

**The Voluntourist Gaze: Framing volunteer tourism experiences as portrayed in
Facebook**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to begin to analyze the discourse of volunteer tourism. More specifically, a holistic examination of the hermeneutic circle of volunteer tourism that takes into consideration the messages being communicated by volunteer tourism organizations, the voluntourist's interpretation and consumption of the messages, and in turn the re-distribution of the messages via social media using photographs and comments.

The sending organization pre-trip materials were reviewed to determine if volunteer tourism participants experienced a voluntourist gaze and subsequently captured similar images as marketed by the sending organization, thus completing the hermeneutic circle. Using grounded theory, photographs were coded to flush out underlying themes and patterns. These themes and patterns were incorporated into semi-structured interviews that were conducted, using a purposive sample of participants in a volunteer tourism experience with a student volunteer organization, to document the experience of the voluntourist. Underlying patterns further studied included: tourist gaze (Urry, 1990) vs. family gaze (Haldrup and Larsen, 2003), characterizations of hosts (Caton & Santos, 2008), and the characterizations of other images (Schmallegger et al., 2010) utilizing content and semiotic analysis. These results were triangulated with the interview responses to interpret the story shared on Facebook. Additionally, Barthes (1977) theory

of anchorage and relay was utilized to analyze the photographs uploaded onto Facebook and the related captions and comments to reveal the story shared.

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Chapter I Introduction

Volunteer tourism has been defined as a form of tourism that ‘makes use of holiday-makers who volunteer to fund and work on conservation projects around the world and which aims to provide sustainable alternative travel that can assist in community development, scientific research, or ecological restoration’ (Wearing, 2004, p.217). McGehee and Santos (2005) defined volunteer tourism as ‘utilizing discretionary time and income to go out of the regular sphere of activity to assist others in need’ (p.760). Volunteer projects involve many different types of work, with some of the most common project categories being community welfare, environmental conservation and research, education, construction, business development, and healthcare (Callanan and Thomas, 2005). A recent study claims that the most significant growth in the volunteer tourism sector has occurred since 1990, and the study estimates that 1.6 million people participate in volunteer tourism projects every year (Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008). Academic research on the subject began almost a decade later, with some of the earliest work being conducted by Wearing (2001) and McGehee (2002).

Researchers studying volunteer tourism have looked at participants and their motivations (Cohen, 1979; Mundt, 1994; Thomas, 2001; Wearing, 2001; Broad, 2003; Wearing and Deane, 2003; Miller, 2003; McGehee and Santos, 2005; Broad and Jenkins, 2008; Matthews, 2008; Söderman and Snead, 2008; Andereck, McGehee, Lee, and Clemmons, 2011), the structure of sending organizations (Wearing, 2004; Wearing et al. 2005; Coghlan, 2008), perceptions of the host community (Singh, 2002, 2004; Broad, 2003; Higgins-Desboilles, 2003; Elliot, 2008; McGehee and Andereck, 2008), social movement participation (Hall, 1994; Light and Wong, 1975; McGehee, 2002; Tonkin, 1995), and both the benefits and drawbacks of volunteer tourism (Guttentag, 2009). While research in this area of tourism is steadily growing, one gap identified by this literature review persists: an analysis of the overall discourse of volunteer tourism. More

specifically, a holistic examination of the hermeneutic circle of volunteer tourism is needed that takes into consideration the messages being communicated by volunteer tourism organizations, the voluntourist's interpretation and consumption of the messages, and in turn the re-distribution of the messages via social media using photographs and comments (Figure A.1).

One goal of this research is to begin to uncover themes of the voluntourist gaze, particularly how it is first portrayed by the volunteer tourism organization, and then how it is reflected in participant motivations regarding volunteer tourism and finally how it is manifest in the participant's photographs. The voluntourist gaze will be analyzed based on the theory of the tourist gaze commonly used in destination image research (Garrod, 2008).

Initially, the advertising materials of the volunteer tourism organization, Student Worldly Volunteers (SWV), were analyzed to determine what tools were used to promote their program and in turn how their voluntourist gaze was crafted. SWV's voluntourist gaze was then deconstructed using content analysis of the text and images pertaining to the purpose of volunteering and motivations, characterization of images, characterization of locals, and the tourist gaze vs. the family gaze.

For the photographic analysis component of the study, this research focused on analyzing the VEP images to discover what the participant found meaningful enough to photograph. For the purpose of this study, 'meaning' was determined by the participant via the photographs and comments she/he selected to upload onto his or her Facebook page, therefore sharing their perspectives of the story of the volunteer tourism experience. By using both images and comments, the participant is applying Barthes (1977) communication theory of anchorage and relay. Barthes argued that the combination of the two minimizes the potential for misinterpretation by the viewer.

Once the images and related comments were content analyzed to flush out initial themes and patterns, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants who worked on the same project. These interviews were based on the findings of the content analysis, discussions on motivations, expectations and satisfaction with the experience, reconstruction of the voluntourist gaze, characterization of the host community, and their use of Facebook specifically regarding uploading travel photographs. Simply put, the goal of this study is to see what story the participant chooses to tell of their volunteer tourism experience to the many different groups of friends on his or her social network through both photographs and comments.

Chapter II Review of the Literature

In order to accomplish the task of providing a foundation for the discourse of volunteer tourism, three different sections of literature will be reviewed. The first section of the literature review involves work surrounding the volunteer tourism phenomenon, focusing on previous studies that have been conducted involving motivations and host-guest interactions. The second section of the literature review introduces the theories of the tourist gaze and the hermeneutic circle, and includes different methods that have been used to effectively analyze these theories. The literature review will conclude with an examination of research involving social networking, specifically focusing on Facebook. The encompassing literature review will highlight current gaps and suggest how this study will attempt to fill those gaps. Further validation for this study will be discussed in the justification of the research section and then will conclude with the research questions for the study.

Volunteer Tourism

Participant Motivations of Volunteer Tourism

Research surrounding motivations in tourism in general has evolved from identifying factors that motivate tourists to attempting to classify different types of tourists based on their motivations. One of the earliest motivational scales used was Maslow's (1954, 1970) 'hierarchy of needs' – physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self actualization for understanding travel behavior and demand for tourism. Cohen (1979) identified five 'modes' of the tourist experience on the basis of where and how people currently locate themselves in relation to their own culture (Wearing, Deville, and Lyons, 2008). These modes, recreational, diversionary, experiential, experimental and existential, give structure to the variety of tourism experiences. Further, Pearce (1982, 1993) also identified five levels of travel motives

known as the Travel Career Ladder, which include: relaxation, stimulation, relationship, self-esteem/development, and fulfillment. Dann (1977) suggested a two tiered motivational scheme where tourists were either 'pulled' to a particular travel experience or destination based on motivations, or was 'pushed' by them. The pull factors are external factors that affect where a person travels to fulfill the identified needs or desires while push factors are social-psychological motives that drive the desire to travel (Brown, 2005). While a variety of motivational scales have been developed and applied to tourism as a broad field there is only one motivational scale that directly relates to volunteer tourism. Weiler and Richins (1995) developed a continuum of voluntourist types which included shallow voluntourists, extreme ecotourists, intermediate voluntourists, and deep voluntourists.

In one of the earliest studies of volunteer tourism, Wearing (2001) found that seven motivational categories emerged as to why individuals choose to participate in volunteer tourism: altruism, travel and adventure, structure of the program, right time and right place, personal growth, cultural exchange and learning, and professional development, (Wearing, 2001). Additional discussion of each of these studies, according to type of motivation, is found below.

Altruism

The first motivator, altruism, included various levels of romanticism and concepts related to saving the world, doing good, and helping others (Wearing, 2001). The underlying aspects of altruism were based on community service experience, media images of the destination the participant has been exposed to, and the wish to give something back (Wearing, 2001). Brown and Morrison (2003) later found that one outcome of volunteer tourism is that this type of vacation can create a potential scenario where every volunteer traveler can be an 'ambassador of peace'. Lyons (2007) analyzed diaries and web blogs of participants of a fundraising/cycling

adventure with OXFAM and discovered that a significant component of the blogs related to the altruistic experiences of volunteering. Interestingly, Lyons (2007) also found that altruism related to volunteering remained a background motivation to the adventure of cycling throughout the country- except when participants were immersed in the community they were aiding. Similarly, Coghlan (2008) studied project leaders' estimations of volunteers' motivations claims and found that while there was an element of altruism that motivates voluntourists, self-gratification is equal to or greater than the altruism that drives participation in these projects.

Travel and adventure

The second type of motivation, travel and adventure, relates to the excitement of going new places and meeting new people (Wearing, 2001). Simpson (2005) found voluntourists desired to travel to unique and atypical destinations, including destinations in the developing world, rather than destinations selected by many gap year travelers. While a unique destination was identified as a motivation, the desire to experience the destination with participants from a similar background was also mentioned to instill normalcy in an unfamiliar setting (Simpson, 2005). In order to capitalize on this travel and adventure motivation for volunteer tourism participants, sending organizations have begun exploring other innovative ways to attract and engage voluntourists who may wish to provide their voluntary labor in less direct ways (Lyons, 2007). This can be seen in the variety and duration of volunteer projects and activities in which the volunteer can participate.

Structure of the program and Right time/right place

Volunteer tourism sending organizations have recognized the third motivator, structure of the program, by offering variety in the length of programs, which allows potential volunteer tourism participants to choose the experience that best fits their needs. Sending organizations

have capitalized on participant motivations by fusing adventure and volunteerism into an innovative tourism experience (Wearing, et al. 2005). This flexibility also works to fulfill the fourth motivation identified by Wearing as the right time/right place. The voluntourists interviewed listed a range of personal and social factors to lead them believe a volunteer vacation 'was the right thing for them' (Wearing, 2001 p.69). Not only are the personal and social factors indicators of the right time/ place motivator, but also the availability of volunteering opportunities also plays a part in the potential voluntourist believing a project is right for them (Simpson, 2005).

Personal growth

Wearing (1998) writes that the act of travel and the physical and emotional removal from one's home world essentially creates a circumstance in which it becomes important that 'the human agent' focus on adapting the self rather than the environment. The contemplation, interpretation of and interaction with the surrounding environments of the host community provide the opportunity for tourists to learn new forms of behavior and develop appropriate coping mechanisms, sometimes as a matter of survival (Wearing et al., 2008) as a form of personal growth. Personal growth relates to the participant's desire to focus on their self, cultural exchange and learning, and professional interests, (Wearing, 2001). The most important development that may occur in the voluntourist is that of a personal nature, that of a greater awareness of self (Wearing, 2001). Similarly, Callanan and Thomas (2005) argued that, in some projects, the volunteers are primarily interested in personal gain related to their self and their development while the project benefits to the host community were questionable. One example of a personal gain motivation related to the desire for participants to learn or hone their foreign language skills (Simpson, 2005).

Cultural exchange and learning

This motivation is primarily concerned with experiencing the host community along with the sense of sharing the experience with other participants. It has been suggested that the interactions between volunteers and their hosts have led to improved cross-cultural understanding (Raymond and Hall, 2008). During the experience, it has been found that voluntourists gain a more informed understanding of the local culture, and of the issues facing the host community (Jones, 2005; Lewis, 2005; Wearing, 2001). Additionally, relationships developed among voluntourists can also reduce racial, cultural and social boundaries (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2003; Hustinx, 2001; McGehee & Santos, 2005; McIntosh & Bonnemann, 2006; Wearing, 2001).

Professional development

Wearing (2001) discovered that the opportunity for professional development was also a motivation of voluntourists related to personal growth. Many volunteer tourism projects have minimal or no requirements regarding the skill set needed to participate in a project (Guttentag, 2009). For many organizations, the only requirement to participate is the desire to help others (Brown and Morrison, 2003). Voluntourists have the opportunity to select a project in order to gain a specific experience, or simply sample a specific field of expertise (Wearing, 2001). Voluntourists get a level of experience and decision making that, in some cases, would not be available to them at home (Brown, 2003). This can be seen when voluntourists undertake scientific research projects. Additionally, voluntourists are doing things in host community hospitals, construction projects (Callanan and Thomas, 2005), and schools (Griffith, 2003; Potter, 2004) that would never be allowed at home (Simpson, 2005).

While other studies have been conducted to further understand the motivations of volunteer tourism participants (Broad, 2003; Brown, 2005; Matthews, 2008; Söderman and Snead, 2008; Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004) the majority of the motivations identified can be categorized into three interrelated benefits noted by Wearing (2001): increased awareness of self, increased awareness of others, and ultimately, personal growth and development. These different motivation categories support Gazley's (2001) claim that both traditional volunteering and tourism motivations may apply to the volunteer vacationer, who may also be motivated by both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards (Gazley, 2001 as cited in Broad, 2003).

One gap found in the review of the literature related to motivations of voluntourists is that no one has looked at how motivations are manifested in photography, which is an alternate method for the study of motivation. In his study of mainstream tourists, Markwell (1997) found that the content and images taken in mainstream tourists' photographs often reflect the way in which they want to perceive the destination, and therefore, their own personal perceptions and biases can be seen through the photographs. One aim of this study was to build upon the foundation of research related to the motivations of volunteer tourism participants by triangulating the motivations discussed by participants in personal interviews with the images participants captured and uploaded onto Facebook. This mixed method analysis would assist in determining if the motivations given by the participant to engage in a volunteer tourism experience are manifested in the photographs and accompanying captions uploaded onto Facebook.

Interacting with the Host Community

Volunteer tourism experiences vary widely in terms of the amount and quality of host-guest interactions afforded to participants and local residents. While some research has been

conducted with the specific focus of host community and voluntourist interactions (Broad, 2003; Higgins-Desboilles, 2003; McGehee and Andereck, 2008, Singh, 2002, 2004; Zahra and McGehee, (in press) the work falls far short of providing any definitive conclusions regarding the value and impacts of these interactions on both the host and the guest.

Broad (2003) examined volunteers at the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project (GRP) in Thailand and the relationship between volunteers, their volunteering experiences and the eventual outcomes. Clifton and Benson (2006) explored the socio-cultural impacts and economic benefits to host communities using a case study from Indonesia. Higgins-Desboilles (2003), investigated the possibility for tourism to contribute to the socio-cultural development of Australia to foster social justice and reconciliation within the divided society of indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. McGehee and Andereck (2008) studied the relationship between the residents of two volunteer tourism host communities and the voluntourists who visited them. Singh (2002, 2004) reported a case study in the Himalayas that highlighted person-to-person relationships that developed between host community residents and voluntourists (cited in McGehee and Andereck, 2008). Most recently, Zahra and McGehee (in press) focused on the impact of volunteer tourism on the host community utilizing a community capitals perspective.

Themes that have emerged as a result of these studies directly focusing on the host community include: personal change experienced by the volunteer, local resident increased sense of pride in host culture, economic impacts including income generators, income leakages, and dependency, satisfying curiosity of the 'other', reinforcing stereotypes, and the rationalization of poverty.

Personal change experienced by the volunteer

Broad (2003) examined the experiences of volunteers outside of their volunteering duties including interactions with the local community, tourist activities, their perceptions of their experiences, and any personal changes that occurred as a result of volunteering. Two key themes that emerged of what volunteers considered to be positive aspects of the project were socializing and working with co-volunteers and experiencing the Thai culture. Additionally, the majority of volunteers identified some form of personal change, however, there was little evidence that volunteers had changed or expected to change their daily lives in any considerable way.

Local resident increased sense of pride in host culture

Higgins-Desboilles (2003) focused on a camp where initially, school children would go to learn about the Ngarrindjeri culture and history in an attempt to bridge the divided society of indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. As the camp has expanded, it became open to a variety of patrons such as university students, reconciliation groups, non-governmental organizations concerned with social justice, tour groups and other indigenous groups (Higgins-Desboilles, 2003). The focus on her study was to analyze the guest books placed in the camp museum between 1990 and 2002 to determine if the experiences at the camp affected the participants. Findings suggested that non-indigenous visitors were appreciative of what they learned and indigenous visitors felt an increased sense of pride of their culture after the experience (Higgins-Desboilles, 2003). Comments written by Aboriginal and other indigenous visitors included: 'affirms my pride in being an Ngarrindjeri', 'I saw photos of my grandfather and father. Made me proud to be an Ngarrindjeri descendent', and 'exactly what's needed for educating foreigners' (Higgins-Desboilles, 2003).

In a related study that focused on resident attitudes towards voluntourists, Clifton and Benson (2006) found that the dominant attitude towards the voluntourists of the local residents was one of acceptance and enthusiasm. Members of the host community frequently stated that the presence of voluntourists choosing to travel to their remote area increased their pride in the region. Additionally, communal benefits, such as the novelty of having young foreign people stay in the villages and the subsequent excitement that generated were highlighted as positive outcomes more so than individual benefits.

In their work targeting NGO-related voluntourism organizations in the Philippines, Zahra and McGehee (in press) found an increased sense of pride in the host residents' identity and their culture as a result of the volunteer-host interaction. In fact, the impact was so strong that it resulted in the revival of cultural events and activities (Zahra and McGehee, in press).

Economic impacts – income generators, income leakages, and dependency

A number of studies in volunteer tourism have included a component that examined the economic impacts of volunteer tourism at the community level. In the same study mentioned previously, Clifton and Benson (2006) determined that while limited in duration due to seasonality, 'research ecotourism' an analogous term for volunteer tourism, provided grounds for optimism with regard to income generated activities within the host community. Examples of income generators included direct employment of local residents, rental of accommodation for the volunteers, and the sale of handicrafts and food (Clifton and Benson, 2006). However, the distribution of the number of local residents who were able to economically benefit from the presence of voluntourists depended on the assets or personal skills of the local resident. For example, direct employment most often required the resident to speak English or possess boat handling skills (Clifton and Benson, 2006). In addition, only local residents who owned their

home could collect rents from the participant. The sale of handicrafts and food, however, was open to the greatest distribution of host residents.

Conversely, Zahra and McGehee (in press) found the host community to be either neutral to financial capital or even experience income leakages related to the presence of voluntourists. Interviews with local residents revealed that often local residents would buy a soft drink or cake to show their thanks and appreciation for the voluntourist. However, the residents would not purchase these luxury items for their own family because they were too poor to afford these items for themselves (Zahra and McGehee, in press). Another example of an income leakage related to the presence of voluntourists was the regular habit of community members giving volunteers crafts they would normally sell to other tourists (Zahra and McGehee, in press).

McGehee and Andereck (2008) studied two volunteer tourism organizations; one in a rural community in Appalachia and one located in an urban area in Baja California, Mexico. One theme consistent between the two organizations studied related to the potential for economic dependency of the local residents on volunteer tourism. Both organizations studied did not support any kind of free handouts of items in order to preserve the dignity of local residents and mitigate dependency on outside sources. The forethought of the organization's management in to recognize the sensitivity for potential for dependency, and enacting a policy to mitigate this potential negative impact demonstrate that long term effects of volunteer tourism are taken into consideration.

Satisfying curiosity of the 'other'

Travel is frequently embraced as a means of satisfying curiosity and accumulating experiential knowledge of the 'other' (Matthews, 2008). Locals are constructed as the anchor points of an experience; they remind travelers of their location and ensure that they are not

simply set loose in an increasingly homogenized world (Matthews, 2008). Elsrud (2001) argued that backpackers and independent travelers are concerned with otherness as authenticity only in so far as they assure increased status or cultural capital. Sending organizations could play a role in this as Simpson (2004, 2005) suggest that these organizations advertise a one dimensional view of 'the other' so it can easily be sold or consumed. This is done through sweeping generalizations in various promotional materials and can continue throughout the volunteer trip due to lack of significant engagement with 'the other' (Griffin, 2004; Simpson, 2005).

Travelers who are more 'inwardly' than 'outwardly' focused and motivated by concerns with personal transformation, desires for experiential knowledge, altruistic impulses, and a need or desire to create common bonds with members of the host community (Cohen, 2003). However, for the creation of common bonds between the volunteer tourism participants and the host community to happen, the voice of the other must be heard, rather than falling back on mere sightseeing, curiosity, objectification, inferiorization and exploitation (Wearing, 2002). There is, in a sense, this idea that without the presence of 'real' locals, one could be anywhere, or worse still, one could just as easily be in their home country, negating the very reason for travel in the first place (Matthews, 2008). In interviews with gap-year volunteers, Simpson (2004) noted a difference between the host community and the volunteers; emphasizing a difference and establishing a dichotomy of 'them and us' as opposed to both cultures finding common ground with each other.

Reinforcing stereotypes

While cultural exchange and learning was found to be a primary motivation of volunteer tourism participants, the quality of the interaction between voluntourists and host communities can vary significantly by participants. Raymond and Hall (2008) argued that facilitating contact

with the 'other' through a volunteer tourism experience cannot be assumed to lead to long-term international understanding and respect between the two cultures. Raymond and Hall (2008) noted that several interviewees implied that the positive relationships they had developed with individuals from different countries were simply 'exceptions to the rule' rather than a normal occurrence. International volunteering may in fact reinforce existing stereotypes and increase the viewpoint of the volunteers and host community having little in common with each other (Simpson, 2004; 2005). One example of a stereotype which tends to occur is when voluntourists inappropriately take on the roll of the expert or teacher when working with the host community, regardless of their experience or qualifications (Raymond and Hall, 2008). This stereotype represents the idea of the westerner as racially and culturally superior to the local community (Raymond and Hall, 2008). Wearing and Wearing (2006) suggest that recreational and diversionary tourists (tourists seeking entertainment and a temporarily escape from routine life) understand the local population and culture as 'other' and either before or after the experience come to view the host culture as inferior to their own dominant and advance culture.

Rationalization of poverty

Simpson (2004) found that volunteers commonly remark on how happy locals appear despite not being economically wealthy. One volunteer tourism participant stated 'here, they don't have TV's but it doesn't bother them because they don't expect one, I think they are a lot more grateful for what they get' (Simpson, 2004). Interviews conducted by Raymond and Hall (2008) produced similar findings where one participant stated that 'they don't know any better and they haven't had what we have so to them that's quite normal and they're happy being like that'. The rationalization of poverty by volunteer participants undermines the positive ethic commonly associated with volunteer tourism. If participants return from a volunteer tourism

experience with the thoughts that host communities prefer to live in poverty because they enjoy their social and emotional wealth, it allows the equality differences to be justified.

The Hermeneutic Circle and the Tourist Gaze

As evidenced by the review of the literature above, while still in relative infancy, the research in the host-guest interactions manifest in volunteer tourism is growing. However, one gap found in the literature is a lack of examination of how relationships between the local residents and voluntourists are portrayed through photographs and comments posted on Facebook. In other words, how are the relationships with the host community captured in photographic images and subsequently framed for the participant's social networks? This topic of study is important due to the vast reach of the photographs. For instance, unless increased privacy settings are in place, all members of an individual's social network can view photographs uploaded onto Facebook. Additionally, an individual can edit their preferences to share photographs with the social networks of their friends, and anyone who would happen to search for their profile page. Of the topics discussed above, satisfying curiosity of the 'other', reinforcing stereotypes, and the rationalization of poverty, all varying degrees of negative impacts of volunteer tourism potentially could exponentially increase. Friends of a voluntourist's social network would only be privy to the relationship framed on Facebook, and could make judgments based only on the portion the voluntourist wishes to share. Conversely, the framing of the relationship of the voluntourist and the host residents could also be a tool of breaking down stereotypes and educating entire social networks about issues occurring in parts of the world which may not make mainstream news. Given this, initial research on how these relationships are framed on Facebook is very pertinent.

The tourist gaze was a concept developed in 1990 by John Urry and subsequently adopted by many (Baker, 2009; Crang, 1997; Jasson, 2002; MacCannell, 2001; Perkins and Thorns, 2001; Prins and Webster, 2010; Volkman, 1990). The tourist gaze is elaborated as a particular “way of seeing” the world that is enforced on tourists and essentially conditioned by the imagery created for tourism destinations by the tourism industry (Garrod, 2008). Urry (1990) writes that:

Photography is . . . intimately bound up with the tourist gaze. Photographic images organize our anticipation or daydreaming about the places we might gaze on. When we are away we record images of what we have gazed on. And we partly choose where to go to capture places on film. The obtaining of photographic images in part organizes our experiences as tourists. And our memories of places are largely structured through photographic images and the mainly verbal text we weave around images when they are on show to others. The tourist gaze thus irreducibly involves the rapid circulation of photographic images.

Rojek (1997) argues that ‘most tourists feel they have not fully absorbed a sight until they stand before it, see it, and take a photograph to record the moment’ (p.58). Crang (1997) suggested that photographers need to think carefully through the process of picturing and seeing to understand how the photographs taken may frame events in space and time. Photographs capture the highlights of the trip and serve as a vital element of both remembering the event and sharing the trip with others (White, 2010). Urry (1990) develops some more nuanced senses of visual appreciation, qualifying the idea that it is all a quest for an authentic experience, suggesting equally important framings around different pleasures and indeed the possibilities of ironic engagement with viewing, where visitors are not seeking authenticity so much as seeking

to play with the idea of the production of the authentic (Crang, 1997). This finding is consistent with Culler who argues that “all over the world the unsung armies of semioticians, the tourists, are fanning out in search of the signs of Frenchness, typical Italian behavior, exemplary Oriental scenes, typical American throughways, and traditional English pubs (Culler, 1981, p.127).

Haldrup and Larsen (2003), argue that tourist photography is more than simply a “preprogrammed shooting of image-driven attractions.” In their research, Haldrup and Larsen suggest that instead of the desire to consume places, tourists focus their photography more on social activities. According to this view, the tourism destination is the setting for the “family gaze,” which uses tourism merely as a stage for framing personal stories revolving around social relations, particularly among the photographer’s accompanying family, which can later be told and re-told through the medium of the photograph album or slideshow (Garrod, 2008).

Many snapshots made by tourists complete the hermeneutic circle. This circle begins with the photographic appearances that advertise and anticipate a trip, moves on to a search for these photographs in the experience of travel itself, and ends up with travelers certifying and sealing the very same images in their own photographic productions (Albers and James, 1988). Images are considered to be crucial in determining a number of important consumer variables, including destination choice, tourist behavior, and product satisfaction (Garrod, 2008). Pitchford (2008) argues that destination promotional materials speak to tourists so that a set of expectations is created about the destination. Tourism marketing, in these terms, is a practice in which tourism marketers and operators provide tourists with a range of representational images of what places are like, and tourists begin their attempts to understand those places through the imaginary construction of reality contained within those texts (Goss, 1993). Marketers must ensure that the images they transmit reflect as fully as possible the expectations, preferences, and motivations of

tourists (Tuohino and Pitkanen, 2004). A destination's image is more than simply the sum of its tangible attributes: images are constructed not just from the visual look of a place, but from its atmosphere and the emotions it evokes (Jenkins 1999).

Many tourist destinations have a strong identity and sense of place, which is embodied in the destinations history, culture, landscape and social activity. Photography selectively extracts from this multifaceted expression and reduces it to a series of icons (Human, 1999). This distorts the identity, trivializes the place, and contributes to the consuming nature of tourism (Human, 1999). In many ways, costs of marketing are decreasing, it is essential that each visual have the greatest possible impact on the target market (Day et al., 2002). Consequently, the photographs chosen to represent the destination image are often photographs of stereotypical characters and posed them performing stereotypical activities (Albers and James, 1988; Mellinger, 1994). The photograph appears to be believable as a direct representation of reality, a "true" reflection of actual places, people, and events (Markwick, 2001). These images thus "authenticate", so that the act of taking a photograph or buying a postcard on holiday effectively serves to represent and signal the genuineness of the touristic experience (Sontag 1979). Therefore, the concern of the tourism operator and promoter is not necessarily to provide an experience of the authenticity of place or people, but rather to provide an experience of the place or people that will authenticate the images and other representations of place promotion (Perkins and Thorns, 2001). This finding relates to the theory of the tourist gaze and the hermeneutic circle in that if destinations are promoting images that authenticate images and other representations of place promotion rather than the true reflection of the people, places, and events, then participants of volunteer tourism experiences will seek out the images portrayed in marketing materials rather than the true essence of the destination. This study attempted to analyze the images located on the

sending organizations website, promotional materials, and other correspondence provided to the participants to look for similarities, patterns, and/or themes between these materials similar to the photographs taken by the participants and if these materials influenced the voluntourist gaze in any way and completed the hermeneutic circle.

Analyzing photographs taken by tourists is considered a useful method to elicit destination image, as photographs contain both individual features of a place and the holistic and psychological impressions of the place (MacKay & Couldwell, 2004). The content and images taken in tourists' photographs often reflect the way in which tourists want to perceive the destination, therefore, their own personal perceptions and biases can be seen through the photographs (Markwell, 1997).

Jenkins (2003) empirically tested Urry's (1990) concept of the closed circle of reproduction of the tourist gaze focusing on Australian backpackers. Jenkins' major conclusion is that, very much like the tourists in Urry's tourist gaze, backpackers to Australia do indeed tend to seek out particular views that were considered "photogenic" or "iconic," and to reproduce these in their photographs (Garrod, 2008). A similar study was conducted by Caton and Santos (2008) who asked whether Western students who visit formerly colonized areas reproduce in their own photographs the media depictions of hosts and host cultures that have drawn so much criticism in the literature, or whether their actual experiences in these destinations override the media stereotypes, leading them to create images that break the hermeneutic circle. They found that the images and captions referring to the 'other' produced by tourists seem to echo tourism media representations quite closely, despite the fact that the participants in this study were traveling with a coordinated program professing the explicit goals of providing a critical context

for international exposure and facilitating meaningful cross-cultural understanding to reduce stereotypes and emphasize equality and interdependence of all people (Caton and Santos, 2008).

Photographs can serve as supplementary data for illustrating and illuminating aspects of the tourist experience and its associated travel environment. They can also become a primary source of data for understanding the form, meaning, and process of photographic representation in tourism (Albers and James, 1988). As the use of photography in research has developed, a number of different terms have been coined including: photo-interviewing (photo-elicitation), autodiving, visitor employed photographs (reflexive photographs), and photo novella (photovoice) (Hurworth and Clark et al., 2005). Photo-interviewing and photo-elicitation involve the use of photographs to prompt informants to provoke a response (Hurworth and Clark et al., 2005). This differs from autodiving where photographs of the interviewees themselves were used in research to strengthen the qualitative data. This process gives the informant a strong voice and authority over the research process as the interviewee is able to see his own behavior (Heisley and Levy, 1991). Visitor employed photographs (VEP) involve distributing cameras to respondents and asking them to photograph aspects of the site that relate to the research objectives (MacKay and Couldwell, 2004). The VEPs taken and used in reflective interviews are then characterized as reflexive photographs. The main differences between photo-interviewing/ photo-elicitation studies and those using Visitor Employed Photography (VEP) are with photo-interviewing the photographs are selected by the researcher, and then used as prompts in an interviewing process, rather than incorporating the VEP's taken by the research participant. It is possible for participants to include themselves in the photographs they take and therefore, autodiving can be incorporated into VEP and reflexive photographs. The process of photo novella (picture stories), also termed photovoice, uses photographs as a means of empowering

participants to create narratives about the events and routines that make up day to day existence (Hurworth and Clark et al., 2005). Similar to VEP and reflexive photography, the photographers are the informants themselves.

This study attempted to incorporate many of these techniques into its methods. The main focus of this study was the VEPs taken during a volunteer tourism experience. These photographs were analyzed and then discussed with the participant who took the photograph resulting in the VEP photo transforming into a reflexive photograph. In other words, participants were challenged to consider their views and experiences in depth, and hopefully enabled to express feelings and ideas they would find hard to verbalize (Stedman, Beckley, Wallace and Ambard, 2004). Since all members of the volunteer tourism experience were connected via Facebook, all participants of the trip have had the opportunity to view photographs of them uploaded by other participants. A portion of the semi-structure interview will be to incorporate autodiving, which will have the participant discuss their behavior on the volunteer project, how they felt when they captured the image, and why they chose to uploaded to their social network. Finally, each participant has already sorted through their entire population of VEPs taken during the trip and based on their personal selection criteria uploaded a subset of the photographs onto their social network. During this process they ordered the photographs in some fashion and incorporated photo novella to tell the story of their volunteer tourism experience to their social network.

VEP was first used as a practical research technique in the early 70's by Cherem and Traweek (1977), and later developed by Cherem and Driver (1983) and Chenoweth (1984) to investigate landscape management issues, usually in wilderness settings (Garrod, 2008). The majority of the studies that have utilized VEP as a research method have studied landscape

preferences, outdoor recreation experiences, and community planning (Dakin, 2003; Loeffler, 2004; Oku and Fukamachi, 2006; OPENspace, 2005; Schuster, Johnson and Taylor, 2004; Stedman et al, 2004; Taylor, Czarnowski, Sexton and Flick, 1995; Yamashita, 2002), children's place perceptions and experiences (Aitken and Wingate, 1993; Dodman, 2003; Douglas, 1998; Germain, 2004), the field of health and well-being (Hurworth et al, 2005; Rapport, Doel, and Elwyn, 2007; Wang and Burris, 1997), sociological research (Harper, 1988), and personality research studies (Burke and Dollinger, 2005; Ziller and Lewis, 1981).

Perhaps surprisingly, in view of the intimate relationship that exists between photography and the tourist experience, there have been relatively few applications of VEP in the field of tourism (Garrod, 2008). Due to the underlying rich market data in VEP photography, researchers are increasingly incorporating photographs taken by the consumer into tourism and leisure research (Markwell, 1997). Although VEP photographs are mostly taken by novices, tourists' photographs often contain layers of meaning beyond the obvious appearance (LaGrange, 2005). These motivations include reproducing existing destination images (Jenkins, 2003), highlighting personal accomplishments (Lemelin, 2006), documenting social roles (Larsen, 2006), and attempting to capture the essence of special places (Garlick, 2002). To date, no research was found that utilized VEP (in its pure or hybrid form) in the area of volunteer tourism. The majority of research of photo-based analysis has revolved around the concept of the tourist gaze and destination image.

The purpose of this study was to determine the stories volunteer tourism participants wish to tell to their social network via the photographs taken by the participants of the volunteer tourism experience. The main focus of this study focused on analyzing the second half of the hermeneutic circle and hence, the tourist gaze. One manifestation of the second half of the

hermeneutic circle is social networks with the prominent social network of Facebook. This next section will provide a review of the literature of the social networking phenomenon.

Social networking and Facebook

Increasingly, one of the most common places used to share photographs with friends and relatives is via social networking sites. There are a number of terms and definitions associated with social networking. According to Berg & Teriö, (2010), a social medium is an online forum where people can connect, communicate and interact with each other and their mutual friends through either instant messaging (real-time based communication) or social network sites. Correa et al (2009) define a social network as a web-based service which allows its users to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, to articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and to view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. Social media is a relatively new phenomenon, only recently introduced in the academic research field (Berg & Teriö, 2010). Social networking sites and services have been studied from several theoretical perspectives including network theory (Paolillo & Wright, 2005), signaling theory (Lampe, Ellison, & Steinfeld, 2007), human geography theory (Humphreys, 2007), social contract theory (Snyder, Carpenter, & Slauson, 2006), and the sociology of groups (Baym, 2007; Boyd, 2008, Knobel and Lankshear, 2008). Other studies have focused on mapping traits and behavior patterns of users of social media (Berg and Teriö, 2010; Correa et al., 2009; Farquhar, 2009; Ross et al., 2009; Zhao et al., 2008).

Social networking sites (SNSs) represent a larger transition in social life toward mediated communication among pre-teens to early-20-somethings; these technologies increasingly are part of their social lives (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). In fact, *not* being online is associated with lowered social standing (Boyd, 2004). Life in an SNS ostensibly revolves around performing for

one's peer group (Campbell, 2006; Choi, 2006). SNSs are structured as personal (or 'egocentric') networks, with the individual at the center of their own community (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

According to Correa et al (2009), one of the major functions of social media as a mechanism is that people can connect, communicate and interact with each other. When asked what they perceived to be the reason for using social media, and what they gained from it, respondents agreed that the main purpose for their social media use was to keep in touch with friends and acquaintances (Correa et al, 2009). Facebook turned out to be the main topic of discussion in most interviews as all respondents had an account there, and it was also the social media in which a majority of respondents claimed to be most active (Berg and Teriö, 2010).

Facebook is a SNS which allows users to build a profile page within a distinctive online service or utility, to connect with others in mutually agreed-upon ways, and to view and "traverse this list of connections and those made by others within the system" (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 2). Membership and active participation in groups on Facebook comprise socially recognized ways of signaling interest in, or commitment to, some particular thing (Knobel & Lankshear, 2008). Further, Knobel & Lankshear (2008) go onto identify three different networks encompassing Facebook: (1) the formally identified networks afforded by the Facebook utility itself (traversing countries, regions, cities and universities), (2) they may comprise the social networks within one's list of friends (family, work mates, high school friends), which are not necessarily visible as formal networks, and (3) networks may refer to membership of groups formalized as such within Facebook (Knobel & Lankshear, 2008). This study focuses on the social networks within one's list of friends and seeks to understand how participants of a volunteer tourism vacation frame their trip to the multiple networks in their friend list.

Facebook users' craft their identity performances through a variety of components for a variety of audiences, and those performances are manifested in the selection and emphasis placed on specific types of images and text (Farquhar, 2009). This results in freedom in identity performance, even as online representations may match offline realities for the most part (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). Using Facebook, individuals communicate their personal image through frozen moments via their friends list, photo albums, and wall posts rather than using nonverbal cues, which are an essential part in the way we communicate in the physical world (Boyd & Heer, 2006). Zhao et al. (2008) imply that individuals appear to be more likely to communicate their personal image indirectly through their friends list, photo albums, and wall posts, instead of through an explicit self description. Photographs that are posted on websites become part of the visual culture that makes up our world (Sheldon, 1997). Rather than these memories being encased in photo albums and stored on bookshelves collecting dust, photos shared on the internet have a vast potential audience (White, 2010). Photographs are a dynamic element that drives a lot of activity on Facebook. Uploading photographs onto the site is the first step. After that, the person who uploaded the photo goes into a process of labeling, posting initial comments, tagging others who are involved, grouping photos in an album, and perhaps selecting one as the featured profile photo (Farquhar, 2009).

Facebook profiles can be thought of as an online embodiment of real persons using the site (Boyd, 2004; Boyd & Heer, 2006, Farquhar, 2009). Within a particular site like Facebook, participants can choose among diverse socially recognized ways afforded by the site for accomplishing self-identity presentation and interaction with friends by generating, communicating and negotiating meanings with others (Knobel and Lankshear, 2008).

One major difference in communicating and negotiating meanings with others in the physical reality compared to its virtual version is the physical reality's possibility to separate audiences from each other through interaction with different people in different occasions and places (Berg and Teriö, 2010). While individuals have developed a coherent brand image (or identity), it is normal for individuals to develop multiple roles, personas and self images in order to adapt to their personal, social and working selves (Shephard, 2005). Mixing merely two types groups (i.e. – friends with coworkers) can cause high anxiety for the individual at the center of both groups (Farquhar, 2008). In social media, most users get exposed to several of their social groups at the same time, in each respective forum (Berg and Teriö, 2010). This new twist social structure is increasingly evident on an SNS like Facebook, where friendship lists include classmates, siblings, parents, aunts and uncles, friends, love interests, professors, coworkers, RAs, and even complete strangers (Farquhar, 2008). Online, the groups can all view (and judge) the individual at essentially the same time; different affiliations might make very different interpretations of photographs uploaded to the profile and other aspects of an individual's Facebook page (Farquhar, 2008). Berg & Teriö, (2010) found that respondents stated that they were striving for what they described as a 'neutral' profile; one that is suitable for all social groups that have access to their profiles, as a way of managing the variety of relationships. Adjusting privacy levels for some or all social groups was another common way of managing certain groups.

Sheldon (1997) argues that the Internet in particular facilitates tourism. The existing literature related to the importance of tourism consumer generated content (CGC) online has focused exclusively on the texts posted by consumers on blogs, in travel review sites and virtual communities, and in wikis; however, photographs (and other media) are at least as important as

texts in communication between travel consumers (Schmallegger et al., 2010). Schmallegger et al. (2010) argues that photographs make a substantial contribution to word-of-mouth marketing and that there is a need for a method of interpreting the photographic images. Schmallegger's study incorporated Echtner and Ritchie's (1993) destination image framework for mapping travel photographs. A combination of content and semiotic analysis was used to identify the functional, psychological, attribute-based and holistic images components of the South Australian Flinders Ranges (Schmallegger et al., 2010). Common themes represented in the photographs included natural characteristics, cultural attractions, activities, and people. While this study did not directly mention the hermeneutic circle, one process in this study was to compare the consumer generated images with official destination management images to determine any similarities or differences. The comparative analysis revealed that the consumer generated images, of both domestic and international markets, generally tended to reinforce those of destination management organizations. Additionally, the psychological impressions (sense of adventure or a peaceful atmosphere) were also reinforced by both markets (Schmallegger et al., 2010). Schmallegger's study provides a baseline for analyzing VEP photographs for this thesis. By using Echtner and Ritchie's (1993) destination image framework for mapping travel photographs, their study is grounded in a method which has been peer reviewed. This thesis seeks to draw upon the methods used in Schmallegger's study and relate it to the story line of a volunteer tourism experience as told via Facebook.

At the time of this study, only one study was found that analyzed travel photographs uploaded to Facebook. White (2010) selected ten Facebook users for investigation and focused on the photographs uploaded onto their Facebook page. Using a combination of content and semiotic analysis, White identified two main types of photographs that were uploaded to

Facebook. The 'type one' photograph included human subjects which may or may not have a landmark or landscape in the background (White, 2010), known as the family gaze. The 'type two' photograph is considered a traditional tourism photograph, where the landmarks and landscapes are the main focus and do not include human subjects at all (White, 2010). This is also known as the tourist gaze. The results of this study documented the participant's age, the number of friends, travel albums, photographs, type one photographs, type two photographs, and the number of comments on the photographs. White concluded that while this study is too small to be conclusive, she/he did find that photographs involving human subjects are more likely to be commented on than photographs without them (White, 2010). White's study is helpful to this thesis as it provides a typology of photographs.

Many photos receive not only comments from the uploading user but responses from Facebook friends (Farquhar, 2009). Further, Farquhar found that the use of the photo section with Facebook users vary greatly in terms of the amount of time and energy spent; some Facebook users don't upload any photos, some have only a handful, and some have thousands of photographs on their profile page. This finding is similar with tagging and writing comments for the photographs as well (Schmallegger et al., 2010). Crang (1999) found that tourists often tailor the nature of their photographs according to their desired future audience. Tourist photographs tend to capture experiences that tourists want to share with their selected audience (Schmallegger et al., 2010). Wells (2004) also found that tourists also capture how they would like to be portrayed to their friends. A rich potential area of study lies in the analysis of the volunteer tourism related photographs posted on Facebook by participants, along with the accompanying descriptions and responses from friends.

Justification for research

Over the last two decades, visual methods in tourism research have been relatively ad-hoc (Scarles, 2010). As a consequence, a potentially rich seam of evidence that can inform our understanding of tourism as a social construct and set of phenomena has been under-utilized, not to say undermined (Burns and Lester, 2005). Further, little attention has been given to the second half of the hermeneutic circle; in fact, only a handful of studies have addressed tourist photography at all (Caton and Santos, 2008). As mentioned above, photographs taken by participants during a voluntourist experience have yet to be analyzed to determine the voluntourist gaze.

There is clearly a need for more research into how photographs are used by tourists to communicate with each other, and how this has transferred to the online environment (Schmallegger et al., 2010). White (2010) pioneered research on the types of images people choose to post on the Internet, and how these images may begin to influence others. For future research she suggests work in exploring how these uploaded visual images work to reinforce the memory of the photographer. This study hopes to provide a foundation on what photographs volunteer tourism participants choose to upload onto their social network along with their considerations of the multiple social groups who will be able to view the photographs. Additionally, this study hopes to explore whether posting a unique experience such as participating in a volunteer tourism experience on a social network further motivates the participant to sign up for another similar type of trip. Finally, this study hopes to add to the research of motivations of voluntourists by determining if participant motivations can be seen through the photographs they choose to share with their social network.

Research Questions

The overarching goal of this study was to begin to uncover themes of the voluntourist gaze, particularly how it was first portrayed by the volunteer tourism organization, then how it was reflected in participant motivations regarding volunteer tourism and finally how it manifested in the participant's photographs. In order to achieve this goal, a range of topics related to pre-trip planning, the volunteer trip itself, and the post-trip experience needed to be explored in order to gain a full understanding of the storyline posted onto Facebook.

For instance, questions focusing on pre-trip planning involve the motivations of the participants and their use of sending organization's materials. What are the underlying motivations of why the participant chose to participate in the volunteer tourism experience? Were these motivations manifested in the images the participants captured? How influential were the materials produced by the sending organization and to what extent did these materials shape the voluntourist gaze and potentially complete the hermeneutic circle?

Research questions were also developed to gauge the participants' satisfaction of the trip and how important it was for them to document the experience through photography. This information was needed to determine the relationships made with the host community, other participants, and how rewarding they felt the volunteer tourism experience was to their self. This information will provide a background to how the participant is reflecting the experience they had through photographs uploaded onto Facebook. Additionally, questions related to interactions with and relationships formed with the local residents will assist in determining how relationships with the host community are captured in photographic images and subsequently framed for the participant's social network.

Finally, questions related to the sorting and uploading of photographs onto Facebook will be explored. How do volunteer tourism participants organize and communicate their

experiences on Facebook? What are the themes and/or patterns across volunteers of how the experience is presented online? What experiences are highlighted and/or left out and why? By inquiring about the participant experience during each phase of the trip, the researcher hoped to gain a comprehensive picture of the discourse of volunteer tourism.

Background of the sampled organization and participants

Informants for this study were obtained through a purposive sample of participants in a volunteer tourism experience with a student volunteer organization which will be given the alias of Student Worldly Volunteers (SWV). The author of this study was also a part of this experience. SVW is a nonprofit 501(c) (3) volunteer organization based in California and created exclusively for public benefit and charitable purposes that combine volunteer programs with adventure travel. SVW is involved in projects in eight different countries and has had the focus of volunteer and adventure travel for eight years, hosting over 4,000 students and conducting over 250,000 hours of volunteer work abroad annually. SVW targets colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada and sends representatives, most often participants of previous trips, to large lecture classes where they give a brief five minute speech on the company and their experiences the previous summer. For students that wish to learn more about the program, they are instructed to go to one of multiple informational sessions where they can learn more about the structure of the program. The volunteer projects and adventure activities vary depending on host country. The standard SVW program is a one month program comprised of two weeks working on a volunteer project and two weeks of adventure travel in the same country. Participants have the option to extend the trip by two additional weeks by adding week long excursions before and after the standard itinerary. Additionally, in most cases participants of the trip have not met until they arrive in the host country. Approximately one month prior to

the trip the participants are given a listing of the names and email addresses of everyone participating in the project.

Participants in this study were involved in the volunteer tourism experience portion of the trip that occurred in rural Ecuador during the summer of 2010. In total, eleven students from the United States and Canada volunteered on the project. Below is a description of the volunteer project as described on SWV's website:

Whale Monitoring and Community Development: Collect data on whales in the ocean! Here is your chance to be part of important research which is critical to the success of long term conservation plans. The primary goal of this project is to obtain data that will be used to assist with species monitoring of migrating humpback whale populations, while supporting local eco-tourism development efforts based on those populations. This project focuses on community development and environmental education, specifically targeting the valuation of threatened humpback whales through monitoring and awareness. Primary tasks include monitoring, creating infrastructure to attract tourism, supporting alternative tourism efforts through family home stays and English classes, working with the local community school as part of the Ecuador Children's Program.

In conjunction with the whale monitoring and community development volunteer project, SVW had another volunteer project focusing on organic agriculture which consisted of twelve other participants. The majority of both groups spent their first week in Ecuador together, in Quito, taking Spanish lessons. Once Spanish school concluded, the two groups split up and traveled to their host communities where they would volunteer on their respective project for two weeks. Once the volunteer projects concluded, both groups joined again for the adventure tour part of the trip where we traveled throughout Ecuador participating in various extreme sports for

two weeks. A small group of participants elected to stay an extra week for an additional excursion throughout the Galapagos Islands.

While there were eleven participants of the volunteer trip examined in this study, only eight interviews were collected. One participant lost his camera during the trip thus making him ineligible for the study since it is based on the photographs uploaded to Facebook. Another participant elected not to be interviewed. The eight eligible participants, seven females and one male, were all Caucasian. To maintain the confidentiality of their answers the participants were given pseudonyms.

Chapter III Methods

The methodological approach for this study is qualitative. Applying qualitative methods is a logical choice since the goal of this thesis is to attempt to understand the underlying themes and patterns surrounding what images participants of a volunteer tourism experience are drawn to photograph, and of these images, which are chosen to be shared with his or her social network. The purpose is not to find a "truth" behind these behaviors, but rather to help understand and interpret this phenomenon (Berg & Teriö, 2010). As the researcher was a participant of the volunteer tourism experience along with the informants studied, this study will contain both ethnographic and autoethnographic methods. More specifically, using a combination of autoethnography and photo-elicitation within the interview setting ignites an embodied connection and understanding between researcher and respondent (Scarles, 2010). The use of visual methods generates a “potentially rich seam of evidence that can inform our understanding of tourism as a social construct and a set of phenomena has been under-utilized, not to say undermined” (Burns and Lester, 2005). In this practice, respondents do not simply introduce their own photographs to the research setting, but actually produce primary data as they are given the task of taking photographs primarily for the purpose of the research (Garrod, 2007). While such practice provides clear avenues for accessing and articulating insights into tourist behavior, visual autoethnography exists as a fusion of visual elicitation and autoethnographic encounter; an opportunity for accessing and mobilizing deeper, nuanced insights into the embodied performances, practices and processes of the tourist experience that recent tourism research addresses (Scarles, 2010). The initial use of this method will provide a baseline of the participant’s perceptions. Follow up interviews will also be conducted which will focus

specifically on the photographs taken during the volunteer tourism experience as well as the decisions regarding what photographs to upload onto Facebook (or other social networking site).

One unique feature of this study compared to other studies utilizing VEP is that the study was not conceived until months after the trip, when participants had already posted their photos on their Facebook pages. Most studies utilizing VEP involve the researcher giving a camera to the participants and having them take pictures (MacKay & Couldwell, 2004). With this study, the images photographed while on the trip were taken solely from their own motivation. This eliminated any social acceptability bias of participants capturing photographs that they believed the researcher wanted to see. Additionally, in most cases, not all of the photographs taken on the trip were loaded onto Facebook. Participants selected a subset of the photographs taken to upload and comment on. By “self sorting” the participant gained increased voice and authority in the photographs which were presented (Sherry, 1988). The self-sorting process in which the participants engaged eliminated noise from the uploaded albums, ensuring that only photographs which fit the unique criteria of the participant’s choosing were shared with their social networks. Finally, by sorting the uploaded photographs and placing them in a predetermined order to formulate the online photo album, as well as selecting one photograph to make the photo album cover and titling the photo album, participants have further engaged in the self-sorting process, framing the storyline of the volunteer tourism experience they wish to share with their social network.

The data collection process began with assigning a unique identifier to each of the 1,071 photographs the participants uploaded to Facebook. This initial coding captured all of the static information related to the photograph such as: who took the photograph, which part of the trip, the date the photograph was taken, when it was posted on Facebook, if the participant

commented on the photograph, if friends commented on the photograph (separated out other participants and friends), if others “liked” the photograph (separated out “likes” from other participants and friends), and if people were tagged in the photographs. This initial step initially flushed out themes and patterns of the story the participant wished to share with his social network and these findings were incorporated into the semi-structured in-depth interviews. With a semi-structured interview, the researcher has freedom to expand upon answers given by respondents; however, the main topics covered remain unchanged (McIntosh & Zahra, 2008). The interviews were structured to obtain background information related to the informants experience as a voluntourist ranging from the decision to sign up for the trip, pre-trip and post-trip perceptions, and the importance of capturing the experience using photography. Additionally, questions were focused on the participants’ use of the materials the sending organization provided before the trip which included newsletter e-mails, a volunteer project overview, resource document (which gives a description of the host country at a glance, its people, politics, economy, and its biogeography), travel manual (detailing the volunteer project and itinerary), and information located on the sending organizations website.

Once the eight initial interviews were completed the researcher then subsequently content analyzed the photographs the participants uploaded onto Facebook. The photographs were coded according to the presence of a variety of identifiable features (Garrod, 2008) using NVIVO software. Content analysis is a common research method when analyzing photographs (Albers and James, 1988; Caton and Santos, 2008; Garrod, 2008; Govers and Go, 2005; Groves and Timothy, 2001; Jenkins, 1999; MacKay and Couldwell, 2004; Markwell, 1997; Schmallegger et al., 2010; White, 2010). Content analysis is also used in this study as it is a useful tool for examining content that might assist in the ‘bigger picture’ (White, 2010). It

provides an empirical foundation for contrasting and comparing appearances within large data sets (Albers and James, 1988) and is used to elicit the common themes emerging from the data; thus the themes that emerged were grounded in the nature of what respondents themselves described (Patton, 2002). In quantitative content analysis, the researcher ‘uses objective and systematic counting and recording procedures to produce a numeric description’ of what is contained in the text (Neuman, 2006, p.323), or in this case photographs.

During the content analysis process the researcher developed a range of descriptive categories that would best describe the content of the photos (Schmallegger et al., 2010) and, assigned a category to capture the essence of the image. These categories were developed using supported grounded theory, which initially based the categories on a theoretical foundation, yet the categories were flexible enough to let the data do the talking. To eliminate researcher bias the categorization process needs to be transparent. One common method of obtaining transparency is to document the development of the categorization system formulated by the researcher using a process of constant comparison, revision and modification to identify and code the specific dimensions and themes contained in the transcripts (Jenkins, 1999). This study will use the work of Caton and Santos (2008) and Schmallegger et al. (2010) as a base for coding the dimensions and themes of the volunteer tourism photographs. An initial broad categorization of photographs will follow Schmallegger et al. (2010)’s adoption of Echtner & Ritchie (1993)’s components of destination image. The common themes included natural characteristics, cultural attractions, activities, and people. Once the photograph is described in terms of the overall content and composition of its pictorial elements, it can then be analyzed in terms of other corresponding dimensions of the photographs (Albers and James, 1988). These dimensions will be specific to the volunteer project location. These categories can be seen in Tables 9 and 10 in

Appendix D. Similar to Markwell (1997), the fact that the researcher participated in the volunteer tourism experience meant that the identification and description of each photograph was a straightforward procedure; the contexts of the majority of the photographs was known to the author, thus reducing the difficulties inherent in interpretation. These dimensions are important in determining how certain contextual features influence the frequency and clustering of the sample of photographs and are important in identifying patterns and continuities of the volunteer tourism experience (Albers and James, 1988).

For photographs involving the voluntourist participants and members of the host community, the researcher relied on the foundation of the work of Caton and Santos (2008) photographic encounters of the other. Their framework was based on Albers and James (1988) study of ethnic representations in postcards. The focal themes generated from this research included: Traditional vs. Modern, Subject vs. Object, Master vs. Servant, Center vs. Periphery, and Devious-Lazy vs. Moral Industrious. These focal themes were based on the people in the images, the actions in which they were engaging, and other depicted features (such as landscape elements) (Caton and Santos, 2008).

Tourist photographs, just like any other research data, can contain noise appearances which have no significance to the outcome of the research. One way to determine what photographs in the online photo albums were of importance was if the participant chose to write a comment, linked to the photograph, to describe the image or provide some sort of additional explanation. Content classification of photographs on the Internet relies mainly on ‘tags’ and ‘comments’ that are manually assigned to the photograph by the photographer (Schmallegger et al., 2010). The combination of text and image draws upon Barthes (1977) theory of anchorage and relay. Anchorage relates to text supplementing an image to allow readers to focus on the

gaze of the image and to understand the interpretation of the image. The combination of the two minimizes the potential for misinterpretation of the viewer. Relay is the complementary relationship between text and image; both reviewed separately are mere fragments while the combination of the two will heighten the level of understanding of the story (Barthes, 1977). It is only possible to determine if photographers are contesting images or agreeing with them if the photograph is accompanied with some text analysis (Schmallegger et al., 2010). For instance, without a comment to anchor the image it would be difficult for a viewer to determine if a photograph of an abandoned farm-house conveys the fascinating beauty of a landscape or the undesirability of the location as a residence (Schmallegger et al., 2010).

Semiotic analysis was used to evaluate these comments. While content analysis normally breaks the photograph down into a number of categories, semiotic analysis considers the photograph as a whole, and is concerned with investigating how the content and composition of a photograph communicate certain messages through signs and symbols about the place or object they depict (Schmallegger et al., 2010). Semiotics is a useful tool for examining the sometimes multi-layered images of the encounters and experiences that took place at a destination (albeit as relayed via the photographer through the lens of a camera) (White, 2010). In order to interpret the possible interplays between the signs and symbols found in any given photograph, it is necessary to contextualize analysis in written narratives associated not only with the photograph itself (or analogous images), but also with the subjects who are being portrayed (Albers and James, 1988). This process establishes what particular photo objects could signify about the destination and to identify the main psychological attributes and holistic feelings captured in the photographs (Schmallegger et al., 2010). The active process at work in the text, combined with the act of decoding the image by the viewer create meaning (Williamson, 1978). When

semiotics meets content analysis, we can interpret key features of a text and also measure the frequency of the specific phenomenon under investigation (White, 2010).

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, two types of methodological triangulation methods will be incorporated to limit the personal and methodological biases of this study. Method triangulation pertains to the use of multiple methods to study a single problem – that is, different qualitative methods or a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques (Decrop, 2004). For this study, content analysis, semiotic analysis, participant observation and interviewing will all be utilized in an effort to develop rich findings.

In addition to method triangulation, data triangulation will also be applied to this study. Data triangulation involves the use of a variety of data sources in a study (Decrop, 2004). Primary data sources will emerge from the aforementioned methods, including field notes from the researchers participant observation, member-checked transcripts from the semi-structured in-depth interviews, and photo/textual content and semiotic analysis of the VEP's taken and uploaded on social networks with the participants of the volunteer tourism experience.

To increase dependability of the data, in addition to the above research plan, the researcher kept a reflexive journal and documented any changes to the research plan listed above. This journal, along with the interview transcripts and photographs with accompanying comments stored and categorized in NVIVO will serve as an audit trail for an auditor to retrace and redraw how the researcher came to the conclusions reached (Decrop, 2004). Further, the research is performed over a prolonged engagement period as the majority of the data uploaded by participants onto their social network was uploaded within weeks of the end of the trip while the semi-structured interviews were conducted approximately eight months later.

Chapter IV Results and analysis

The purpose of this study was to analyze the overall discourse of volunteer tourism. More specifically, a holistic examination of the hermeneutic circle of volunteer tourism that takes into consideration the messages being communicated by volunteer tourism organizations, the voluntourist's interpretation and consumption of the messages, and in turn the re-distribution of the messages via social media using photographs and comments. The main focus of this study concentrated on analyzing the second half of the hermeneutic circle and hence, the tourist gaze. However, to properly analyze the second half of the hermeneutic circle, it is important to focus on the first half, those images and promotional materials provided by the sending organization, to determine if these materials had any impact on the voluntourist gaze reflected on participant's social networks.

The first half of the hermeneutic circle

As indicated in the literature review, the hermeneutic circle begins with the photographic appearances that advertise and anticipate a trip, progresses toward the search for these photographs within the context of experience of travel itself, and concludes with travelers including the very same images in their own photographic productions (Albers and James, 1988). In order to determine if the voluntourist gaze of the participants was based on images they were exposed to before the trip, the advertising materials of the volunteer organization needed to be analyzed.

The two main tools that SWV utilized in attempting to craft the voluntourist gaze were the organization's website and the various mailings that SWV sent to students after they have signed up for a trip. The tools SWV used to promote their program and in turn their construction of the voluntourist gaze is discussed below.

SWV: crafting the voluntourist gaze

The homepage of the SWV website provided a basic overview of the history of the program itself, a list of the countries in which they host programs, and a brief bullet point listing of the potential volunteer projects and adventure activities available to participants. Tabs indicating the different destination countries were located on the side of the homepage, leading to more in-depth descriptions of the country specific program. This includes information trip logistics, adventure and optional activities, and volunteer activities. The trip logistics tabs pertained to travel dates, flight information, program costs, common questions, and information for potential academic credit. This section of the website has little influence over the voluntourist gaze.

The adventure and optional activities section provided information about the activities on the two week adventure tour following the volunteering portion of the trip. It also provided information on the potential add-on's to the standard program. For Ecuador, these add-on's included Spanish school to be added before the standard program, and excursions to either the Galapagos Islands or Machu Picchu, either of which could be added after the standard program. In this section, SWV attempts to craft a gaze with the use of a detailed itinerary of the adventure tour and photographs of each activity. While it was evident that SWV was using textual and photographic appearances to advertise and create anticipation for the adventure portion of the trip, this gaze is outside of the realm of this paper as the focus of this thesis is the overall discourse of volunteer tourism. The adventure tour is only mentioned to give a complete picture of the information available on the SWV website.

Additionally, information conveyed on the SWV website related to the volunteer activities. The information available included a description of the different volunteer projects and a listing of accomplishments broken out by conservation efforts and community

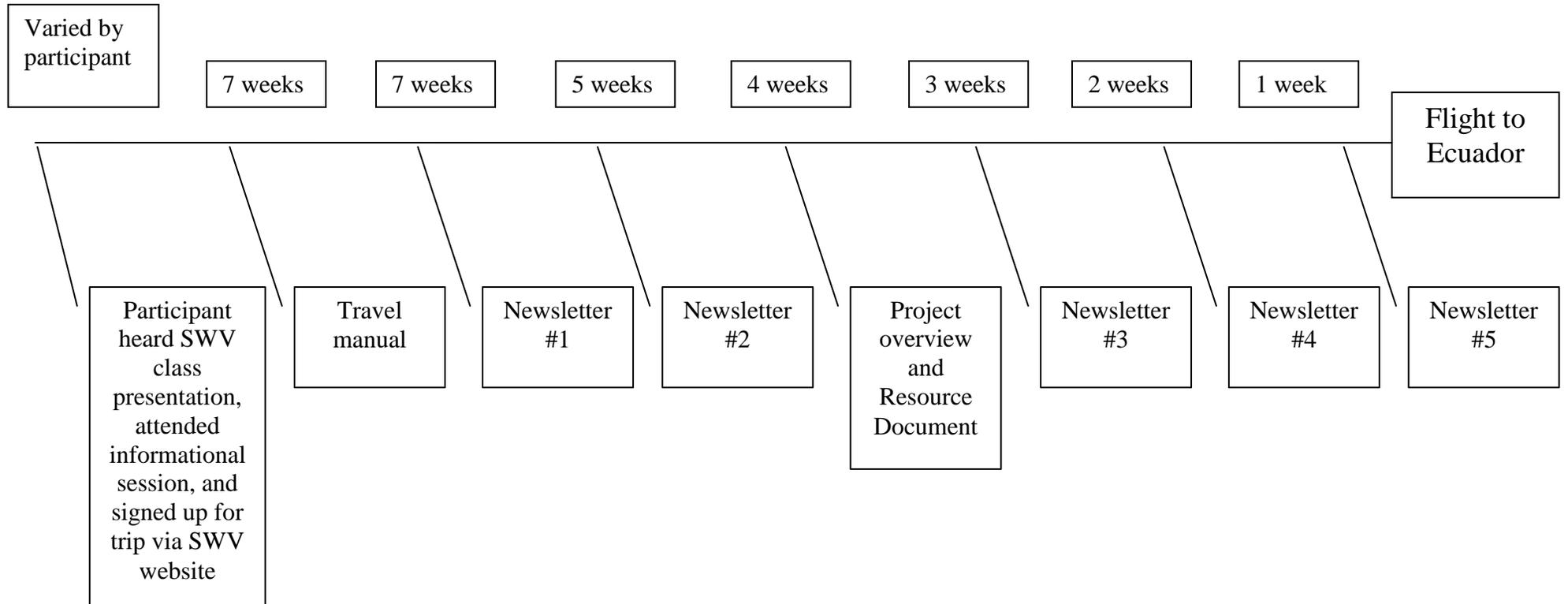
development efforts. Two additional links, which perhaps were SWV's most obvious portrayals of the voluntourist gaze, included a link to a photo gallery of past projects in Ecuador and a link to a testimonials page where previous participants shared their thoughts on the experience. These two links were not separated by the adventure portion or the volunteer portion of the trip but rather attempted to provide a gaze for the entire SWV experience.

Once a student has applied for the trip and paid the deposit, SWV will then send various mailings via email to the future participant. These mailings consisted of the following:

- Newsletters – SWV sent a total of five newsletters via email with the first being sent approximately two months before the project date. These newsletters consisted of one to two feature articles, a checklist section which detailed the deadlines of when required forms are due, and a section of “Ecuador Quick Facts”. Each newsletter also had several photographs incorporated in it.
- Resource document – this document comprised of a brief history of life, Ecuador at a glance, people, politics, the economy, biogeography, tropical forests, environment, conservation and development, sustainable initiatives, and resources.
- Travel manual – this document provided essential travel information, a more in-depth description of the program logistics, and country information which included the climate, the people, extra expenses, handy facts and the local lingo.
- Project overview – this document provided background on the organization with whom SWV partnered, a listing of volunteer tasks, and general information about transportation, accommodations, meals, free time, and health and safety.

Figure 1 below provides a timeline of when the volunteer tourism participants received these documents before their trip.

Figure 1: Timeline of SWV mailings



Deconstructing of the Voluntourist Gaze: Motivations

SWV used a combination of testimonials and photographs on their website to craft the voluntourist gaze to the general public. Once an individual signed up for a trip, SWV continued to advertise their voluntourist gaze to future participants via a variety of photographs, articles written by SWV, and information related to the history and culture of Ecuador obtained from third party sources. The variety and frequency of these sources showcased by SWV provided a well developed gaze for future voluntourists to base their expectations of, and potentially what they would seek out themselves on the trip. The textual elements of the gaze focused on highlighting the purpose of volunteer tourism as described by a SWV employee, and motivational factors of participating in a volunteer tourism trip as described by past trip participants.

The first newsletter sent to future participants was SWV's strongest attempt to create excitement for volunteering with their "The Purpose of Volunteering" article. The article began by acknowledging that future participants may initially be concerned with questions that directly affect them such as 'Will I be able to speak the language?' and 'Will I be able to carry my backpack?' but that 'sometimes the most important questions are the ones most easily overlooked, and one of these was "*what is the purpose of volunteering?*"' The purpose or motivation of volunteering can be different for each individual. SWV acknowledged this by asking the reader to consider their purpose for volunteering and stating that "Answering this question for yourself and exploring the motivation behind your decision to undertake this journey will enhance your overall interaction with this and contribution to the projects, creating lasting memories and hopefully a desire to give back again and again.' However, after stating that motivations are personal and based on the individual, SWV then goes on to highlight their

model for voluntourism. Their suggested motivations include altruism, personal growth, and cultural exchange and learning were communicated with the following bullet points:

- To unselfishly give your time, skills, ideas and passion by helping a community through sustainable development, humanitarian relief, or helping wildlife and conservation causes.
- To make positive contributions through the work you do and interactions you have.
- To experience personal growth by facing new challenges, learning new things and being fully immersed in a different culture.
- To have fun and make new friends!

SWV not only used their words but also used the words of past participants to highlight the motivations for participating in the SWV experience. At the conclusion of both the volunteer portion and the adventure portion of the trip SWV had all participants fill out a survey to rate their satisfaction with that portion of the trip. At the end of the survey was a space for the participant to share a short testimony of their thoughts on the experience. Based on the homepage for the SWV website, 'each year over 4,000 students from more than 800 universities and colleges worldwide choose to travel with SWV'. Therefore, SWV collect approximately 8,000 testimonies annually to sort through and determine which to upload onto their website. The testimonial link on the SWV website featured 92 testimonials from previous participants. These testimonials related to both the volunteer portion and the adventure portion of the SWV program, and often included discussion of the motivations of the participants.

The motivations expressed in the testimonials were coded based on Wearing's (2001) motivational categories. Many of the testimonials emphasized multiple motivations. For

example, the following testimony highlighted motivations relating to the structure of the program, travel and adventure, cultural exchange and learning, and altruism:

“SWV - best thing ever invented. It was a wonderful way to explore a new country, meet people across the nation, and serve the environment. I am looking forward to planning another trip with SWV. Thank you SWV!!!” – Previous SWV participant

This particular testimony also showed the satisfaction of trip and the intent for the participant to sign up for another trip with SWV. The testimony below highlighted the structure of the program, the cultural exchange and learning component, and personal development:

“Greatest experience of my life. Met some people I'll be friends with for life. Learned a lot about culture, other people, and myself. Would definitely do something like this again with SWV.” – Previous SWV participant.

Additionally, this participant also acknowledged her satisfaction with the friendships she made with other voluntourists.

Based on the literature review, Wearing (2001) identified seven motivational categories for participating in volunteer tourism: altruism, cultural exchange and learning, personal growth, professional development, structure of the program, and travel and adventure. With the exception of professional development, each of these motivational categories was present on the SWV website as shown by Table 1. One additional motivation which emerged when coding the testimonials of previous participants: the desire to meet and interact with other volunteers. Table 1 below highlights the results of the coding of SWV documents by motivation.

Table 1: Motivations communicated by SWV				
	Links found on SWV's webpage			SWV's mailings
Motivation	Testimonials	Achievements	Description of volunteer projects	Newsletters
Altruism	23	2	1	3
Cultural exchange and learning	36	0	2	1
Personal growth	40	0	1	1
Professional development	0	0	0	0
Structure of the program	48	0	0	0
Travel and adventure	29	0	0	3
Interacting with other participants	12	0	0	1

A number of results of the analysis were of interest to this study. Not surprisingly, the majority of the testimonials mention the structure of the program in a positive light. The theme of altruism was consistently highlighted through multiple links on the SWV website and newsletters, but testimonies involving altruism are outranked by structure of the program, personal growth, cultural exchange and learning, and travel and adventure. While altruism was mentioned 23 times in past participant testimonies it was evident that although there was an element of altruism that exists, an element of self-gratification was also a driver for motivation as supported by Coghlan (2008). The testimonies below were an example of the self-gratification element present:

“This was a great trip. Every single thing we did was rewarding, went smoothly, pushed our limits, kept everyone excited, and would be hard to experience otherwise. I would not trade this experience for anything. Groups like us are what will make the difference for places like this.” – Previous SWV participant

“I feel this project was very fun mostly because of the people we worked with. They were very thankful.” – Previous SWV participant

“SWV is a fully opportunity to fully experience a different culture, be integrated with families and community, and work with like-minded people to effect a change where it is needed.” – Previous SWV participant

However, there were a testimonies void of self-gratification, as illustrated by the following.

“I loved working in Machalilla. The people were so friendly and helpful; they were out working with us every day. I had an incredible time and I will miss my host family very much.” – Previous SWV participant

Table 1 above also showed that SWV’s attempt to communicate motivations sharply decreased once the participant signed up for the trip. After the first newsletter, motivations were no longer conveyed in the correspondence sent to the future participants. One possible reason for the decrease in motivational correspondence could be that future participants have already been motivated enough to sign up for the trip, therefore, there is no need for additional motivational communication.

Deconstructing the Voluntourist Gaze: Characterization of images

As indicated in the literature review, the tourist gaze is based on photographic images which organize our anticipation or daydreaming about the places we might gaze on. Similarly, the family gaze, a later concept based on the tourist gaze, suggests that tourists base their photography more on social activities rather than image-driven attractions. The photographs on SWV’s website pages and mailings to participants attempted to directly focus the participant’s gaze of the upcoming experience, and in doing so, also attempted to shape the participant’s expectations. In total, SWV presented 100 photographs to future participants: 62 were publically

available on the SWV website and the remaining 38 were included in mailings to individuals who have signed up to participate. Table 2 below provided a short outline of the most common themes identified.

	Links found on SWV's webpage			SWV's mailings			
Theme	Picture link	Achievements	Volunteer projects	Newsletters	Resource document	Project guide	Total
<i>People</i>							
Hosts only	5	0	3	1	0	3	12
Participants	16	2	3	3	0	3	27
Participants and hosts	13	0	2	2	0	0	17
Participants and sites	7	0	0	1	0	0	8
<i>Cultural</i>							
Host house	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
Other	0	0	1	6	3	1	11
<i>Natural</i>							
Scenic view	8	0	0	1	6	0	15
Wildlife	1	0	1	2	1	1	6
Total	50	2	10	16	10	12	100

Clearly, the main theme that SWV displayed is people. In total, photographs focused on people were the most prevalent, both in frequency and distribution. Photographs involving people were included in every volunteer specific link on the SWV website, and also included in all documents mailed to future SWV participants with the exception of the resource document. As illustrated below, photographs of participants most often included participants while either working together on the volunteer project (Figure 2) or taking part in a adventure tour activity (Figure 3).



Figure 2: Participants working on a volunteer project



Figure 3: Participants on adventure tour

Seven photographs showcased one participant posing at a sight, most often either a landscape or on the volunteer project. The low frequency of photographs of one participant could possibly indicate that SWV wanted to highlight the community of volunteers formed while participating in the trip. Photographs that involved the host community and participants interacting with the host community will be discussed in the characterization of locals section.

With the exception of one photograph (Figure 4), photographs depicting the host culture were not displayed on the volunteer activities section of SWV's webpage. SWV presented the majority of cultural related images through the supplemental mailings sent to future participants. As discussed earlier, cultural exchange and learning was one of the main motivations that SWV presented and was mentioned directly multiple times throughout past participant testimonies. This is not to say that photographs displayed on the SWV website had no cultural elements present, rather that the main theme of the photograph was something other than cultural.



Figure 4: Cultural related photograph on SWV website

As indicated in Table 2, of the cultural–other photographs, seven photographs focused on images of local people in traditional attire highlighting cultural dress, while the remaining six images focused on buildings, markets, and goods sold at markets.

Photographs of the host house were found only in the project guide. These photographs show the exterior of a host house, a bedroom, a bathroom, a living room and are supplemented with a brief description of the accommodations and basic facilities. A final paragraph explained the living arrangements between the host family and the participants. The SWV management incorporated Barthes (1977) theory of Anchorage and Relay for this section of the project guide to use both textual references and images to paint an accurate picture of living conditions while on the volunteer project for future participants. This not only provided the future participant with an idea of the facilities, but also conveyed the type of relationship between the participant and the host family. Based on the description provided, the host family is not expected to cater to the participant but rather they are to live as equals.

SWV also displayed nature-oriented photographs involving either scenic views or wildlife. The eight scenic photos on the photograph link on the SWV website were ambiguous as to whether they were views of the landscape at the volunteer project, or of the adventure tour.

Five of the six photographs of wildlife related to conservation and research projects available in Ecuador. The remaining wildlife photograph, of a monkey in a tree, was found in the Ecuador Resource Document to support the section on tropical forests biogeography of Ecuador. Four of the six scenic view photographs in this document provided an image of the varying terrain of Ecuador.

Of the 100 collective photographs projected by SWV one third were cultural and natural themed photographs while the remaining two thirds of photographs concentrated on people. Based on this analysis one hypothesis developed was that one major theme that SWV wanted to convey to potential participants was the opportunity to interact with both local people and other participants in the volunteer vacation.

Along with a distinguishing theme assigned to each photograph, each was also coded by activity. Table 3 provided a break down each SWV photograph by activity. The main activities included the participants engaged in volunteer work (park, whale monitoring, elementary school, and nursery), activities and landscapes that could be found on the adventure tour, and finally free time while on the volunteer or adventure tour.

Table 3: SWV photographs by activity

Activity	Links found on SWV's webpage			SWV's mailings			Total
	Picture link	Achievements	Volunteer projects	Newsletters	Resource document	Project guide	
Park	13	1	3	2	0	2	21
Whale monitoring	3	0	1	0	0	2	6
Elementary school	3	0	3	1	0	2	9
Nursery	4	1	2	3	0	0	10
Adventure tour	11	0	2	9	9	0	31
Free time	16	0	0	2	0	5	23
Total	50	2	11	17	9	11	100

Almost half of the activities shown (41%) were photographs that related to the volunteer work performed by past participants. Photographs that highlight the adventure tour represented 31% of the composition while the remaining 23% were photographs that could have been taken either during the volunteer or adventure tour. Since these photographs were not volunteer project or adventure activity specific, it can be concluded that they were taken during the free time on either part of the tour.

Deconstructing the Voluntourist Gaze: Characterization of hosts

The above analysis showed that SWV attempted to capture all potential parts of the experience with concentration on the volunteering work and interactions with people. The majority of photos of people were those interacting with either fellow participants or the host community. One common negative impact of volunteer tourism mentioned in the literature review was ‘othering’ of the local people by voluntourists. One gap found in the literature review related to host community interactions was that to date, no one has looked at how relationships between the local residents and voluntourists are portrayed through photographs and comments posted on Facebook. To determine if the purposive sample of participants in a volunteer tourism experience complete the hermeneutic circle in regard to images of the host community, it is important to analyze the images included on the sending organization site. Members of the host community were included in images on the SWV website and in documents mailed to participants along with texts describing the various peoples of Ecuador. In total, 36 photographs related to members of the host community. Of the 36 photographs, 12 were of members of the host community, 17 were members of the host community interacting with voluntourist participants, and seven were traditional images highlighted in documents which discussed the cultures and indigenous people. For this study, the focal themes were based on the

characterization of student’s photographs of local during a Semester at Sea yearbook analyzed by Caton and Santos (2008). Photographs of local people were coded based on whether the image contained adults or children; their placement in the photograph (center vs. periphery); the focus of the photograph (subject vs. object); the actions of the local person (devious-lazy vs. moral-industrious); interactions with Westerners (master vs. servant); and dress (traditional vs. modern). The themes of devious-lazy vs. moral-industrious and master vs. servant were not prevalent in all photographs in this study, so they were only coded when necessary. These results are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Portrayal of local people in photographs by SWV			
	Adults	Children	Total
Center	11	15	26
Periphery	3	7	10
Subject	10	15	25
Object	4	7	11
Devious-Lazy	0	0	0
Moral-Industrious	3	3	6
Master	0	0	0
Servant	2	0	2
Traditional	7	0	7
Modern	7	22	29

Of the 36 photos involving the host community, 22 were of children while the remaining 14 were of adults. In most cases, the host was the central focus and subject of the photograph. In some cases volunteer tourism participants were also included in the photograph; however, they were not the subject of the photograph as shown in the three photographs below (Figures 5 – 7).



Figure 5: Participant interacting with host



Figure 6: Participant interacting with hosts



Figure 7: Participants interacting with hosts

In photographs that included both voluntourists and the host community (with the exception of Figures 5 - 7), the voluntourist was the central focus of the photograph, with the hosts in the periphery of the photograph (Figure 8 and Figure 9) or as a backdrop (Figure 10).



Figure 8: Participant interacting with host



Figure 9: Participants interacting with host



Figure 10: Participants interacting with hosts

The similar results of center vs. periphery and object vs. subject coding demonstrated that SWV attempted to clearly place focus on who they wanted to showcase in the photograph.

There were no photographs that portrayed the host in a negative light as a devious-lazy individual. The three photographs where the host appeared moral-industrious were photographs of the host member working with the participant on the volunteer project (Figure 8), or elementary school students working on assignments provided by the SWV participant.

The only two photographs where the host was depicted in a servile way toward the SWV participant are shown below (Figures 11 and 12). Figure 11 was taken while on the adventure tour during a hike through the Amazonian jungle. The image captured the host applying the paste of an endemic fruit to an SWV participant. The photograph suggested a cultural exchange, however the host was responsible for the exchange while the SWV participant was simply the recipient of the interaction. Similarly, Figure 12 focused on group of SWV participants on the volunteer portion of the trip posing outside of a host house with two host family members. The SWV participants were all grouped together and encompass the majority of the photograph. The two host members were standing to one side of the group, both holding what appear to be dishes of food. This image insinuated that the SWV group was catered to while on the volunteer project.



Figure 11: Host serving participant



Figure 12: Hosts portrayed as servants

Finally, six of the seven photos where the hosts were found in their traditional dress were in two of the newsletters as well as the resource document sent to participants. While the first newsletter focused mainly on motivations and the purpose of volunteering, the second newsletter began to introduce cultural aspects to future participants. The first article in the newsletter entitled ‘What do you know about Ecuador’s history?’, written by the Ecuador program director, gave a brief political history of Ecuador, beginning with the fall of the Incan king through the most recent presidential election in 2006. The second article ‘A Day in the Life of the Chagra’ painted a picture of a typical day for a member of the Ecuadorian Charga, ‘the modern day equivalent of the American ‘cowboy’’. The article was supplemented by a photograph (Figure 13) and goes on to describe the Charga as ‘Andean cowboys often seen throughout the lofty paramos of the highland Sierras, wrapped in brilliant red and black woolen ponchos and hairy llama leggings’. The article does not indicate how or if future participants would interact with the Charga, so it appeared that the main purpose for this article was to simply highlight a specific element of Ecuadorian culture. Charga, the town of the Chaupi, was not a stop on the adventure tour, and while it could potentially be one of the volunteer project locations, no mention of this was made in the article. The photograph associated with the article (Figure 13) show the Charga in their traditional dress. The sepia pigmentation in combination with the Charga in their traditional dress suggested that the Charga are exotic and mystical and a culture preserved from the past.

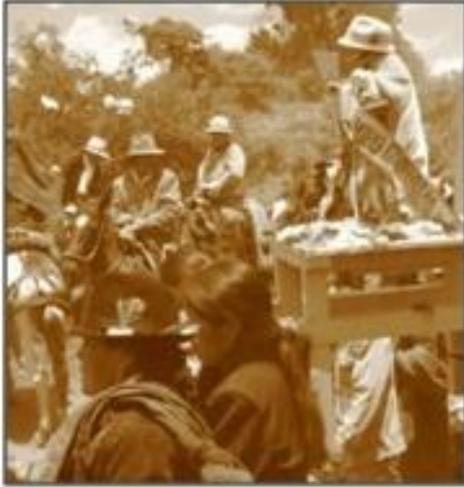


Figure 13: SWV image of Charga



Figure 14: SWV image of locals performing a traditional dance

The fourth newsletter also had cultural references with two articles: one focused on the potential for culture shock and homesickness, and the other discussed socially and environmentally responsible souvenirs. The culture shock and homesickness article mainly focused on the fact that homesickness is a common feeling experienced among participants and provided examples of what that can be done to mitigate this feeling. The text goes on to introduce cultural elements of Ecuador with the following blurb:

‘Ecuador is a country with a very rich culture. In Ecuador, people love music. You will find music being played in shops, buses, streets, even in banks! Another characteristic is that they are very conservative due to Ecuador's strong Catholic roots. People are very respectful and polite.’

While the intention of SWV may be to ease the future participant’s mind about the culture shock they may experience, SWV inadvertently oversimplifies a ‘country with a very rich culture’.

The photo caption ‘Locals performing a traditional dance’ associated with Figure 14 further simplified the culture and provided no educational element to this glimpse of cultural activity.

Common questions that would come to mind when viewing this photograph and caption include:

Who are the locals performing the dance? What type of dance is it? As a participant will I have the opportunity to experience this?

While the Ecuador Travel Manual did not include photographs representing the local people as the newsletters did, there was a brief section of the people shown below.

‘Ecuadorians belong to three main ethnic groups: Spanish, Mestizo, or Quechua.

Ecuadorians of Spanish or mixed descents populate the metropolitan centers, while the Quechua inhabit the ‘campo’ (the country). Overall, people in the Sierra are friendly but conservative, while people along the coast are more liberal. The Quechua have traditions and customs that date to pre-Hispanic times. They are respectful and friendly, yet guarded at the same time.’

Similar to the article discussing culture shock, the description of the culture was very broad and general. The best description of the local people provided by SWV was included in the Ecuador Resource Document. The section provided a distribution of the Ecuadorian population as ‘65% ‘mestizo’, of half Spanish and half Indigenous decent. There are still 13 indigenous nations and 14 tribes that represent 30-40% of the countries population’. The section goes on mention that the ‘diversity of the different tribes is reflected in their social structure, food, medicinal knowledge, justice system, language, clothing, art, crafts, religion, sacred sites and their myths and legends’. No examples were given regarding the similarities and differences of the tribes. This section attempted to illustrate the complexity of each tribe rather than over simplifying the people of Ecuador by saying ‘In Ecuador, people love music’ as written in one of the newsletters.

The photographs used to supplement the People section in the Ecuador Resource Document all portray Ecuadorians in traditional garments, as with the examples shown in Figures 15 and 176below.



Figure 15: SWV image of host in traditional dress



Figure 16: SWV image of host in traditional dress

Images of the local people were prevalent in the marketing materials SWV used to promote their volunteer tourism experience to future participants. The only photographs where hosts are wearing traditional clothing were located in cultural related sections of documents sent by SWV (Figures 15 and 16). Although the photographs as a whole illustrated the host in a variety of images, the textual representations of the people were often vague, consisting of sweeping generalizations. The characterization of the images and related text, both of the local people and of the other images provide by SWV, all contributed to the crafting of the voluntourist gaze and whether that gaze was based more on the traditional tourist gaze or a family gaze.

Deconstructing the Voluntourist Gaze: Tourist Gaze vs. Family Gaze

As discussed in the literature review, the study by White (2010) differentiated between the tourist gaze and family gaze. The tourist gaze is ‘a traditional ‘tourist photograph’ – visual representations of landscape, landmarks or other images such as streetscapes revealing aspects of

the destination, which do not include human subjects at all' (p. 120). The family gaze is a photograph with 'human subjects such as the individual, family, friends, or other tourists, or a combination of these...which sometimes might include a landmark or landscape in the background' (p. 120). This framework was used to analyze both the SWV website and the voluntourist participant's photographs.

According to White's (2010) definition a photograph that included a human subject should be defined as a family gaze photograph. However, in the case of volunteer tourism this definition proved to be problematic due to the high degree of host/participant interaction. Hosts are not a tourists, family members, or friends and therefore, are not accounted for in this definition. One question that arose during this study was how to solve this problem. Is there another category of gaze that needs to be developed? Are these photographs still considered as a family gaze since the hosts are human subjects although they are not part of the family unit? Or are the photographs of hosts considered as a tourist gaze? As noted in the literature review, one theme that has resulted from previous research involving interactions with the host community was voluntourists often sought to satisfy their curiosity of the 'other'. In this sense the host community would be similar to a landmark, the equivalent of what Haldrup and Larsen (2003) describe as an 'image-driven attraction' when discussing the tourist gaze. For this study, hosts were coded as either tourist gaze or family gaze depending on the relationship expressed with the participant in each photograph. By triangulating interviews with participants, field observation, and the content analysis of photographs the relationship between the participants and hosts portrayed in each photograph were able to be accurately interpreted to fall under a family gaze or tourist gaze.

The 21 natural and 15 cultural photographs displayed on the SWV website and mailings to future participants focus on the tourist gaze (Table 2). Using the definition discussed above, the 12 photographs of the host community displayed on the SWV website would also fall under the category of tourist gaze. The 27 photographs involving the SWV participants and the 8 photographs where a participant was posing with an object or landscape would be classified as a family gaze (Table 2). The remaining 17 photographs of the SWV participants interacting with the host community were perhaps the most difficult to classify (Table 2). While they represented both the tourist gaze by featuring members of the host community, they ultimately represented the family gaze because a family member is included in the photograph. This corresponded to White's (2010) classification of a photograph that features both a human subject and a landmark. Therefore, the 17 photographs which featured both a voluntourist and a member of the host community were considered to represent the family gaze (Table 2). In total, of the 100 photographs used to craft the voluntourist gaze, 52 represented a tourist gaze and 48 represented the family gaze (Table 2). The similar frequency of both gazes suggests that perhaps the voluntourist gaze is comprised of both the tourist gaze and the family gaze. The voluntourist gaze included gazes of the volunteer community, volunteer project, host community, and natural and cultural images that represent the place of the project.

The second half of the hermeneutic circle

Voluntourist's consumption of SWV Gaze

The section above attempted to determine the voluntourist gaze of SWV by analyzing the website and advertising materials of the volunteer organization. The following section will analyze a purposive sample of SWV participants to determine the usage of SWV's website and mailings. This analysis will determine the reliance each participant placed on SWV's

voluntourist gaze and aid in determining how influential these materials were in forming each participant's voluntourist gaze.

None of the participants interviewed reported actively seeking out a volunteer tourism trip. They all explained that it was quite accidental. They just happened to find out about it from either a class presentation or through friends and decided to sign up for it. The majority of the participants (all participants interviewed with the exception of P3 and P5), learned of the concept of a volunteer vacation through a SWV class presentation:

‘I was in class just at school and the recruiters came by my class and made the announcement and it sounded like something I really wanted to do because I really wanted to volunteer; but at the same time I wanted to go out and travel because I have been traveling my whole life and I have been volunteering most of my school career. I decided to just go to the meeting to figure it out and see what it's about and I fell in love with the idea and thought it was really cool and it sounded like something I would, it sounded really cool so I went for it. Just like that...’ – P8

P5 was the only interviewed participant who signed up for the program because one of her friends had already signed up. P3 ‘had one of her friends mention it’ to her after seeing a presentation before her class. While P9 was not actively seeking out a volunteer tourism trip, she became interested in volunteer tourism after participating in a study abroad trip:

‘Well the winter before I studied abroad in Costa Rica, which I loved, and I have always wanted to volunteer abroad just cause, just from seeing Costa Rica you could see that other countries need help with certain stuff. So, I was really super interested especially after my Costa Rica trip.’

Similarly, other participants who were initially interested in a study abroad trip found the SWV trip as a suitable alternative because it was a better fit than a study abroad trip:

‘I wanted to study abroad, but I didn’t want to be gone for a whole semester because I didn’t want to leave school. So I was looking for programs, but I didn’t really need the academic credit, so I wanted to do something better than taking classes.’ –P3

Although P9 was interested in volunteering abroad, she did not research any other programs because ‘no one else was promoting it, so I just went to where they were promoting it.’ This was a common theme as all participants interviewed, except for P3, reported that they did not research any other volunteer tourism programs. Once potential voluntourist’s learned about the SWV program from a condensed presentation in their class they were invited to attend an information session to gain additional information from past participants or employees of SWV.

Several participants were ready to sign up for the trip based on the five minute announcement and the informational interview which was approximately one hour long. P4 explained that the presentations ‘seemed pretty legit’ and ‘the fact they were coming around to the university and they fact that my university let them talk to us I thought they are probably pretty legit.’ P6 even reported that she signed up the very day she learned about SWV: ‘I went to the meeting and then I almost didn’t do it, and then I decided that I am going to almost not do everything I ever want to do, so I just signed up that day which is really out of character for me.’

For the participants who were not sold on the trip based on the announcement and informational interview, they could gain additional information about the program on SWV’s website. As discussed in the section above on the first half of the hermeneutic circle, the SWV website provided information related to trip logistics, adventure and optional activities, and volunteer activities. All participants interviewed had to access the website to obtain the

application form for the trip, however, the amount of time spent on the website varied widely. P9 reported that she ‘would just go on the website to just look at other trips. I wouldn’t say I went on it a lot, it was more to do what we had to do to sign up for the trip and get all of that stuff done with.’ P3 noted that ‘between applying and actually being accepted [she spent] probably a couple hours [on the website].’ Conversely, P8 some participants reported spending ‘a couple hours a week’ on the SWV website: ‘just making sure I had all of my paperwork in and you know, I was up to date with as much as I could get...I didn’t want to be behind at all.’

P6 noted that she ‘probably spent very little time on the website, but I read every single thing they sent me in the mail and all of their emails I read very thoroughly.’ This was also a commonality among the participants. P5 reported:

‘I would read everything. I would read it through, whether it would stick or not was another thing. But I would read everything through because it was the first time I was going like seriously out of the country, I have been to Canada and stuff, but um, it was the first time I was actually going to a country by myself without my parents so I was kind of you know, not so much nervous, but I wanted to know everything.’

Overwhelmingly, the documents related to the project (the project guide and the travel document, which were both outlined in the previous section) were found to be the most useful to the participants. One reason P1 reported for the project guide being the most relevant was: ‘the main focus of the trip would be the volunteer project, so I thought I should get as much knowledge on that.’ The project guide also provided an example schedule and a packing list which P9 found helpful:

‘it gave you all of the information of what you would need; what the climate was going to be like and it described what our trip was going to consist of...I remember highlighting

and underlining stuff. Especially my parents were like very, they wanted me to make sure I did that because they wanted me to know what I was getting myself into and to know all of the information I should know. I definitely remember I took that thing around where ever I went.'

Additionally, the project guide included an example of a typical daily schedule while on the volunteer that P7 believed to be more pertinent than the documents related to Ecuador's culture:

'I looked through the project guide and I looked at what we would be doing day by day and stuff. But I didn't read most of the culture stuff. I read a lot of what to bring and like day by day what we were doing. Cause I was really worried about what we needed to bring more than like what their culture already was because I figured I would learn it when I was down there.'

While P7 believed that the information related to the day to day activities was of greater importance, P8 thought the cultural related documents were also important, just in a different way:

'The resource document was the one that I really went through a lot. The project manual was definitely as important. I thought it was equally as important just in a different way because it was basically what I was going to be doing for the next couple of weeks whereas the other one was just helpful in a sense just being there. Being around the people I knew what to expect, I knew what they were going through whether it was politically or socially, so I definitely thought it was pretty helpful just in different ways.'

P3 agreed and also liked the resource document; however, she felt 'it was really vague. I liked that they sent the history and culture thing although it was really funny because it started with 'in the beginning of time' ...I liked it and I did read it; I didn't think it was really helpful.' P6 also

found the resource guide the most relevant because ‘it was just more interesting to me I think.’ This document provided a breakdown of Ecuador’s indigenous people by tribe and played a role in P6 expectations of the host community: ‘when we got there it seemed that the people really weren’t that much different than us. I expected the people to have a lot more differences than I guess we found.’

The consensus of the group showed the newsletters that SWV would send would be the least relevant documents as P4 reported:

‘I didn’t read any of the emails that they sent like those newsletters. I was just not interested, I would just delete them. Mainly because they just like showed people that I didn’t know, like different projects, I don’t know it was just like too much. I didn’t really care about it, which sounds bad.’

P3 echoed P4’s sentiments in that ‘the email newsletters were like ‘look at what other people have done’ and I didn’t care.’ P7 just read the fun facts that were included in the newsletters because ‘they were easy to read’ and ignored the articles in the newsletters.

While several reported purchasing lonely planet guide books related to the region, the information provided by SWV was the participant’s primary source of information related to the host community or culture of Ecuador. P3 felt that with the information packet SWV sent and the fact that she ‘knew stuff about Ecuador in general just from History and Spanish class’ was sufficient pre-trip knowledge. Participants who did utilize other sources of information, mainly researched risks associated with traveling to Ecuador, articles and images of Ecuador and basic facts related to the people of Ecuador. The main topic P4 researched included the risks traveling outside of the country:

‘I obviously wanted to know what kind of risks there were obviously things like getting immunized were things that I wanted to find out. I looked up things like currency; I looked up things like water safety, like if we could we drink the water. Which I assumed that we couldn’t and I was right, but I also went to see a travel doctor and he told me all about what to expect when going to Ecuador and that kind of type of world. I surfed the internet a little bit and I bought a book like the Lonely Planet book on Ecuador or whatever and other than that I didn’t really learn too much about the actual culture of Ecuador, but I learned more about environmentally, the climate, what to expect and what risks there were.’

With the exception of P1, all other participants echoed P4’s sentiments and did not learn about the culture of Ecuador or the host community. P7 ‘read a couple of articles on Ecuador and looked up a couple of churches in Quito that sounded kind of cool to visit.’ In a similar fashion, P5 ‘wikipediaed it [Ecuador]. I just kind of clicked through pictures and stuff and just looked through it. Like Cotopaxi I looked up.’ Although both participants performed additional research other than what SWV provided, their research was mainly on sites to travel to in Ecuador. Contrary to the other participants, P1 researched cultural aspects of Ecuador and learned ‘that people have different customs whether you live in the mountains or on the coast and whether you roll your R’s or not.’

Based on the analysis of this purposive sample, the participants of this volunteer tourism trip were quite passive when it came to signing up for the trip and researching the culture of Ecuador. Largely, their only concern was the schedule of day to day activities they would participate in while on the project site. Though it appeared that the website and reading materials were not very effective in terms of the pre-trip learning for the participant, the resource

guide did play a role in P6's expectations of the host community. The next section will focus more intently on the motivations for participating in a volunteer tourism experience, the level of pre-trip expectations, and the satisfaction levels of the participants.

Motivations, expectations and satisfaction levels of SWV participants

As noted in the literature review, Markwell (1997) found that content and images taken in mainstream tourists' photographs often reflect the way in which they perceive the destination, and therefore, their own personal perceptions and biases can be seen through the photographs. Building on the foundation of this research, this section will analyze the motivations, expectations, and satisfaction levels of the participants to determine if these attributes played a role in shaping their voluntourist gaze and if these attributes can be seen through their photographs.

The first half of the hermeneutic circle section of this thesis analyzed the potential motivating factors SWV showcased in its marketing materials and found that often multiple motivators exist for someone to sign up for a volunteer tourism trip. This was also the case for the purposive sample of volunteer tourism participants interviewed. Table 5 below presented a breakdown of the motivations the participants mentioned for wanting to sign up for a volunteer tourism trip. P2 declined the interview so her motivations for participating in a volunteer tourism trip are unknown.

Table 5: Motivations for participating in a volunteer tourism trip									
Motivation	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Altruism	X	unknown	X					X	X
Cultural exchange and learning			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Personal growth				X		X			X
Professional development	X						X	X	
Structure of the program			X				X		
Travel and adventure	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Interacting with other participants									X

Based on the above table all participants had multiple motivations for participating in a volunteer tourism vacation. While cultural exchange and learning was a motivator for all participants except P1, the degree to which it was a motivating factor varied by participant. This can be seen by the following two quotes regarding what P3 and P9 expected to gain from this experience:

‘I wanted to see another culture and another country because I have been out of the country only for like week long vacations I wanted to get a more in depth experience.’ – P3

‘[I wanted] to see what other people were like and kind of learn to appreciate what I have more, I guess, which I definitely did. And meet new people...I thought um, I thought it was going to be definitely an experience where it would change who I am as a person in a better way where like after I would be a better person, and think of things differently.’ – P9

Though cultural exchange and learning was also mentioned by P9, based on her quote personal growth carried much more weight in her decision to participate in a volunteer tourism experience than cultural exchange and learning did. Cultural exchange and learning carried more weight based on P3’s response than it did for P9.

P9 was the only participant to list interacting with participants as a motivating factor for participating in a volunteer tourism vacation. This motivation was based on the study abroad experience P9 participated in the semester prior to her volunteer vacation. She became aware of the friendships that she would develop with other participants from her past experience of befriending her fellow study abroad students. While the other participants did not list interacting with other participants as a motivator, many mentioned the relationships made with participants exceeded their expectations and enhanced their overall satisfaction of the experience.

One component of the research question for this study was to determine the underlying motivations of why a participant chose to participate in the volunteer tourism experience and if these motivations manifested in the images they captured. During the coding process it was impossible to determine if an image truly represented the motivating factors shown in the table above. For instance, an image of a participant whale monitoring could be coded as altruism in that the participant assisted a non-profit organization assess the migrating whale population off the coast of a predominantly fishing community with the goal of gradually shifting the livelihood of the community from fishing to tourism. That same image could also be coded as travel and adventure for the fact that the participant was in an old fashion motor boat in the middle of the Pacific Ocean surrounded by humpback whales. Finally, that image could be coded as professional development by P8 who mentioned in his interview that he is studying marine biology and that when he saw the 'whale program, the whale watching and being really in love with the ocean...and thought it was kind of neat to be able to see that as well.'

Only one interview question was asked regarding what the motivations for a participant to partake in a volunteer tourism trip were. Even though the participants did list a variety of

motivating factors, the information they provided was not conclusive enough to determine if their motivations were manifested in their photography on a photograph by photograph basis.

Using the format found in White (2010), each participant's expectations and satisfaction levels were analyzed separately to determine if each individual's expectations and satisfaction levels were manifested in the photographs they uploaded to Facebook. The percentages are based on Tables 9 and 10 in Appendix C.

Participant 1 (P1) expectations and satisfaction

P1's initial expectations of the trip were not well developed despite spending time to learn about the people and the culture of the host project: 'I wasn't really all too sure what to expect with the people that lived there. And I guess the same can be said with the culture. I didn't really know what to expect.' As a result of not having great expectations related to the experience, as a whole the volunteer portion of the trip matched P1's expectations. The only part of the trip that fell short of P1's expectations was the amount of whale monitoring volunteering there was. The whale monitoring was also the most memorable part of the SWV experience for the participant; 'definitely the whale monitoring was pretty awesome. That really stuck in my mind.' No parts of the trip exceeded P1's expectations. Overall, P1 reported gaining similar themes as her motivations for participating in the experience: altruism and cultural exchange and learning. Additional hints of travel and adventure were also sprinkled into what she believed she gained from the experience:

'[I gained] world experience. Going to another country and experience I guess doing things like what I wouldn't be able to do in my own country. I don't think in the States there probably isn't whale monitoring like it was there or its harder to access all like professional, and they don't really need volunteers.'

The focus of P1's photographs supplement the interview responses given as 86% of P1's uploaded photographs are natural themes. Additionally, all of the photographs taken during volunteer work were of whale monitoring. P1 did not have expectations related to the culture and the people, consequently only six photographs uploaded were classified as cultural or photographs comprised of the host community. Half of the cultural photographs were of the host house, which was what P1 had basic expectations about.

Participant 2 (P2) expectations and satisfaction

As mentioned above, P2 declined the interview so her expectations and satisfaction levels of the trip are unknown.

Participant 3 (P3) expectations and satisfaction

P3's expectations were not well developed, despite reading some of the pre-trip materials that SWV sent: 'I honestly felt like that they didn't give us very much information at all and I didn't really know what to expect.' While P3's did not have many expectations related to the trip to compare her satisfaction levels against, there were parts of the volunteer trip that fell short, met, and exceeded her expectations. P3 felt the volunteering on the trip did not meet her expectations and described her experience with SWV as 'poorly organized':

'I guess maybe poor communication would be more appropriate, just like no one knowing what we were doing when or what we were trying to accomplish with the playground...I think better communication would have made it more helpful, and also, more engaging for us especially with the playground to know 'why are we building these trenches'. No one seemed to be able to answer that question and it would have made it a lot more motivating to actually dig the trenches if we actually knew what was going to go in them I think...It didn't seem like we were helping and making a lasting impression on

ourselves or them...I mean we finally saw pictures of the finished playground and it was awesome, but I didn't feel like we were actually contributing. And that was disappointing because you go abroad and are like 'I'm going to make a difference' and you know that is not real, but it didn't feel like that happened. But it was still fun.'

Although the volunteer work associated with the park fell short of P3's expectations, the volunteering in the elementary school met her expectations:

'With the schools, we were more in touch with the culture and the people and their experiences. I think even though I mean we didn't do it as much as I would have liked to and I feel like we would have made more of a difference if we had done more, but like the one time, I don't know if you were there when we painted the skirts for the celebration of the different counties. That was really interesting because it was so different than anything we have here. I mean obviously we have different celebrations but it was interesting to see the way they approached it and devoted an entire school day to not even the kids getting ready for it but the teachers and us getting ready for it for them. So it was I guess more a formal experience than we would take things like that here.'

P3 also felt that her interactions with the host community and other participants exceeded her expectations. P3's responses of what fell short of her expectations (the volunteer work overall being poorly organized), what met her expectations (volunteering in the elementary school), and what exceeded her expectations (interacting with the people) all directly related to all of her motivations for participating in a volunteer tourism trip: altruism, cultural exchange and learning, and the structure of the program.

Interestingly, P3's Facebook album that related to the volunteer portion of the trip corresponds to her responses of expectations and satisfaction levels. For instance, the people on the trip exceeded her expectations. Photographs with either members of the host community or participants comprised 87% of the photographs related to the two week period. Additionally, the volunteer work fell short of her expectations, and represented only 28% of the activity photographs. Further, the main volunteering activity she was interested in was teaching elementary school children and there were twice as many photographs of volunteering at the elementary school than any other volunteering activity. Similarly, 70% of the photographs with members of the host community were of children. P3 noted that 'all of the kids were memorable because they were cute and fun and they seemed to interact more naturally with us than anyone else because their kids.'

P3 also discussed her satisfaction with the cultural elements of the trip, with one being assisting the elementary school children in preparing for a festival. Her satisfaction of the cultural exchange and learning emerged in the analysis of photographs she uploaded. P3's album has the third highest percentage of cultural activity photographs at 17% and the second highest cultural themed photographs at 7%. For P3, her expectations and satisfaction of the trip were manifested in the photographs that she uploaded as the patterns of the types of photographs uploaded corroborate to her interview testimony.

Participant 4 (P4) expectations and satisfaction

P4's expectations of the trip largely revolved around the amount of volunteer work that she would do. The volunteer work fell short of her expectations and she was dissatisfied with the amount of volunteering she did. This dissatisfaction was heightened when P4 compared notes with a different volunteer group after the volunteering was completed:

‘For the volunteer part of it I really thought we would be doing a lot of volunteering, like every day, 8am to 6pm a full packed day of volunteering, doing different things, and the humpback monitoring think I was like ok well that would be pretty cool if we did it like every day. So I really expected, I guess I imagined that we would be busy from like morning until night just doing a couple of things... It was just a lot less than I expected. And after getting back from the project I really didn’t feel like we made a big difference. So I don’t know. As much as I loved staying there I don’t think that our contributions were necessarily very great... And remember when we met up with the other group that was volunteering on the organic farm? When I heard about what they were doing I was like ‘what you guys had to cook your own meals and were working from 5am to dinner time, and you know really hard work every day, and I was thinking about what we did and I went to the beach everyday and ate really good food and got to sleep in’ so I just thought that it really wasn’t fair. They were doing all of this work and I feel like we could have done more.’

Overall, P4 felt that she experienced personal growth and travel and adventure from the SWV experience, which were two of her main motivating factors: ‘I think I probably gained a lot of self confidence and just I definitely trust myself more and I value my abilities more mostly from the adventure part of it, being able to do things that I never thought I would do. So I definitely learned a lot about myself and I am very proud of myself because of some of the things I never pictured myself doing.’ Additionally, the most memorable part of the experience for P4 was interacting with the host people: ‘it was great to see even though we didn’t always speak the same language; it was great to see how we had an understanding of each other regardless of language.’ This also tied back to her motivator of cultural exchange and learning.

Despite the volunteering activities not meeting the expectations of P4, these were the majority of the photographs uploaded, which represented 64% of her Facebook album. While altruism was not an initial motivator for P4, as mentioned above, she ‘gained that volunteering kind of craze’ and it appeared that she wanted to showcase this new passion to her social network. Interestingly, even though interacting with the host community was one of the most memorable parts for P4, this was not conveyed through her Facebook album either as only four photographs related to the local people were uploaded. Additionally, one of the initial motivators of P4, cultural exchange and learning, was not conveyed in P4’s photographs as only one cultural themed photograph relating to the host house was uploaded. No photographs related to the cultural activities that participants took part in were uploaded. In the case of this participant, her pre-trip motivations and satisfaction levels reported were not manifested in the photographs she took.

Participant 5 (P5) expectations and satisfaction

P5 tried not to go into the experience with expectations since this would be her first time going out of the country. Although P5 attempted to have as few expectations as possible, P5 did discuss at length her expectations regarding the structure of the program and interactions with the host community:

‘I didn’t really have any expectations about the people in Machalilla, but I’ll tell you I did not think that they would be such busy bodies. I thought everybody would be a lot more patient listening to our Spanish. I don’t know about your host family, but my host family would be like ‘Cumplianos, cumplianos’ like, and we were like ‘Yeah, I just told you an entire sentence about my cumplianos and you are like just saying cumplianos, glad we got that across.’ I don’t know. The children were kind of interesting. I kind of expected

the children to be like they were; kind of interested but they couldn't I don't know. [P7] and I were annoyed by the children... Oh and O----- [host family member serving as a coordinator]. I did not expect O----- to be how she was. I did not expect them to like yell at us about things... she wouldn't listen to us, she wasn't receptive to us. I didn't expect anybody to be like that. I expected everybody to be like kind of, I expected more structure and nobody was structured. I'm not like terribly disappointed in it. That is just what I expected and it wasn't like that... I tried to go in with as little expectations as possible, so the only thing I expected were the things we talked about. I expected them to speak English, I expected them to speak to us with a little more, like, what am I trying to say... like a little more patient. And they didn't really have any patience for us. They kind of wanted us to do all of their work and I expected them to be very, more helpful. I guess that is one of the expectations that wasn't really met. I expected them to be helpful. And I expected them to want to change their community as much as we did. And they didn't in any way. Remember when all of those adults just sat there and watched us clean glass out of the park. I just felt bad about that. Yeah no one wanted the change as much as we wanted them to change. And they wanted us to do the change for them. It wasn't that they wanted to change, they didn't want to help change.'

The most memorable experiences for P5 revolved around interacting with the other participants:

'Memorable experiences were hanging out with everybody. Not so much memorable experiences as doing volunteer work because I didn't really feel connected to that so I guess one of the most memorable experiences would be like the karaoke bar... Just hanging out with everybody... I didn't really expect to make as many, of like all of our

friends, I didn't think any of us would all hang out, like I don't know if you thought that, but I didn't. So I was really excited and like we were all friends. It was great.'

Overall P5 reported the structure of the program, ease of travel, and general feeling of safety while in a foreign country as what she gained from her experience with SWV which directly related to her motivations of travel and adventure. Additionally, the extent of her responses regarding her interactions with the host community can also be linked to her motivation for cultural exchange and learning.

P5 reported the lowest satisfaction levels among the participants interviewed.

Correspondingly, she uploaded the fewest photographs related to the volunteer portion in her Facebook album. The only element of the trip that exceeded P5's expectations was interacting with the other participants. This emerged through the analysis of P5's photographs.

Photographs taken of our leisure activities accounted for 62% of her album. The majority of the photographs (86%) were taken of people. Of the photographs centered on the theme of people, the composition of these photographs was pretty evenly split between interactions with the other participants (45%) and photographs of the host community (55%). While P5 did not report being satisfied with her interactions with the host community, she discussed at length her interactions with the hosts in greater detail than all of the other participants. Interestingly, the length of time spent discussing the host community corresponds with the photos uploaded by P5 because she uploaded 45% of photographs related to the host community, the highest percentage of any other participant (the second highest percentages were 15%, a substantial difference). Similarly, P5 felt like she didn't connect with the volunteer work, especially the work in the park, which was also reflected in the album that she uploaded. The volunteering activities only represented 38% of the activities she photographed, with zero photographs related to volunteering in the park.

Participant 6 (P6) expectations and satisfaction

The majority of the expectations reported by P6 related to the volunteer project:

‘I sorta pictured that we were going to be working with people [host community] more and spending more time on the volunteer things than we did. I sorta pictured that we would spend more than a half an hour teaching Spanish, or teaching English, and that kind of stuff.’

On the whole, the trip matched P6’s expectations: ‘I think I would say it just met my expectations. We didn’t do as much as I thought we would get done, but there were other portions of the volunteer portion that would exceed my expectations so I would put it like somewhere in the middle.’ The people met on the trip were what made the experience for P6 and actually exceeded her expectations:

‘I just remember the people more [host community]. Um, and I feel like we didn’t do as much volunteering, or we didn’t get as much done as we were going to but I really did learn a lot about even just like trying to talk to the people that were there. I felt like I really got what I was hoping for out of that...I think the I was really surprised with how well I connected, how well the whole group of us [participants] connected. That really exceeded my expectations on how it ended up being like it felt like we knew each other forever. We worked together really well.’

Another memorable experience for P6 was staying with a host family: ‘It was really neat. I am really glad that we stayed at houses with families instead of anywhere else. Cause I just thought it was really neat eating supper with the family and doing laundry. It was a really good experience.’

P6 reported gaining the cultural exchange and learning and that the adventure tour exceeded her expectations which were both initial motivators for her. The remaining motivator

of personal growth did not emerge in her expectations or satisfaction levels. The expectations and parts of the trip P6 was satisfied with were brought out in her Facebook album. P6 reported her most memorable experiences related to relationships made with the other participants, half of the photographs uploaded were of the participants, and themes related to people comprised 65% of her album. P6 also reporting gaining insights on the Ecuadorian culture, and although she did not upload any cultural activity photographs, 13% of her photographs were culturally themed. Of the culturally themed photographs uploaded, all but one were of the host house, which was brought out as a memorable experience for P6. Although the volunteer work just met P6's expectations, volunteering activities represented 59% of the photographs that she uploaded with the remaining 41% attributed to leisure time.

Participant 7 (P7) expectations and satisfaction

Much like P5, P7 reported that she did not set a lot of expectations; therefore, few parts of the experience fell short of her expectations:

'I didn't expect anything crazy going into it. I was just like pretty open into just going down there and doing pretty much whatever they wanted us to and like meeting people that came with and like talking and seeing how like the other people lived down there and seeing what was going on. Like, I didn't really expect anything really specific. So there wasn't much that didn't meet my expectations... I had a super great experience and I met a lot of great people and everything, but I did think that the volunteer portion would be more structured. It was kind of like a this day we'll do this, maybe tomorrow we'll do that if we can like I don't know and then like the park we never really saw much results with it.'

The most memorable parts of the SWV trip related to P7's interactions with the people; both the host community and the other participants:

'I liked going to the school because the kids would like flock to us. Oh my gosh, no I remember the one night where we were walking down the street and like one of the kids came to say something to me so I went to talk to them and they all surrounded me like I thought that was pretty interesting how it was like I don't know. It was fun though, it was cool. And like meeting the people down there and meeting everyone [other participants].'

P7 also reported that 'it was cool how we were able to hang out like on trips and stuff, like when César took us fishing and stuff like that was cool.' As for what she gained from the experience, P7 reported gaining a better understanding of other cultures:

'I think I gained like a better understanding of other cultures I guess, of Ecuador's culture and like you can really see like a socioeconomic difference from like Ecuador vs. like America and they still use the same currency. So like and their city is so much more different than our cities. I don't know. So like we really have it good living in America. I guess is what I gained from it.'

P7 reported gaining cultural exchange and learning which was an initial motivator for her. Additionally, she mentioned the structure of the program falling short of her expectations while the trips she would take during the leisure time of the volunteer project exceeded her expectations. Both of these were also motivators for P7 to participate in a volunteer tourism vacation. The remaining motivations of professional development did not emerge in her expectations or satisfaction levels. P7 reported a better understanding of other cultures as one of her overall gains of the experience. This appeared in the analysis of photographs that she

uploaded. While only 2% of photographs were culturally themed, photographs of activities with cultural elements represented 22% of the activity photographs. This percentage may not seem high but when compared to the rest of the participants, it was the highest amount of cultural activities posted. Similarly, P7 felt that the volunteer portion just met her expectations because it should have been more structured; only 39% of volunteering activity photographs were uploaded which was the same percentage of photographs she uploaded related to leisure time. P7 reported that the people were the most memorable part of her trip. This corresponds with her Facebook album as 87% of the photographs uploaded are people themed. The majority of these photographs, 68%, were solely of participants.

Participant 8 (P8) expectations and satisfaction

As a whole, P8 went into the volunteer tourism experience trying not to have any preset expectations and would just be open to the experience as it unfolded: ‘I really kind of tried to accept everything that was going on around me...I wanted to try everything and have a good attitude about it. I didn’t really have any bad experiences.’

The whale monitoring, volunteering work in the park, and interacting with the other participants stood out as one of the most memorable parts of the SWV trip, and interestingly, the whale monitoring and volunteering in the park are also what fell short of P8’s expectations:

‘It definitely at least matched, went further than matching my expectations. The whale watching was one thing fell short was I expected to be whale watching like every day. And we didn’t get to do that every day. We only got to do that twice so I mean it was still amazing, but I kind of wish we would have went a little bit more. But in general, and I expected us to do more of the park as well. That was one thing I found, it was kind of a question, like we don’t get to see it finished. I mean we got the pictures so it was cool to

see it then, but other than that I don't think with the relationships and everything that happened, I don't know, just in general, just those two [fell short], the trip by far it exceeded my expectations.'

When discussing his expectations, P8 brought up all of the initial motivators for signing up for the volunteer tourism trip: altruism, cultural exchange and learning, professional development, and travel and adventure. The motivation of altruism and the general desire to volunteer was stronger than that of other participants interviewed based on his history of volunteering and his desire to 'help out and give back'. This emerged during the analysis of P8's photographs by activity where 59% of the photographs uploaded related to the volunteering aspects of the experience. The majority of the volunteer photographs, 91% were of the park. Although P8 mentioned that it was the whale monitoring program that he was 'really in love with the ocean and being a marine biologist I thought it was kind of neat to be able to see that as well. Or studying marine biology, not being a marine biologist.' The reason for this skewed distribution surfaced later in the interview when P9 mentioned that he did not use his camera 'certain parts of the trip, like maybe some of the adventure parts just because it was a bigger camera and it wasn't waterproof or anything like that so I wanted to keep it safe a little before the end.'

P8 felt like he gained cultural exchange and learning, travel and adventure, and felt the benefits of volunteering (altruism), which were three of the four motivators mentioned for participating in a volunteer vacation:

'It's hard to pinpoint any one thing. I definitely became more cultured and it is good to appreciate where you come from a little bit better and you don't take things for granted as much. Other than that just seeing the work we did and you are able to help out those that

are less fortunate than you, and you can't really put a price on that. Friendships that I hope to have for a long time and just awesome activities, things I would never get to do again and bungee jumping...rappelling down those waterfalls was crazy. It was amazing.'

P8 felt that he 'became more cultured' after the volunteer tourism experience. This also paralleled with P8's Facebook album as 22% of the activity photographs were of cultural activities. As mentioned in the analysis of P7's photographs (who also uploaded 22% culturally themed photographs), while this percentage may not be high, it was the highest percentage of cultural activity photographs uploaded by all of the participants.

Finally, P8 reported that the parts of the trip that exceeded his expectations were 'just in that with friends that we made out of it. Both us [other participants] and the host families around us like in the town, I thought that was something I didn't expect to become as close with.' This also corresponds with the photographs uploaded as of the 206 photographs related to the volunteer project; only two photographs did not involve people.

Participant 9 (P9) motivations, expectations, satisfaction

Since P9 already had experience in living within a small community of Costa Rica, her expectations of the culture and the people were the most developed of the participants interviewed. As for the volunteering part of the trip P9:

'expected it to be organized, and um I guess kind of us already having a schedule, following it, and us basically really helping the people we were going to help. Like not just going there and doing little things and this and that. I really wanted to go to a town or a place where we would actually going to do something that was gonna, we were

going to see the end result...Like I wanted to see, I expected to see the change that I made. ‘

The most memorable moments of the trip revolved around the expectations the participant had regarding cultural exchange and learning and interactions with the people:

‘It didn’t match all of my expectations, but it matched some of them where I definitely learned a lot about the culture and the people. I met amazing people [host community]. We obviously did something to impact that town...I guess the people on the trip [other participants]. I didn’t expect to get as close as we did. Like I didn’t think that we would feel that comfortable that quickly...but the relationships I made definitely exceeded my expectations.

Similarly, the least memorable experiences were also based on expectations of the volunteer work, specifically, seeing the change and helping the people.

‘Well the thing was with our trip we were brought thinking we were going to be monitoring humpback whales or something like that. But we get there and it ends up that we are building a playground and teaching kids English and cleaning up a beach and only going to monitor humpback whales like two times. Which was very misleading because although this wasn’t my first choice of a trip I was still excited because it is obviously something new, and learning about it, but we didn’t really get to do anything. And it wasn’t really like we were monitoring humpback whales, it was like we were tourists kind of just there looking at them, which didn’t seem like we were helping much with it...And then the playground, I would have been fine if I went there and like it ended up being that we monitored humpback whales for like two times, but we actually built a playground but we just started building a playground and never got to see the end result

which bothered me a lot because they acted as though it wasn't possible. But then we meet up with a different group of people who actually built a playground and worked on a farm and did all of these other things that actually sounded as if it was beneficial to the people directly. Like they saw kids go on the playground and enjoy it and really experience what they did whereas yes we did start building a playground and later on we saw the end result from pictures but we weren't there to experience the town really grasping what we did. So that definitely I wasn't too happy about.'

While P9 did feel like the group could have done more, as a whole the volunteer tourism experience was a positive one.

'It definitely, even though it didn't match all of my expectations, I still saw a different culture, a different way people, how they lived. It definitely just makes you grateful for everything that you have and to be thankful for it and it changed my life where it kind of just reassured me that I kind of keep want to do this. Like I want to go again and volunteer abroad or just volunteer at home in general. I want to continue doing that because it is something that I remember that when we were there the people; we would do the smallest thing and they would be extremely thankful for it. Whereas I go home and everything is all about like being successful and like all about being on top; whereas in Ecuador they were so all about family and having close relationships and just like living day to day. Whereas here it is just kind of like this speed raceway thing that you have to get through and I just like when we would go to the school and teach them; they were so thankful and excited and the just even like I was just thankful after it all. It was definitely life changing after that. I will always remember it.'

In discussing her expectations of the trip and satisfaction levels, P9 mentioned all of the motivating factors she had for signing up for the trip: altruism, cultural exchange and learning, personal growth, and interacting with participants. In reviewing the composition of photographs uploaded by P9, there were several parallels from her interviews that related to her expectations and satisfactions with the photographs she uploaded. First, 67% of the photographs in P9's album were of people. The most memorable moments P9 reported were interacting with the host community, and she did not expect to get as close to the other participants as she did. Further, 71% of the photographs related to the activities that occurred during our leisure time on the vacation with the remaining 29% relating to the volunteer work performed, which was one element of the trip that P9 was not satisfied with because she believed we could have done more during our time.

Conclusions of participants motivations, expectations, satisfaction

There were two key findings regarding participant motivations, expectations, and satisfaction which include the interrelated relationship between the three and how that relationship endured over time.

Whether it was discussing pre-trip expectations, satisfaction levels or what the participant felt they gained from the trip, five of the eight participants interviewed mentioned all of their motivations for signing up for the trip. The remaining three participants mentioned all but one of their motivations. Further, several participants also reported motivators that they had not initially listed as attributes that they gained or that exceeded their expectations, which may not have occurred to them initially. Interacting with other participants was the motivator that was most commonly mentioned, with personal growth gained for a few individuals, and altruism gained for P4.

An additional finding was that the level of expectations a participant has about the experience played a direct role in the satisfaction levels reported. The participants who attempted to go into the experience with an open mind and as little expectations as possible reported that the volunteer experience as a whole met their expectations, whereas participants who had more developed expectations of what they would accomplish reported lower satisfaction levels.

While it was determined that coding individual photographs based on motivations was not feasible, this section did show that motivations do play a part in developing a participants expectations which drive their satisfaction levels. Based on the above analysis, expectations and satisfaction levels are attributes that influence what the participant chooses to photograph and share with his or her social network. This can be seen through the findings for all of the participants interviewed with the exception of P4. These albums which were created upon return of the trip (with the exception of one of P2's albums which was created during the trip) paralleled the responses given in the interviews conducted one year after the experience. In other words, respondent's motivations, expectations and satisfaction endured over time. This next section will look at the composition of each participant's uploaded photographs on a more in-depth level to determine their voluntourist gaze.

Participants reconstruction of the Voluntourist Gaze

In this section, volunteer participant's photographs will be analyzed in the context of previous research on the tourist gaze, which delineated two categories of gaze: the tourist gaze (focused on the landscape and icons of a destination) and the family gaze (including the members of the travel party within the focus of the gaze). The content analysis of the SWV materials revealed a voluntourist gaze that was split evenly between the tourist gaze and family

gaze. Interestingly, analysis of the participant's photographs revealed a broader spectrum of voluntourist gaze.

Table 6: Photographs by theme (in percentages)											
Theme	P1	P4	P5	P6	P9	P7	P2	P3	P8		SWV
Tourist gaze											
<i>People</i>											
Hosts only	1%	6%	49%	14%	15%	15%	6%	11%	1%		12%
<i>Cultural</i>											
Father's Day serenade	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%		0%
Host house	2%	2%	0%	12%	3%	2%	2%	3%	0%		4%
Other	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%	0%	2%	3%	0%		11%
<i>Natural</i>											
Scenic view	29%	24%	3%	11%	18%	7%	5%	0%	0%		15%
Wildlife	57%	36%	7%	11%	10%	3%	9%	6%	0%		6%
Total	91%	68%	62%	50%	49%	28%	24%	24%	1%		48%
Family gaze											
<i>People</i>											
Participants	9%	16%	31%	30%	29%	47%	44%	42%	47%		27%
Participants and hosts	0%	2%	0%	11%	6%	13%	15%	16%	28%		17%
Participants and animals	0%	6%	0%	0%	2%	2%	4%	5%	7%		0%
Participants and sites	0%	8%	7%	9%	14%	10%	13%	14%	17%		8%
Total	9%	32%	38%	50%	51%	72%	76%	76%	99%		52%

Based on these results, three types of voluntourist gazes emerged: a dominant tourist gaze, a gaze evenly comprised of both the tourist and family gaze, and a dominant family gaze (Table 6).

Below are definitions of each of the gazes, followed by a discussion of each participant's photographs and relevant interview comments:

Dominant tourist gaze (the Drifter gaze): For these voluntourist's, it was more important to showcase the images related to the destination and host culture; something you cannot consume at home. This carried more weight than the participants desire to capture images including themselves or the relationships made with other participants.

Evenly comprised tourist/family gaze (the Zen gaze): This voluntourist wished to provide a complete picture of their experience: to not only showcase the foreign destination, but also to portray the relationships formed while on the project and images of the participant consuming the foreign destination.

Dominant family gaze (the Narcissistic gaze): For this voluntourist, capturing the uniqueness of the foreign destination was not as important as capturing the relationships made with others sharing the experience. Additionally, it was more important for this participant to exhibit their power by posing with destination iconic sites, scenic views, and members of the host community rather than capturing these images on their own.

Participants P1, P4, and P5 fit the description of the dominant tourist gaze. The majority of P1's gaze was comprised of scenic and wildlife photographs and further reinforced by her interview comments. P1 was initially motivated to participate in a volunteer vacation for conservation efforts rather than community development efforts:

‘At first I thought whale monitoring was the center of our project. Like, that confused me a little bit. I was expecting to spend a lot more time with the whales, but that didn't happen... it seemed like the focus, it was more focused on the community rather than the environmental part. I'm not saying that it was a bad thing, I am just saying I didn't know it was going to be more in that direction rather than the other way.’

While the voluntourist gaze of P4 was not as heavily centered toward a tourist gaze as P1, she too focused on nature-based photographs. P4 was also the only participant whose expectations and satisfaction reported in the interview were not parallel with her photographs (see motivations, expectations, and satisfaction levels of SWV participant's section). One explanation for P4's perspective of the voluntourist gaze was her passion for photography. Her

selection criteria for uploading photographs onto Facebook was a greater factor than many other participants:

‘I am someone who really enjoys photography. Obviously, I am not a professional photographer or anything, but I did have a really good camera and I was really excited about some of the pictures I had taken...I am not someone to post all of my pictures. I like to pick and choose the ones that show all of the activities that we did, but usually just one or two pictures of each activity. Usually they are the best ones, or the highest quality ones, or the ones where everyone is smiling that is going to show off what we are doing in the best light.’

Although the voluntourist gaze of P5 appeared similar to P4’s gaze, the main difference was P5’s curiosity of the ‘other’ was the driving factor of her voluntourist gaze. Half of the photographs uploaded by P5 were of images of the host community. This percentage was both the highest of all of the themes for this participant, and the highest when compared to host community photographs taken by all of the other participants. P5’s consumption of the host community was discussed in more detail in the characterization of the host community section.

The next typology, the evenly comprised gazers, consisted of P6 and P9 which was similar to SWV’s gaze that was discussed at length in the first half of the hermeneutic circle section. Both P6 and P9 had similar responses for their expectations and satisfaction levels. Both deliberately wanted to upload photographs that included all three themes (people, natural, and cultural). For instance, P9 stated:

‘I definitely wanted, I remember wanting to put pictures of the country itself and how beautiful it is because I feel like people might be like ‘it’s a poor country and the desolate place’ but its honestly one of the most beautiful places I have been to, so I definitely

wanted to show those pictures. Probably like volunteering, like us, the beginning and after pictures of what we did at the playground. I remember taking pictures of what we did at the school with the local people. I wanted to show pictures that symbolized Ecuador and resembled something that, and not just random pictures that didn't really mean anything.'

It was important for these participants to showcase the different themes of the volunteer experience and this was evident when viewing the composition of the photographs taken.

The third typology, the dominant family gazers, was comprised of P2, P3, P7, and P8. As indicated in Table 6, the majority of the family gaze included photographs of the participants. Additionally, P2, P3, and P7 all had similar distributions of the remaining components of the tourist gaze and family gaze. Much like P1 was the outlier favoring the tourist gaze, P8 was the outlier favoring the family gaze. The main driver of the tourist gaze for P3 and P7 were depictions of the hosts, which represented approximately half of the tourist gaze for both participants. Conversely, photographs related to wildlife were the driver of the tourist gaze for P2. The majority of her wildlife images were of a stray dog which P2 'adopted' during our stay on the volunteer project. Of the participants interviewed in this group (P2 declined the interview) each reported interaction with the other participants on the project as the most memorable part of their experience:

'The people on it I thought, like you, I mean seriously though everyone was a lot more friendly than I expected and able to get along despite like weird intergroup dynamics and ridiculous situations I think we all, because we were all there for the volunteer part, we were a very compatible group. But I think if it just would have been an adventure tour type trip there would have been some very different people on it that might not have been

able to mesh as nicely. So that was really cool, the fact that we were all were willing well mostly, get in the dirt and dig ditches or whatever else and then hang out afterwards.’ – P3

Participants characterization of the host community

One key component of the voluntourist gaze was the images of the host community. As discussed in the literature review, to date no one has looked at how relationships between the local residents and voluntourist’s are portrayed through photographs and comments posted on Facebook. This section analyzes how the relationships with the host community are captured in photographic images and subsequently framed for the participant’s social network.

Host-Guest Interactions

As indicated in the literature review, volunteer tourism experiences vary widely in terms of the amount and quality of host-guest interactions afforded to participants and local residents (Broad, 2003; Higgins-Desboilles, 2003; McGehee and Andereck, 2008, Singh, 2002, 2004; Zahra and McGehee, (in press). Previous research in the area of host and voluntourist interactions has revolved around the following themes: personal change experienced by the volunteer; satisfying the curiosity of the ‘other’; reinforcing stereotypes; rationalization of poverty; local resident increased sense of pride in host culture; and economic impacts including dependency. While many of these themes did not emerge while reviewing photographs, the first four topics did come up in interviews with the participants.

Personal change experienced by the volunteer

As discussed in the motivations, expectations and satisfaction levels of SWV participant’s section participants P4, P6, and P9 listed personal growth as an initial motivator to

participant in a volunteer tourism travel experience. Additionally, P8 gained the insight of personal growth after reflecting on the project upon his return.

Satisfying the curiosity of the 'other'

Overwhelmingly, the participants reported really enjoying the home stays during the trip as a means to see how members of the host community lived. Several participants reported being fascinated with the day to day activities and roles of their host family. This was exemplified by a quote from P4:

‘I really loved living with people in the culture. I am really glad they didn’t put us in a hotel or in an apartment or our own house or something like that because I am really glad I got to live with the families and see how they live and how they do their day to day things, and how they make money, and how you know everyone ruled in the family. Everyone has defined things like someone is going to do the cooking and this person cleans and this person is the breadwinner or whatever, like they have everything all set up and they welcomed us in their family and it was amazing just to see how they made their lives, they were just so happy with their lives. Regardless of the conditions they were living in.’

While P4’s curiosity mainly focused on the roles of the family, P7 focused more on the facilities of the host house when describing her experience with the home stays:

‘I really liked it. Like I really like to be able to like shower in that shower that they shower in and like have to drink water out of a jug and like not sleep in rooms where the walls connect to the ceiling and things like that. I thought it was really great to stay with the locals because then like you really know what’s going on there and stuff. You really, it’s really different, like a lot of the mission trips that are going from my school, like they

stay in a hotel which I think is nice but it's a really great experience to stay with locals.

Then you get a feel for it.'

Apart from seeing the way their host families lived during their home stays, several participants also mentioned the relationships formed with the host family. In the process of describing their relationships formed, participants P5 and P8 also reflected on how the host community interacted with each other:

'How would I describe my experience with S----- oh my god and Mariana. Oh my god. Well they are a community. They are super community. Remember when G----- got sick and my entire family was there, well not family, our little house mommy and stuff? They all came over to G-----'s house...They are very community oriented.... [P7] and I were just cracking up the entire time because our entire family, our host mom and our whole entire family was there [to make sure G----- was okay].' -P5

'I thought it was great. I really liked it. I was nervous about it, that was definitely one of the things I was more nervous about, but I really enjoyed it a lot more than I thought I would. And just like even the little jokes we would have, like they called me La Succi, for the longest time. Things like that just made it that much more fun. Like the world cup was on and that was a great thing to have. We were able to root for the US and they were able to root for their team and it was fun to have something in common like that. They were very communal. My host mom was just awesome. She always gave us so much food and she was always surprised at how much food I ate. I loved it. It was so much better than I thought it would be.' -P8

One interesting finding was that the participants would gush about the host community members with whom they interacted on a regular basis during the volunteer project but

conversely, if the participant did not develop a relationship with a member of the host community, they would refer to them by nicknames the participants assigned them. For instance, P5 discusses how Hammock Man and Blessing Woman, two members of the host community, were common topics of conversation among several of the participants:

‘They were kinda, I wouldn’t say they were a joke, but they were people that, I think some people were more receptive to speaking with us. And Hammock Man, if [P7] and I went over to try and say something to him or like ask him who he was he was just like uh huh uh huh uh huh, bye. And it wasn’t really like ever a conversation or wasn’t really like one of those things where you could approach him, so we kind of just gave him our own name. He was always the guy in the hammock. He was always sitting there. He would never talk to us so we were like ‘who are you sir’ so we would call him Hammock Man...That was the enigma of Hammock Man. I wrote a little thing on my online thing but that was great because Hammock Man was always on hammocks. He would go in the houses, he would come get food from our house, but sometimes he would go get food from the house down the street. So we didn’t know if he belonged to us or if he belonged down the street. We weren’t sure because he would get food everywhere. So then, but then he brought starfish for us in the morning, er not starfish, seahorses. And he would put them on the fridge, look at us and go ‘seahorse’ and then put it on the fridge and walk away. Ok. That was like during breakfast one morning. [P7], [P3], and I looked at each other and were like, uuuummm. We talked to Hammock Man in the morning, but I don’t know who he was or where he lived. I think if I had to say, if I had to pick where he lived, I think he lived with us and I think he was a fisherman and went out at night and that is why we never saw him sleeping at our house, but like I don’t know. Cause they

said like all of the fisherman just hung out around the town and they would go out at night, so it looked like the men were lazy. D----- [SWV leader] said that; it looked like the men were lazy, but they went out and fished at night, but got taken care of by their women. So I think that he went out at night and was S-----'s husband. That is my closest conclusion, but I don't know why. Somebody told me that he was S-----'s [host mom] husband, I think D----- told me that. But I think S----- told me that she was a widow, so I don't know. Maybe he was maybe he wasn't. I don't know who Hammock Man was, he was just important in our lives because we loved talking about him. He was the hammock hopper dude, the hammock hopper.'

P5 goes on to elaborate:

'And Blessing Woman would never talk to us either, but she had big glasses and looked like that and would always come in the kitchen for breakfast and go Buen Provecho. She would do it to [P3], she would do it to [P7], and she would do it to me. Right in our face, right to us, looking at us and that was the only contact we really had with her and they told us that was the blessing of the morning. So we called her Blessing Woman. I don't know why she blessed us, but she did bless us when we would eat breakfast or a meal, and so she would come over and talk to S-----, but she would never really speak to us. She would just bless us before food or after food or during food. We would sit there and be so confused for a while, and then it would be over.'

Based on this very detailed passage about Hammock Man and Blessing Woman it is evident that P5 was very curious about the host community. This also emerged during the analysis of her photographs in the motivations, expectations, and satisfaction levels of SWV participants section.

Reinforcing stereotypes

As mentioned in the literature review, Simpson (2004, 2005) found that international volunteering may in fact reinforce existing stereotypes. One stereotype that emerged during interviews with the participants was the host community being consumed with the presence of American's in their town. P3 mentioned that she enjoyed 'seeing how glad they were that we were there, even though they didn't really converse with us, they were still really happy to see us every morning and just happy and generous.' P9 echoed this sentiment with the following memory: 'I remember we would be on the playground and there would be little kids helping us and we would interact with them, or like them watching us and stuff and be amazed by what we were doing cause we were like Americans and stuff...' P5 also mentioned noticing members of the host community observing the participants:

'Or even if just because we were American if that is why they are staring at us. I think we just knew it because we were white and looked different, but it was probably because we were American's where they all think we are stupid and are staring at us to see what stupid things we will do next. Pretty smart. I mean going around the town asking if it was the sun or the moon... But like, we do the same thing, so they were probably looking at us because we were stupid, but we thought it was because we were white. We were absolute idiots, and we would go around doing absolute stupid things.'

Another stereotype that emerged during the interviews involved the work ethic of the host community. P8 mentioned the work ethic when he was discussing his culture shock upon arriving in the host community: 'to go from such a fast paced world here and then you go there and you go fishing in the morning, get the work done. Then at the end of the day you watch TV and are on your hammock. So, lax and relaxing. It was refreshing to be around.' The livelihood

for this host community revolved around fishing. The majority of the men in the town would work on their fishing boats overnight and sort out and prep each days catch around sunrise. Consequently, the volunteer participants would only see the fisherman after they had finished their daily work. While they were ‘lax and relaxing’ when the participants would see them, in reality they had already put in a full day’s work.

As a means to prevent reinforcement of stereotypes, SWV had procedures in place where the volunteer trip leader would facilitate meetings with participants to discuss their feelings and their perspective of the host community. Ironically, while SWV had good intentions with these meetings, the execution of these meetings sometimes served to reinforce stereotypes. Often it was the trip leader, an Ecuadoran from the more urbanized region of the country, who made statements referring to the Machalillan’s as lazy. This was pointed out during an interview with P3:

‘I wasn’t expecting D----- [volunteer trip leader] to talk about their laziness... We had been talking about Hammock Man I guess so we were supposed to be talking about our impressions of the people and the culture and stuff but I don’t know if his impressions of the people were that they were lazy or if he thought that would be our impressions of them. But I don’t think any of us felt that way, based on just talking. And then our conversation then where we were just like ‘What?’ I don’t know what he was trying to get out of that, but it was not what I was expecting to discuss like in an organized setting led by someone from Ecuador discussing how lazy Ecuador was. But then he wasn’t from Machalilla. So, um the meetings where we were supposed to talk about our experiences and the ridiculous things D----- said. But the content of the discussions weren’t meaningful. But I feel like we had meaningful conversations like that amongst

ourselves without D-----'. So, that was kind of a bust on the SWV end, but still a good experience.'

However, there were opportunities for participants to alter their previous notions about Ecuador and its people. P6 reported that her stereotype of the entire country being poverty stricken was broken upon visiting Ecuador's capital city, Quito: 'when we went to Quito I was really confused cause I expected to be in what I envision as a third world country is more like where we were in Machalilla so um, yeah I didn't realize that they would have big cities and stuff like that.'

Rationalization of Poverty

Another common stereotype that was reported by Simpson (2004) and Raymond and Hall (2008) is that volunteers view the host community as 'poor-but-happy' and view the under which poverty the host community is living as acceptable because the locals seem really happy. This was mentioned in the quote above from P3 and again in the interview with P4 when asked what her expectations were of the host community:

'I was expecting a lot of people living in really rough conditions and obviously the water not being very clean and people not having the greatest food or jobs or whatever, that kind of thing. But I actually think it surprised me when I got off the plane. When I got into Ecuador I was really surprised to see how bad it was and it my expectations were completely under what I saw there. I wasn't expecting it to be as bad as it was, but at the same time the people there were really happy in the way that they lived, and the people that we stayed with seemed to obviously I mean that is the lifestyle that they are used to and so they knew how to get along, they knew what kinds of food they could cook and they knew they couldn't drink the water. I don't know, they just got by on what they

knew and they were so happy. And they really cared for us so, I mean obviously it was different that what I am used to living in Canada, but yeah, for them they seemed to be really happy about their living conditions.’

Framing volunteer tourism host-guest relationship

One gap found in the review of the literature related to host community interactions is that to date, no one has looked at the portrayal of relationships between local residents and voluntourist’s through photographs and comments posted on Facebook. This next section will utilize framing analysis to explore focus on how relationships with the host community were captured in photographic images and subsequently framed for the participant’s social networks. Each photograph that included a member of the host community was evaluated based on the following categories utilized by Caton and Santos (2008) and developed by Albers and James (1988): center vs. periphery, subject vs. object, devious-lazy vs. moral-industrious, master vs. servant, and traditional vs. modern. Center vs. periphery referred to the physical location in the photograph while subject vs. object referred to the main focus of the photograph. Devious-lazy vs. moral-industrious related to the perception of the host’s work ethic as captured by the photograph while master vs. servant related to the voluntourist providing a service to the host or vice versa. Traditional vs. modern largely represented the type of dress and behavior of the host captured in the photograph. The first three categories were coded for all photographs which included a member of the host community. The remaining categories were only coded as necessary since these themes were not prevalent in every photograph. The results are shown below in Table 7. As Table 7 denotes, there were no depictions of traditional cultural, therefore, that component was deleted from the analysis.

Table 7: Participants characterization of the host community										
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	Total
Center	1	26	16	4	9	17	32	25	20	150
Periphery	0	12	11	0	5	8	17	34	4	91
Subject	1	24	15	4	10	15	31	20	20	140
Object	0	14	12	0	4	10	18	39	4	101
Devious-Lazy	0	3	0	0	2	3	4	14	0	26
Moral-Industrious	0	3	0	1	1	9	4	24	7	49
Master	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Servant	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	5
Traditional	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Modern	1	38	27	4	14	25	49	59	24	241

Center vs. Periphery and Subject vs. Object

As indicated by Table 7, the subject of the photograph was also generally at the center of the photograph. Given the strong correlation of center/subject and periphery/object analysis of the photographs can be hypothesized that the participant was intending for the focus of the photograph to be clearly identified. There were a few photographs, however, where the central focus appeared to be one thing, but a caption by the participant who uploaded the photograph (caption) or a comment posted by another participant (comment) focused the viewers attention on an object or a person that does not initially appear to be the focal point of the photograph.

There were several instances where a participant was the center of the photograph; however, a caption identified the subject of the photograph as a host located in the periphery. The caption associated with Figure 17 was ‘Except no one warned me of Ecuadorian traditions.’.

The caption written by P3, places the focus on herself who was the center and subject of the photograph in her eyes. However, the comment left by P5 ‘hahaha look at S----- in the back! she knows whats about to happen!’ made S----- the subject of the photograph, although she was in the periphery. Additionally, in Figure 18, P3 commented ‘Cake makes your eyes sting. I love the old man in the background.’ which gave herself and the man in the periphery of the photograph equal weight as a subject of the photograph.



Figure 17: P3 image of birthday party



Figure 18: P3 image of birthday party

Conversely, there were photographs which included members of the host community, but their presence was ignored completely. For example, Figure 19 was included in the album uploaded while P2 was still on the volunteer project. The initial comment left by P2’s mother, ‘you’re cracking me up...never saw you work soooooooo hard...so so so proud of all you’ve done...xox nice hiking boots!!’ focused only on P2. While the photograph showed P2 working alongside other participants and a member of the host community, the comment left by a non-participant focused on the level of effort of P2 as brought forward by the comment.



Figure 19: Participants and host working in the park

Devious-Lazy vs. Moral-Industrious

With only two exceptions, the photographs that portray members of the host community as devious-lazy were from volunteering in the park. The most common image captured in this category depicted the participants diligently working while hosts are in the periphery of the photograph standing and watching as shown below. Based on the composition of the photograph in Figure 20, the main focus was of the participants digging trenches while the locals just happen to be in the background observing. Figure 21 was a more intentional image of the locals watching the participant's mortar bricks.



Figure 20: Hosts watching participants work in the park



Figure 21: Hosts watching participants work in the park

Based on conversations with D-----, our volunteer trip leader, it is not very common in Ecuadorian culture for women to perform construction related work. This was given as the reason to why the host community would watch us build the park, but was not conveyed on anyone's Facebook album. Figure 22 is another example of a misleading image of members of the local community. In this photograph the three local men in the background appear to be standing around watching the participants dig the hole. In reality the participants and host community were working together to dig the hole. First the men pick axed the ground then the participants shoveled away the loosened earth. Anyone viewing the photograph that was not on the trip would assume the men in the background were simply watching the participants work. It should be noted that there were also photographs where members of the local community were diligently working and the participants appeared devious-lazy as seen in Figure 23. While there were only two of these photographs out of the entire population, it is worth noting their existence.



Figure 22: Hosts watching participants work in the park



Figure 23: Participants watching hosts work in the park

The majority of photographs that were coded as moral-industrious (all but six) were of hosts working in the park with the participants. These photographs showed members of the host community working either alongside the participants or on a different section of the park, with the participants most often as the central focus of the photograph. While Figure 24 does show the host members working, they encompass a small portion of the photograph. It appeared that they just happened to be included in the photograph and documenting the hosts work in the park was not a priority. Conversely, Figure 25 put greater emphasis on the local children working with the participant. The participant also highlighted the teamwork of the three working together with the following caption related to the photograph: ‘now i have alexandria and madeline...’



Figure 24: Hosts working with participants in the park



Figure 25: Hosts working with participants in the park

Only one photograph was uploaded where a member of the local community appeared to be leading the participants. This photograph, Figure 26, featured the local coordinator for the Pacific Wales Foundation giving the participants instructions on what to document when humpback whales are spotted.



Figure 26: Host providing instruction on whale monitoring

Of the five photographs where a member of the local community was portrayed as serving a participant, half were of images where the participants received a cab ride from a neighboring town. The vehicle, two participants, and the driver (a member of the host community) were all collectively the focal point as the cab was not a traditional car or truck, but instead a three wheeler (Figure 27). This photograph was uploaded initially by P2 while she was still on the volunteer portion of the trip and later as a part of an album she uploaded after she returned from her trip. P2's caption for this photograph was 'PUERTO LOPEZ, ECUADOR super chill taxi'. P2's mother commented on the photograph, 'ain't that the life!!!! looking good ladies and driver!!!!'



Figure 27: Host providing transportation to participants

This example supports the work of Caton and Santos (2008) who argue that 'it is certainly possible for tourists to have meaningful experiences interacting with those whose job is to provide services for them.' Although the driver was providing services to the participant, he does take up equal weight in the photograph, and was given equal weight in the comment of P2's mother.

Based on the previous analysis, the object or person which was considered to be the subject of the photograph was also in the center of the photograph, with the exception of several photographs where captions or comments would draw attention to the intended subject in the periphery of the photograph. In these instances the caption associated with the photograph anchored the image by focusing the gaze of the onlooker to one specific area of the photograph. This was consistent with Barthes (1977) theory of Anchorage and Relay. Additionally, any member of the participant's social network was also given the power to focus the gaze by writing comments associated with the photographs. The next section will look more closely at the nuances of uploading, captioning, and commenting within the context of Facebook.

Social networking and Facebook

As discussed in the literature review, the study of social media is a relatively new phenomenon (Berg & Teriö, 2010). The existing literature targeted tourism consumer generated content (CGC) online has focused exclusively on the texts posted by consumers on blogs, in travel review sites and virtual communities, or in wikis; however, photographs (and other visual media) are at least as important as texts in communication between travel consumers (Schmallegger et al., 2010). To date, only White (2010) has analyzed travel photographs uploaded to Facebook. This current study incorporated White's (2010) methods of analyzing the tourist gaze along with Schmallegger et al.'s (2010) methods of analyzing the characterizations of images captured by participants and uploaded onto Facebook. In addition, interviews conducted with volunteer tourism participants provided supplemental information regarding the process of uploading to Facebook the photographs taken during the volunteer tourism trip. The following sections discuss the motivations for uploading photographs onto Facebook; what participants choose to highlight and leave out and why; the process of organizing Facebook

albums; how much time is spent viewing Facebook albums once they are loaded; and if uploading photographs onto Facebook is a motivator for participating in other volunteer tourism vacations or vacations in general.

Motivations for uploading photographs onto Facebook

Four motivations emerged collectively from the interviews conducted and analysis of uploaded photographs onto Facebook. Chronologically these included wanting to communicate with friends and family while on the volunteer tourism trip; sharing photographs with the other participants who were on the trip; sharing photographs with friends and family after the trip; and uploading photographs for bragging rights. These motivations were expressed by participants in varying degrees.

P2 was the only participant of the trip to upload photographs onto Facebook as a means to communicate with her friends and family members (while on the volunteer tourism trip). In total, P2 uploaded 25 photographs during the trip. P2 supplemented each of the photographs that she uploaded while in Ecuador with a caption. The majority of the captions listed the town in which the photograph was taken such as 'Machalilla, Ecuador' or 'Puerto Lopez, Ecuador'. Additionally, all but two of these photographs were commented on by a member of P2's social network. Occasionally, P2 would comment back, providing further explanation of the photograph, updating the progress of the volunteer work, and/or reporting how she was spending her leisure time while on the project.

The second and much more common, motivator which emerged from interviews with P3, P6, P7 and P8 for uploading photographs onto Facebook was the desire to share photographs with other participants. P3 reported that it 'was pretty important mostly because other people I know, like you, didn't have your camera and wanted to see them.' P6, P7, and P8 posted their

photographs in hopes that the other participants would do the same so they would have access to the entire group's photographs:

'It was important so that everyone else on the trip could get the pictures too. I mean we all took our own pictures, but everybody was in everybody's pictures so it was nice, you know, I know I wanted some pictures that other people had taken and I was glad that they put it up so that I could have it for myself, so I wanted to be able to do the same thing.' -

P8

P4's comments best exemplified the importance of sharing photographs with friends and family after the trip. She reported that she wanted 'to post some of the good ones [photographs] so people can see what I saw and what I did; especially for the people who weren't in Ecuador with me.' P9 also explained that 'it was more my friends wanted to see what I was doing. Like, my close friends were like "I wanna see your pictures, I wanna see your pictures" and were excited to see what I did and what I experienced...I felt it necessary to share those pictures because they meant a lot to me and I had such an amazing experience and I wanted people to see that.' P5 reported similar reactions from her friends and believed that her friends were more interested in seeing her photographs because the duration of the trip, six weeks in total, was longer than most vacations: 'because we were gone for so long, like everybody wanted to see my trip and it was so much easier like just to put it up online for everyone to look. That's what I did...like I haven't even posted pictures from Holland because nobody is really bugging me for it because I was only gone for two weeks.'

Finally, as mentioned by P3, 'bragging rights for other friends' also emerged as a motivator to post photographs onto Facebook:

‘I literally have a folder on my computer of like pictures of me doing cool things and I am like ‘yay profile pictures for the next couple of months’; so just the bragging rights. Normally I am really bad about posting pictures on Facebook and people bug me about it but I felt like this was when I was more willing to do it just because I knew that there were people who wanted to see them.’

P8 also discussed bragging rights in the context of altruism: ‘it was cool to be able to show that I was able to do that and this is what I did with my summer and I made a difference so you know I would say it was kind of important.’

What participants choose to include and exclude in Facebook albums

While there was some variation in what participants chose to include or exclude in their Facebook album, they largely wanted to include photographs of images that were meaningful and flattering. Participants deliberately excluded unflattering photographs of themselves and other participants, poor quality photographs, photographs that were repetitive, photographs of scenery, and photographs of participants drinking alcohol.

P4, P5, P7, and P8 all mentioned wanting to post photographs that were meaningful to them on their Facebook album. This primarily meant that photographs of people and experiences were highlighted whereas scenery pictures often were not included:

‘I wanted people to get a feel for where I was, but mostly for the experiences that I had. I don’t care what it looked like so much. I care how I interacted with the people and how I felt there. So it was more like show them what I did, not what the place is like; because you can Google it and look at landscapes, but you can’t Google the people.’ -P5

Although P8 was not opposed to posting photographs of scenery, he mostly reiterated the sentiments of P5:

‘Well I wanted to show the cool landscapes so if we could remember. If it was just a place that I saw myself and took a picture of then maybe not so much, but if it was a cool sunset where we were all watching it than I would put that up as something to remember. But it was mostly just people. That is what people care about mostly, just to see themselves in the pictures and can remember being with each other.’

Flattering photographs of participants, or as P3 put it ‘pictures of me looking awesome’ was also commonly mentioned when determining which photographs to upload onto Facebook. This was more important to some participants than others. For instance:

P4 ‘wanted to pick the ones where it showed what I was doing. Obviously, the ones where I looked good instead of the ones where I was sweaty or you know, not... anyway. And I also didn’t want to post pictures of other people who obviously didn’t look good, like if they look at the picture and they think they didn’t look good. I don’t like posting pictures of other people that aren’t flattering of them. So I normally post pictures where everyone is smiling or it’s a fun picture...showing off what we are doing in the best of light.’

In a similar fashion, P3 mentioned that she did not upload ‘pictures where I didn’t look awesome...if it was just me looking stupid that one usually didn’t go up.’ Just as unflattering photographs of participants were often excluded poor quality photographs ‘if the lighting was bad or if it was fuzzy or out of focus’ as described by P1 were also not uploaded. Additionally P9 added ‘if there was like the same picture over and over again, I didn’t want to put it up’.

While all participants were of legal drinking age in Ecuador, photographs involving drinking alcohol were also not uploaded onto Facebook by multiple participants for varying

reasons that included professional development, members on the participant's social network, and drinking not being the purpose of the trip:

'I personally never upload picture of us drinking. I wouldn't even let people take pictures of me with a beer in my hand, not that I drank a lot of beers there, but I'll never upload pictures like that. I don't care how old I am. I choose that for myself just because I am going to med school and people judge me like that but so none of those pictures were ever uploaded' –P5

'I didn't really upload any of the ones where we were like at a bar...or any photos that had alcohol involved, just because being a coach I feel I need to be a good, a little better role model for the elementary school kids that I work with.' –P6

'I don't think I put a lot of drinking pictures up there and stuff and I think I wanted yeah, it was really just the partying pictures that I didn't want to put up there...well, because as much fun as it was it wasn't really the reason why I was down there so I didn't want everyone to see it.' –P7

The process of organizing Facebook albums

As mentioned in the literature review, uploading photographs onto Facebook was the first step in creating an album. After that, the person who uploaded the photograph may group photos in an album, write captions, and/or tag others who are involved (Farquhar, 2009). All participants interviewed mentioned that they ordered their photographs chronologically in their albums. Half of the participants used the caption feature, supplementing their photograph with text, and thereby supporting Barthes (1977) theory of Anchorage and Relay. The participants who did not write captions for their photographs explained that they were taking a passive approach to providing an explanation for their images. P4's reasoning for not using the caption

feature was that it was too time consuming. She ‘didn’t want to take the time to write captions for every single photo.’ Additionally, P1 noted that ‘if someone wants to know what is going on they could just leave a comment.’ By not utilizing the caption feature P7 felt that her album did accurately represent her experience. She felt that it was partially represented through the photographs uploaded, ‘but I think there is more like so many more stories behind the pictures so it doesn’t fully reflect’ the experience.’

Conversely, P6 found writing captions ‘to be really important because photos by themselves, they say a lot but they don’t really tell the actual story. You can infer a lot from them and I just think at the time I just wanted to make sure how good of a time we had...and it was just kind of fun to tell other people.’ However, while this participant found the caption feature to be very important to fully tell the story, she did misspell the name of the town in which she was volunteering for a majority of the photographs. The participants who utilized the caption feature did not write a caption for every photograph, but rather only those which invoked certain memories of the experience, to share their feelings about their experience, and/or to serve as memory joggers for themselves. P9 reported only writing a caption for the photographs that were especially meaningful:

‘I guess like certain pictures maybe I looked at it and it reminded me of something that was funny or like meant something, I don’t know. I probably looked at that picture and was like ‘oh I should write this’ I guess some pictures do that to me and other pictures didn’t. Those pictures, the ‘emotion’ pictures were just necessary to describe what was going on in the pictures. And then the other ones, like I said I think I looked at this picture and thought I need to write this. Like our group; no one would know our group name was Los Gallos unless I wrote that cause like I just think it just like when I looked

at that picture I was like AAAAHHHHH I want to share this. Or like the nightly talk with Aboleta, I just think that when I look at those pictures in particular it reminded me of something and I wanted to share it with people and the other pictures didn't really do that.'

P5 utilized the caption feature to share how she felt the moment the photograph was taken:

'It's like you get to see what I think about the picture. Like, do I think it's funny? Or like Hammock Man. If you just look at the picture and don't know anything about the experience that I had you see a man on a Hammock Man; it's not that cool. But like Hammock Man was a huge part of what we were there. He was an enigma...I don't even know what I captioned it, I don't remember, but like captions remind me of the moments... People will ask you about who is Hammock Man? Like my dad would look at my thing and be like '[P5], who is Hammock Man?', ...and you know, I would have a story.'

P3 also brought up that Facebook was an easy way for her to create photo albums and used the captions as memory joggers.

'I think just sharing the memories, and for me too. I tried to put them in chronological order and put at least a little explanation of what they were because I have always, like back before Facebook, tried to keep real photo albums and never ever ever finished them. And it's a lot easier with Facebook to get them that way. When I go back I can see a random building and be like 'oh this is a random building in Quito' whereas I look at the pictures I took when I was little when I went on a vacation to Paris and I'm like 'oh this might be a place...but I don't know?.'

One theme that emerged when analyzing photographs with captions was the recognition that many of the captions were of inside jokes between the participants. While these captions did anchor the photograph, supporting Barthes (1977) theory of Anchorage and Relay, the captions did not anchor the photograph for someone who was not on the trip. The photograph was only anchored for the other participants, a subset of the participant's social network. P3 noted that 'inside jokes happen a lot on Facebook and people just realize they aren't in them and don't care anymore.' P5 corroborated this sentiment by explaining that including the inside joke as a caption 'wasn't important to show for other people. Those inside jokes were meant for people like you and [P7] and [P3] and stuff like that; people who would remember it.' This analysis demonstrates that the point of anchoring the photograph may not be to provide a further understanding of what was happening in the image, but to draw attention to the bonding that has occurred between the participants of the volunteer tourism project. This special relationship was further highlighted when other participants leave comments related to the photographs portraying inside jokes.

Captions were also used by the participants to convey both the frustrations and accomplishments they felt in relation to the volunteer tourism experience. The caption associated with Figure 28 was 'Half a fence—success!' while the caption associated with the Figure 29 was 'Our "park"'. In looking at both photographs a viewer would conclude that P3 was happy with both tasks in the photographs, however, the quotes surrounding the word park are interpreted as sarcasm by other participants in the volunteer tourism experience. When asked about the photographs and the corresponding captions, P3 stated:

Um, I think the park in quotes is sarcasm. I'm looking at it and it's me standing in the big unknown hole. But I did think the fence was the coolest thing we did because it was

a fence when we were done. And you could tell it was a fence. I know I personally had major issues trying to get the sticks to go where they were supposed to go on the fence.

But looking at the pictures you could actually see that we actually built something.



Figure 28: Participants posing with the fence in the park

Figure 29: P3 posing with the hole and fence in the park

In this instance the combination of an image and caption does not necessarily lead to an enhanced understanding of why a particular image was taken. If you did not know the personality of P3 you could possibly conclude that the above picture of her standing in the hole with the caption ‘Our “park”’ would be a reflection of her sense of accomplishment in digging the hole. In reality, this was an expression of her sarcastic personality.

Another step in organizing photographs uploaded onto Facebook included tagging the subjects in the photographs. One interesting finding was that P3, P5, P6, and P8 tagged members of the host community. The host member would either be tagged by their name or the nickname given by participants which would depend on their relationship. For instance, P6 tagged Madaline, one of the children of her host family, and then ‘creepy drunk Ecuadorian’ a member of the host community with whom she had no meaningful interactions. Similarly, P5 noted that

she would tag Blessing Woman ‘because she didn’t know what to call her, but she was Blessing Woman.’

Members of the host community were also tagged to so they would remember their names or to highlight the relationship formed. For instance, P3 tagged L----- in one of the whale monitoring photographs. When initially asked why he was tagged she reported:

‘I honestly don’t remember him...I probably tagged him so that I would remember his name, so apparently it was L-----. Oh oh oh, I remember. L----- was our Casamama’s son or the neighbor’s son or someone’s son. We could never figure out whose son he was.’

Similarly, P8 also tagged members of the host community with whom he built a relationship during the trip:

‘I think I tagged C----- just cause you guys; he was just such a character on our trip. You know, all of the girls were freaked out by him and me and G-----, he just loved us. He was just a funny guy; I thought it would be funny to put him up. And L-----, he lived in my house so I remember hanging out with him a couple of times. It was cool to throw the name out there so I would remember it in a couple of years if I don’t remember it.’

Viewing Facebook albums

As mentioned above, one of the motivators for participants uploading their photographs onto Facebook was the hope that the other participants would also upload their photographs. All participants interviewed reported viewing other participant’s albums quite frequently shortly after the trip, but gradually reducing the frequency as time passed. P7 stated: ‘when I got back I would just look at them all the time and even now sometimes I’ll just like go through tagged pictures of people and just look at their Ecuador pictures and...still find new pictures on

Facebook from other people.’ While P7 would use Facebook to look through other participants albums, P8 reported revisiting the Facebook albums to remind him about what he did:

‘Those first couple of days back I was definitely sad and you know I was away from a place where I had so much fun in and away from the people that I really loved being around for those past four weeks, five weeks. And it was nice to relive it a little bit and I still go back and look at my pictures every now and then just to see what I did.’

While P4 no longer spends time on Facebook reviewing the photographs from Ecuador, she does use Facebook as a means of staying up to date with the participants with whom she volunteered:

‘Now a days I don’t really go back to my albums on Facebook and look at it. I am sometimes like to look at some of the people that I have met and see what they are up to now, you know just check out their profile and see what they are up to but I don’t do that very often.’

Additionally, P4 spends time reviewing the photographs she uploaded from a more recent volunteer tourism trip: ‘I find like I am really proud of some of the pictures that I have taken so I like to go back and reminisce about things I got to see, but I am sure this time next year I probably will not be looking at it much.’ If Facebook is used as a means to reminisce about past experiences, the reminiscing that mainly occurs shortly after returning from the trip and then tapers off when the participant was fully reintroduced into their own routine. This was consistent with other participants who now only revisit the Facebook albums if they receive a notification that someone has commented on a photograph or when they are in contact with a fellow participant.

Posting comments related to photographs in other participant’s albums was a common activity when viewing Facebook albums. Similar to the findings related to writing captions,

commenting on photographs allows the person to convey inside jokes, the viewers thoughts on the image, and to reminisce about the trip as shared by P7: ‘commenting on them was really great because we would all like reminisce about the trip and stuff and it would just like bring back memories and make it like that much more fun to talk about it and stuff.’ P5 brought up the point that she would be more likely to comment on a photograph taken from a trip that she was on rather than one from a trip she was not a part of:

‘Commenting was important to you guys. Not that it was important to you, but it was important to me to comment to you guys because you guys were the ones there doing these things. So like when we were there I would comment, I would see pictures and be like ‘oh my god, I totally forgot that’, like um I don’t even remember what it was. But when other people would comment on it, it would remind me of the things that I did. And I was like ‘oh my god, I totally forgot about that part too’ so it was just memories kind of thing, so it was important to do it. Like if somebody else posted a picture of Ecuador I don’t think I would put Oh my God I was there I did this, this, and this. I would probably put oh my god that is such a great thing. I hope you had a good time because this picture like in my mind would remind me of something completely different of that person. But with you guys I got to share that, so I would comment, but with another person...they had their own experience and I just would hope that they would have a good experience, but because you guys knew, that’s why I would love commenting on it.’

P5’s sentiments are consistent with the findings of this study. With the exception of the photographs uploaded by P2 during the trip, the majority of the comments were posted by participants on the trip rather than non-participants.

Facebook as a motivator

As noted in the literature review, Facebook users' communicate their impressions of frozen moments such as images and texts. The analysis above reviews the importance of uploading photographs onto Facebook and the thoughts behind creating online albums of a volunteer tourism experience. As part of the study, participants were asked whether Facebook itself served as a motivator for future participation in a volunteer tourism experience. P3 and P5 reported that Facebook was not a motivator at all to them:

'Facebook is not a motivator in my eyes. I don't really care if anyone else knows what I have done. I know what I have done. If people ask me where have you been I can say oh I went to Ecuador, I went to all of these places but I don't feel the need to put them online. I put them online for other people because they asked.' –P5

'[Facebook] is a nice afterthought, but it certainly wouldn't affect whether I go or not. I would take pictures and I think getting to take pictures and show them in person to people is a nice thing, but I don't think it would influence whether or not I went. It's still the experiences themselves that I want to have.' –P3

What was interesting about the response from P3 was that although she reports that Facebook is not a motivator to her, previously she revealed that she used Facebook for bragging rights and has a folder of potential profile photographs for the 'next couple of months' as a result of her SWV experience.

With the exception of the participants mentioned above, all other participants shared that while uploading photographs onto Facebook would not serve as a primary motivator for them to participant another volunteer tourism experience, it is certainly a secondary motivator. Facebook provides an ease of reminiscing about past experiences which sometimes creates a desire to repeat the volunteer tourism experience as mentioned by P8: 'you definitely love to reminisce

and it makes you want to go back, but obviously you can't go back, the only thing you can do is go again. I would say it definitely does [motivate you]. It definitely kind of fuels me...I would say yes.' P9 also added that looking at the photographs on Facebook reassured her because she had such an amazing experience.

While reasons of reliving past experiences emerged as Facebook serving as a possible secondary motivator, P4 shared that the ability to continue to post photographs was another factor: 'I think [Facebook] is definitely a factor. I love taking photographs and even though I don't really know all of the photography type things, but I love sharing my pictures with other people.' P6 also mentioned that Facebook may not just serve as a secondary motivator, but it was also a thought during the experiences:

'If I were to say that [uploading photographs onto Facebook] wasn't in the back of my mind I would probably be lying. I don't think it inspires me to do it, but when I go I'm thinking I can't wait to get these on Facebook, just because.'

Discussion of Findings

This study attempted an analysis of the overall discourse of volunteer tourism using the case of SWV and its volunteer tourism experience to Ecuador. More specifically, a holistic examination of the hermeneutic circle of volunteer tourism was conducted that considered the photographic messages being communicated by volunteer tourism organizations, the voluntourist's interpretation and consumption of the messages, and in turn the re-construction of the messages via social media using photographs and comments (Figure A.1). This was accomplished using triangulation of several types of qualitative analyses, including: an examination of SWV's website and other promotional and informational materials using content analysis; in-depth interviews of volunteer tourism participants using semiotic analysis; and an analysis of participant's VEP photographs and accompanying comments posted on Facebook using both content and semiotic analysis. The research was theoretically framed using the tourist gaze (Urry, 1990) and anchorage and relay (Barthes, 1977).

Initially, the first half of the hermeneutic circle was analyzed in order to determine the influence of the sending organization in shaping the participant's voluntourist gaze. The analysis of the photographs on the SWV website and related documents found a wide and evenly distributed range of the depictions and descriptions of the motivations for volunteer tourism. These motivations included altruism, cultural exchange and learning, personal growth, professional development, structure of the program, travel and adventure, and interacting with other participants. The images throughout SWV's website and their additional mailings also reflected an even distribution of Urry's (1990) tourist gaze and Haldrup and Lawsén's (2004) family gaze. While both Urry (1990) and Haldrup and Lawsén (2004) have introduced and

defined the tourist gaze and family gaze respectively, this is the first study that has looked at the composition of both gazes in the formation of the voluntourist gaze.

In addition to an analysis of motivation and tourist/family gaze, this study also analyzed SWV's images of the local community based on the framework utilized by Caton and Santos (2008) which was developed by Albers and James (1988) to determine how the relationships between participants and hosts were characterized. Photographs related to members of the host community were broadly represented, including photographs solely of the host, hosts interacting with volunteer tourism participants, and cultural themed images of indigenous tribes in traditional dress. A primary finding from this study was the observation that the image of the host community, particularly in the sense of its culture, was portrayed by SWV as rather simplistic and one-dimensional. This was consistent with Simpson (2004, 2005) who suggested that sending organizations could play a role in a basic view of the 'other' so it can be easily sold or consumed. The voluntourist's interpretation and consumption of the messages being communicated by SWV, which constitutes the second half of the hermeneutic circle, was analyzed via in-depth interviews. The sample of participants was found to be very passive in the pre-trip stages of their volunteer tourism trips, with the majority of participants paying little or no attention to the website and other promotional materials utilized by SWV. Based on the interviews conducted with the participants, none of them reported actively seeking out a volunteer tourism trip. They all learned about SWV through an impromptu presentation given by an SWV representative during a general education class. This five minute announcement informed interested parties of multiple information sessions where potential participants could learn more about the experience in more detail from a past SWV participant. The classroom presentations and informational meetings were reported by the participants to be more influential

than the information located on the SWV website. Many of the participants interviewed mentioned that their first- and often only - visit to the SWV website was to sign up for the trip or review other logistical information. Further, once they learned about the concept of a volunteer tourism experience, the majority of participants were content to sign up with SWV without researching any similar companies (only one participant reported researching other volunteer tourism companies).

In addition to taking a relatively passive approach in making the decision to participate in an SWV volunteer tourism experience, the participants interviewed spent very little time researching third party information on the history and culture of Ecuador. Many relied on the 'Lonely Planet' travel books and the information provided by SWV. Overwhelmingly, the documents considered to be the most relevant among participants were the two documents which gave examples of day to day itineraries while on the volunteer project. Several participants found the documents describing the cultural aspects of Ecuador interesting yet not as helpful as the documents related to the project. The only other source of information that the participants reported using during pre-trip preparation were general internet searches of travel related images and information detailing the risks of traveling to a third world country. For the most part, the participants reported that the documents provided by SWV combined with their existing knowledge of Ecuador were sufficient in their pre-trip learning.

Given that informants reported that they conducted minimal research related to the either the volunteer tourism trip or the culture of Ecuador, it is not surprising that the majority of the participants reported having few pre-trip expectations. Several reported deliberately going into the trip with as few expectations as possible in order to remain open to whatever they may experience on the trip. This varies from Andereck, McGehee, Lee, and Clemmons (2011) who

found that potential participants have fairly high expectations for pre-trip services including packing lists and cultural information. While the participants of this study did report utilizing the project guide which provided packing lists and a typical schedule of how the days on the volunteer project would be spent, overall they required very little pre-trip information before signing up for the trip and did very little research on their own before their trip began. Often it was enough for the potential participant to listen to a presentation related to the SWV experience. This is also a very powerful finding in that the word-of-mouth and face-to-face contacts were far and away the most influential factors in the decision-making process of the volunteer tourism participants, much more so than any of the web-based or electronic methods of promotion.

Not surprisingly, the expectations that the participants did report were related to the motivating factors given for signing up for the trip. Each participant reported multiple motivations for signing up for a volunteer tourism trip (Table 1). Five of the eight participants interviewed (P3, P4, P5, P8, and P9) reported direct connections between all of their motivations and pre-trip expectations and post-trip satisfaction levels. The remaining three participants connected their pre-trip expectations and post-trip satisfaction levels on all but one of their initial motivating factors. For example, P1 and P7 mentioned all of their motivations except for professional development and P6 mentioned all motivations but personal growth when discussing pre-trip expectations and post trip-satisfaction. Three participants reported unexpected gains from the volunteer tourism experience that they did not foresee as an initial motivation. For instance, P4 gained the volunteer tourism craze, P5 gained an appreciation for the structure of the SWV program, P8 gained insight on personal growth, and both P6 and P8 reported that the interactions with other participants were the best parts of the experience. An interesting finding from this study is that interaction with other participants was only reported by

one participant as being an important pre-trip motivator. This participant was also the most experienced of the group, having participated in study abroad previous to this trip. This is especially important information for volunteer tourism providers, many of whom may highlight interacting with other participants in their marketing materials much in the way that SWV does. The finding that the most experienced participant of the group had an initial motivator that many other participants gained throughout the course of the trip supported the research of motivational scales in tourism (Maslow, 1954, 1970; Cohen, 1979; Pearce, 1982, 1993; and Weiler and Richins, 1995).

One area of future research in this area would be to explore if and how a participant's motivations become more developed with each experience. Given the strong connection between motivations and expectations, which then shape the level of satisfaction, it might be valuable to explore whether participants with more experience in volunteer tourism have higher expectations for their volunteer tourism trip than the last one in which they participated. An additional finding which emerged from this study was the connection between expectations and satisfaction and what the participant chooses to photograph and share with his or her social network. In other words, these factors influenced how the participants re-constructed the volunteer tourism discourse through photographs and social media conversation. This is illustrated through the findings for all of the participants interviewed with the exception of P4. Looking at this finding another way, it is possible to determine the primary motivations and satisfaction levels of the participants on a volunteer tourism vacation through the composition of the photographs in their album. For example, based on the composition of P8's Facebook album it is evident that he was satisfied with the interactions with the hosts and other participants as the majority of his photographs involved people. This was also confirmed in his semi-structured

interview. This is similar to Markwell (1997) who found that content and images taken in mainstream tourists' photographs often reflect the way in which they want to perceive the destination, and therefore, their own personal perceptions and biases can be seen through the photographs. As mentioned previously, one goal of this study was to utilize the tourist/family gaze as a framework to explore whether voluntourists completed the hermeneutic circle by capturing images similar to the images SWV advertised through its marketing materials. Each participant's entire Facebook album related to the volunteer portion of the trip was analyzed to determine the photo novella, or the story of their volunteer tourism experience that was told to their social network. This was accomplished by analyzing the VEP's uploaded onto Facebook and corroborating the analysis with participant semi-structured interviews which incorporated autodiving. The use of autodiving enabled the participant to discuss their behavior on the volunteer project, how they felt when they captured the image, and why they chose to upload certain photographs to their social network.

One component of the voluntourist gaze, interactions with the host community, was analyzed in to determine how volunteer tourism participants frame their relationships with members of the host community on Facebook, and if was similar to the gaze depicted in SWV materials. This study found that hosts who had formed relationships with participants were given a different status by the volunteer tourism participants than members of the host community with whom participants had little interaction. For example, hosts who had formed relationships with participants were often named in both captions posted by the participants and in subsequent comments made by other participants. Additionally, participants reported they would often tag the member of the host community in the photograph as a memory jogger so they would remember his or her name when going through the photographs at a future time.

Conversely, members of the host community who did not form relationships with the participants were often given nicknames and were ‘othered’ by the participants. This is in keeping with Griffin (2004) and Simpson (2005) who found that sweeping generalizations in various promotional materials can continue throughout the volunteer trip due to the lack of significant engagement with ‘the other’. While it is impossible for volunteer tourism participants to form relationships with every member of the host community, sending organizations could play more of a role in creating events that bring host community members and voluntourists together to aid in the formation of relationships mitigating the othering which can take place. It appears that SWV attempted to implement controls to prevent othering and other negative impacts from volunteer tourism from happening by implementing several group discussions between the volunteer tourism trip leader and the participants. In the case of this trip, the voluntourist’s did not find these discussions relevant. One area of future research would be to determine how effective these meetings are for other trips or if this breakdown was just isolated to the volunteer tourism experience analyzed in this study.

In addition to examining how relationships between members of the host community and volunteer tourism participants were framed on Facebook, this study also analyzed how the entire volunteer tourism experience was framed. During the in-depth interviews, questions were asked about the decision process of uploading photographs, writing captions, and commenting on a participant’s Facebook page. Interestingly, only one participant uploaded photographs onto Facebook during for the trip as a means of keeping in touch with her friends and family back home. This album of photographs had the highest percentage of comments and captions associated with it as Facebook was the primary means of communication while away for this participant. All other participants uploaded their albums onto Facebook upon returning home

from the trip. Participants reported uploading the majority of the photographs taken while on the volunteer tourism trip, with the exception of repetitive photographs, poor quality photographs, and photographs with the participants drinking alcohol. The majority of participants did not write captions for any of the photographs which were uploaded. The participants who elected to write a caption on photographs reported that captions were only necessary to further explain the photograph, or to express the significance of the photograph to the participant, confirming Barthes (1977) theory of Anchorage and Relay. Although only a fraction of the photographs analyzed had captions or comments associated with them, this did not prove to be a limitation of the study, as I incorporated participant observation and utilized the journal that kept by the researcher during the trip. This brought an awareness of “the back story” of each photograph, and as a result the researcher was able to inquire further about the inside stories of the photographs. While each participant’s album was accessible to their entire social network, the majority of photographs that were commented on by other participants on the trip rather than by friends and/or family who were not part of the experience. As mentioned by P5, she probably would not comment on a photograph if she wasn’t a part of that experience. She felt more inclined to comment on photographs on the trip that she was on to reminisce about the trip, remind other participants about experiences, and highlight inside jokes which occurred while on the project. One interesting finding when analyzing photographs which included captions by the participant and comments by other participants was the power of the writer. In traditional photo albums and scrap books the power lies with the individual composing the album. They can choose which photographs are included and which are given additional focus by writing a caption with them. With the case of photographs uploaded to Facebook, power is initially given to the creator of the album who can select which photographs to upload and include captions.

However, Facebook also gives power to the viewers of the photographs who choose to comment on a photograph. These comments have the ability to shift the focus of the photograph; what may be intended to be the subject of the photograph to the participant who uploaded it may be different from what the commenter's emphasis. This was illustrated with the example of a photograph of P3 and her birthday cake. Her caption focused on herself while the comment made by P5 focused on a person who was in the periphery of the photograph.

Facebook was also reported to serve as a post-trip coping mechanism for the voluntourist participants. Creating their own albums and commenting on other participants albums provided the participants a means of reliving what they experienced while on the trip. Accessing other participant's photographs also served as a memory jogger for participants on things they may have forgotten over time. While posting photos and comments on Facebook was reported to be an important aspect of tourism for the volunteer tourism participants, it also has practical implications for volunteer tourism operators. Schmallegger et al. (2010) argues that photographs make a substantial contribution to word-of-mouth marketing and that there is a need for a method of interpreting the photographic images. The evolution of Facebook has placed greater importance on photographs with the ease of uploading albums onto Facebook, captioning/commenting on photographs, and the vast reach that online albums have to participant's social networks. Volunteer tourism participants can potentially upload photographs and provide their comments in real time. Volunteer tourism operators need to understand and appreciate the power of social networks. Past participant Facebook pages have the potential to serve as rich marketing materials for sending organizations. Conversely, negative comments have the potential to snowball out of hand creating a public relations nightmare for the sending organization. Therefore, it is important for sending organizations to be aware of the power of

social networks. Perhaps volunteer tourism operators should consider monitoring samples of voluntourist's Facebook pages to ensure good press and attempt to circumvent bad press on several social networks before going viral.

Limitations

This study provides important insight into the relationship between photography and volunteer tourism, the discourse of volunteer tourism, and construction and re-construction of volunteer tourism in social media. However, as with any research, several limitations exist. The majority of these limitations center upon the focus of the study being delimited by one volunteer tourism experience within one organization. However, this small laboratory enabled the study to delve deeply and triangulate both methodologically and theoretically to more completely analyze the discourse of one volunteer tourism experience.

While the analysis of the website and marketing materials used by SWV provided a baseline to determine the first half of the hermeneutic circle, future research could evaluate a group of volunteer tourism providers in order to broaden our knowledge about the voluntourist gaze. Additionally, other volunteer groups traveling with SWV could be targeted in order to determine if the findings in this study were project-specific or in fact consistent with SWV. Additionally, this study could also be expanded to include multiple volunteer tourism companies and participants as a way to gain a more comprehensive view of how participants frame their experience on Facebook.

Another limitation springs from this study's focus on only the volunteer component of SWV trip. The standard SWV experience includes two weeks of volunteering in a host community, followed by two weeks of adventure tour traveling through other parts of the country. Because of the high number of photographs posted by participants for both sections of

the trip, in order to make the data manageable only the volunteer portion of the trip was analyzed. While focusing on the volunteer portion provided a deep representation of the participant's voluntourist gaze, a future study could include analysis of the entire trip in order to explore the permeability of the voluntourist gaze across the adventure portion of the trip.

An additional limitation of this study surrounds the application of Albers and James (1988) theory of the hermeneutic circle to the research of volunteer tourism. Like other conventional forms of tourism, voluntourists are exposed to a variety of photographs that advertise and anticipate a trip. These photographs represent the first half of the hermeneutic circle. However, given the nature of volunteer tourism, there is also a component of the participants underlying morals and values which possibly influence the participant's motivations surrounding embarking on a volunteer tourism experience differently from a more mainstream tourism experience. This is a fascinating area of research not covered in this study.

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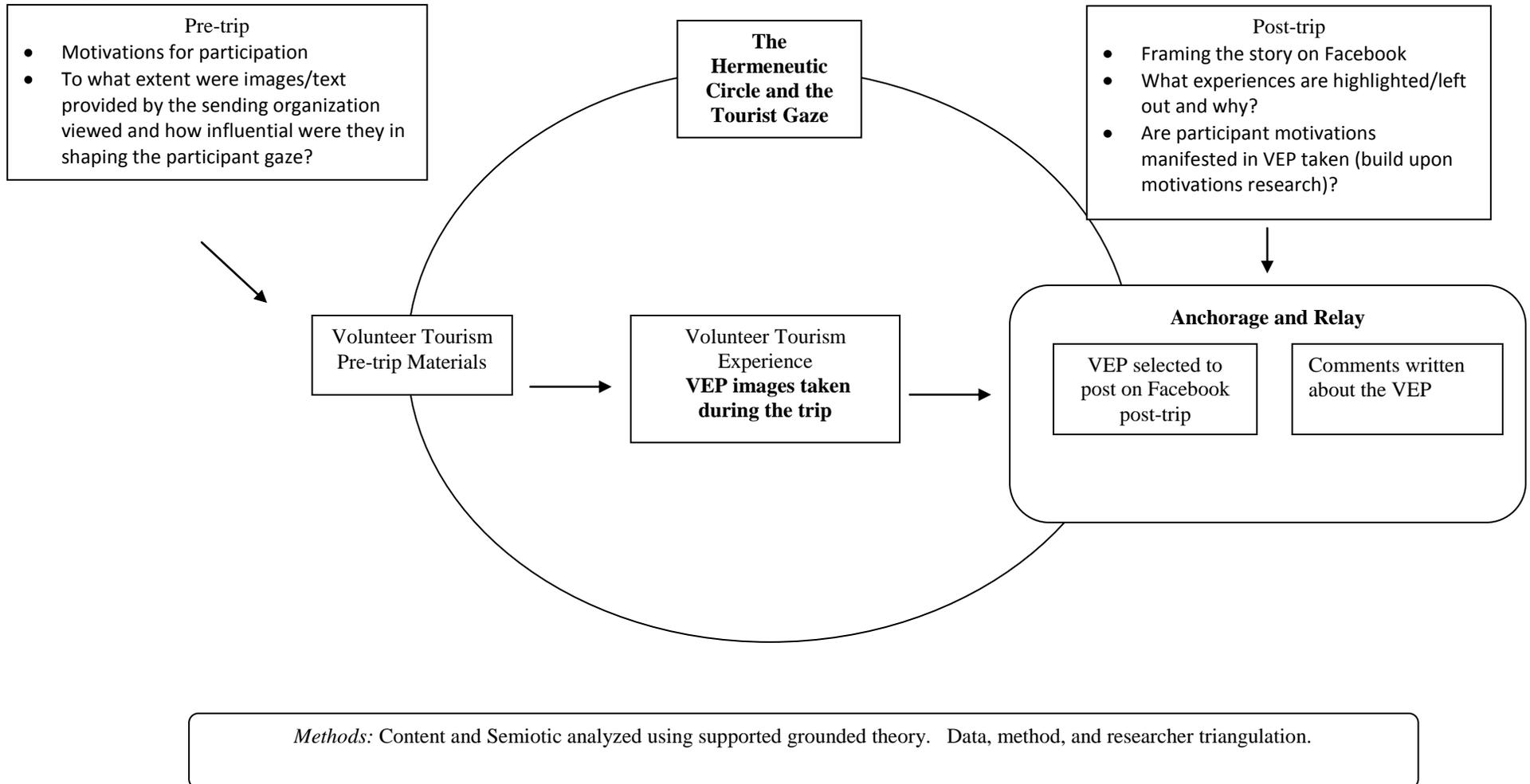
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Appendix A: Figure A.1: Flowchart of thesis

Goal: To examine the discourse of volunteer tourism. Underlying patterns to be studied include: tourist gaze (Urry, 1990) vs. family gaze (Haldrup and Larsen, 2003), characterizations of locals (Caton & Santos, 2008), the characterizations of other images (Schmallegger, 2010), and the use Barthes (1977) theory of anchorage and relay for selecting photographs to upload and comment on in Facebook.



Appendix B – Codebook for initial coding of photographs

Who took the picture	Which trip	Number in album	Profile Picture	Date posted to FB	Participant wrote caption on picture	What did the caption convey?
1 A-----	A Machalilla	1	Y	11-Aug-10	Y	A positive toward volunteer community
2 C-----	B Rio Muchacho	2	N		Z	B positive toward host community
3 E-----		3				C positive toward the experience
4 B-----		4				D negative toward volunteer community
5 G-----		5				E negative toward host community
6 H-----		6				F negative toward experience
7 J-----		7				G inside joke
8 L-----		8				H bonding
9 M-----		9				***
10 F-----		10				
11 T-----		11				

Total number of comments	Friends commented on the picture	Total number of likes	Photograph likes	Motivations	Brief description of photo
	G group		G group	1 Altruism	A working in the park
	O other		O other	2 Travel & Adventure	B whale watching
	P participant		P participant	3 Cultural Exchange & Learning	C teaching
	X none		X none	4 Program structure	*
				5 Personal growth	*
				6 Professional development	*
				7 Right Time & Place	

*** Drawing upon grounded theory additional attributes will be added based on the analysis of the photographs

Appendix C – Semi-structured interview questions

My name is Lisa Sink and I am a Masters student in the Hospitality and Tourism Management Department at Virginia Tech. I am conducting a study of how participants frame their volunteer tourism experience on Facebook. I am hoping that you would be willing to take a bit of time to chat with me about your pre-trip, during the trip, and post-trip experiences. I am particularly interested in your motivations for deciding to participate in a volunteer tourism experience, your satisfaction of the trip, and the photographs and comments you uploaded to your Facebook page. You can elect to not answer any questions, and you can elect to stop the interview at any time. I will be recording the interview to ensure I accurately record your responses. However, I will be using aliases, so any of your responses that I will use in my research will not be connected to you directly. In other words, your responses are confidential.

The following is a list of questions I hope that we can discuss during our meeting. Answers to the following questions will of course be kept confidential. You are also free to choose not to answer any of the following questions.

Thoughts on your Pre-trip-preparation: Let's talk first about the months/days leading up to the trip. Try and take yourself back to that time and think about what it was like.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Source</i>
Tell me how you found yourself on an "SWV adventure"? Prompt: people, internet, life events, etc.	(Wearing, 2001) Motivations of voluntourists; (Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle
What did you expected to gain from the experience? As you were preparing for the experience, what did you imagine it would be like?	(Wearing, 2001) Motivations of voluntourists; (Maxwell, 2005) Grounded Theory to determine trip expectations for a baseline of satisfaction of the experience
What were your expectations about the trip? Prompt – people, places, things, sights, activities...	(Wearing, 2001) Motivations of voluntourists; (Maxwell, 2005) Grounded Theory to determine trip expectations for a baseline of satisfaction of the experience
Before your SWV experience, did you learn about the people, culture, and/or environment of the destination? If so, what did you do? Prompt: talk to people, surf the internet, buy books, and watch the travel channel, other media...	(Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle.
Before you arrived there, what were your perceptions of Machalilla? Ecuador? Prompt: economic, environmental, socio-economic, political...What did you think you would see? What did you think you would do there? Who would you meet?	(Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle.

How much time would you say you spent on SWV's website before the experience?	(Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle.
Which of the documents that SWV sent (newsletters, resource document, and project guide) did you read? Which were most important or relevant to you? Which were less relevant, if any, and why?	(Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle.

During the trip: Now let's talk about the SWV experience itself. Think about how you felt during that time.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Source</i>
What were the some of the most memorable parts of your SWV experience?	(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory to determine if these parts were captured in album.
What were some of the least memorable parts of your SWV experience?	(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory to determine if these parts were captured in album.
Did the trip match your expectations? In what ways? Did the trip exceed your expectations? In what way? Where there parts of the trip that fell short of your expectations? What were they? Why do you think they fell short?	(Wearing, 2001) Motivations of voluntourists; (Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory to determine if these parts were captured in album.
How would you describe your experience of staying within the local community?	(Broad, 2003; Clifton and Benson, 2006; Higgins-Desboilles, 2003; McGehee and Andereck, 2008, Singh, 2002, 2004; Zahra and McGehee, in press) host community interactions
What do you feel you gained from the SWV experience?	(Wearing, 2001) Motivations of voluntourists; (Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory to determine if these parts were captured in album.
How would you characterize yourself while you were in Machalilla? Did you think of yourself as a tourist, or as a visitor, or a guest, or something else?	(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory.
Specifically regarding the volunteer project, how would you describe your experience with SWV? Did it meet, exceed, or fall short of your expectations?	(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory to determine if these parts were captured in album.

Post-trip: Last group of questions, which bring us to the “here and now”.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Source</i>
How important is it to you to post your photographs onto Facebook? Comment on the photographs posted?	(Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle; (Barthes, 1977) Anchorage and relay.
What was your selection process for choosing which photographs to load onto Facebook? Prompt: specifically about the two week volunteer experience.	(Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle; (Barthes, 1977) Anchorage and relay; (Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory.
Was there something in particular that you wanted to concentrate on when creating your photo album(s) of the SWV volunteer experience? Were you trying to convey something specific, or did you simply post all of your photos from the SWV experience?	(Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle.
How did you order the photos on the album on Facebook?	(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory.
What were the types of photos you wanted to upload? Why?	(Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle.
Were there certain photos that you didn't want to upload? Why?	(Urry, 1990) Tourist gaze and hermeneutic circle; (Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory.
Questions related to findings of coding of photos specific to each participant. Examples?	(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory.
Do you spend time viewing your album on Facebook? Do you find yourself going back to look at it often, or not? When you do, what do you find yourself doing – looking for new comments, reminiscing about the trip, thinking of new comments to add, or something else? Do you find yourself looking at other participants' albums? If so, what are you doing when you are looking at them - looking for new comments, reminiscing about the trip, thinking of new comments to add, or something else?	(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory.
Do you think that your album accurately reflects your SWV volunteer experience?	(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory.
Do you have any upcoming travel plans lined up? Any upcoming volunteering plans lined up?	(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory.

<p>Do you think you will participate in a volunteer tourism experience again? Why or why not? Do you think that getting to share photographs on Facebook inspires you at all to want to go again, so that you can share your experiences online?</p>	<p>(Maxwell, 2005) Grounded theory.</p>
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Appendix D – Content analysis of images

Table 8 below breaks down the theme of each photograph taken during the volunteer portion of the trip. These themes were grouped by overarching categories of people, cultural, and natural theme similar to the findings of Schmallagger et.al. (2010).

Table 8: Participant photograph by theme										
Theme	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	Total
<i>People</i>										
Host community	1	11	11	3	14	14	27	2	17	100
Participants	10	81	42	8	9	30	82	97	33	392
Participants interacting with hosts	0	27	16	1	0	11	22	57	7	141
Participants interacting with animals	0	8	5	3	0	0	4	14	2	36
Participants posing with sites	0	23	14	4	2	9	18	34	16	120
<i>Cultural</i>										
Father's Day serenade	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	5
Host house	3	3	3	1	0	12	3	0	3	28
Other	0	3	3	0	0	1	0	1	3	11
<i>Natural</i>										
Scenic view	33	9	0	12	1	11	13	1	20	100
Wildlife	66	16	6	18	2	11	6	0	11	136
Other	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total	115	183	101	50	29	99	176	206	112	1071

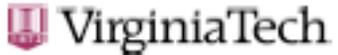
Further, each photograph was also coded by activity which was grouped focusing on overarching themes of volunteering, cultural activities, and free time during the two week period (Table 9). While on the project the voluntourist's started construction on a park for school children, monitored the migrating whale population off of the coast of Machalilla, taught English at a local elementary school, and cleared overgrown brush at a nursery. Cultural photographs included a visit to Agua Blanca, a commune in the host community, a joint birthday party between a member of the host community and a

volunteer tourism participant, and the volunteer tourism participants cooking an Ecuadorian meal with the assistance of a host family. All other photographs which did not involve the participant working on volunteer projects or include an infusion of cultural learning and interaction were coded as leisure time. Several categories of leisure time were separated out and include the bus ride to the volunteer project, trips to a neighboring city of the host community, karaoke nights, and saying goodbye to our host families. All other photographs taken during leisure time were classified as free time.

Table 9: Participant photograph by activity

Activity	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	Total
<i>Volunteering</i>										
Park	0	45	5	14	0	32	36	111	27	270
Whale monitoring	38	14	5	15	3	14	4	6	6	105
Elementary school	0	7	12	0	4	2	20	0	0	45
Nursery	0	23	6	3	4	10	8	5	0	59
<i>Cultural</i>										
Agua Blanca	16	1	10	0	0	0	22	31	0	80
Birthday!	0	0	7	0	0	0	7	0	0	14
Cooking dinner	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	15	0	24
<i>Leisure time</i>										
Bus ride to volunteer project	6	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	9
Puerto Lopez	3	17	6	0	0	4	17	0	2	49
Karaoke	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	26	33
Saying goodbye	0	13	3	0	2	6	5	2	4	35
Free time	52	59	43	18	16	30	48	35	47	348
Total	115	183	101	50	29	99	176	206	112	1071

Appendix E – IRB Approval Letter



Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board
2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)
Blacksburg, Virginia 24060
540/231-4808 Fax 540/231-0959
e-mail irb@vt.edu
Website: www.irb.vt.edu

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 7, 2011

TO: Nancy G. McGehee, Lisa Slink

FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires October 26, 2013)

PROTOCOL TITLE: The Voluntarist Gaze: Framing Volunteer Tourism Experiences as Portrayed In Facebook

IRB NUMBER: 11-515

Effective June 7, 2011, the Virginia Tech IRB Chair, Dr. David M. Moore, approved the new protocol for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All Investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at <http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm> (please review before the commencement of your research).

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved as: **Expedited, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 5, 6, 7**

Protocol Approval Date: 6/7/2011

Protocol Expiration Date: 6/6/2012

Continuing Review Due Date*: 5/23/2012

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals / work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

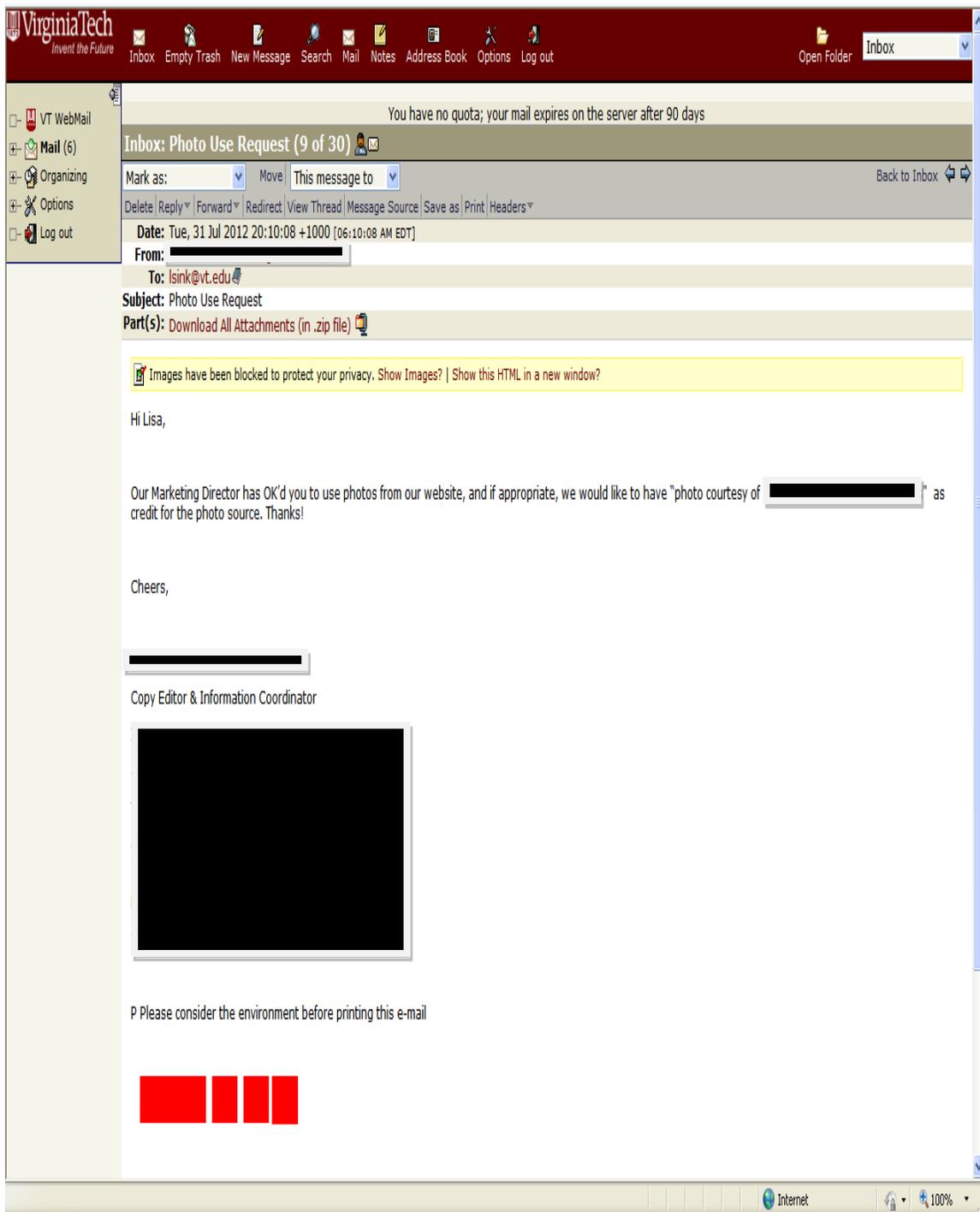
The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

Invent the Future

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An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

Appendix F – Copyright permission from sending organization



Note: The sending organization has been kept confidential to protect the participants and keep with IRB requirements.

Appendix G – Copyright permission from participants

Copyright permission was obtained from each participant during the semi-structured interviews. Participants were aware that the photographs that they uploaded to Facebook were the central focus of the interview and were aware that a selection of these photographs would be used in the thesis. While participant 2 did not participate in the semi-structure interview, she provided full access to the photographs and comments that she uploaded to Facebook. These permissions are noted and not included specifically in order to preserve the identity of the participants and to keep with IRB requirements.