

## SANTA FE: THOUGHTS ON CONTRIVANCE, COMMODITIZATION, AND AUTHENTICITY

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The City of Santa Fe, New Mexico, committed itself to tourism as a form of economic development in the early 1900s. It built on historical and ethnic characteristics and contrived an architectural style that expressed those characteristics as commodities to attract tourists. Santa Fe successfully built a strong tourism economy. However, some critics emphasize that commoditization of culture leads to loss of meaning and authenticity and exploits traditional peoples. Other observers point out that while Santa Fe is not authentic in a traditional sense, it has achieved a certain uniqueness that gives it value as a place. Santa Fe has had a more viable economy for the past seventy years than Las Vegas, New Mexico, a nearby city that based its economy on more traditional commerce and manufacturing. Tourism in Santa Fe may have been no more demeaning for local residents than the marginal manufacturing economy of Las Vegas.

Santa Fe, New Mexico, has continued to attract artists, writers, and tourists, including the rich and famous. Paul Horgan (1956: 327), for example, observed that:

...after World War II Santa Fe became one of those subcapitals of the world's fashion, a city special in character, known by "everyone" — a designation meaning a small segment of the world's people who were famous for their riches, or talents, or style, or beauty, or wit, or all these together. By the mid-twentieth century "everyone" had been to Santa Fe or had heard of it, as in various times "everyone" had been familiar with Biarritz, or Palma de Mallorca, or the Lido, or Juan-les-Pins, or Prades.

Yet, people who have traveled to Santa Fe for many years often comment that the city has lost its authenticity and that its functions have changed (Cullen 1992). Santa Fe is criticized for being "Santa Faux." The thesis of this article is

that like most American cities, Santa Fe seized on the opportunities that were available to it. For most of the twentieth century, Santa Fe shaped itself to appeal to tourists. It has not been "authentic" since at least the early 1900s. This contrived character of the city includes forms, colors, and architectural details that create a congenial ambiance that captured the interest and imagination of millions of visitors (Mather and Woods 1986). The character and ambiance of Santa Fe are not functions of architecture alone, but are shaped by the spatial arrangement of the city as well.

As the title implies, this is not an empirical research article. It is the result of reflection on a variety of perspectives from the literature and frequent visits to northern New Mexico over the past forty years. This article addresses several pertinent geographical issues. In the first part, I review how tourism stimulated a local commitment to architecture and how this commitment resulted in a built environment that was intended from the outset to be a commodity. In the second part, I discuss the evolution of the "Santa Fe Style" and how this contrived and rather unique environment has succeeded as a commodity. In the third part, I argue that failure to maintain the traditional spatial characteristics of the city threaten its uniqueness. In the fourth section, I offer some counter arguments to criticisms about commoditization and inauthenticity related to tourism. In the conclusion, I suggest topics for empirical analysis.

## **Tourism and Architecture in Santa Fe**

Santa Fe based its tourism attractions on the beauty of its setting and its history, which is long by North American standards. Pueblo people and their ancestors inhabited the site in prehistory (Hazen-Hammond 1988). The Spanish established Santa Fe in 1610 as a northern outpost of their empire and evolved a culture that was a combination of Spanish and Native American. During this period, adobe buildings clustered around the central plaza formed the fabric of the community (Horgan 1956). Beginning in 1821, the city was under the administration of the Republic of Mexico. American traders following the Santa Fe Trail introduced their culture to the mix. In 1846, New Mexico became a territory of the United States, and by the 1880s, the Anglo-American presence was dominant (Hazen-Hammond 1988).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Santa Fe's administrative and trade functions had declined substantially. Local promoters hoped that the rail-

road would support a manufacturing economy, but the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad ran only a spur line to its namesake city (Dauber 1993; LaFarge 1959). However, beginning in about 1880, Santa Fe and Taos emerged as regional art centers that attracted artists and wealthy would-be artists from the northeastern part of the United States (Gibson 1983).

Artists and writers promoted a vision of Santa Fe that emphasized its aesthetic, cultural, and historical value. Recognizing the commercial potential of tourism, in 1912, the City of Santa Fe acted on the advice of Colonel D. C. Collier of San Diego, California (Markovich 1990). Collier analyzed growth and development patterns of cities in the western United States and concluded that cities that emphasized tourism had developed into the largest cities. In order to develop its tourism industry, the City of Santa Fe established a planning board to protect valuable historical attributes and to coordinate tourism development in a manner that would emphasize the unique character of Santa Fe. The planning board recognized architecture and ethnicity as the most unique and attractive features of Santa Fe. City streets were renamed with Spanish names. A movement began to restore the previously deprecated adobe "mud huts" and to convert American-style buildings to the Pueblo-Spanish Revival style (City of Santa Fe 1986; Reeve 1988; Markovich 1990).

Beginning in 1909, the Territory of New Mexico initiated renovation of the old Governor's Palace on the north side of the main plaza in Santa Fe. This building, or at least its remnants, dated from 1610. Arnold (1989: 143) writes that in the American Territorial period before its renovation:

A series of ever more elaborate porches replaced the portal, and each bureaucratic entity vied for attention with turnings, spindles, and balustered railings. In 1877 a large brick cornice was added to the east end, matching moulded brick chimneys were built, and the outside of the palace was plastered with white lime and sand with imitation stone blocks painted on it.

The "restoration" of the Governor's Palace facade to the Spanish-Pueblo style was completed in 1913. A full restoration of the building was completed in the 1980s (Arnold 1989).

In 1915, the State of New Mexico supported construction of a new art museum adjacent to the Governor's Palace. I. H. Rapp designed the New Mexico Museum of Fine Arts (Figure 1), which architecture historians recognize as the first complete statement of the Santa Fe Spanish-Pueblo style (Sheppard 1988).



**Figure 1.** New Mexico Museum of Fine Arts (Photo by Jerry Touchstone Kimmel)

The museum continues to be a major feature in the primary tourist area of the city (Ellis 1982).

In 1919, citizens of Santa Fe subscribed \$200,000 in bonds to build a hotel, which was named La Fonda (La Farge 1959). I. H. Rapp designed the hotel, which faces the southeast corner of the Santa Fe plaza, diagonally across the plaza from the Museum of Fine Arts. Thus, by the early part of the twentieth century, the architectural stage was set for tourism in Santa Fe.

Tourism has been the driving factor in Santa Fe's economy for most of this century. In 1926, the Fred Harvey Company, which operated restaurants and hotels associated with American railroads, purchased Santa Fe's La Fonda Hotel (Howard and Pardue 1996). La Fonda served as headquarters for the "Indian Detours" offered by the Fred Harvey Company in conjunction with the Santa Fe Railroad. Passengers were given the option to leave the train at Lamy, New Mexico, and travel to Santa Fe by touring car (Henderson 1969). From Santa Fe, they were taken on tours of pueblos, guided by cultivated and well-trained young women called "Couriers" (Howard and Pardue 1996). By the late 1930s, buses and private automobiles supplanted organized tours (Meinig 1971), but

the attractions continued to be based on Native American culture, the landscape, and architecture. Currently, Santa Fe's attractions are diverse and not dominated by any single feature. Repeat visitors to Santa Fe rank their favored activities in the following decreasing order: (1) restaurants; (2) museums, opera, galleries; (3) shopping; (4) architecture, skiing, sightseeing (Temple 1992).

As the preceding overview of the evolution of tourism in Santa Fe describes, after the beginning of the twentieth century, community leaders self-consciously and purposefully shaped the built environment of Santa Fe to meet expectations of visitors, primarily from the eastern seaboard of the United States. Santa Fe became a commodity. In 1956, Paul Horgan wrote, "Both the ancient and the modern life of Santa Fe and its *ambiente* were brought into a state of high organization for the entertainment of the tourist" (Horgan 1956: 318).

Cohen (1988: 380) defines commoditization as "a process by which things (and activities) come to be evaluated primarily in terms of their exchange value, in a context of trade, thereby becoming goods (and services)." Commoditization (commodification, in some sources) generally has a pejorative meaning in the literature on tourism. Conversion of cultural objects and activities into commodities can result in a loss of meaning and interest in the culture, exploitation by outsiders who can profit from selling the commodities, and a change in cultural objects and activities (Cohen 1988).

The very essence of people's lives may become commodities. Following Urry (1990), Rodriguez (1994: 107) maintains that the tourist "gaze" transforms the life and being of those gazed upon into commodities to be sold:

Feminist deconstruction of the male gaze as an instrument of sex-gender hegemony points to several interrelated aspects of the system: physical domination and control, material ownership, appropriation of services, and above all the power of symbolic representation. Although the role of eroticism in the tourist and male gazes may differ, the two are nevertheless comparable in these specific respects. First the artists and ultimately any visitor with a camera cast their hegemonic gaze upon New Mexico, rendering it into an image, an ethos: a place to be visited, owned, bought, and sold. The transformational impact of the gaze upon the landscape and built environment was immense.

Rodriguez' observation gives pause to the ecotourists' theme, "Take nothing but photos, leave nothing but footprints." Photography and even gazing are intrusions.

Rodriguez (1994) also describes how the plazas in both Santa Fe and Taos

were transformed from local commercial and social places to places that serve tourists, and this same gentrification extends to residential areas, as “amenity migrants” are attracted to purchase residential property as second homes or even permanent dwellings. The cost of homes in Santa Fe has risen far beyond the reach of most natives. Many employees of the State of New Mexico who work in the capitol complex cannot afford to live in Santa Fe but must commute from Albuquerque, about sixty miles distance.

Britton (1991: 470) interprets tourism from the perspective of economic geography and maintains that tourism accrues symbolic and cultural capital through two processes. First, localities compete to offer “innovative, exciting, and creative life-styles and living environments.” Secondly, localities build physical infrastructure and create environments that “attract and capture circulating discretionary expenditure and investment.” The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad and the Fred Harvey Company recognized early that the imagery and symbolism of the Southwest could be very profitable if they provided the infrastructure for access and aggressively promoted their services.

### **Evolution of the “Santa Fe Style”**

Until New Mexico became a territory of the United States in 1846, Santa Fe’s architecture consisted of forms evolved by the indigenous people of the Southwest and adapted by the Hispanic settlers, with some modifications. After 1850, the Anglo-American influence became dominant, and American-style buildings were preferred, even to the extent that some adobe buildings were painted with false-brick facades (Reeve 1988). However, around the turn of the century, artists and writers began to emphasize the mystique of New Mexico. In 1893, Charles Lummis, in *Land of Poco Tiempo*, said that New Mexico could be summarized in three words: “Sun, silence, and adobe” (Lummis 1925: 1). The exotic character of traditional New Mexican architecture attracted influential artists and writers, who promoted the image that it created. As architecture became an important focus of tourism, it provided a commercial incentive to encourage the traditional style.

There is some disagreement on the history of the development of the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style that is now associated with Santa Fe (Reeve 1988). Bunting (1983) attributes much of the architectural character of the city to John Gaw Meem, an architect who practiced in Santa Fe beginning in the 1920s.

Meem devoted much of his career to converting buildings to the Santa Fe style. However, Sheppard (1988) states that the Santa Fe style was developed by I. H. Rapp, who designed the New Mexico Museum of Fine Arts and La Fonda Hotel before Meem started his architectural practice in Santa Fe. Regardless of which architect originated the style, it is important to note that what is now called the "traditional" Santa Fe style is actually a contrivance of twentieth-century Anglo-American architects (Gleye 1994).

The Santa Fe Railroad used architecture to enhance its destinations. The railroad company purchased hot springs northwest of Las Vegas, New Mexico, about sixty miles east of Santa Fe. The railroad company opened the Montezuma Hotel in 1882 to provide luxurious lodgings at the spa. The Montezuma burned in 1884 and was replaced. The replacement burned and was replaced by a hotel appropriately named the Phoenix. The Fred Harvey Company managed the hotels and their restaurants. In 1898, the Santa Fe Railroad built the Casteneda Hotel adjacent to its depot in Las Vegas, New Mexico (Howard and Pardue 1996). These hotels probably provided an example to Santa Fe of the value of architecture in attracting tourists.

Development of the Santa Fe style was part of a larger architectural revivalist movement that included the Mission Revival style that began in California in the 1890s (Francaviglia 1996). The Fred Harvey Company participated fully in this movement and emphasized regional art and architecture in its properties in the Southwest. The company and the Harvey family built an extensive collection of Native American artifacts, some of which were sold at high prices, and some of which were displayed in collections in various hotels. The company employed Mary E. J. Colter, an architect and interior designer, to develop appropriate themes for each of its properties. In 1926, Colter directed the redecoration of La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe after it was purchased by the Fred Harvey Company. Her interior designs emphasized the elements of the Santa Fe style (Henderson 1969; Howard and Pardue 1996)

Santa Fe is contrived in more than just style. The Museum of Fine Arts, built in 1915-17, was constructed of tile blocks and covered with colored stucco to look like adobe. While there is criticism of this faux-adobe (Ellis 1982), the method continues and has incorporated new technologies. Newer buildings, such as the Inn at Loretto, consist of a metal frame covered with stucco (Gleye 1994).

But if Santa Fe is so contrived, why has the city been an important attraction for most of the twentieth century? The architectural critic Gleye (1994) analyzed the urban design concepts expressed in Santa Fe. He recognized the contrived character of Santa Fe, but he also explained how it provides the context for a sense of authenticity. Gleye describes Santa Fe in terms of three-dimensionality; the frequency with which a walking person encounters something new to see, hear, or do; sequence of open-enclosure; appearance of hand craftsmanship; and detail at the level of hand and eye. Gleye admits that the historic connection is "apparent" rather than authentic and that the architecture gives the "appearance" of handcrafted work. Nevertheless, he maintains that the city has achieved a unique urban identity.

On a more general scale than Gleye's analysis, my impression is that Santa Fe's architecture is attractive because it is exotic but comfortable. It is exotic in its form and color. The city promotes itself as "Santa Fe, the City Different," and its difference emanates from the organic shapes and brightly colored trim that contrasts with the earth tones of the walls.

But while Santa Fe's architecture is distinctive, it is also accommodating and inviting. Buildings are often set immediately adjacent to the sidewalk, but enclose courtyards that are cool and shady in the summer and protected from wind in the winter. Many sidewalks are sheltered by overhanging covers called *portales*. The earth-toned, thick-walled buildings seem natural, like an integral part of the environment.

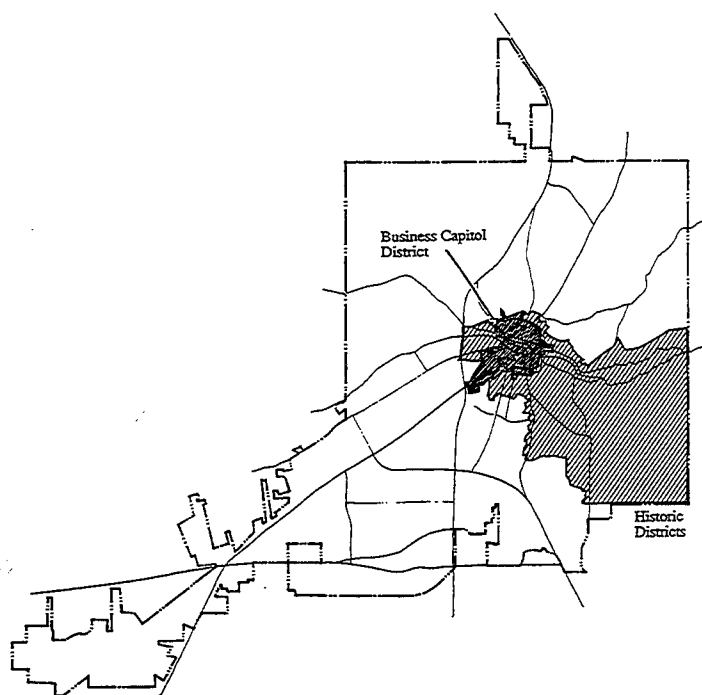
Although Santa Fe's economy was increasingly supported by tourism based on a contrived expression of its heritage, it took the city many years to seriously attempt to protect its architectural heritage. The emphasis on architecture as a tourist attraction began in 1912, but it was not until 1957 that the city adopted its Historical District Ordinance that established architectural controls in order to maintain the Santa Fe style (City of Santa Fe 1986).

Santa Fe evolved a delicate balance between control that produces an essential visual and historic continuity on one hand, and creative freedom that fosters a sense of authenticity on the other hand. The city's development ordinances provide for local variations. For example, the Historical District Ordinance establishes distinct requirements for five historical districts, and the Business Capitol District Ordinance identifies fifteen distinct "Townscape Subdistricts" within the Business Capitol District (City of Santa Fe 1986). Flexibility of



land use encourages economic viability. All uses permitted in other districts of the city are allowed in the Business Capitol District, except where they conflict with the Historical District Ordinance, which takes precedence (City of Santa Fe 1990).

Although the historical districts of Santa Fe are controlled and to some extent contrived, they look authentic because the planning, control, and contriving have not been overdone. Santa Fe and much of the American Southwest have been criticized for being like a Disney creation (Weigle 1989). However, comparing Disneyworld's Main Street to Santa Fe reveals important differences. Disneyworld's Main Street provides nostalgia with little of the unpleasantness of a real city. There are few hazards, and the design facilitates visitor circulation through the theme park. By contrast, Santa Fe is not perfect. It is organic, not uniform. Sidewalks may be broken or co-opted by cafes and narrowed so walkers must step into the traffic (Figure 2). Low-hanging signs



**Figure 2.** Santa Fe Historic and Business Capitol Districts (Source: City of Santa Fe 1986, 1990)

and ancient irrigation canals present hazards to pedestrians. But the result is a sense of a real community, which it is. For example, Canyon Road, the historic district that is now the main center of art galleries, is and feels like a place where artists live and work (Kimmel 1995).

While architectural form and details are obviously important to the character of Santa Fe, its spatial form is also crucial. As with most cities laid out before the automobile became dominant, Santa Fe's core is compact. Streets are narrow, and lots tend to be long and narrow. Long lots were common in the upper Rio Grande Valley in Spanish colonial times. They increased access to streams or irrigation ditches and provided spaces for gardens and household animals in early Santa Fe (Carlson 1975). By placing buildings close together along the street frontage, the long-lot form produced a compact community. The modern result is that the core of Santa Fe is intimate and conducive to walking. Although Santa Fe has continued to allow automobile access to the core of the city, the narrow streets and extremely limited parking reduce the speed and volume of traffic so that traffic does not dominate.

Squire's (1994) contention that authenticity is a negotiated social construct may explain Santa Fe's success in attracting visitors. Visitors to Disneyworld know that it is not authentic, but millions of people apparently enjoy the illusion. Santa Fe's contrived ambiance goes further toward authenticity in its negotiation and suffices for many people at this symbolic level. However, such negotiated constructs are vulnerable to change and are subject to reevaluation. Criticism of the "depthlessness" (Weigle 1994) of the Santa Fe style may reflect such a reevaluation.

As implied above, "authentic" is an ambiguous term, but it should not be dismissed because it is ambiguous. The sentiment behind authenticity is important. Cohen (1988: 373) maintains that "The quest for authenticity thus becomes a prominent motif of modern tourism." Many people, especially those who are well educated and urbane, seem to demand some degree of authenticity.

Some writers define authenticity quite narrowly, to the point that nothing of the modern world can be authentic. Relph (1976) identified only a few examples of self-consciously made places that he judged to be authentic. The contrived or "staged authenticity," as seen in much of Santa Fe, is thought to result in tourism being a "colossal deception" (Cohen 1988: 372-3). Even pres-

ervation is considered by some to be inauthentic (Cohen 1988). By these definitions, Santa Fe is not and cannot be authentic.

### **Sprawl in Modern Santa Fe**

The foregoing comments are based on Santa Fe's core historical districts and do not apply to the newer sprawl that has developed around the core. Developments outside the city's core historical districts emphasize the fragility of Santa Fe's claim to being "The City Different." As illustrated in Figure 3, the Business Capitol District and the designated historical districts comprise a relatively small part of the city of Santa Fe. In addition, a substantial amount of development is taking place outside the city's corporate limits. Strip malls, discount stores, and large motels attempt to conform to the adobe look and earth tones that characterize the Santa Fe style, but they sometimes appear cheap and seem to be a cynical parody of the city's theme.

The spatial characteristics of modern development in Santa Fe are even more destructive of the city's ambiance than faux adobe. New development in Santa Fe, like most American cities, is low density, built to accommodate automobile traffic. The intimacy, excitement, and detail of the old part of Santa Fe are diluted and lost among wide streets and parking lots of the newer sections. Although the architectural characteristics and details analyzed by Gleye (1994) can and have been duplicated in modern buildings, when they are set in the sprawling spatial context they lose their attractiveness and mystique. The whole cloth of the traditional design is essential, not just the details. Even though authenticity may be negotiated as Squire (1994) maintained, such negotiation can only be stretched so far. Some degree of community integrity must be maintained (Murphy 1985; Inskeep 1991).

It can be argued that low-density sprawl is authentic to twentieth century development. However, as emphasized above, Santa Fe's commercial success is largely the result of its ability to contrive a particular ambiance. Care should be given to continuing that successful contrivance if the city intends to maintain its tourism economy. Design principles of the "New Urbanism" (Calthorpe 1993) are consistent with the traditional spatial patterns of Santa Fe and can help the city maintain its character.

## How Bad is Tourism?

Norris (1994:vii-viii) summarizes much of the criticism of tourism:

the "tourism problem" is really a set of problems that seem to emerge whenever tourism becomes a significant economic and social force in a region or community. "Tourism" in this expanded sense includes or implies a number of issues: the often abrupt and unplanned development of service industries and of a low-wage economy based on these industries; seasonal or permanent increases in population that exceed the carrying capacity of community infrastructure, resulting in environmental damage and social displacement; overuse and degradation of even "protected" natural areas and scenic resources; the commodification and commercialization of local history, culture, and ethnicity; and the rapid growth, inflation, and gentrification brought about not just by the flow of visitors but also by what anthropologist Sylvia Rodriguez (following Lawrence Moss) terms "amenity migrants" — former tourists who move to, or buy second homes in, their favorite vacation site.

Is Santa Fe as spoiled, bleak, and meaningless as Norris and others would have us believe, especially when compared to possible alternatives to tourism? To begin to answer this question, I will return to the issues of commoditization and authenticity and then describe a preliminary assessment of an alternative to tourism.

Commoditization of cultural processes and objects may make them meaningless, but it also may give them new meanings (Cohen 1988). Although Native American jewelry, pottery, and blankets are now commodities, I was impressed at a recent Northern Pueblos Arts and Crafts Show at San Juan Pueblo that the exhibitors seemed more interested in displaying their skills to fellow artists than in trying to sell commodities to the visitors that were present.

At least in the Southwest, Native Americans adopt and adapt a great variety of cultural objects and activities and apparently give them meaning within their own culture. Men incorporate boots, blue jeans, and western hats with braided hair and traditional silver jewelry. The "traditional" Navajo woman's skirt and blouse are patterned after the clothes of wives of nineteenth-century army officers at western forts. Families dressed in these styles drive pickup trucks to traditional ceremonies. Perhaps some of the academic concern about loss of meaning through commoditization ignores adaptability and the dynamic character of cultures.

The hard economic reality of making a living in the modern Southwest

provides an additional perspective for evaluating tourism. Money is necessary, and commoditization of culture can provide it. Partially due to the popularity of the Santa Fe style, southwestern Native American arts and crafts have become popular and much more expensive than in the past. The arts-and-crafts market follows fads and will probably decline in the future. However, Native American artists and craftspeople in New Mexico drive new trucks, build new houses, and send their children to college. Some are creating new art from traditional forms and images and developing a dynamic *genre*. This implies a breakdown or at least a change in the traditional culture. However, southwestern Native Americans have shown an incredible resilience in the context of a harsh environment and purposeful efforts of powerful enemies to exterminate them. They will probably survive tourism and maybe even benefit from it.

Changing the cultural function of an activity or object may help preserve it. Cohen (1988: 382) states:

One has to bear in mind that commoditization often hits a culture not when it is flourishing, but when it is actually already in decline, owing to the impingement of outside forces preceding tourism. Under such circumstances, the emergence of a tourist market frequently facilitates the preservation of a cultural tradition which would otherwise perish.

It is possible that what emerges from the Southwest will be a strong modern Native American culture with tourism as part of its economic base.

The dynamic cultural process discussed above applies to our understanding of the landscape as well. Daniels and Cosgrove (1988) remind us, as did Tuan (1974), that landscape has no meaning outside of culture, and every piece of symbolic explanation, criticism, or celebration of a landscape adds to its meaning. For tourist landscapes such as Santa Fe or Disneyworld, this implies that they take on meaning through the very process of people visiting them, photographing them, and reading literature about them. This is part of the process that Cohen (1988) calls "emergent authenticity." Places take on authenticity because they are good at being what they are. Cohen (1988) also states that some classes of tourists approach places with a playful attitude that recognizes that nothing is quite what it seems, even the tourist.

The discussion above is focused on the visitor's enjoyment derived from some degree of emergent authenticity of a place, even though that authenticity is sold as a commodity. The discussion, however, does not address the issues

raised by Rodriguez (1994) and Norris (1994) concerning the impacts of tourism on the people whose place and culture have become commodities.

Norris's (1994) long list of negative impacts should be assessed within the context of alternatives. What was the alternative for Santa Fe, and would that alternative have produced fewer social and environmental impacts than tourism?

It is impossible to second-guess a hundred years of history in order to identify alternatives and assess their probable impacts. However, Las Vegas, Santa Fe's neighbor sixty miles to the east, provides a useful contrast to Santa Fe and may help visualize the impacts of commerce and manufacturing as alternatives to tourism.

Although Las Vegas was on the main line of the Santa Fe Railroad and had the Montezuma/Phoenix and Casteneda hotels previously mentioned, the city did not focus on tourism as the mainstay of its economy. Meinig (1971) describes Las Vegas as a vital commercial hub, linking ranching on the extensive grasslands to its south and east to urban markets. After 1879, a new Anglo community developed around the railroad, while the old Hispanic town remained on the other side of Gallinas Creek, somewhat disconnected from the new commercial area.

As the railroad network matured, Las Vegas lost its competitive commercial position and was left "to stagnate within a very local hinterland" (Meinig 1971: 78). Las Vegas's population today is slightly more than twice as large as it was in 1900, whereas Santa Fe and Albuquerque are ten times and sixty times their 1900 populations, respectively. This is not to imply that population growth ensures a viable economy and high quality life. However, investment requires growth potential, and failure of a city to grow at a rate that is comparable to other cities means that capital will relocate in more dynamic places and the economy will stagnate.

Las Vegas continues to show signs of a marginal local economy. Attractive structures in both the Old Town and the New Town remained idle or abandoned for decades. Property values were extremely low even in the early 1990s. One of the primary employers at that time was a factory that made risqué underwear for women.

Employment opportunities are limited, and economic value has not accrued in Las Vegas as rapidly as other cities. While Norris's (1994) list of tour-

ism impacts is impressive and worthy of concern, living in a stagnant economy also has substantial social and psychological impacts. Whether the tourist's hegemonic gaze is more demeaning than sewing provocative underwear is open to individual interpretation.

Ideally, people should be free of demeaning necessities, but the demands of making a living often leave few choices. The pre-modern subsistence existence may have been less demeaning, or that view may be romantic nostalgia. At any rate, a pre-modern existence is not a viable alternative, and it is ultimately frustrating and counterproductive to judge modern life against assumptions about those times. To tell the Hispanic woman being gazed upon by a tourist or sewing party underwear that she should not have to suffer such indignities, that she should be able to live with the dignity of her ancestors, is deceptive and cynical. A return to a pre-modern economy would require her to live a vulnerable subsistence life comprised of endless bone-grinding labor with very few comforts and little means to mitigate pain and sickness and early deaths of her children and herself. Maybe the tourist gaze is not so bad in comparison.

## Conclusion

Tourism is a volatile business, but Santa Fe has managed to sustain its tourism economy relatively well. However, more critical perspectives have identified inherent problems resulting from the commoditization of the traditional Native American and Hispanic cultures. The issues are serious and must be addressed both in Santa Fe and in the many other places where tourism is now being pursued as economic development. However, some of the criticism of tourism seems to be based on unrealistic assumptions and does not address the question of the impacts of alternatives to tourism. Cohen (1988: 375-367) stated:

Anthropologists, like curators and ethnographers, even if paradigmatic of the modern tourist, appear to entertain more rigorous criteria of authenticity than do ordinary members of the traveling public. They belong to the wider category of modern, alienated intellectuals — indeed, their alienation from modernity often induces them to choose their respective professions.

Such psychologizing may not be necessary, but there is a major gap between the perspectives of the general public and some academics regarding tourism.

The thoughts expressed in this article lead to the following research questions that would provide a better understanding of the positive and negative impacts of tourism and would help establish policies and guide the development of tourism:

1. What are the varying cultural factors that might cause the commoditization of cultural objects and activities to result in either meaninglessness or preservation?
2. What are the net economic, environmental, and sociocultural impacts of specific types of tourism *when compared to reasonable alternatives*?
3. What policies and strategies can be used to anticipate, manage, and mitigate the subtle sociocultural impacts of tourism?

Tourism is currently one of the largest economic activities in the world. It is being promoted by private companies, nongovernmental organizations, and local, state, and national governments. Tourism will continue to expand. We need research that goes beyond criticism and focuses on how the impacts of tourism can be managed and mitigated.

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