front), but the big facade was vital in attracting the automobiling public as it sped by at fifty miles per hour. Jackson comments that while some individuals were decrying the roadside ugliness, the roadside development was often a pleasing and gratifying experience as it saluted, or greeted, the weary traveler.

Considering that Jackson was writing in 1955, sometime before others seriously considered the practice that gave rise to roadside development, helps us appreciate his insightfulness and prescription that when it comes to the human landscape we should spend less effort condemning and more effort trying to understand how and why the roadside strip development had come to be. Jackson (1955) encourages his readers to,

try to understand it and even develop a kind of love for it? We have not really tried to understand it yet [Venturi finally did try in 1972]. For one thing we know little about how the roadside development, the strip, came into being, nor about how it grows. We know (and seem to care) far too little about the variety of businesses which comprise it."

Jackson continues by encouraging us to look seriously at the roadside strip, the "other-directed" landscape. Jackson observed that establishments along the strip roughly fell

into one of two categories: "those establishments serving the working economy, and those serving our leisure." He continues:

In the first would naturally fall all the factories, warehouses, truck depots, service stations, used car-lots, shopping centres and so on -- the roll call is endless; in the second would be restaurants, cafes, night-clubs, amusement parks, drive-in movies, souvenir stands, motels -- for motels are primarily associated with vacation travel and with leisure; in brief all those enterprises which Mr. De Voto listed and denounced, and then some. What is more, these two classes -- the workaday and the leisure -- should be of almost equal value, though kept well apart, at least when we were considering which businesses would be allowed along the highway outside of built up areas.

Much of what Jackson elaborates here has become less relevant or applicable as things have changed over the last thirty-five years. For example, it has become increasingly more difficult to maintain the separation of "work" and "leisure." As well, much work is required in provisioning for leisure services. Also, the highway itself has been largely replaced by the limited access freeway. Air-travel has reduced the importance of the "road," in some instances erasing the trip itself from our minds. Finally, the categorization that Jackson uses would no doubt require more than just a "fine tune." For example it would be difficult to argue that the "shopping centre" which is now a mall should be on the work side of his equation and not a centre for leisure.

Jackson perceives the role of leisure time and driving for pleasure as agents of landscape change most pronounced by the roadside strip development. He counsels us to set aside our judgments based upon categories of "high" culture and to respect the popular nature of this landscape which he describes as "a kind of folk art in mid-twentieth century garb." Jackson continues to consider the motive of those who have created such a landscape as "a desire to please and attract the passer-by." In his words the result is,

an other-directed architecture, and the only possible criterion of success is whether or not it is liked; the consumer, not the artist or the critic, is the final court of appeal.

The other-directed landscape that Jackson is describing has become common place as we approach the end of the century. The retail/service strips are no longer such a threat as most have been wiped out by suburban centres, malls, and mega-malls. At the same time the underlying motive of many small-town enterprises has changed little, there are still rewards to be won if you can direct your landscape to attracting the leisured passer-by -- today, the tourist.

Towards Tourist-Directed Places

Inspired by Jackson's concept of other-directed architecture we will develop and explore the concept of a tourist-directed landscape. Tourist-directed landscapes of the late twentieth century are landscapes directed toward attracting and serving the tourist. The vitality of these

landscapes ride on their ability to evoke an image and atmosphere which might best be described as extraordinary, mythical, magical, or phantasmagorical. Tourists do not want to appear interested in the familiar, although many are not in the least interested in extreme difference either. It seems we want the illusion of the exotic or "other."

Jackson provides us with a succinct statement regarding the uncommonality of "other-directed" places. He argues that to succeed the roadside establishment cannot rely solely upon eye-appeal. He notes that all retail establishments have good sense when it comes to an appealing presentation. When it comes to highway leisure time enterprise, a special attractiveness must be offered, that being the attractiveness of pleasure and good times. Jackson notes that attractiveness and the offer of good value by itself would not likely be adequate for success, but what is, is a sense of escape from the everyday (Jackson, 1956, p.62-63):

What there has to be is an absence of any hint of the workaday world which presumably is being left behind: any hint of the domestic, the institutional, the severely practical, the economical; any hint of the common or plain. On the contrary, what is essential, both inside and out, is an atmosphere of luxury, gaiety, of the unusual and unreal. Imitation is quite as good as the genuine thing if the effect is convincing and the customer is happy."

Little has changed, it is still illusion that matters. Satisfaction is not based so much upon authentic experience as it is upon the feeling that the effect of the experience is "as good as" the effect would be in the presence of the

authentic. Of course without experience or presence of the authentic thing itself who is to say if the experience is worse, or for that matter better. Indeed, there is great difficulty defining what ultimately constitutes an authentic experience. Eric Cohen (1979 and 1988), has explored the issue of authenticity in the context of tourism and suggests that authenticity ought to be evaluated as a continuum or range of "authenticity" tied to the expectations and aspirations of the tourist themselves. Cohen implies that authentic experience is that experience which is believed by the consumer to be authentic. In terms of tourist experience Cohen argues that authenticity should not be conceived as an external objectively determined category.

For Jackson, the vitality of other-directed architecture which was spreading out along the highways was its ability to "create a dream environment." Jackson noted that this new dream environment differed significantly from that dream environment of an earlier generation that was based on the aping everyday and ceremonial activities of a leisure class - - a superior social group. For a critique of the dream environment of consumer culture we can turn to Benjamin's (1986) description of the Arcades of Paris, as utopian, worlds in miniature, where art is brought into the service of commerce in the display of goods. Benjamin quotes Balzac: "The great poem of display chants its many-colored strophes from the Madeleine to the Porte-Saint-Denis." Referring to the dream-world aspects of these consumer environs, Benjamin

comments:

These images are wishful fantasies... these wish-fulfilling images manifest an emphatic striving for dissociation with the outmoded -- which means, however, with the most recent past. These tendencies direct the visual imagination, which has been activated by the new, back to the primeval past. In the dream in which, before the eyes of each epoch, that which is to follow appears in images, the latter appears wedded to elements from prehistory, that is, of a classless society. Intimations of this, deposited in the unconscious of the collective, mingle with the new to produce the utopia that has left its traces in thousands of configurations of life, from permanent buildings to fleeting fashions.

In the context of Benjamin's remarks we can understand the one function which the "consumer-scape" of the arcades share with modern "tourist-scape" is the role these places have performed in carrying our imaginations away from the everyday. We enter the dreamworlds of these fantasies where elements from our imagined futures are mingled with those of the prelapsarian past (before our fall to capital, industrial alienation and the development of a class society) to find faith in an utopian future. The images at Chemainus and the role of maritimicity in the construction of Peggy's Cove both serve to illustrate this process.

This transcendence of class through tourism is also found in the tourist-resort, popular at the turn of the century. Rob Shields (1991) approaches Brighton, England, by considering it in terms of the carnivalesque inversion theorized by Bakhtin. Shields notes that:

carnival forms 'offered a completely different, non official... extra political aspect of the world, of man, and of human relations; they built a second world and a second life outside of officialdom (Bakhtin, 1984, p.5-6).' in which all participants were reduced to the lowest common denominator of participants.

In this way the resort town provided a necessary time-out, not only from the rigours and routine of industrial work and the confines of the city, but as well, from the constraints of class which had become clearly defined by the modes of industrial production. Sites of escape in western Canada included resort places like Banff, Harrison Hotsprings and Qualicum Beach come to mind, and the consumer palace suggested by the classical architecture of urban Hudson Bay stores in Victoria, Vancouver and Calgary. In all cases, the escape is into another time when the social class of the tourist would preclude them from the practice they now engage in or seek out.

By the post-war period class imitation had lost its appeal. Perhaps this resulted from the fact that the pre-war Depression had simply undermined much of the wealth of the "upper" class, and perhaps it resulted from the increase in wealth that a large share of the population experienced in the post-war years: particularly the increase in discretionary earnings available to wage earners along with an increase in leisure time. In fact, Jackson suggests that during the post-war period, wage earners acquired more leisure time than either the managerial or executive class. Obviously class distinctions especially in terms of

recreational opportunities were less clear after World War II.

As the appeal of the world of a superior social class dwindled it was supplanted by a desire for a world remote in terms of space. The "vacationland" became one of distant and exotic places. Jackson notes that names like the Astor, the Ritz and the Ambassador drop out of the popular world to be replaced by the Casa Manana, Bali, Sirocco, and the Shangri-La. Over time, the form that the touristic escape has taken has had many faces. The ones depicted here only track the change from the pre-war to the post-war. In subsequent decades of the sixties, the seventies, the eighties and the nineties other idioms have prevailed: futurama or populux of the late fifties and early sixties; back to the earth and frontierism of the late sixties and seventies; and from the eighties through to the present a multiplicity of spatial and historical codes that have so far resisted ossification into the appearance of a clearly articulated thematic. The last stage noted here from the nineteen-eighties through the present is intimated by the term "post-modernism" and has many characteristics including the plurality of codes, and fragmented narratives, alluded to here. Disneyland[s], EPCOT, and other multi-thematic environments come to mind as we contemplate this latter stage of touristic expression.

Making Sense -- the Role of Myth

Myth's role is to make sense out of the disorganized matter and practice of everyday life. In order to be plausible, myth must create a consistent narrative and in doing this, all contradictions are either dismissed or ignored. The contemporary practice of deconstruction essentially involves the reintroduction of this contradictory material, and/or practice, back into the narrative enframed by myth. By doing so, the deconstruction opens myth up to critique. Through this approach, alternative readings are again possible.

The story of myth, as Barthes (1972) explained, is about power and the social relations of power. When we explore the mythification of tourist-directed development, we also explore the relationships of power that have given rise to the particular tourist-directed landscape. This exploration includes an analysis of the role of media and how certain individuals gain access to the sense-making vehicle of the media. When analyzing the role of the media in the construction of myths about a specific place it is necessary to consider how certain individuals or groups have been able to create narratives to explain the tourist-directed development. This includes the role of the built environment including influences which shape and continue to shape the physical plant upon which the tourism is based.

Semiotics, which entails the approach of deconstruction, has something to offer to the analysis of the way myth has been put into the service of those with power at Chemainus. By critically analyzing the myth of the "little town that did," certain stories which have been reified (so that they are accepted as natural) will be revealed for what they are - - socially constructed myths.

In passing from history to nature, myth acts economically: it abolishes the complexity of human acts, it gives them the simplicity of essences, it does away with all dialectics, with any going back beyond what is immediately visible, it organizes a world which is without contradictions because it is without depth, a world wide open and wallowing in the evident, it establishes a blissful clarity: things appear to mean something by themselves.

In this quotation Barthes (1972 p.143) argues that myth acts to present the world (our socially constructed understanding of the world) as coming from nature without history. Myth effaces all of the historical past along with the dialectics of a multitude of experiences and replaces it with an explanation which is itself a smooth, seamless, narrative from author[s] since forgotten. Myth is reified belief, and as Adorno (quoted from Wolin, 1989) once reminded Benjamin, "all reification is forgetting." According to Barthes (1972), "myth has the task of giving historical intention a natural justification".

Disney's Main Street can be used to illustrate the way mythic history proceeds. Main Street, USA, is not a compendium of American main streets, nor even a copy of any one actual Main Street, which of course would not be

naturally occurring but would reflect the political and economic desires of individuals with enough power to control development. Rather, Disney's Main Street is a constructed, private, streetcape within an amusement park, the creation of Walt Disney and a team of designers. As Richard Fracaviglia (1977, p.20) explains, the Main Street at Disneyland bears little resemblance to that of Marceline, Missouri, where Disney grew up:

When Walt Disney and his artists reproduced Marceline, however, they took many liberties with the landscape. Marceline's unpaved thoroughfare ran straight as an arrow in Disney's day (1905-15). It was rutted and rilled and horse-manure helped turn it into a soupy quagmire in wet weather. The public square, really a railroad park, was simply a block that lay between the town's main road and the unpretentious railroad station. Buildings that fronted the street had standard small-town, Victorian storefronts, and their sides were used for advertising. There was little to soften the impact of this landscape. Gaunt telephone poles with many cross arms, rather than trees, bordered the sidewalks.

This main street of Marceline was Disney's favourite referent for Disneyland's Main Street. Even so, Main Street, USA, has become a myth and through the widespread repetition of its image through media, including Disney's own television product, *The Wonderful World of Disney*, Main Street, USA has become the archetypal main street in our collective memory. More significant is the fact that Main Street architecture is now being reproduced as main-stream architecture from the revitalization of small-towns and urban cores to suburban

tract and mall development across North America and beyond. Disney's Main Street, USA, has become what it never was.

The spread of Disney's idiom is best understood as a continuation of the social forces which have contributed to the success of the Disneyland theme park itself. Walt Disney was concise about his aspiration for the park. He summed it up: "I don't want the public to see the world they live in while they're in Disneyland. I want them to feel they're in another world." Why not this world? Perhaps because it is not quite as tidy as Disneyland has been made to appear. When you go to Disneyland you leave behind the everyday world of work, obligation and responsibility, of deadline and dateline and death, of mortality and of morbidity. There is no mess at Disneyland, life is not difficult and it is nothing but fun.

Solomon (1988) has observed we are more likely to loosen our purse strings when we are on a vacation, or in an imaginary vacation space, such as the Old Orchard Mall in Skokie, Illinois:

To stroll the walkways of such a mall is to feel that one is on vacation, which is a very effective stimulus to spending money, because spending money on vacation seems different from spending money while merely shopping. Vacation dollars don't just buy *things*, they buy *souvenirs*. It's simply a lot easier to part with your money while on a holiday than when running errands...

Marshall Berman (1982) has argued that being modern means that we have found ourselves in a world of constant ever changing conditions. This maelstrom has made it

increasingly difficult, perhaps impossible, to make sense of it all. Modernity has meant that most of us in the industrialized world live a life which is remote from most of the experiences entailed by the modern world. We are distanced from the harsher realities of production by the market. We are distanced from most war and political unrest by the media. While we are presented by an image to signify the struggle, we are saved from all of the harshness entailed by the situation. The remoteness of our highly mediated world has resulted in providing us very little access to full experiences of the processes that affect our lives. With such limited access to experience we are left struggling to make sense out of fragments of information or as is more likely the case a flood of incoherent and paradoxical explanations.

One response to the inapprehensible world is to retreat into the past, where all things already make sense. Myth has already made sense of the past, the narratives of history have already done the job. There is another possible retreat, that is into nature. We imagine that we have tamed nature through technology. Like the past, nature is also readily available to myth. The realm that is problematic for myth to manage is the future, it is too much like the present -- provisional and unpredictable.

So we don't bother with the present. In fact we don't bother much with the historical past either. That would mean we would have to deal with the same complexities that make

everyday life in the present difficult. Life in the past, too, was difficult. Through myth we have been able to capture the past, not as a historical past, but as nostalgia. Nostalgic past and the historical past are fundamentally different concepts. Nostalgia always involves selective memory lapse; nostalgia is mythic past -- reified past.

Scientifically, history should entail as comprehensive a knowledge as possible, and where a historical narrative has been ignored, or certain conditions have been missed, it is the responsibility of the historian to revisit and retrieve those lost memories. Nostalgia on the other hand has imperfect memory. There is little to retrieve because nostalgia lacks historical experience. Nostalgia is history imagined from the present and includes only those memories which myth selects from history to serve its particular narrative. Nostalgia's challenge to history comes not so much from the present, but from a nostalgic past mythified through the present. Nostalgic memory is mythic and only recognizes the past that can be placed in its servitude.

Jameson (1984) expresses reservations about the use of the term nostalgia because of the way the term is understood within a "properly modernist" aesthetic: he utilizes it in a discussion of the "nostalgic film." Jameson observes the way that the nostalgic film doesn't deny certain history, or antecedent film referents; rather, the nostalgic film picks up the earlier works and recognizes our awareness of their

pre-existence as an essential and constituent element of the nostalgic piece. This ironic use of the past has also been related by Charles Jencks as he discusses Umberto Eco's quote of Barbara Cartland. Eco explains:

I think of the postmodern attitude as that of a man who loves a very cultivated woman and knows he cannot say to her "I love you madly", because he knows that she knows (and that she knows that he knows) that these words have already been written by Barbara Cartland. Still, there is a solution. He can say, "As Barbara Cartland would put it, I love you madly".

Eco continues to explain that the postmodernism he describes here is one in which it is no longer possible to speak innocently. The *sui generis* of speech and other forms of expression have been lost. It is no longer realistic to expect authentic and original expression. Still this does not mean that nothing more can be said, it means that because everyone is aware that everything has already been said we will be expected to include the referent in what ever representations we express.

Disneyland, Chemainus, and other theme-town developments are nostalgic fantasies. They are not required to present authentic and original experience. They do not provide trips to the past as it was rather they represent the past of our dreams. As a result of this present perspective on the past, not as it was, but as we imagine it ought to have been, we lose track of the actual past. Post-structural critiques of a modernist history have already discredited historical representation and drawn our attention to the limitations of

historical retrieval. The absence of an official history permits the mythification of the past. Although the actual lived everyday experience or pressing reality of the past would logically contradict the idealized images of our nostalgic myth we no longer can legitimately claim access to any such retrievals.

Nostalgic Simulations

The colonization of the past through images constructed to be served up to tourists is a feature of modern tourism. The distinguishing characteristic of the nostalgic simulation (a term used here to denote the product of touristic mythification at play in tourist-directed heritage development such as Chemainus) is that the world of the past is presented in a way to detract from the present. Obviously any escape into this nostalgic world would be a welcomed break from the drudgery of our everyday world. The problem is that our imagined past has little or no referent in the actual past. It is simulation, a copy for which no referent exists. Disneyland, including Main Street, USA, is quintessential simulation and the simulacrum continues throughout Chemainus as well.

Making History with "Time-Marks"

Every act of recognition alters survivals from the past. Simply to appreciate or protect a relic, let alone embellish or imitate it, affects its form or our impressions. Just as selective recall skews memory and subjectivity shapes historical insight, so manipulating antiquities refashions their appearance and meaning. Interaction with a heritage continually alters its nature and context, whether by choice or by chance.

David Lowenthal (1985, p.263)

The past can be conceived as a place and as such is open to the process of being continually created and recreated through our engagement with it. We make the past "meaningful." Chemainus is no exception: the mural project, the nostalgic theme, festive activities and the built environment all function to shape our impression of the communal past. Certain events, and artifacts, are valued, others ignored. Selected perspectives on the past are present; other perspectives are absent -- never brought to our attention, and as a result, forgotten. Certain voices on the past are privileged while others are suppressed and abandoned.

Through history groups define themselves by selecting and interpreting specific events from the past. They construct a history that explains and reinforces their present situation. Such a history is fundamentally conservative in maintaining the *status-quo*. Indeed, the enterprise is crucial to social preservation. J. Pocock (1962, quoted by Lowenthal, 1985, p.214) explains:

Since all societies are organized... to ensure their own continuity', collective statements about the past help to conserve existing arrangements, and the diffusion of all manner of history, whether fact or fable, fosters the feeling of belonging to coherent, stable, and durable institutions.

Because history is a socio-political activity that reinforces existing stability, it is critically important to understand the means through which "history" is created. It is necessary to contemplate whose history is dominant, and the means through which one's history claims legitimacy over another's history. Regarding display for touristic consumption the role of the historical is crucial. The historical is the thematic upon which the tourist attraction is predicated -- actual history becomes an alibi. Once the built landscape conforms to a certain take on history, the landscape itself reinforces and legitimizes particular narratives over others. In this environment, the "reading" of the landscape itself becomes a critical activity.

How do we change the past? David Lowenthal has approached this question and offers a workable outline in response. Some of the practices Lowenthal identifies apply directly to Chemainus while his other categories anticipate change which is plausible with the town's metamorphosis. Lowenthal approaches the way we change the past by exploring categories of the way we treat relics which exude, or proclaim, their history. Lowenthal draws attention to the ways we treat these historical materials and practices differently. His categories include: identifying,

displaying, protecting, reconstituting, moving, readapting, re-enacting, and emulation. These categories are useful for understanding the construction of a heritage tourist-scape at Chemainus and will be considered here in detail.

Identifying: Valuing the past locates it on our mental map and lends it special status. Phenomena do not necessarily need to be sign posted, names themselves connote particular memories or shared meanings. For example "Heritage Square" suggests heritage and history.

Displaying: By identifying we begin to transform the visible traces of the past, so to with display. Firstly, we are stating the worth of an object by selecting it for display, regardless of how obtrusive our mode of display is. Once on display a particular relic of deemed historical significance is segregated from its "natural" and lived setting. It has been marked, set apart, for appreciation. Lighting, fencing off and "point of view" all serve this function of interpreting the experience of history for the visitor. Other display practices include: guidebooks, the location and orientation of "photo opportunities," along with the designation of the proper path or route to follow.

Protecting: Akin to display and identification is protection. We protect our "valuables." Ironically, protective measures often detract from the experience of phenomena. "No touching," articulates the worth and diminishes the scope of potential experiences to that of a detached observation.

Frequently the measures taken to keep the visitor out, or to protect a certain item from harm, greatly detracts from the thing itself. The *Saint Roche* is a good example. It was the first vessel, a RCMP vessel, to navigate the North-west passage. It is now deemed to be a National Historic site, and I suppose, monument. To protect this "ship" -- a word which evokes travel and the sea -- the *Saint Roche* has been given a home, inside, and on "dry land," quite incongruous with the context "ship." Nevertheless, these extraordinary measures were taken to "protect" this significant artifact.

Another example from Chemainus is the carved sign that once marked the turn-off to the town at the nearby Trans-Canada Highway. Today that sign has been moved into the local park and has been installed under a protective shelter. What was once a sign is now itself part of the attraction.

Reconstituting: Often the past is reconstituted in the name of restoration. It is common for relics that are not given special protection to weather and decay. In the case of Roman ruins in Britain, there is little that remains (except for the fortunate marker maintained by the local historical council). Occasionally, the desire to preserve is translated into a desire to recover what has been lost, or what will be lost without an urgent effort to save it. In these cases an effort at recovery and restoration is undertaken. Many of these efforts desire to recreate or reconstitute a relic to its previous grandeur -- as seen

through our contemporary eyes. Relics, because of their historicity -- history in them -- are more valuable to us than they were ever valued by their contemporaries. They have become more significant through time.

Moving: Relics can be moved in order to be preserved. Sometimes useful relics are salvaged and re-used rather than being disposed of. Today there are many relics which exist because they were salvaged from demolition to be used in a new context. Often old light and bath fixtures find a new home in a renovated older house. Sometimes old fixtures are used in new construction projects. In other instances dramatic and radical relocation occurs, such as the moving of London Bridge to Lake Havasu, Arizona. At Chemainus a large cedar stump has been moved into town and is now located on a dry hillside, amongst a small grove of second growth fir. This site would be too dry for cedar.

Readapting: Giving new uses to old relics especially buildings. This *quid pro quo*, conservation for use, has resulted in many buildings being saved from the wrecker's ball. Although it is impossible to recognize the older building, or the business activity that was once carried out there, The Little Inn on Willow is actually the former barber-shop -- the building is now in costume as a fantasy castle.

According to Lowenthal adding to relics also changes the past. He suggests the four ways of adding to relics are: duplication, re-enactment, copying and emulation.

Duplication seeks to produce a facsimile to the historical relic. While few facsimiles capture the original in every detail the aim of such an effort is imitation. Facsimiles take one of three major forms: copies which seek to replace lost or damaged originals; forgeries which seek to take the place of originals; and replicas which are reproductions of a well-known original and which acknowledge their debt to that original. An example of an attempt at duplication is the waterwheel in waterwheel park.

Re-enactment is the duplication of events. Persons play roles as past scenes are recreated, often involving "period" dress to enrich an historic or heritage scene. Such would be the case at "festivals" where visitors often seek to recreate a feel for a certain period or seasonal event.

Copies are similar to duplicates except they have more freedom of interpretation. They do not necessarily strictly adhere to the original, especially regarding materials and modes of production. Essentially, copies still resemble the original, and, therefore differ from emulations. The closest thing to copies at Chemainus are the murals themselves, each a copy of a photograph from the book, Water Over the Wheel.

Emulations are free readaptations of past originals, or, in some cases of a style or idiom, an approximation of the past. Emulations can involve the mixing of historic codes to create an historic amalgam. In some ways the whole tourist simulacrum at Chemainus falls into this category. There are

many examples of emulation at Chemainus, from the simulated Victoriana to the many quotations from Disneyland.

Each of these ways that involves a level of simulation changes the past, sometimes subtly, other times drastically. As the past changes so does our relationship to it and in turn our identification with it.

De-Signing a Theme-Scape

Lowenthal provides us with a framework for approaching "heritage." The development of a methodological approach that could enable the engagement of Lowenthal's categories, or the like, to reveal the ways that we create history in practice will prove useful in our approach to Chemainus. Dean MacCannell has discussed the symbolic nature of tourism and has presented the concept of attraction as sign. His semiotic of tourism is also vital to the study of Chemainus. MacCannell's socio-semiotic approach to tourist attractions includes the exploration of the social realm from which certain places obtain special significance. Integrating the work of MacCannell and Lowenthal permits an exploration of the image of the city including what the image means and where the image originates from.

Socio-semiotics are concerned with the role of significance and signs as they are negotiated socially. In this way, it departs from the early work in the study of the symbolic nature of space, such as that of Kevin Lynch, which mainly focused on the denotative, and grammatical

structuration of space and has ignored the connotative meaning of space -- the space we refer to as "place."

Roland Barthes (1972) observed and discussed the way myth appropriated existing signs and applied new significance to these. Myth is obviously at play in the realm of tourist directed landscapes and there are obvious examples of this from Chemainus, such as the appropriation of the post-war streetscape that was reworked into a stark, worthless derelict, which has been reworked again into a vital "sea-side Victorian" streetscape -- the result of heroic initiative and effort to save the little town from the brink of disaster.

Dean MacCannell's semiological approach to tourist attractions is useful because it provides us with a way of explaining the significant role played by the media in the creation of the tourist sign system at Chemainus. MacCannell's term "marker", which he discerns as being either on-site or off-site, provides a means of integrating Lowenthal's typology into the study of tourist-directed place. The different measures described by Lowenthal can all be conceived of as markers in the same sense that MacCannell uses this term. In terms of the role of media in the promotion and creation of tourist destinations MacCannell's term "off-site" marker is especially useful. It describes the activity of the media well.

The value of semiotics in the study of tourist-directed place should come as no surprise. Indeed, tourists themselves are practitioners of the field. In their most specifically touristic behaviour, tourists are the agents of semiotics: all over the world they are engaged in reading cities, landscapes and cultures as sign systems. It seems regrettable that the practice of being a tourist has been given such little serious study, but tourists generally are disdained by "serious academics," and even though we are all tourists at some time, we never seem to face up to it. We always believe we are different from the rest, especially the "mass" tourist. MacCannell (1976, p.4), after spending some time considering his subject, expressed this observation with surprise: "My colleagues were everywhere on the face of the earth, searching for peoples, practices and artifacts that we might record and relate to our own socio-cultural experience."

Chapter Summary: Comprehending the Tourist-Scape

So far, this thesis has introduced and outlined a number of concepts that will provide a basis for engaging and comprehending image-based, tourist-directed communities. These concepts include: myth, simulation, time-space compression, hyperreality, place, tourist-directedness, rootedness and sense of place.

Myth presents historical knowledge as natural. Mythic history or heritage seldom reveals its authors or their

agendas. Once a myth loses sight of its referent it becomes simulation. Time-space compression sets the stage for the world of simulation by erasing the basis upon which we mark our relationship to time and place.

Place is a critical concept because place is not the same as location, places are made meaningful through social practice and representation. We can say that places are image-based and as such must be understood through concepts and approaches that allow us to appreciate the role of image. One conception from this thesis that has much promise is the conception of tourist-directed places. Tourist-directedness owes much to J.B. Jackson's notion of other-directedness. Like other-directed architecture the vitality of tourist-directed places depends upon their ability to evoke images that attract others from outside the community who would not bother to visit if it were not for the town's image. The concepts developed throughout the first chapter have provided a basis for better understanding the role of image in tourist-directed places. These concepts will be applied and evaluated in the next two chapters as we approach a blatant example of a tourist-directed community: Chemainus, British Columbia.

PART TWO

CHEMAINUS, A CASE STUDY OF A TOURIST DIRECTED PLACE

CHAPTER II

THE LITTLE TOWN THAT DID -- THE REVITALIZATION OF CHEMAINUS

Chemainus is a small town on Vancouver Island. Located between Duncan and Nanaimo, about 75 kilometres north-west of Victoria, along the east coast of Vancouver Island at Chemainus Harbour -- previously known as Horseshoe Bay. Although the town is situated in the fertile valley of the Chemainus River farming has played only a minor role in the lives of the valley's residents. The community's major economic activity has been tied to the rich coastal forests nearby. Since the establishment of a community at this site by white settlers, Chemainus has been the site of a lumber mill. In fact, there was a saw-mill operating at Chemainus continuously from 1862 until 1982, the year Macmillan Bloedel closed its Number One mill.

Today, there is again a saw-mill at Chemainus, MacMillan Bloedel established the fifth mill to operate at this site in 1985, only two years after closing its "big-log" mill, which was the largest saw-mill in the world when it opened in 1924. The mill was still one of the largest when it was bought out by H. R. MacMillan in 1944. The new mill is not a "big log" mill, a term that describes the type of mill built earlier in this century when the size of the timber being hauled out of

the woods required brute machinery to manage the cut. The new mill is a fast, efficient and accurate, hi-tech mill. Although this mill is not able to handle the large logs (no longer a problem since few large trees remain), it can cut a variety of timber dimensions and quickly adjust to the particular log on the table in order to get maximum yield of knot-free product. The new mill can programme the cutting of timber to provide any dimensions for a wide range of customers.

The importance of Chemainus precedes white settlement. The area had been occupied and exploited for its natural resources by Salish people, who resided at this site and at neighbouring coastal locations since long before contact with Europeans. Today, there are still significant communities of Salish people (such as: Penelakut, Halalt, and Seclameen) neighbouring Chemainus, although much of the traditional lands have come under private, corporate, and Crown control.

From a contemporary point of view this is a very attractive area of Vancouver Island. The area fits the tourist ideal of a natural landscape. The coastline is punctuated by a number of Gulf Islands, small and large. There are sandstone ridges, slopes and shoals. Usually the slopes are covered with a carpet of grass and moss with Arbutus trees poised along the ridges. Where the soils deepen, we find a wide range of flora from salal and salmonberry to large ferns and Oregon grape. Large deciduous

forests of Alder and Maple have mostly been cut away revealing the fertile soil they flourished on; some large tracts remain. Cottonwoods line the banks of local rivers and streams. Most important along the coastal areas have been the coniferous forests from the giant Red and Yellow Cedar, to the majestic Douglas Fir.

From the hillsides around Chemainus there are striking views of the narrow channels which run between Vancouver Island and adjacent islands and between these Gulf Islands themselves. Throughout this region, the sandstone layers have been uplifted and faulted to create a very distinctive and pleasing "lay of the land" which runs in a southwest/northeast direction. Ridges and all the islands are elongated along this axis. The area is punctuated by finger inlets and lakes. The view from Chemainus includes, along with the wonderful archipelago, the gentle slopes of Thetis and Kuper Islands set off against the high vertical wall of Valdes Island's sandstone bluffs and the backdrop of the snow-capped mountains of the Coastal Range on the British Columbian mainland. The natural beauty and wealth of resources have attracted people to this region for centuries.

When contemplating this setting we quickly can appreciate that the huge MacMillan Bloedel mill at Chemainus was not the town's only resource; however, it certainly was of great importance. For decades most jobs in Chemainus seemed to depend on the mill and this dependence was always in evidence. After all, the main mill building stretched for

a thousand feet along the town's main thoroughfare, and life in town was regulated by the mill's mammoth whistle.

Everyone was aware of shipments to and from the mill by sea, or rail and especially by road -- a loaded logging or lumber truck on a twisting highway is a very formidable sight.

The mill dominated life at Chemainus and whether employed by the company (M and B) or not, everyone knew this was a mill-town. Given the dominance of the mill on life at Chemainus, it is little wonder that the residents and especially the merchants of Chemainus watched anxiously as dwindling resources and changing lumber markets led steadily to the mill's demise throughout the late nineteen seventies and early eighties. The uncertainty of the mill's future may have contributed to the decline in local consumption. Local merchants were suffering. Large malls in Nanaimo also opened at the beginning of the 1980s and these were attracting shoppers from across the mid-Island including Chemainus.

Revitalizing the Town

By 1980, there was a perceived need, by at least some local merchants and politicians, to do something to revitalize Chemainus. Then mayor, Graham Bruce, initiated a committee to look into funding (the provincial government had grant and loan money available for downtown revitalization), and develop a revitalization plan. The standard approach of sprucing up the streetscape and improving the infrastructure

of street surfaces and underground services was laid out.

In the fall of 1980, Wm. Vander Zalm, British Columbia's Minister of Municipal Affairs, announced the 25 million dollar Downtown Revitalization Programme. Chemainus fit the criteria for funding. In September of 1980, Mayor Bruce met with a number of the local merchants at Chemainus to discuss the possibilities. A committee was established, and seven merchants volunteered to investigate the matter. They were: Blake Hamill, who was succeeded by Tony Monco; Jack and Bill Jameson; Joe Hudak; Joe Jules; Vern Kay and Al Johnson who acted as a Chairperson. The Municipality of North Cowichan provided a \$20,000 budget ahead of the provincial funding. Provincial monies provided \$5,000 of start-up funds and \$10,000 for advanced design work -- essentially proposals. In January of 1981, the committee recommended hiring a full-time co-ordinator. Karl Shutz was hired the following month: February, 1981. The bulk of the assistance came in the form of low interest loans for up to 75% of the improvement. Grants and low interest loans were also available directly to private business. At the time there was a concurrent programme, administered by Heritage Canada -- their Main Street programme, but because Chemainus had no buildings of historic value (pre World War Two, in good shape and a potential resource) they could not qualify. Even so, Chemainus did take advantage of the provincial programme to the tune of \$350,000.

From February 1981, co-ordination of the revitalization became the responsibility of Karl Shutz, a former mill-worker and local businessman. Shutz put together a proposal for the revitalization. Shutz proposed using local materials, cedar siding, posts and beams in order to reflect the importance of forestry, especially saw-milling, to Chemainus. This approach to downtown revitalization was typical of efforts elsewhere, and many were not very successful. Martin Thomas, Director of the Downtown Revitalization Programme for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, questioned the likely success of a typical revitalization and suggested Chemainus attempt something new -- the town needed a hook. In response to Thomas' suggestion Shutz suggested including a few murals to spruce up some of the more boring surfaces along Chemainus' commercial corridor. The murals would adhere to the theme of the importance of Chemainus' lumbering past. Murals could include scenes of logging sites, trains hauling out the timber, the mill(s), the shipping docks, ships, etc. Ironically, Thomas expressed reservation about the mural idea; he questioned the value of these murals in terms of the program's goals. The goal was to boost morale, create long term investment and stability for local merchants. Other desired outcomes included discouraging shoppers from heading north to the malls of Nanaimo, and as well to encourage those who were shopping elsewhere to return to shopping locally. Basically, the goal was to revitalize and reintegrate Chemainus as a local economy.

There is no evidence that the reorientation of Chemainus to the serving of tourists was a goal of this initial revitalization. Interviewed in 1990, Martin Thomas, noted that few shops for locals were created and that the tourism at Chemainus had been a very interesting and unexpected development:

Yes, you didn't create any new shops for the people, the locals. You created a new industry and it was fascinating, that, and that was not planned.

Indeed, the types of businesses located in downtown Chemainus in 1980 and 1981 were there to serve a local clientele and would be of little interest to the traveling public. Among the businesses in this area, the following stores were included: meat-market, shoe store, drug store, hardware store, cinema, women's fashion store, liquor store, mixer shop and bakery.

Today only the clothing store and liquor store remain. Another vendor operates a drugstore, and all the other space including the cinema has been converted into retail space directed toward the day-tripping public. These tourist-directed retailers offer little for the local residents and most local shoppers now have no choice but to travel to neighbouring communities to find a basic range of goods and services. For example, you can find any kind of windchime in Chemainus. There is a store that boasts the largest selection in B.C., but you will have a tough time finding a toilet plunger when you need it. Chemainus no longer has a

hardware store, it was subdivided and renovated to become a gallery and a tee-shirt shop. Since so much of Chemainus' retail activity is directed away from the resident-consumer, stopping the leakage to neighbouring communities is no longer a concern of Chemainus merchants.

When tourists, actually day-trippers, first appeared they no doubt only came from the local area and neighbouring communities. The first significant coverage of Chemainus as a tourist attraction did not come until the Festival of Murals in 1983, a year after the revitalization and the initial murals were completed. The key event which reoriented local thought was Chemainus being chosen first place at the Downtown Development Award by The Downtown Research Development Centre, New York, New York in February, 1983. The fact that the award was given out in New York City and that Chemainus had been chosen over a large number of American towns, most of which had spent much greater sums of money than Chemainus, meant to many Chemainus locals that their town had really made it into the big-league. This was an actualizing event for the town of Chemainus, and it was quickly assimilated into myths about Chemainus, particularly the dynamic myth of the little town that did.

In the following Spring: a large highway sign was produced; the film The Little Town That Did was undertaken; the mural office was established; and a Festival of Murals was strongly promoted. By the end of the summer of 1983, the tourism theme was clearly articulated, well practiced, and

widely distributed in print, through electronic media, and by word of mouth. Chemainus was now becoming known as a tourist site for the first time. As Karl Shutz (1990) explains, recognition of the town's potential for tourism became an incentive for new initiatives:

In 1983, we said we can't let that good thing [the murals as an attraction to town] go by. We had to expand and that's when the goal came in. We are becoming the mural town in the world. And, then we started talking about making, getting, the same importance on the west-coast in the visual arts as Stratford [Ontario] is in the east, to the performing arts. That was our slogan.

Chemainus' Murals -- Drawing on History

As noted the revitalization of downtown Chemainus involved the inclusion of a few murals to "spruce up" a few of the more boring surfaces. These murals have become one of the key features of the town and are often cited as the foundation upon which the tourism has developed. Chemainus' murals have had to adhere to a historical theme. In fact, they have had to be based upon either a photograph or story from a local history written by Harry Olsen (1963), Water Over The Wheel. Olsen, himself an accountant for the company (MacMillan Bloedel) was born in Chemainus and spent most of his life there. Olsen's book is an historical account of Chemainus from the earliest days of European settlement up to the time the book was published. According to the book's endpiece:

The result is an authentic and absorbing history of the community of Chemainus, a dramatic and colourful account of the young, vital and courageous people who undertook to build a community in a wilderness.

An important critique of any single historical text is to note the fact that historical texts are limited representations of the past; in the case of Olsen's book the historical representation reflects the values of a single author.

Regarding contemporary Chemainus the importance of this critique carries over to all the murals as the murals are mandated to reflect the contents of Olsen's book. The limit of Olsen's perspective is apparent in the murals when we contemplate the absence of scenes critical to the company and the forest practices that have denuded the surrounding forests of their previous grandeur. Nowhere in any of the Chemainus murals are we exposed to the labour relations between the Company and its employees. Strikes, lockouts, and long stretches of unemployment are not to be seen in any Chemainus mural. This ought to be expected given that the official history (Water Over The Wheel) was written by a MacMillan Bloedel administrator -- the mill's accountant. As well the murals of Chemainus are dominated by scenes of white settlers. One mural in particular gives a clear illustration of the value given to settlement by Europeans; this mural of Julie Askew is by Elizabeth Smiley and is titled: Julie Askew -- First White Child Born in the Chemainus Valley. It is interesting to note that this mural is now referred to as

Julie Askew -- First Child of European Ancestry Born in the Chemainus Valley. Regardless of the title, the fact remains that it is the birth of Europeans at Chemainus that is celebrated. Children of First Nations heritage are not given the same attention. In general most murals celebrate the accomplishments of European settlers; from the birth of a child to the building of a mill or the celebration of one family that has worked for MacMillan Bloedel for four generations. Although the murals were a late addition to the initial revitalization the murals provided the basis for tourist-directed development at Chemainus. The initial five murals painted in 1982 have been added to on a regular basis; now there are thirty something murals throughout the town.

In recent years there has been a shift away from painting murals; the early mural promoters now feel that more murals will add very little and new complementary development is required for Chemainus to continue to thrive. For Karl Shutz the future will be in the form of the Pacific Rim Artisan Village; Dan Sawatzky is making his mark by promoting new construction and evolving new architectural styles for the town. While these developments suggest that the importance of murals for Chemainus may be subsiding during the early 1980s the painting of murals was exciting business in Chemainus.

Festival of Murals

The growth of the town of Chemainus in the early eighties is quite remarkable. Significant developments followed the initial interest in the murals, when only local residents and a few visitors came to see the murals. Visitors passing through on the way to their destination, spent a few hours in downtown Chemainus and likely had a snack, at least a coffee, or perhaps an ice-cream cone. Almost certainly an ice cream cone. One vendor (Billy's Delights) became quite famous for selling copious amounts of ice cream in the first couple of years after the revitalization was started (29,000 cones from March to the start of June, 1984 -- quoted from Bruce, 1985).

Those who came to see the murals themselves became the subjects observed by the promoters and coordinators considering the next step in the revitalization of Chemainus. What was becoming apparent to those concerned with revitalization was that the murals were themselves an event. Capitalizing on the murals, the key communicators in Chemainus, Graham Bruce and Karl Shutz, initiated a campaign to get as much media coverage as possible. The invitations went out to the media, Chemainus needed its story told.

The Little Town That (Said It) Did

A story (the little town that did) emerged as the promoters of Chemainus discussed the murals and the vitality that the murals were bringing the little town. Karl Shutz (1994) has concurred that the romantic nature of the story of how the murals saved the town after the heartless corporation shut down and laid off all the workers was a story that some media believed was worth telling. In fact he suggests that the media were much less enthused about the actual chronology of the mural project and revitalization preceding the mill closure. The media preferred an already familiar story, the archetypal narrative of the underdog struggling against the apparently unbeatable adversary. Chemainus' story of "the little town that did!" was such a narrative.

Often the chronology of events leading to Chemainus becoming a tourist attraction are not discerned in the articulation of media stories. Media reports about Chemainus have the story told with contemporaneous events resulting in a blurring of cause and effect. The time-space continuum that has shaped Chemainus is severely compressed in the media representations of Chemainus' transformation into a tourist-scape.

The media's interest for "a good story" can not be overlooked. The main objective of the media is to attract an audience. The story of "The Little Town That Did" had great appeal to the many writers that started telling the story of

Chemainus. Because the story was already well known as an archetype its acceptance met with little resistance.

The success of Chemainus in becoming a tourist-directed centre has been intimately linked to media coverage. Chemainus had the attention of the media, as it was eyed as another ghost-town story. The preamble to the town was written by Graham Bruce just before he resigned as Mayor to pursue a career in provincial politics. In the preamble Bruce makes the assertion that local boosters were quick to recognize the value of media attention and were careful not to lose the spotlight; while in the spotlight the story was repeated frequently gaining legitimacy with each reiteration.

During an interview, Dan Sawatsky (a local artist and designer) notes that media attention was maintained by making every step toward the goal a major event. He claims that the media were happy to report the good news of Chemainus. According to Sawatsky, the media and Chemainus enjoyed a sweetheart relationship.

Chemainus, is and has been, for seven or eight years the darling of the media and it is fun to come here. We treat our press like royalty, we host them to dinners, we treat them like 'hey, you're a guest in our town' and it's worked. Disney has followed pretty much the same principle, people love to go there and love to report on it, because, it's fun. It's good news!

As well, one of Karl Shutz's roles as co-ordinator was to provide timely news releases and information packages to make the job of reporting on Chemainus easy for the media (K. Shutz, 1984, p.7).

The media were invited at every opportunity to visit Chemainus, be hosted by one of the town's boosters, to see for themselves the great things going on. Concurring with Martin Thomas, Graham Bruce (1985) recognizes that the revitalization alone would not be sufficient to turn Chemainus' decline around. He notes, "it was necessary to really tell the story about Chemainus and to really, in the final result, attract the type of attention that would be necessary to diversify the economy."

It is important to recognize that the focus was not on attracting visitors, or new residents, or new industry, but on attracting media coverage. Once Chemainus was known development would follow. Regarding the ongoing development, Bruce's thoughts are very close to Sawatsky's ideas. Sawatsky explains "it is extremely important that you applaud and acknowledge every small step."

At Chemainus, it becomes virtually impossible to discern who is originating certain claims and who is quoting them. The local boosters, much like the media themselves, are quick to pick up certain claims, repeating them vigorously, until they are accepted as legitimate truths. The practice of reiterating certain claims until they are widely disseminated and accepted is part of the mythification process. Through this practice of reiteration certain myths begin to dominate, referents are lost, and alternative readings are difficult to retrieve. Through this telling and retelling the myth system suppresses alternative narratives.

Bruce's explanation of media coverage of the mill closure illustrates the desire by local communicators to manipulate the media. He claims:

The Mayor [he wrote this anonymously], knowing the media, having worked in the business himself, knew they would pick up the story he wanted and that was that they would go out and tell the world, indeed, Chemainus would be a ghost town and everybody would move away and the place would fall apart. That became the basis of packaging and marketing of downtown Chemainus because they already knew that they were on the fast track. As long as that story line could continually build and they could continually talk about the fact that this town was growing and alive. As the businesses came to the community, every single little business, we were able to develop a story around that because what was supposed to happen in this town was that businesses were supposed to move away. They surely were not supposed to come and invest their money in this community.

Local recognition of the importance of media coverage is clearly identified in this quotation. As well there is an indication that Graham Bruce used the Chemainus experience to highlight and promote his own talents. We should not forget that in this authorless preamble Bruce was referring to himself (the mayor with so much media sense). By 1985/1986 when this document was apparently written, Bruce was well on his way up in provincial politics. Having a document about Chemainus which recognized the extraordinary savvy of a "dynamic young mayor" could not hurt. Karl Shutz (1994b) has explained that many of the initiatives Bruce has attributed to council were actually initiated and executed under the auspices of Shutz as co-ordinator of the mural office. Shutz notes that council simply "rubber-stamped" his proposals.

A Decade of Change (1980-1990)

In 1980, before being revitalized, Chemainus was not spectacular as in being a "spectacle." This is no longer so -- today it is a spectacle. In 1980, the street scape was typical of many towns that were mostly developed during the period from the Second World War up until scarcities started to take their toll in the late 1970s. As a lumber-mill town, Chemainus thrived during World War Two providing the wood products required by the war effort. After the war, demand for wood products was fuelled by the huge construction booms of providing post-war housing, suburban expansion, and a period of significant population growth, especially in the North American market. Reconstruction of war-torn areas also increased the demand for wood products. Chemainus was ideally positioned to take advantage of this market. As a result Chemainus had many buildings from the earlier years of the post-war boom. If the buildings were not built during this period (there were older buildings) they were renovated and new "modern" facades were installed to unify the appearance of the streetscape. The use of polished black surfaces, stucco, and aluminum framed glass was popular and these elements were still very apparent on the buildings of Chemainus in 1980. In keeping with the functionalism, popular with architects of the period, intricate and decorative facades were avoided. Chemainus had a distinctively modern appearance. It was not burdened by the

rotting wood and peeling paint of the old sections of neighbouring towns such as Duncan, especially its Chinese district, and Nanaimo.

By 1980, some of the stucco surfaces were becoming weathered and the aluminum clad windows and polished black glass had dropped out of vogue. This was not limited to Chemainus, the streetscape of the post-war period was being eradicated at an alarming rate, usually to be replaced by a strange historicist bricolage of polychromatic, wood or plastic, gingerbread. The streetscape at Chemainus is no exception, although here the initial plans for revitalization were conservative, and vernacular. The planned revitalization involved: a typical treatment of the sidewalk and street; improved lighting in the form of simple white globes; planters with an integrated bench; a wooden awning supported by brick columns. According to Shutz (1984) this revitalization was modeled after the approach taken by some successful shopping centres. In the older section of town, a cloth awning was proposed. The awnings were a response to the varied rooflines and building styles in this area. Using fabric would allow more design flexibility. The overall design is considered vernacular due to the choice of materials. Cedar wood was selected to reflect the primary industry upon which the town evolved. The reasoning behind this choice is sensitive to the historical roots of the town. The inclusion of murals to depict the local history is also a sign of the historicist and vernacular impulses.

Forget History -- "Heritage" is the Future

Ironically, the development which the initial revitalization triggered has made it very difficult to imagine the Chemainus of the past. While the story of Chemainus claims to recapture the past it actually proceeds by covering up Chemainus' past and in doing this dominates individual, and likely communal, memories. The impossibility of remembering the past results from the domination of the visual, and rhetorical, presence of a nostalgic historical simulacrum that evolved from the initial vernacular and historic efforts to revitalize the town.

Not all voices have remained silent as a simulated Chemainus has imagined its mythic past. It is true that Chemainus was a mill-town, but it was also a close-knit, coastal community slightly off the beaten track and only a half hour away from larger neighbouring towns. Many local residents did not work in the mill; some were retired, others worked at either one of the huge pulp-mills just down the road, others were involved in fishing, tow-boats, or similar maritime activities, as well, there was a significant service sector. Perhaps if Chemainus had been a remote community things would have been different and the closure of the mill would certainly have meant the end of the town. Chemainus is not that remote and is integrated into the greater region of the mid-island. As well, Chemainus is and has always been a particularly pleasing environment to live in. The focus on

the importance of the mill has made some of these other facts difficult to imagine.

Yet, it was precisely these facts that some residents felt were missing from the story of "The Little Town That Did" and they expressed their resentment about the oversight (Ray Rolf, 1990). These were the contentious points: that Chemainus was not a dying town; that everyone was not running away to greener pastures; and that the mill was not by itself the only thing that kept the place going. These were grievances that local boosters were aware of early on, certainly by the mid-1980s. It is likely that the desire to keep the mythic story (the little town that did) going in order to maintain media attention has exasperated this situation. The dominance of "the little town that did" story about the rescue of the dying town by muralists would make it increasingly difficult to offer a credible alternative.

The dominance of a particular story, style, and/or architectural idiom is obvious at Chemainus. There seems to be one way of doing things, perhaps it is the size of the community, certainly the tenacity of key individuals is a factor -- both Shutz and Sawatsky were quick to note that you only bother with those individuals that were on side. Karl Shutz (1990) summed this up with his saying: "you don't let those who say that it can't be done interfere with those who are doing it." There was room for only one narrative of "The Little Town That Did." There was no room for contradictions or alternative readings that could undermine

the credibility of this story -- that promoters seemed to rely heavily upon to capture attention.

Chapter Summary: Inventing "The Little Town That Did!"

Chemainus' revitalization was as much a response to the offer of grant monies as a reaction to a dwindling resource-base and the threat of mill closure. The tourist boom that followed was not part of the initial effort but was a logical adjustment to increasing publicity about the town. The catalyst for the touristic impulse came in the form of the town's victory in a downtown revitalization competition in New York.

Chemainus has evolved into a heritage simulation. Little of the town's actual past, or history, remains intact as the town's "historic image" is being invented and reinvented through the processes of mythification and heritage simulation. The simulation of heritage has continued to provide images of Chemainus to the media and these images have continued to prompt more innovation and change resulting in the invention of new heritage simulacrum. The cycle of simulation drives an image-base that supports touristic activities at Chemainus.

CHAPTER III

RE-IMAGINING CHEMAINUS -- TOURIST-DIRECTED SIMULATION

After the initial revitalization at Chemainus, change continued to take place to the streetscape. Most of this change has been very dramatic and today even the initial revitalization seems subdued, even boring. Remarkable development has taken place as simulated Victorian gingerbread facades have multiplied throughout the little town. In this instance, "remarkable" is a particularly apt term, especially if we conceive the term as re-mark-able: that is having the ability to revise or redo the marking or signifying of the town.

One of the initial mural painters, Dan Sawatsky, is accountable for much of the remarkable development at Chemainus. In fact there are few aspects of present-day Chemainus that Sawatsky has not influenced from the town's centrepiece "Heritage Square" to murals, to signage, to the dominant architectural styles and idioms. There are significant implications of Sawatsky's work regarding historicity and the vernacular. [The problem is that there is a constant mixing of the exotic and the vernacular in a way which makes it difficult and perhaps irrelevant to decode. For example, trees, stumps and stones are made of plastics, concretes and sophisticated mixes of both; simple concrete block buildings are treated to elaborate and articulate wooden facades, and existing typical wooden framed buildings

are engulfed by plastic and plaster.

This fusion of the past and present, here and elsewhere (including no-where), has created an environment which lacks a discernible, and discrete, sense of time and place. In other words, the development of tourist-scape at Chemainus has resulted in what Harvey (1989 p.p. 284-286) has termed time-space compression. Ironically this de-differentiation of time and place has been created through the simulation of a place that presents itself as having a definite sense of place -- both in time and space. The paradox is troubling. Chemainus displays history through murals that are in-your-face. The architectural design of the buildings there is so loaded with symbols and intense colours, its potency is impressive and experience of the town lingers. Yet, the everyday Chemainus that was known throughout the years has been diminished to a point near oblivion.

There is an absence of rootedness in the new "heritage" landscape of Chemainus. The hyperactive production of heritage at Chemainus has resulted in an overproduced hyperreal simulation of intense "history." At Chemainus a mythic nostalgia theme has swamped, or saturated, the town with image. Against the hyperreal Chemainus with its exploding colour, contorted but human scaled plastic tree, concrete stumps that will never decay, and story telling murals that permit you to share their history photographically, there is little room for the mundane everyday life of Chemainus, or any of its bland, typical,

post-war relics.

It is unlikely that any visitor to Chemainus will meet a long-term resident. Generally, they do not participate in the tourist trade, except perhaps as "tourists in their own town." Over 95% of the businesses in town are tourist-directed and these are almost without exception operated by entrepreneurs that came to Chemainus as tourists themselves, only to return after recognizing its potential for their business (Shutz, 1990; Freer, 1994). If we contemplate the way Chemainus must have appeared to residents throughout its past it is understandable that locals would be skeptical of investing in the tourist spectacle. Indeed, they were painfully aware that the rewards of the tourist trade were more available to Vancouver Island's traditional tourist Meccas, such as: Victoria, Parksville-Qualicum and Tofino adjacent to Pacific Rim National Park. The transformation of Chemainus was unimaginable for most. It was brought about mostly by those without a sense of what Chemainus was; for some of them it was nothing but a blank sheet and because of this it could be made into anything they wanted. Today if long-term residents are tourists in their own town it is only because, indeed, Chemainus is no longer the town it used to be. Chemainus today appears distinct and separate from the Chemainus of the past (before 1982).

There are few folks more pleased about this fact than those who are indebted to the tourist trade for their

livelihood. Comments about the Chemainus of the past are seldom complimentary and most are directed to the physical appearance of the town and the improvements brought about by those who created, and participate in, the tourist-directed activities. Sawatsky was quoted by Jane O'Hara (1985) in Macleans magazine describing Chemainus as "a little hole in the ground full of derelicts." More recently Neil Burn, owner of one of the more than one hundred tourist-directed businesses that have emerged since the mural project took off, explained to Jena MacPherson of Sunset Magazine that: "This [Chemainus] was a pretty crummy mill town. Now it's a showplace." These statements are indicative of the sentiments of most of the newcomers, after all many had probably never heard of the town before the media attention it received during the first couple of years into the 1980s. Their view is certainly congruent with the story that has been repeated since about 1982.

Chemainus has been constructed, or imagined and represented, by those individuals involved in restructuring Chemainus as tourist-directed. Their myths about the way that Chemainus was before the town was reoriented toward tourism are in many ways the myths of the colonizer (Memmi, 1965). In other words, Chemainus has been colonized by the promoters of tourism. They have created a series of myths about the way the town was before 1980 which justify and reconcile the redirection of the town towards touristic activities. These myths include, but are not limited to: the

myth that the town was dying and it was nothing but a hole in the ground until developers, and their artists, created the wonderful place that has attracted tourists and given the town vitality; the developers did not take over a viable and vital town rather they saved Chemainus from the precipice of disaster that loomed as the mill prepared to shut down; once saved, Chemainus has been improved significantly from the ugly, shack laden, derelict mill-town that it once was.

There are examples, and insights, from the way that colonizers have represented and imagined those they have colonized that apply to Chemainus.

The notion widely held was that the people of the colonies were at an early stage of historical development where concepts of state and nation had not yet to take hold. Many properties of the modern nation did not yet exist, and thus the colonizers could operate with a clean slate. Jean Brunhes agrees with the claims of Governor-General Marital Merlin of East Africa: "When we arrive in these new countries, the ground belongs to no one.... The land must be given only to those who exploit it and make it useful."

AlSayyad (1992) draws our attention to the contention commonly held by colonizers that there is little of value there before their arrival and it is logical that those whose industry improves the land are the natural recipients of the reward. Conceiving the land being taken over as unimproved, waste, or empty allows the colonizers to represent their role as that of improvers, saviours. As well, it is reasoned that the people found in the area by the colonizers are backward, and lack industry. If this were not the case they would

surely have progressed beyond the state they were found in, and would have made better use of the resources that surrounded them.

Always in the discourse of colonization the context of definition, and explanation, is from the perspective of the colonizer. It is through this mythic discourse that the colonizer establishes the forms of dominance. There is no need to look to the African experience; for examples of this are everywhere and nowhere are they more clearly articulated than in Canada, especially in the context of the discourse regarding First Nations peoples. This quotation from Thomas Berger relates the attitudes of the colonizing Spanish to the Natives of the New World that they were about to usurp:

Spain conquered the empire of the Incas, bringing war, disease and famine. The Spanish, like other Europeans who followed them to the New World, assumed that they had the right to another people's lands, the right to their labour, the right even to take from them the legitimacy of their own past. For the early European colonists, the Indians were alien and primitive, of uncertain humanity, arguably without rights. Although five hundred years have past, the moral and intellectual distance between those of us of European descent and Native peoples often seems as great as ever.

Berger (1991) makes the point that the colonizers even went so far to take from the colonized the legitimacy of their own past. Mythification of Chemainus up to 1980, including the focus on Chemainus as a dying mill-town, dominates and effaces the actual histories of the many residents of Chemainus that do not conceive that they were living in a dying mill-town -- a derelict full of nothing

but shacks.

There are many myths of the colonizer about the colonized. Daniel Francis (1993) has written an excellent study of the *Imaginary Indian*.

The Indian began as a White man's mistake, and became a White man's fantasy. Through the prism of White hopes, fears and prejudices, indigenous Americans would be seen to have lost contact with reality and to have become "Indians"; that is anything non-Natives wanted them to be.

Francis makes the point that the conception of Indian and Indianess is non-Native. Non-Natives in our society control the context through which Indians are defined regardless whether the stereotypes are (in our terms) positive such as the Noble Savage or original environmentalist or negative such as an inferior race, or blood-thirsty savage.

The relevance of Francis' work is that it directs our attention to the fact that through myths non-Natives have been able to make the Imaginary Indian into just about anything they wished -- but in the end the stories could never reveal anything about Natives. The stories about Natives only reveal features of the non-Natives constructing them. In a way Chemainus is a similar case. The story of the little town that did says little about Chemainus, or the way the town actually was up to 1980 (and since that time for those not involved in tourist activity there). Indeed, this story (the little town that did) tells us a great deal more about *the promoters that said it did* than the little town itself. The story certainly does not speak for many of the

town's residents. In fact, this myth (the little town that did) usurps any voice of resistance simply because of its dominance as it became widespread through constant media reproduction.

The contempt that some long-term residents feel is understandable considering the long history of the town and the fact that so many aspects of everyday Chemainus were just never talked about. A recent article in the *Smithsonian* has noted another long-term resident that feels slighted by the story of "The Little Town That Did." MacMillan Bloedel expressed their concern:

Officials of the mill, owned by MacMillan Bloedel, behemoth of Canada's forestry and paper industry, sometimes feel annoyed and frustrated by exaggerations in the many accounts of the miracle of the murals. The mill owners are usually painted as the villains. By closing the mill, according to these stories, MacMillan Bloedel brought the town to its knees: muralists then galloped to the rescue like red-coated troopers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. News and television features usually play down and even sometimes ignore the fact that a new mill opened two years after the old mill closed. Nor do the tourists understand this. Only 900 of the almost 400,000 visitors last year took one of the mill's twice-weekly tours. "It's nice to get a chance to tell our side of the story," says tall, bearded, ex-logger Al Dewar, the mill's personnel supervisor.

In a recent interview with Karl Shutz (1994c), he noted that there was a serious lack of communication between the town's boosters and the mill. Apparently this lack of communication still persists. Recently, Shutz explained his surprise that the mill management felt excluded as late as the writing of the *Smithsonian* article (written twelve years

after murals first appeared in Chemainus). No doubt better communication between stakeholders within Chemainus would alleviate some of the apparent hard feelings. One factor that has made better communication difficult is the story of "the little town that did!" There is the probability that the town's promoters internalized their story to the point that it appeared natural to them. It would be a challenge under these circumstances for the local boosters to develop a critical perspective on the actual role of tourism in rescuing the town from doom.

The telling of the story, how the murals saved the town, should not be attributed entirely to the town's boosters. Contrary to Graham Bruce's assertion, the media were not really duped into telling this particular story -- they were happy to report it. Any other story would have been a far more difficult "sell" for the town's promoters.

The role of the media has been discussed briefly, and it is worth reiterating that many reporters actively discouraged telling the story in a chronologically accurate fashion. The murals were initiated before the mill closed; the revitalization was intended to stop leakage to neighbouring towns with large new malls; Provincial announcements of funding for revitalization prompted the town's mayor to establish a committee to consider the opportunities; and so on. Instead the media preferred the romance of the story about the huge heartless corporation and the 'Little Town That Did.'

Putting the Present Before the Past

The problematic relationship between the past and present at Chemainus is not limited to disputes over the fate of the town at the time of the mill closure and the particular narratives that have sprang up as explanations of this issue. As suggested earlier in this thesis, the emergent townscape at Chemainus including the significant departure from any architectural style historically present in Chemainus, has made it difficult to imagine the way Chemainus appeared in the past. So much of what now presents itself as heritage, especially through the heraldic names such as Heritage Lane, Heritage Square, etc., and through the incorporation of architectural styles associated with bygone eras, confuses the new for the old. At Chemainus the newest buildings are imbued with a historicity that none of the buildings present before the revitalization was started could have achieved; the older buildings were simply too modern. Confusion occurs because the newest buildings are designed to look like they are from the turn of the century while most of the buildings which stood in Chemainus in 1980 were relatively recent, built during and after World War Two.

In Chemainus we are exposed to a complete townscape of simulated buildings that have no precise referent. The retreat is into an imagined past (but not the imagined past of Chemainus); it is fantasy not history. The style is a bricolage of design elements from different places and times.

The town bears some resemblance to Disneyland and this should be expected. The principal designer of the town, Dan Sawatsky, has a keen interest in the design and construction techniques incorporated by Disney and has spent a considerable amount of time and energy keeping up with these masters of the simulacrum.

**From Concrete Stump to Plastic Trees;
Sawatsky Re-Imagines Chemainus**

See we couldn't recreate anything, 'cause there was nothing here to recreate, the buildings -- it was a small mill-town, and they were basically shacks, eventually being updated to something more current. The bulk of the commercial was built in the fifties which, uhm, is not user friendly. At that point they were going very stark and especially in small town it was pure function. ... There was no heritage here!

Dan Sawatsky (1990)

Dan Sawatsky has shaped the face of Chemainus more than any other individual. A visitor to Chemainus during the early days of revitalization, Sawatsky would later return to make his mark on the town. Sawatsky's mural, the reason for his initial interest in Chemainus, is located behind the town's post-office, on an adjacent building, where it receives only limited exposure. Many visitors might pass it by, some may never learn Sawatsky's name, and yet no-one that visits Chemainus can avoid his influence. The first work Sawatsky completed outside of the genre of the murals was a small shopping arcade named Willow Street Place. This is known by most visitors for an ice cream dealer (Billy's

Delights) and the adjacent mural of Billy Thomas -- the town's longest resident -- born in 1874, Thomas lived his entire 102 years at Chemainus. That Thomas adorns the side of Sawatsky's exotic Victoriana facade/building is ironic. Dan Sawatsky, a complete stranger to Chemainus in 1982, has created a townscape of building styles, public space, and signage, that departs so distinctively from anything known at Chemainus throughout Billy Thomas' long life there, that, Thomas himself would probably have felt lost in the space of a tourist-directed Chemainus.

It is difficult to classify Sawatsky's architectural idioms, we will loosely define them as Victorian-boomtown, perhaps they could be termed Disney-post modern. This architectural idiom compresses many elements associated with turn-of-the-century Victorian, and the subsequent Edwardian, architectural periods (neither of which was an original architectural style, as both were revivalist in their selection and development of idioms) onto a relatively small facade thereby increasing the visual intensity confronting the street and its passer-by. The construction used in the simulations at Chemainus usually involves a cheap wooden frame or cinder block building which is then treated to an elaborate decorative facade. It is the brashness of the juncture between the thin, decorative facade and the bulky, basic box-building that earns the moniker "Disney Post Modern."

Occasionally an existing building is stripped down, renovated, and treated to a new skin. While the Victorian-boomtown facade is prevalent at Chemainus, Sawatsky has recently departed from this idiom. The Little Inn on Willow is an example of his newer fantasy idiom. This style is utilized more fully at a theme-park he is currently developing at Coombes, about thirty miles west of Chemainus toward Pacific Rim National Park. The Little Inn is a good example of the way that an existing building, in this case the town's barber-shop, can be reinvented into another use through renovation including the application of a new facade. In the case of the Little Inn the facade is more appropriately described as a costume, a complete container, rather than a mask as is the case with most of the earlier projects.

In a 1990 interview, Sawatsky suggested that there were no quotable referents for his romantic boomtown design and that he conceived these in his head, on his own. This is no surprise, since Sawatsky was already on record describing the town as a hole in the ground full of derelicts. Obviously Chemainus could not provide him with the idiom upon which he would base his own work. When pressed, he conceded that Disney would perhaps be the most influential source. Three years later, Dan Sawatsky is quick to point out the influence of Disney on his designs and notes what an excellent job Disney creators do in designing complete environments that visitors enter into. Indeed, Disney is excellent at this

aspect of environmental design and has provided significant direction to mall-designers, park designers, and others who need to control large numbers of people in their day-to-day operations. Chemainus also benefits from the effective direction of people through the site, who see the murals from controlled angles, avoiding incongruous views, such as the back of the wall behind Heritage Square. Merchants benefit as well if the visitors can be slowed in front of their shop, or better yet, directed into the shop.

Cullen (1961), has pointed out that in any Victorian or pseudo-Victorian streetscape there is a strong sense of the vertical; buildings are read from top to bottom and bottom to top. In such an environment it is important that the eye is drawn along by visual magnets, that are different enough that they attract the observer down to them. An excellent example of a visual magnet is Sleeping Beauty's Castle at Disneyland; it draws the visitor through the highly articulated simulated Victorian streetscape of Main Street, USA. At Chemainus the murals serve a similar role. The flow of visitors is also managed through the simple technique of a marked tourist route which has been designated by painted yellow footsteps and as well is available in the form of a map.

Sawatsky's acknowledgment of the genetic role of Disney does not include many of these other aspects; he is speaking specifically of his building techniques, materials, and to a lesser degree architectural idioms. On this last point, he

suggests that The Little Inn owes much to the fantasy architecture of Disney with more than a slight debt to Toontown. The owner of the Little Inn, Dave Haberman has his own explanation. The Inn is modeled after the small road houses in Europe, especially Bavaria. However, when it comes to the architectural design we will find no reference for the Little Inn, except maybe in the magical World of Disney. The genesis of the Little Inn is revealed when we contemplate the mini-golf site that Sawatsky is currently building at Coombes. There the colours are extraordinary, building aspects are distorted (they lean) to create a stronger sense of fantasy -- a technique that Sawatsky feels was not applied to its fullest extent at Chemainus.

Visitors to Chemainus are struck by the colour of the townscape, the murals and polychromatic architecture. It is enhanced, intensified in colour and architectural features such as colours and gingerbread scrolling etc. Quoted by Stanley Meisler (1994) Genoa-born art critic, Gianna Pontercorboli, made the following comments after happening upon Chemainus by accident on her way to Alaska:

The atmosphere of Vancouver Island is pretty Nordic, but Chemainus was suddenly full of color. The murals are 'larger than life.' The people are extra friendly, everything is more real than reality itself.

These are all features of hyperreality. A necessary condition to create such a hyperreal environment is control. According to Albert Borgmann,

It is an artificial reality, to be sure, but it is not a poor substitute. It surpasses traditional and natural reality in brilliance, richness, and pliability. Umberto Eco and Jean Baudrillard have aptly called it hyperreality.

Umberto Eco (1985) notes the alligator at Disneyland is more satisfying than the one along the Louisiana roadside precisely because of its precision. You can bank on the alligator at Disneyland coming out of the water just in "Kodak-time"; indeed, Disney Corporation literally does bank on these predictable animatronic characters.

Disneyland has been constructed to exacting engineering, or as they refer to it imagineering. Chemainus too, has been constructed to a large degree for the sake of control. Plastic trees and concrete stumps are very pliable. They can be placed where ever they are needed and can be expected to remain unchanged regardless of the weather or use they are put to. The trees in the murals are also plastic -- acrylic paint -- and they too can supersede the real tree in their grandeur and ability to stand as symbol for a forest long since denuded through the forestry practices now being celebrated in mural and condemned in public. The nostalgic old Victorian architectural facades are simply veneers on simple, plainly constructed buildings. These veneers create an excellent backdrop for the murals and easily permit the tourist to capture very satisfying polaroids of this small-town. The colours and crowding of intricate details onto a small surface has created a richness that far exceeds reality. There is more gingerbread wood scrolling; the

decorative parts are more plentiful and their details more exact; the colours are deeper in hue and saturation. The trees are more green; the stones remain clean and the ponds are blue. Often we pass by ponds and the water does not stand out as blue -- but if you add a few gallons of blue coloring it stands out. Finally the hyperreal is brilliant.

Hyperreality is brilliant because our experience of it is designed, controlled in order to filter out anything that would detract from our experience of it. The term noise is often used to refer to unwanted information. Borgmann explains that:

A truly brilliant hyperreality will exclude all unwanted information, the visual and auditory cues, for example, that would betray the presence of the machinery beneath the hyperreal commodity. Technically, brilliance means the absence of noise.

An excellent example of this from Chemainus is the use of the huge wall upon which Paul Ygartua has painted the mural *Native Heritage*. The wall presents a backdrop to the small park (Heritage Square) and at the same time blocks the view of discordant residential buildings and a perspective out onto the vacant mill-site; a mill-site that stands in opposition to the promise of wealth portrayed throughout the murals, that is the wealth from the forest resources which are portrayed as huge, bountiful and insurmountable.

When we consider the murals and the town as a back-drop for collecting images, another referent for Chemainus is revealed. The *reel-source* of Chemainus is the back-lot of

the Hollywood studio, take your pick: Universal, Disney, MGM, Paramount or North-Shore (Vancouver). The backlot does not have to sell goods; it only needs to present a facade. In this regard there is a difference: there are few cheapjack buildings behind the facade at Universal Studios; only a scaffold structure to keep the facade in place. Still the similarities between the studio and the touristic theme-town are many: the need to control photographic angles; the presentation of elaborate and intensified fronts; the creation of simulated foliage and even the use of murals. It is in this regard that Chemainus is indeed a back-lot in the back-woods.

New Realism and the Post-Tourist

Chemainus is not seamless. Perhaps in the limited scope of photographic images Chemainus appears wonderfully flawless, but it seems unlikely that visitors to Chemainus could help but notice the rough edges. You need only step away from the yellow-footed path to see back-stage, behind the scenes -- behind the screens. It is easy to see Chemainus for the contrivance it is. Indeed, it takes a measured effort to maintain the illusion of Chemainus' heritage and tourists themselves must be complicit in maintaining the scene. The illusions at Chemainus are not well hidden, in fact they are blatantly revealed. This is an example of, "the new realism." The hyperreal facades back up against incongruent block buildings, and the tourist

landscape of Chemainus is smack in the middle of a basically non-tourist setting. This is easy to see. New realism does not attempt to hide the constructed nature of the image -- it relishes in its own construction.

The following comments were made by Jack Solomon (1988) regarding the trend to "new realism" in advertising:

An ad for Miller draft beer tries the same approach [new realism], re-creating the effect of an amateur videotape of a wedding celebration. Camera shots shift suddenly from group to group. The picture jumps. Bodies are poorly framed. the color is washed out. Like the beer it is pushing, the ad is supposed to strike us as being "as real as it gets."

Solomon suggests that ads such as the one described are evidence that consumers desire reality in the marketplace and are now weary of slick Madison avenue illusions. He argues that in response to this disenchantment Madison Avenue has upped the ante -- there is no bigger illusion than the illusion of reality. In Solomon's words:

Every special technique that advertisers use to create their "reality effects" is, in fact, more unrealistic than the techniques of "illusory" ads. The world in reality, doesn't jump around when you look at it. It doesn't appear in subdued gray tones. Our eyes don't have zoom lenses, and we don't look at things with our heads cocked to one side. The irony of the "new realism" is that it is more unrealistic, more artificial, than the ordinary run of television advertising.

The new realism that Solomon is drawing to our attention is also present in the forms of buildings with apparent facades, obviously colored water and plastic trees which confront us with their "fakeness." We have grown accustomed to seeing

the reel world of Hollywood. To confront the artifacts of this world in our everyday is no longer a novelty. As tourist our response to the "staged authenticity" has come about in the practice of post-tourism.

Maxine Feifer (1985) coined the term *post-tourist* to describe the self-conscious, reflexive practice of being "tourist." We can no longer aspire to the authentic, or the exotic. Through the mass-media we now know something about everything and we also know there is little left to discover. We have abandoned the search for universal truth and have turned to the quotidian, where each of us can be comfortable in our own world view. It was within such a mode that Feifer set out, Barthes in hand, to visit the Eiffel Tower. Her purpose, to see Paris as "tourist" (Feifer lives in France) and in the context of Barthes, whose essay on the tower she carried with her as a guide. There will be nothing new only the revisiting and reproduction of previous experience. To be sure the tower lives up to her Barthesian expectations -- she is actualized. But one question lingers: Why do they come -- the tourists? She conveys their responses:

"It's a tourist thing to do," says the man who admired the rooftop ensemble, eyeing me [Feifer] suspiciously for asking such a question; "I've been to Paris dozens of times and I always come."

"Are you kidding?" answers a woman cheerfully. "Because we are *tourists*. We've seen all the out-of-the-way places on other trips. This trip, we're just doing touristy things."

Another lady says, first off, "When you think of Paris, you think of the Eiffel Tower." Then, they go on to praise the view.

Feifer leaves the tower with a feeling of affection; she notes, that in the near century it has been there it has generously offered itself to many uses, and now, she too has used it -- to have sought out and found the *post-modern tourist*. There is also the likelihood that Feifer's post-tourist has sought out and found Chemainus: "the back-lot in the back-woods."

Signtist and Their Signs

Signage is an important aspect of Chemainus. The town itself has become a sign and through the story of "the little town that did" Chemainus has come to signify: the struggle to survive; spirit of life; value of persistence and hard work; murals capital of Canada, etc. Much work has been done to ensure that the significance of the story is shared by a wide audience. Many features at Chemainus themselves, have been given significance through the special treatment afforded them. This treatment has marked the significance of these features -- they are apparently special.

Marking of phenomena can be at the location of the phenomenon, or off-site, away, from the thing or practice. Dean MacCannell has approached touristic phenomena in this way, and his approach can be explored through the examples from Chemainus.

Signage at Chemainus acts to point out things for us; some signage has become an attraction in and of itself. As

well, the signage at Chemainus, through regulation of what ought to be allowed as sign, stands as one example of the way that certain style decisions were encouraged. Specifically, the sand-blasted wooden signs initiated by Dan Sawatsky (doing business as -- The Sigtist) were recommended as the acceptable type of sign in regulations proposed by Shutz. The recommendation has not yet been adopted. Perhaps the regulation was redundant; a quick survey of signage around town illustrates that this type of signage is *de facto* the official signage of Chemainus.

Remaining with signage another development has been the town's sign carved by Elmar Schultes. This sign was intended to direct visitors toward Chemainus from the main turn-off from the Trans-Canada Highway nearby. The sign was mounted against a concrete block wall and served this purpose for a couple of years; after that it was moved to Water Wheel Park where it has become an attraction itself. Only the concrete wall remains at the Chemainus turn-off, this is now a billboard exclaiming the presence of "the little town that did."

Off-site markers designating the significance of Chemainus and the many phenomena to be found there are widely distributed. There are the realms of promotional tourist brochures which can be found from racks on B.C. Ferries to information kiosks throughout the province of British Columbia and beyond. There are the hundreds of travel articles in a range of magazines from *Beautiful British Columbia* to *Sunset* and the *Smithsonian*. Without exception

these articles begin by telling the story of the "little town that did" and go on to extol the virtues of the town from its artistic murals to the colorful streetscape -- a sort of Carmel North. These markers function to explain the significance of Chemainus to the visitor long before they arrive. We are all familiar with certain sites that have extremely strong off-site markers. Barthes' example was the Eiffel Tower; I prefer San Francisco. The strong images which circulate away from these sites are constantly reinforcing the sites and what those sites come to mean depends on the context of those circulating images.

If we always see the Eiffel Tower in the context of romance, we quickly understand that this is a romantic place and our expectations are established. If on the other hand we only see it in the context of suicides attempted there this too will shape our understanding of the Eiffel Tower. San Francisco has many images which have become icons: for me one which is outstanding is the cable-car at the top of Russian Hill returning to downtown with Fisherman's Wharf below and Alcatraz in the background (a common image that is frequently replayed). I think of it in terms of two media products: the television show *The Streets of San Francisco* and a commercial for Rice-a-Roni. The commercial I remember from childhood, the 1960s. I associate the image with the 1960s and the site, San Francisco, has become a very nostalgic place for me. In this case the marker is removed

not only spatially through television but as well temporally through memory.

One brochure for the Little Inn and Pacific Shores Hotel enables us to understand off-site marking a little better. The pamphlet consists of four parts, each double sided. There are basically two parts to the pamphlet, one is an advertisement for the Little Inn, the other an ad for Pacific Shores, both properties owned by Dave Haberman, and designed by Sawatsky. This brochure has a drawing of the Little Inn by Dan Sawatsky as the main component and a removable card across the end with a reduction of the same drawing along with the title "The Little Inn on Willow " The World's Smallest Luxury Hotel" in the heart (shown pictorially) of Chemainus.

The significance of the signs presented through the brochure for the Little Inn is open to interpretation and we offer the following. The drawing like the inn itself is by Sawatsky, a recognized name which like the inn on the brochure itself is repeated throughout Chemainus as it is on the brochure. The repetition is all part of the legitimation process. The claim of being the World's Smallest Luxury Hotel is an attempt to claim the uniqueness of this unit -- establishing its special worth. The text on the reverse of the card is even more interesting:

Experience the Enchantment of The Little Inn on Willow!

Step into a story book world of gingerbread and turrets! The Little Inn on Willow is a whimsical delight of romance and magic. It has been thoughtfully designed to capture the ambience of this seaside Victorian village and carefully created by local artisans to become "the world's smallest luxury hotel". Spend a night and be treated to a luxurious queen size bed complete with designer drapings, a jet tub for two, the cosiness of a fireplace and chilled champagne with orange juice! You will also enjoy a private yard with a deck. Owners Sonia and Dave Haberman invite you to rent the entire hotel and step into the world that is... "The Little Inn on Willow".

"Where happy endings begin."

"A seaside Victorian village" where? Is this a description of Chemainus or the relationship of these two hotels (the Little Inn in the parking lot of the simulated Victorian Pacific Shores with its balustraded deck and bronze statue of a sea-captain looking out to sea). As we have already discussed, Chemainus is not Victorian, the buildings are far too modern. Perhaps it is Victorian in attitude. Clearly the brochure is trying to sell Victoriana to potential clients and through such advertisement visitors would come to Chemainus expecting to see something of a seaside Victorian village. I expect that they would not be disappointed. The reference to local artisans relates to Chemainus' emerging theme which is a centre for artisans and the home of The Pacific Rim Artisan's Village -- Karl Shutz's current and ambitious project for the town. Finally the name The Little Inn on Willow has a striking ring to it as it retrieves from

all the coverage of Chemainus the notion of "the little" as in "The Little Town That Did!"

There is no other off-site marker which has circulated more widely and has had as much significance as the myth of The Little Town That Did. This has been the basis of understanding for most of the visitors that have come to Chemainus to see the murals that saved the town.

Chapter Summary: Heritage Simulation Needs No History

For Chemainus heritage has very little history. The basis for the heritage industry that has developed there is image and imagination. The role of the media has remained central to the development of tourist activities. Our present awareness continuously shapes our notion of heritage. As well, our notion of heritage is influenced by the media, Disneyland and the motion picture industry. In other words the heritage portrayed at Chemainus is not the history of the town itself but is the production of popular notions of "heritage." Chemainus' heritage is a popular fantasy.

The dominance of the myth of "the little town that did" has usurped most recollections of Chemainus' own past (recollections that would tear at the fabric of the heritage simulation that now stands for the town of Chemainus). There is such brilliance to the hyperreal simulation of Chemainus that there are few sites for dissension and resistance. The town's mythic history of the heritage simulation has colonized the town's actual past.

Chemainus' tourist-directed hyperreality provides rich images of the town to be picked up, and spread, by the media. Because it is hyperreal a touristic Chemainus remains flexible and pliable, always on-call to re-present itself in the latest garb along with a "good story" to justify its existence. Change is a constant condition in this tourist-directed community. But, with all the change there is little constancy to focus upon, to anchor one's life to, and in which to find meaning or a sense of place. There is little pressing reality at Chemainus.

CONCLUSION

COMING TO OUR SENSES -- REALITY, PLACE AND THE EVERYDAY

Yet there is a clear difference in the experiential force of hyperreality and reality. To grasp that force we must think of experience not as the sum total of sensory simulation over a certain time but as an eminent encounter of a person and the world. The former notion of experience is indifferent to its context while the latter is oriented within the world. Hyperreality and reality may result in the same experience indifferently understood, but when the experience of hyperreality is oriented within its context, its force turns out to be disposable and discontinuous, that is, it turns out to have no real force at all... To be disposable, hyperreality must be experientially discontinuous with its context. If it were deeply rooted in its setting, it would take a laborious and protracted effort to deracinate and replace it. Reality encumbers and confines. Disposability and discontinuity are marks of hyperreal glamour, and glamour, in turn, is the sign of the perfect commodity.

Albert Borgman (1992, p.97)

We have discussed Chemainus and the way that promoters of this hyperreal simulation have created a mythic context for the tourist-directed development of the town. We have noted that Chemainus as a community has roots which go back beyond 1980 (when the reorientation toward tourism started to take place) and that there are many residents with memories of these times (memories which betray the mythic past represented by those individuals that promote a tourist-directed Chemainus). It has been the task of myth to make the hyperreality of Chemainus brilliant, by usurping the vitality from these memories, to ensure that the myth of "the little town that did" is heard with as little noise as possible.

The murals, the architecture, the promoters and the media have all acted as filters that have allowed for the mythification at Chemainus.

This thesis has approached Chemainus as an image-based community. The application of concepts from communication studies, cultural studies and the general pool of postmodern literature has provided a useful analysis of the role of image and representation in the redirection of a community's economy from traditional resource-based activities to tourism. This redirection of a community towards tourism involved the invention of images and the reworking of the town's touristic environment all of which reinforced existing images and promoted new images to the media. At the same time the imperatives of uniqueness and differentiation in the context of the de-differentiation of simulation and time-space compression mean that a tourist-directed community must continually innovate and change. Constant change is facilitated by the pliability of both images and the hyperreal environments of touristic towns. On the other hand rootedness (long-term meaning, traditions and a deep sense of place) is usurped by the continuously changing faces of the tourist-directed community.

Borgman draws our attention to the relationship between the hyperreal and reality in terms of rootedness, a concept discussed early on in this thesis. He suggests that paramount reality has rootedness, and is continuous with its context. This relationship comes about through practice.

Borgman uses the term focal practice, to refer to the kind of relationship one develops through long-term caring and labour invested into the world, and things found in the world.

Heidegger used the term to dwell to describe what Borgman calls focal practice. When we contemplate our relationship to reality and hyperreality our attention is drawn to finding the difference. In terms of rootedness (or dwelling, focal-practice, or closeness as opposed to being distanced) the difference is one of getting into, and out of, our relationships to our environments. Places that we enter into instantly, as ready-mades, that we invest little of ourselves into, will not provide us with the opportunities to become rooted. We become rooted through our practice with a reality which is both continuous and sustained -- the pressing reality of the ordinary and quotidian.

Reality is pressing in many ways. We spend countless hours in the service of the technological accoutrements of our world, learning to operate them, maintaining them, replacing and improving them. We are obliged by our own vulnerability into a constant and continuous struggle to alleviate the inevitable realities of hunger, illness, fear and discomfort. "Focal reality gathers and illuminates our world" (Borgman, 1992) there is always a contingency between human life and its setting. This relationship is lost in the simulation and hyperreality of the ready-made tourist-directed landscape that we enter into, and pass out from,

through the main-gate. The sense of place which we can develop in a tourist-directed landscape is not sustained. Sooner or later we must step out of it into the real world. The return is depressing and empty. We are left deflated, feeling empty, because like the historic (pre 1980) buildings of Chemainus, reality cannot compare with the spectacle of the hyperreal. The return is depressing because reality has again asserted its claim upon us. Finally we have arrived at Disneyland, and this might just be, the "happiest place on Earth." But in the end, the park closes and the fantasy is over -- we are all kicked back out, onto the mean streets of Los Angeles with our traffic, our pollution, our crime and nature's persistent threat that "the big one" will take it all away -- as we head for home.

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