

The Going Home Experience - new opportunities for tourism researchers.

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Most go back sometime



The background to the interest

- Tourism research overall has mainly been concerned with travel to commonly visited tourism destinations
- Repeat visit/loyalty studies in particular have mostly examined travel to commonly visited tourism destinations or businesses
- Tourism research concerned with VFR (visiting friends and relatives market) has neglected the wider experiential components of this "motive" category

The implications

- There is an understudied category of travel which involves individuals who return with varying degrees of frequency to places which were significant in earlier periods of time in their lives
- This return travel to significant places may be broadly captured by the title:

VHFP- Visiting Home and Familiar Places.

The VHFP focus

- The interest lies with the past “homes” and familiar places for many travellers
- The focus is on the places and relationships entangled in their personal and historical biographies.
- Does this intersect with VFR studies?....it may, but can also be independent

Reflections on the going home experience



The promise of the topic-more than indulgence

- Emphasis is on the nature of the experience, understanding it and researching it

BUT

for pragmatic marketing researchers and industry interests “getting the diaspora to return” is also potentially a theme for persuasive efforts

A standard beginning Framing the VHFP experience

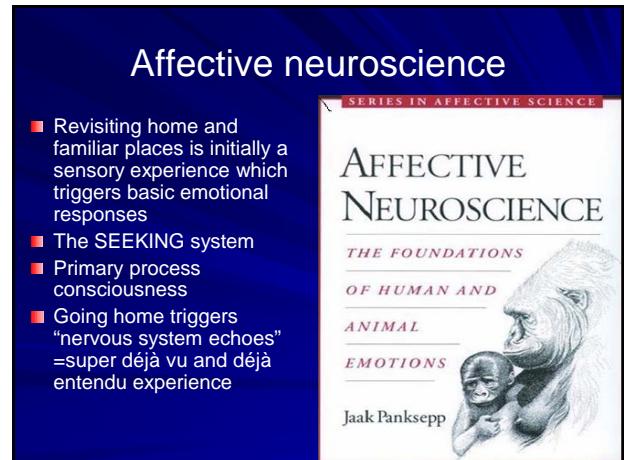
- Time spent in location originally
- Length of time since last visit
- Contrasts between VHFP locations and time spent in away locations
- Visitor demographics and psychological profile
- Travel companions on VHFP return visits
- Residual presence or absence of VFR in the location to which the individual returns

Beyond the influencing variables

- Want to explore the core of the experience
- Journey through aspects of emotion, time perception, memory and identity

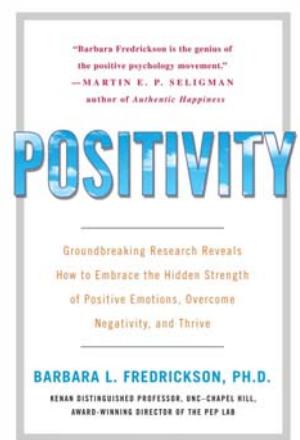
Seeing consistencies in the chaos

- What array of concepts and ideas might we bring to the topic to move beyond the obvious?
- Leading ideas from peak researchers.. Deep scholarship



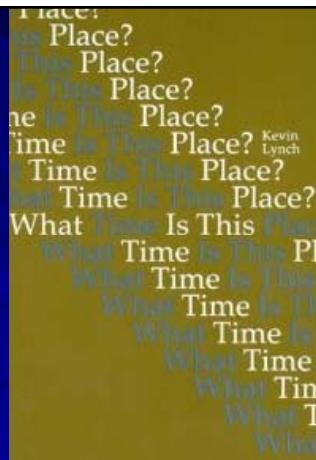
The broaden and build theory of emotions

- Beyond raw emotions... Consumption emotions = more sophisticated and broadly positive emotions
- Positive emotions such as gratitude, reflection, interest, share a common potential to grow human capacity.



Psychology of possibility

- But the recall of the past can be puzzling, mindfulness inducing- we have to work out how to deal with it
- Revisiting the past and engaging with our images of time in positive ways may benefit well being

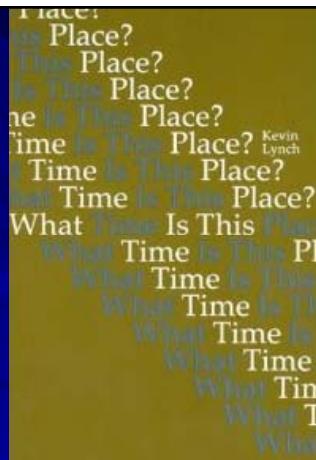


Kevin Lynch

- Studies of places and place making
- What time is this place and who were we?
- Places are positive for us when they heighten our sense of the flow of time
- IFF, we can celebrate the past while making connections with the present and the future.

Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory

- 66 questions are used to cover 4 time perspectives
- Not the events of the past that most strongly influence our lives – our view of them
- Positive past group were healthier, exercised more, showed greater optimism and were happier.



But what about remembering?
Does not accurate recall fill in the puzzle-
the search for meaning ?

- Remembering does not consist of layers of well preserved immutable little files waiting to be unearthed - sorry Freud and Proust...
- It is an imaginative reconstruction or construction
- Remembering is built on attitude towards a whole mass of organized past reactions or experience and to a little outstanding detail (Bartlett 1932)

The cumulative power of the ideas

- The trigger for the memory is initially sensory-a sound, a sign or a significant scent from the past which activates the recall
- Basic emotions are modulated by more sophisticated overlays of (mutable) predispositions to think about the world in more or less positive ways
- The past can caress us into wellbeing

Research opportunities

- A multi-method, varied paradigm model of assembling information

Studying Going Home

- Literature of ideas- especially autobiographies and stream of consciousness styles
- Social representations “going home” in music and lyrics
- Focus groups for experiences across locations
- Travel blogs-for initial insights
- Tracking on site lived experiences

Studying going home

- Serial time- what do we remember at what time? –employing the Zimbardo Who was I? approach.
- Virtual going home studies-Google maps and the experience of place
- Survey work and organising variables
- Appeal of going home promotions
(Return to Renmark or Rotterdam, Back to Berri or Blackpool)

Publication possibilities

A minds and hearts opportunity
I Seek contact from those interested.....

Thankyou.

