

Negotiated Tourist Identities: Nationality and Tourist Adaptation

by

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ABSTRACT

Within the media there is an abundance of reports that claim tourists are being harassed, kidnapped and even killed in some instances as a result of their representation of their country's political ideology and international relations. A qualitative study was undertaken in Bolivia to determine how a tourist avoids or copes with the fear of severe political retribution or harassment in a country whose political environment is largely opposed to that of the traveler's home country. Interviews were conducted in multiple regions of Bolivia, and the data were coded. The results show that tourists experience political retribution on a much smaller scale than initially thought, usually through non-threatening social encounters. The overall themes influencing traveler behaviors are the (Un)Apologetic American, the George W. Bush foreign policy era, avoiding perceived unsafe countries or regions, and Bolivian borders. Respondents, when asked to reflect upon their behavioral habits, do not usually forthrightly deny their country of origin but merely adapt their national identities based on their familial origins, dual citizenship, language abilities or lack thereof, familiarity with the world/regional politics or lack thereof and associating oneself with a popular region in the United States (e.g. New York), rather than the US as a whole. Interestingly, none of the Americans interviewed candidly deny their American nationality or express future intention to deny their nationality. The Americans did express feeling "singled out" at the Bolivian borders which leads to the management implication to implement an automated receipt when purchasing a Bolivian visa and improving the Ministry of Tourism website that would more clearly state visa requirements. Additionally, the image of Bolivia as a culturally and politically homogeneous country is discussed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

One of the fundamental needs of tourists is to remain physically and psychologically safe. Traveling to countries with opposing political ideologies from those at home might pose a threat to a tourist's physical or psychological safety, whether real or perceived. Traveling in destinations with differing political ideologies can create an unnerving or distressing situation where travelers must choose between maintaining and asserting their national identity or adopting other ways of easing the impact of culture shock when confronted with uncomfortable situations that base themselves on the political views or foreign policies of the tourist's home country. Based on anecdotal observations, the author's initial thoughts were that some travelers deny their nationality as a way of minimizing or avoiding their potential to become a target for harassment, or on a more extreme level, terrorist attacks. After further study, the assumption of the aforementioned reasons to deny one's nationality were too extreme, and other more practical topics that initiated an adaptation of one's nationality were noted, avoidance of verbal harassment, and possible avoidance of visa fees and the traveler's need to "blend in". By exploring the literature on political conflicts, traveler risk perceptions, and traveler safety, the study strives to understand why tourists might disavow their nationality while abroad, depending on the country being visited. Why does this phenomenon merit scholarly attention? The benefits and detriments associated with certain nationalities and the significance of the role they play in tourist-resident relationships or tourist-tourist relationships are fundamentally important and a key ingredient in understanding the social experiences of tourists in greater depth and from

another perspective. Furthermore, the tourism literature lacks theory-based or conceptual arguments that help explain how and why travelers might lie about their nationalities, exchange them for others while abroad or avoid discussion of their nationality altogether. This study aims to discover the behaviors and reasons associated with the disclosure or nondisclosure of one's nationality while traveling abroad.

The negotiation of national identity is better explained through a brief introduction of various literature that includes tourist social interactions and tourist behavior that upholds the benefits of "blending in" and the idea that nationality is seen as a sensitive and delicate subject matter with the potential to be detrimental to the benefits of tourism. Interviews with tourists highlight the literature themes and demonstrate the delicate nuances tourists incorporate into their travel behaviors related to their national identities. The interviews will support the idea that tourist identities are flexible, negotiated and fluid. Several theories can be examined to help decipher why and how some travelers alter their national identities in the destination.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political Instability

Political instability, according to Hall and O'Sullivan (1996, pp. 106), "refers to a situation in which conditions and mechanisms of governance and rule are challenged as to their political legitimacy by elements operating from outside of the normal operations of the political system...when forces for change are unable to be satisfied from within a political system and then use such non-legitimate activities as protest, violence, or even civil war to seek change, then a political system can be described as being unstable." Hall and O'Sullivan continue describing dimensions of political instability to include international wars, civil wars, coups, terrorism, riots, political protests, social unrest and strikes. Countries such as Mexico, Northern Ireland, Egypt, and others in the Middle East are not immune to contestation of political ideologies or the implications of the label of unsafe destination. The US State Department warns travelers against travel to a handful of countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt, Haiti, El Salvador and Mexico, owing to potential security risks. Many other countries also issue such travel warnings, which can have a major impact on the tourism sectors of the listed countries and cause considerable apprehension among potential travelers about visiting.

Mexico has had a long-standing bipolar image. The 1994 uprisings in Chiapas, Mexico, fueled by the declaration of NAFTA, with opposition from the Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, affected the tourism economy in Chiapas considerably. The assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio and citizen and traveler accusations of abuse at the hands of Mexican military were portrayed through international media and quickly

disseminated throughout the world. Despite the appointment of a new Minister of Tourism for Chiapas and marketing campaigns, Pitts (1996) reported that Chiapas, Mexico, had not fully recovered two years later from the tourist perception that Chiapas is unsafe and politically unstable. Interestingly, Coronado (2008) describes how the indigenous communities of San Cristóbal de las Casas in Chiapas, Mexico, are today attracting political tourists to their indigenous communities, archaeological sites and ecotourism attractions. Despite the image of a politically unstable region, political tourists have emerged as one of the main sources of tourism revenue.

According to Strizzi and Meis (2001), most of the challenges facing Latin America are economic in nature, which fuels the rebel and insurgency activities as people lash out in desperation (Lew, Hall and Timothy, 2011). Strizzi and Meis noted the increased risk of serious harm or injury, extortion, robbery and kidnapping against international travelers and foreign executives in rural and bordering areas of Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru, which has the potential not only to reduce tourism but adapt it to more enclaved (e.g. beach resorts) and protected forms of tourism.

Putra and Hitchcock (2006) analyzed the impact of the 2005 Bali bombings on international visitor arrivals. The bombs were strategically placed outside the American consulate in Denpasar, Paddy's Bar and the Sari nightclub in Bali, killing 152 foreign tourists. In addition to the Bali bombings of October 2002, Prideaux, Laws and Faulkner (2003) credit the downfall of Indonesia's tourism industry to the Asian financial crisis, ethnic upheaval, religious unrest, political conflict and decades of negative reporting of Indonesia in general. Overall, Putra and Hitchcock concluded that the Bali bombings had the greatest impact on international tourist arrivals of any recent events.

Another form of political instability is terrorism. The US Department of State defines terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against civilians and unarmed military personnel by subnational groups...usually intended to influence an audience.” Sönmez (1998) defines international terrorism as “involving citizens or the territory of more than one country” (pp. 417). The tourism and terrorism relationship shows that tourist behavior is significantly impacted by the potential risk of terror. Terrorists routinely target tourists “because they are viewed as ambassadors for their countries, as soft targets” (Sönmez, 1998, pp. 424) and their “symbolic value as indirect representatives of hostile or unsympathetic governments” (Richter, 1983: 314; Richter & Waugh, 1986: 235). Terrorists have much to gain by targeting tourists, for “when nationals of other countries become involved, news coverage is guaranteed” (Sönmez, 1998:425). Terrorists achieve intense media exposure by kidnapping or killing a tourist “which helps the political conflict between terrorists and the establishment reach a global scale” (Sönmez, 1998, pp. 428).

Harassment

While the elements of political instability noted above are crucial issues that affect tourist demand for certain destinations, they are extreme examples. More mundane are everyday events such as tourist harassment that might make visitors uncomfortable, irritable, or even feel at risk of something more dangerous and sinister. It is important to understand how travelers cope with the risk of harm or harassment, including their aversive behaviors.

One way of defining harassment is “the use of obscene language, gestures, and actions to annoy, taunt, abuse, and insult a person” (de Albuquerque & McElroy,

2001:487). Kozak (2007: 386) identifies five specific types of harassment in the tourism context. The first occurs when tourists are persistently asked to visit an establishment or pressured to make a purchase. The second type is being approached by someone soliciting an unwanted sexual relationship. The third is the “use of obscene language or gestures to make tourists feel annoyed or threatened (verbal abuse).” The fourth type occurs when tourists are approached with aggressive actions. Finally, the unlawful selling or using of drugs and the violent crimes that usually accompanies it.

Interestingly, the study by de Albuquerque and McElroy (2001) confirmed that tourists of different nationalities are exposed to different types and degrees of harassment. An earlier study by de Albuquerque and McElroy (1999) emphasized the occurrence of tourists in the Caribbean falling victim to property crime and robbery, and their counterpart hosts who were more apt to be victimized in a serious manner (murder and aggravated assault). Michalko’s (2003) study of the relationships between crime and tourism in Hungary indicates a higher occurrence of crimes against Germans in the form of vandalism to their cars and valuables. Furthermore, Michalko’s (2003) findings associate a higher incidence of crimes against tourists from the European Union than among visitors from Hungary’s Eastern European neighbors. Similar events took place in Florida in 1992-93, when several foreign tourists were targeted for murder and robberies, causing a drastic decline in international arrivals in that state and in the United States (Gonzalez-Herrero and Pratt, 1998).

Harassment can also come in the form of forced political ideologies on a group of citizens and/or tourists. Such was the case with socialist and communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe and politically unstable countries of Asia such as North

Korea, where the *Juche* communist ideology is the main stimulant for domestic tourism (Hall, 1990) “that keeps citizens devoted to their autocratic leadership and dictates nearly every aspect of daily life” through organized tours that focus on specific propagandized attractions: the birthplace of Kim Il-Sung, tombs of North Korea’s martyrs and the USS Pueblo, a US military craft captured by the North Koreans (Kim, Timothy and Han, 2007).

Risk and Nationality

The travel decision-making process is significantly influenced by the perceived risk of bodily injury (Canally & Timothy, 2007; Hall, Timothy & Duval, 2003). Leisure travelers are more likely to modify their behavior by substituting risky destinations for safer choices with the belief that a country that does not take an active part in conflict is not regarded as a threat. After the events of 9/11, leisure travelers expressed the option to modify present or future travel plans by avoiding perceived targets such as government buildings, city attractions, historic sites and large sporting events, and they believe that acts of large-scale terrorism are least likely to occur at beach destinations (Chen & Chen, 2003; Bonham, Edmonds & Mak, 2006; Goodrich, 2002). Interestingly, nationality has an influence on perceived risk and safety. Reisinger and Mavondo’s (2006) study introduced the influences of tourists’ national culture and their intentions to travel with travel risk and safety perceptions being a significant concern. Lepp and Gibson’s (2003) findings identified seven risk factors among US college-aged travelers: health, political instability, terrorism, strange food, cultural barriers, a nation’s political and religious dogma, and crime.

Understanding the influence of national culture is explained by Geert Hofstede's extensive research of 66 nations based on five constructs (power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, the Confucian dynamic of long-term short term orientation and uncertainty avoidance). Originally, Hofstede (2001) measured work-related values among 11,000+ employees of a multi-national corporation. The employees represented over 70 nationalities and Hofstede's study showed how the work-related values correlated to national culture. This study, focuses on the uncertainty avoidance construct. Hofstede (1993) describes the uncertainty avoidance index as dealing with:

...the degree to which people in a country prefer structured over unstructured situations. Structured situations are those in which there are clear rules as to how one should behave. These rules can be written down, but they can also be unwritten and imposed by traditions...a (national) society with strong uncertainty avoidance can be called rigid: one with weak uncertainty avoidance, flexible. In countries where uncertainty avoidance is strong a feeling prevails of "what is different, is dangerous." In weak uncertainty avoidance societies, the feeling would rather be "what is different, is curious." (p. 90)

For example, Litvin, Crofts and Hefner (2004) apply Hofstede's (2001) cross-cultural dimensions to compare the behaviors of Japanese and German subjects with regard to uncertainty avoidance. Litvin *et.al*, validate Hofstede's original research by showing that Germans and Japanese differ with external search behavior, number of days considered before the decision was made to depart and visit the USA, travel party characteristics and trip characteristics, with Germans showing low uncertainty avoidance attributes and Japanese being a high uncertainty avoidance group.

Nyaupane, Teye and Paris (2008) examined and measured the pre and post-trip attitudes of American university students visiting Austria, Australia, Fiji and the Netherlands. Using a comparable concept to Hofstede's (1980) Uncertainty Avoidance, the Social Distance Theory, in the context of tourism, presumes cultures that share similar social and cultural components will be more likely to be tolerant of one another. One of the significant findings within Nyaupane et. al's (2008) study shows a pre-trip positive attitude towards Australians but post-trip attitude measurements of Australia indicated the greatest negative attitude shift. It is possible that the Americans in the study by Nyaupane and his colleagues felt they shared the greatest similar social and cultural components with Australia but, in fact, the findings show that the respondents were displeased with "how locals perceive the U.S." and "how locals see Americans." At the time of data collection, the United States was actively engaged in a war in Iraq, much to the displeasure of the Australians, who expressed resentment towards the American students.

Depicting Overt Denial of Nationality in Mainstream Media

Currently, the tourism research literature is void of concepts that explain how and why tourists might disavow or hide their nationalities. Despite the absence of peer-reviewed literature regarding the topic, there is an abundance of media articles on the internet that substantiate tourists and/or travelers who misrepresent their identities to avoid physical harm, harassment or other forms of confrontation. Recently, in Mumbai, India, eyewitnesses reported the selective killings of American and British passport holders (BBC, 2008). In 2006, *The Globe and Mail* reported the release of a Canadian citizen after the kidnappers "rifled through his pockets and found his passport."

According to the *Globe and Mail* the kidnappers were disappointed to learn they had not captured an American. According to the BBC, a British citizen, Kenneth Bigley, was taken hostage in Iraq with two American citizens in 2004. Bigley and the Americans were construction contractors accused of working together on a US Army project. Bigley's family appealed to Ireland to grant Bigley Irish citizenship through Bigley's mother. The Irish government confirmed that Bigley could claim Irish citizenship. Bigley's family emphasized his Irish citizenship because the Republic of Ireland opposed the war in Iraq, and the Republic of Ireland is considered neutral in the war against Iraq. Despite family efforts, Bigley was beheaded. The BBC News Online Network reported in 1999 the massacre of singled out British and American tourists in the Ugandan jungle by Rwandan Hutu rebels angry at the support of Britain and the United States for Uganda. Prior to the massacre of the westerners, the release of all French tourists was negotiated. In 1988, *The Washington Post* reported an Egyptian with dual citizenship aboard Kuwait Airways flight 422 who hid his United States passport in his briefcase and handed the hijackers of the flight his Egyptian passport. The Egyptian-American's life was spared, but two Kuwaiti men were killed.

The Guardian, a British newspaper, reported in 2006 that Ireland received a sharp rise in requests from British and Americans for Irish passports. Irish Republic law grants passports if applicants can prove to be descendants from an Irish grandfather or grandmother. Several opinions cited within the article speculate that tourists' heightened fears are fueling the mass load of applicants and renewals; applications for passports doubled and renewals tripled in 2006. *The Guardian* also noted that US citizens were encouraged through websites to acquire another citizenship through Ireland as a better

guarantee of safety while traveling in areas that are hostile towards Americans.

Similarly, a website based out of Dominica extols the virtues of traveling on a non-US passport because “when you travel, your citizenship can make you a target for terrorist attacks. This is especially true for US or UK passport holders travelling in the Middle East region” (“Second Passport and Second Citizenship,” n.d.)

On a lighter note, *Newsweek*'s, Seth Stevenson (2010) disguised his American nationality for investigative reasons. Stevenson claims he is patriotic, but people-watching is not productive wearing long white tube socks, NFL football jerseys or designer running shoes. Being mistaken for another nationality or in Stevenson's words “melt(ing) into (his) surroundings” is one of his most memorable moments as a globe-trotter and suggests to the reader that shedding Americanness, or becoming more like a local, is beneficial for observing the behaviors of the native populace without being observed. The idea of melting in, blending in or disguising oneself for particular reasons is discussed by Peter Greenberg (2009), a popular American travel expert. Greenberg provides several suggestions in becoming more like a local in order to secure better service and fewer attitudes. Like Stevenson, Greenberg also recommends dressing like a local by avoiding the baseball caps, tennis shoes and bright colors.

Overall, the motif of the aforementioned articles remains the same, that people must adapt to their surroundings to have a safe and enjoyable visit abroad. The scales of adaptation vary from formal change or acquirement of an additional citizenship, to altering appearances. The perceived consequences of not considering one's nationality or adapting to one's surroundings varies from poor service and rude attitude to death.

Traveler Identity Change Abroad

Muzaini (2005) illustrates how some backpackers attempt to “be like a local” in Southeast Asia. Using an auto-ethnographic strategy, Muzaini describes the variety of approaches backpackers use to gain deeper cultural immersion. Among those approaches are the types of places they visit with focus on accommodation choices, learning the host language, eating the local fare, *always* being in the company of locals, dressing like the locals and possessing the physical attributes of the host country. The benefits of the aforementioned approaches translate into better service, economic benefits and not being stared at, which allows travelers to frequent local clubs as opposed to clubs that cater solely to tourists, allowing for a more authentic nightlife experience. The detriments of looking local with Asian physical attributes are also discussed such as being bypassed from getting choice accommodations and being mistaken for and subjected to the discrimination of marginalized members of the host community.

Riley (1988) depicted the subculture of international long-term budget travelers and their traveler behavior. Among the behaviors studied, Riley affirmed that budget travelers enjoy playing with identities and “passing” as a poverty-stricken traveler, which allows them to become better acquainted with locals who offer meals or a place to stay. Sørensen’s (2003: 856) ethnographic study of the travel culture among international travelers depicts a phenomenon he calls “road status.” Road status is “obtained in many ways: paying ‘local prices,’ getting the best deal, traveling off the beaten track, long-term travel, diseases, dangerous experiences, and more. In total, it comprises hardship, experience, competence, cheap travel, along with the ability to communicate it properly”. Commonly, the travelers preoccupied with road status communicate their hardships

between themselves through their worn clothes and equipment. Sørensen's subjects disclosed that travelers reproduced the worn look by "intentionally smear(ing) their backpack, roughen(ing) their shoes and scuff(ing) their other equipment" as a method of manipulating the appearance of "road status." Further manipulation of information was expressed through exaggerated instances of diarrhea described as dysentery and simple bus journeys becoming exceedingly strenuous.

Within the backpacker literature, considerable attention has been paid to the importance of nationality within social interactions (Maoz, 2007; Teo & Leong, 2006; Cohen, 2003). Murphy (2000) examined the nature of social interactions and information dissemination among backpackers. Using content analysis of interviews and summary tables that rank order thematic importance, she found that home and nationality differences/comparisons are the third most often discussed topic among fellow backpackers. Furthermore, Murphy unearthed whether there are any rules among backpackers with regard to appropriateness of topics discussed in social situations. According to respondents, the most frequent response was that there were no rules of appropriateness of topics discussed in social situations but, interestingly, the second most frequent response was nationality stereotypes and ignorance about other countries. Among other claims, Murphy postulates that the "feeling out" period among initial discussions will not continue if stereotyping or the ignorance of different nationalities is communicated among backpackers.

Culture Shock

Meetings between culturally diverse people are inherently difficult. Ward, Bochner and Furnham (2001) described various psychological and sociocultural theories

and/or frameworks that are associated with such encounters on the basis that meetings between culturally-diverse people are stressful and difficult. Using sojourners, immigrants, tourists and refugees as the subjects of the theoretical underpinnings, Ward et al. examined the normal positive and/or negative outcomes of intercultural contact.

The outcomes of intercultural contact can be measured on an individual to group level as well as a group to group level. The individuals and groups are categorized by Ward et al. (2001) as sojourners, immigrants, tourists and refugees, with tourists being the least studied by psychologists. A sojourner is defined as:

...a temporary resident. Sojourners voluntarily go abroad for a set period of time that is usually associated with a specific assignment or contract.

Thus, a volunteer might take an overseas assignment for a year or two; a business person might accept a foreign posting for between three and five years; a missionary might go abroad for a longer stint, while military personnel are often posted overseas for the shorter 'tours of duty'; and international students generally remain overseas for the duration of their diplomas or degrees. In most cases sojourners expect to return home after the completion of their assignment, contract or studies (p .21).

Immigrants are defined as:

Migrants include those individuals who voluntarily relocate for long term resettlement. They are generally 'pulled' toward a new country by social, economic and political forces. The majority of immigrants are strongly motivated by economic factors and usually move from poorer to richer countries. A smaller

number, however, choose to migrate for political, religious or cultural reasons (p. 23).

Refugees are similar to immigrants and sojourners but refugees have a significant distinction being that they have been exposed to traumatic premigration factors prior to their *involuntary* displacement. Furthermore, their transition is complicated by the fact that they lack the tangible financial assets the voluntary immigrants and sojourners have. Tourists are defined by the World Tourism Organization as “visitors whose length of stay, away from home, surpasses 24 hours and whose incentive for travel is other than financial” (Ward et al., 2001, p. 19) The stay, in general, is voluntary. Despite their inherent differences, sojourners, immigrants, refugees and tourists—either as individuals or in group contexts—incorporate similar positive and negative coping skills/strategies in new cultural settings.

When groups or individuals come into contact with one another, value systems, social structures and political processes are among many variables that can create stressful interactions. Bochner (1982) introduces and distinguishes the outcomes of cultural contact at the individual level and group level. The individual framework is based on ‘passing,’ chauvinistic, marginal and mediating categories. The group framework is based upon four categories: genocide, assimilation, segregation and integration.

Genocide based on the 1949 Geneva Convention is a series of acts including killings designed to destroy, in whole or in part, a community designated by its racial or ethnic or religious origin. It is the systematic extermination of an ethnic, religious or other group by a majority group. Modern-day examples of genocide include the WWII

Holocaust, the 1990s wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the 1970s Khmer Rouge killings in Cambodia and the 1994 ethnic war Rwanda. Arguably comparable to genocide by way of colonialism, assimilation is regarded as “the process whereby a group or a whole society gradually adopt, or are forced into adopting, the customs, values, lifestyles and language of a more dominant culture” (Ward et al., 2001:29). The segregation category is defined by Ward et al., (2001) as:

...the dominant majority seeking the exclusion of certain minority groups from mainstream positions, institutions, and territories, or from the minority groups themselves actively demanding separate states, cultural enclaves, special schools, land tenure based on ethnic background, territorial reserves, sanctions against intermarriage, and so forth. (p. 29)

The category of integration is seemingly the more positive but the most difficult to implement of Bochner’s (1982) categories. Integration is “the accommodation that comes about when different groups maintain their respective core cultural identities while at the same time merging into a superordinate group in other, equally important respects” (Ward et al., 2001, p.30).

Equally as important, is the intercultural contact at the individual level. ‘Passing,’ exaggerated chauvinism, marginality and biculturality are Bochner’s (1982) individual intercultural outcome categories. ‘Passing’, as previously mentioned in Riley’s (1988) article is a method of playing with one’s identity. Note that Bochner’s (1982) frameworks are psychological responses to ‘second culture’ influences. The individual psychological response in the form of ‘passing’ is to reject culture of origin and embrace the second culture. The chauvinistic response is to reject the second culture and

exaggerate the first culture. The marginal response is to vacillate between the two cultures. Lastly, the mediating response is to synthesize both cultures. Both cultures, to be synthesized, must be perceived as capable of being integrated, as opposed to the marginal response where the cultures are perceived as mutually incompatible.

A contemporary approach to intercultural contact reflected by Ward et al. (2001) suggests that adaptation to new cultures can be divided into psychological and sociocultural adjustment categories.

Psychological adjustment, based predominantly on affective responses, refers to feelings of well-being or satisfaction during cross-cultural transitions. Sociocultural adaptation is situated within the behavioural domain and refers to the ability to “fit in” or execute effective interactions in a new cultural milieu. An evolving programme of research has demonstrated that psychological and sociocultural adaptation are conceptually related but empirically distinct. They derive from different theoretical foundations; they are predicted by different types of variables; and they exhibit different patterns of variation over time. (p. 42)

The psychological adjustments incorporate a stress and coping framework. The sociocultural adjustment incorporates a cultural learning framework.

The stress and coping framework is described as a construction which:

...highlights the significance of life changes during cross-cultural transitions, the appraisal of these changes, and the selection and implementation of coping strategies to deal with them. The core assumptions being that the experience of intercultural contact and change

occurs in a sociopolitical and economic context and is influenced by the characteristics of the migrant's society of origin and settlement. The changes associated with this contact are viewed as precipitating stress, which results in affective, behavioural and cognitive coping responses.

(p.71)

The cultural learning framework is described as “the process whereby sojourners acquire culturally relevant social knowledge and skills in order to survive and thrive in their new society.” (p.52)

A common theme among the above mentioned frameworks (i.e. individual, group, cultural learning and stress and coping), the peer-reviewed literature and the mainstream media article summaries is that effective relationships with a new culture, stress inducing as they may be, are essential workings of adaptation for sojourners, immigrants, refugees and travelers. This study aims to assess the affective, behavioral and coping mechanisms of a tourist when confronted with a socially stressful condition that involves the tourist's political ideology or that of their country of origin.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of the proposed study is to explore how and why a traveler denies, morphs or adapts his/her nationality for reasons of expediency while in the host community. A qualitative approach was used for collecting data and examining it. Qualitative inquiry is employed to interpret intricate human experience, actions and activities. Babbie asserts the aforementioned statement by affirming the effectiveness of qualitative research in examining the “subtle nuances in...behavior and for examining social processes over time” (2007). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define qualitative inquiry as:

...a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

Tourist behavior in relation to identity in countries was ascertained through 26 in-depth, unstandardized/unstructured and standardized/unstandardized face-to-face interviews in Bolivia from mid-September 2010 to mid October 2010. Unstandardized interviews, according to Berg (2007, pp. 93), are completely unstructured, have no set order to any questions, the level of language may be adjusted, the interviewer may

answer questions and make clarifications, and the interviewer may delete or add questions between interviews. Lincoln and Guba (1985) make the distinction from their co-authored book *Effective Evaluation*:

In the structured interview, the problem is defined by the researcher before the interview. The questions have been formulated ahead of time, and the respondent is expected to answer in terms of the interviewer's framework and definition of the problem. The unstructured or specialized interview varies considerably from this mode. In an unstructured interview, the format is non-standardized, and the interviewer does not seek normative responses. Rather, the problem of interest is expected to arise from the respondents reaction to the broad issue raised by the inquirer. (p. 268)

Also incorporated by the researcher was Douglas' creative interviewing technique. As cited by Berg (2007), Douglas (1985) terms creative interviewing as:

...a set of techniques to move past the mere words and sentences exchanged during the interview process. It includes creating an appropriate climate for informational exchanges and for mutual disclosures. This means that the interviewer will display his or her own feelings during the interview, as well as elicit those of the subject. (p. 91)

Bolivia served as a prime data collection site due to the political climate and the tenuous relationship it has with the United States. At the time of writing, Bolivia was viewed by the United States as a leftist Latin American country and is usually grouped in political discourse with the likes of Chile, Uruguay, Venezuela, Peru and Argentina (Cleary, 2006) "Leftist" as defined by Cleary (2006) in broad terms as:

A political movement with historical antecedents in communist and socialist political parties, grassroots social movements, populist social organizations, or other political forces that traditionally have had anti-systemic, revolutionary, or transformative objectives...the left shares a concern with redistribution and social justice, and it finds mass support among segments of the population that are severely disadvantaged under the current socioeconomic order. (p. 36)

Based on the above definition, it is prudent to presume that most Americans view their political climate vastly different than Bolivia and would have reason to conceal or adapt their political views while visiting Bolivia.

Hakim (2006) comments on the overall loss of attention and focus on behalf of the United States towards Latin America and argues that the anti-American rhetoric shared by Venezuela is also perpetuated by Bolivia. Bolivia is accused of siding with Venezuela's now deceased president, Hugo Chavez, and sharing the idea of forging an anti-US coalition (Hakim, 2006). The United States' self-serving political agenda in Latin America was expressed by the vociferous Hugo Chavez and threats to undermine policy by the United States in Latin America were vocalized. On the other hand, the political undermining of Evo Morales' authority by the United States is apparent as Fabricant (2009) reports US journalist and officials supporting a 2006 week-long violent protest by conservative regionalists in eastern Bolivia against Evo Morales with the protestors demanding regional autonomy from the western side of Bolivia that provides more indigenous support for Evo Morales leadership. Instances such as the aforementioned only seek to aggravate diplomatic relationships between the United States and Bolivia.

In addition to political distinctions, the actions of the Leftist leaders also manage to project negative images in Western media. Evo Morales, Bolivia's first democratically-elected indigenous president, has expelled various American government representatives from the country. In 2008 and subsequently since then Bolivia has expelled and/or suspended the American ambassador, Philip S. Goldberg, the US Drug Enforcement Agency, the US American International Development Agency and the Peace Corps from within the country. Following the expulsion of Philip Goldberg by Bolivia, Bolivia also expelled the Israeli ambassador following Israel's air bombing on the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip shortly after December 2008. Venezuela followed suit and expelled the American and Israeli ambassadors to Venezuela and as of this writing, the ambassador's offices in Venezuela and Bolivia have continued to remain vacant. Furthermore, bilateral cooperation with Iran, China and Russia also add to the image that Bolivia is unsafe, unstable and unwelcoming to the United States, its citizens and its allies (Emerson, 2010; Choo, 2009; Collins, 2005 & Lehman, 1999).

The interviews were conducted in public areas such as cafes, restaurants, hotel lobbies and at various tourist attractions. The author gained access to the interviewees, mostly, by visiting two tourism-oriented cities: a street in La Paz named "Calle Sagárnaga" known for its mid-range hotel accommodations, and Sucre, a UNESCO World Heritage city. Overall, Americans were difficult to locate but these two locations proved useful. In La Paz, the author visited various hotels, explained the purpose of the visit to hotel administrators and relied on information on American hotel guests as provided by the hotel managers and employees. In the literature, the informants are sometimes referred to as "gatekeepers." Berg (2007:185) describes gatekeepers as

“...formal or informal watchdogs who protect the setting, people, or institutions sought as the target of research.” Berg calls attention to the notion that gatekeepers are not necessarily high up the hierarchical ranking. Berg distinguishes between the two as informants being “indigenous persons found among the group and in the setting to be studied (p. 185).” In La Paz, the author depended on hotel receptionists, local residents and seasonal tour guides to get pointed in the right direction for interviewing American tourists. In Sucre, the remainder of the interviewees were located in a tourist-friendly café and through the process of snowball sampling. Snowball sampling proved the most effective tool to locate American tourists in Sucre. Once a respondent possessed certain attributes or the necessary characteristics, the respondent was asked for referrals of other people who possessed the same attributes or characteristics. Americans were fairly simple to find in Sucre using the snowball sampling method as opposed to in the larger city of La Paz.

The initial 26 interviews consisted of citizens of the United States, Germany, Belgium, England, France, Australia, Italy, Austria, Korea and Canada. Twenty six interviews were conducted with 31 respondents due to the fact that some of the respondents were traveling with companions and both respondents were interviewed together. All interviews but one (notes were used to due to the circumstances) were recorded with a digital Sony IC Recorder-ICD PX820 and a computer software program, Sony Digital Voice Editor Version 3.3.01, was used to facilitate the transcribing process. Each respondent gave verbal consent prior to the interview process which included an audio recording. In addition, those respondents who shared their e-mail with the author

also received a copy of their transcription and given the opportunity to clarify or make changes. Of the 26 interviews, 13 interviews were with American citizens.

For the sake of determining the accuracy of central claims the author chose to focus solely on American tourists. The majority of the respondents were young Americans that were found in relatively “touristy” areas and traveled alone and access to them was fairly simple as described above. The remaining 13 interviews were further narrowed by excluding three interviews due to the quality of the interview (Roulston, 2010). The remaining 10 interviews consisted of relatively young American individuals traveling alone (most under 30 years old) except for a young Ivy-League educated American couple (considered as two separate individuals but coded together). Two individuals ages 50+ consisted of one legal permanent resident of the United States who was born in Bolivia to Chilean diplomats who was in Bolivia traveling on business purposes and the other 50+ American individual was a participant of an organized tour. As mentioned previously, one interview was conducted with the aid of notes and was not recorded. This interview consisted of a family of 5, two adult parents (40+) and 3 children. The family traveled together and was not a part of an organized tour. The author recognized a point of saturation at 10-12 interviews which is consistent with the findings of Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006).

Initially, the experienced coders were assigned a set of three interviews to read and determine themes without a code book. Subsequently, themes emerged from the data that provided the groundwork for a codebook. Thus, a codebook was created for the second coding round of interviews. The interviews were further analyzed by the author as a result of comparing two sets of the same interview coded by separate coders. The

data showed similarities and parallel trains of thought but the excerpts that were coded identically and maintained unchanged during the two separate coding instances were utilized to convey the patterns of behavior that existed among the tourists.

CHAPTER 4

INTERVIEW RESULTS

The data illustrate several important affective, behavioral and cognitive responses demonstrated by means of the tourist disclosures. The tourist statements included feelings (un)apologetic/ashamed of being an American, feeling a difference while traveling during and after the Bush administration, identifying oneself with a region, city or state as opposed to a country, avoidance of visiting other seemingly politically unsafe countries and perceiving unpleasant incidents at various Bolivian borders. Despite, the preceding findings, the tourists interviewed in Bolivia, with the exception of a few, do not misidentify their nationalities.

(Un) Apologetic Americans

Emerging from the data is the notion of feeling apologetic in addition to the extreme opposite of feeling unapologetic when Americans are confronted by non-Americans during their travels. The two feelings do not exist separate from one another. Respondents express an initial feeling of feeling blameworthy as a representative of their nation but given the right circumstances an apologetic American can easily become defensive and unapologetic as the social situation escalates. A 24 year old American, woman with a college degree from Utah describes her initial emotions and the subsequent weariness that entails being an “apologist:”

I’m tired of having to be an apologist and that’s what I feel like I am. Generally, what they’re (non-American tourists) saying is true but sometimes they’re just nuts and you’re like ‘No, we are not actually the Satan of Everything.’ But a lot of what they’re saying is true usually and I’m not going to deny it and

we've done some terrible things abroad; certainly, School of Americas. I mean, Jesus, here in Latin America (The School of Americas) has done some terrible things. It does get really tiring to hafta always be like 'Yes, I know, my country has done bad things. Yep, you're right.' You know? Because what else can you say? It's not your fault. You can't change anything. You know?

The School of the Americas, as described by an unclassified, congressional report is a military operation posed by the United States Army created in 1946 for Spanish-speaking cadets and officers from Latin American nations. Originally, TSOTA, was located in US-controlled Panama Canal Zone until it moved to Fort Benning, Georgia in 1984. The mission of the school is described as, "developing and conducting instruction for the armed forces of Latin America." Controversies surrounding the school centered on the various graduates who violated human rights by torturing and murdering outspoken civilians, political opponents, professors, university students and religious figures in Guatemala, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Argentina, Panama, Colombia and El Salvador. Scrutiny increased after the discovery of Spanish-language training material from 1982-1991 published by the Department of Defense for the School of the Americas. The training material reviewed strategies and forms of torture, murder and coercion against insurgents. The School of Americas, as it was known, ceased to exist in October of 2000 and was replaced with a new authority named the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation.

Other respondents also report feeling ashamed of US foreign policy but also come to the understanding that they are born and subsequently embedded in a capitalistic social

order despite what can be considered left-leaning views. A 32 year old American man states:

I think more than anything what it has made me realize is that I've spent a great deal of my adult life being kind of ashamed of the United States imperialism, foreign policy and capitalism, in general. I think that coming here has made me realize how much I really do appreciate the infrastructure and the reliability of the system we've developed and even though it's exploiting the poor of the whole world, the poor countries, the developing countries or the poor workforce within the States...

He continues with: "...there is a certain amount of shame about what my government is doing to their government and ultimately what that effect is having on their lives."

Respondents also report the lack of feeling apologetic or ashamed. The respondents did not internalize the foreign policies of the United States towards other countries but did feel "answerable" as a representative of the nation. Also, respondents shift culpability away from themselves, personally, through various measures. One respondent is able to shift or place the shame onto the very "nature of capitalism."

Another respondent, a 23 year old American man states:

I didn't (feel apologetic). I don't think I felt that because it wasn't my responsibility. I came from this culture (American) and maybe I could've protested more, something like that, but I wasn't old enough to vote for Bush and I felt answerable to it but not apologetic. This is a reality and we can criticize it but it's not my fault...

Similar to the above respondent, a 29 year old American man retorts:

...there is nothing to be ashamed of or anything like that. I guess there's probably some people that do feel that way. The things that most people are against, possibly, I didn't like the fact either or the fact is I didn't have much to say in what happened in that point, anyways. It's not like I was personally responsible...

George W. Bush Administration

Culpable feelings coexisted with American administrations and their policies. More often than not, the Bush administration was mentioned alongside the tourist's tendency to feel apologetic, embarrassed and blameworthy while traveling. A 32 year old American man explains:

I can easily say the 8 years of the Bush administration foreign policy was so unilateral and so disrespectful to the entire rest of the world that I was embarrassed to...be (an American)-I guess, I apologized. I would go around and feel like apologizing. You know? Kind of the same way you would for a drunk friend, you know? A drunk friend at the bar, who is like totally making a fool of himself.

This particular respondent as well as other respondents spoke in generalized terms and it can be inferred that the majority, if not all, of the respondents were left-leaning respondents even though the respondents were never asked their party affiliation.

Commonly given the title "liberals," Ivy League educated persons also expressed a sense of non-support towards the Bush administration. A Yale graduate voices:

During Bush I felt the need much more to hide the fact that we were American because we are not Bush supporters in any way whatsoever so we were

embarrassed by our president and we thought that the world looked down at the United States for having chosen that president and we sort of agreed with the world with that.

She continues with:

I was traveling during the Bush administration when I graduated from college. I went on this several week trip with my singing group from college and I remember our business manager who was a peer, our age, sat us down and gave us a talk about how we need to be aware of the fact that Bush is hated in many parts of the world and some places that we were going to so not advertise that we were American.

The same 23 year old respondent that did not feel apologetic or responsible as an American during the Bush administration also expresses challenges that he faced while traveling outside of Bolivia under the Bush administration. The notion that travelers are representatives of a culture but not necessarily the nation's politics reverberates in the following statement:

When I was traveling or living and studying abroad under the Bush administration I felt much more responsible. I felt like I had to answer for very clear cut things that my country was doing to the world that weren't just and the people that I was talking with were suffering under. ...Yeah, so I felt like American politics were so present and inescapable in every conversation. I don't think that people blamed me for anything but I felt answerable like it was mine. If we were talking about that, I couldn't evade the fact that it was my country and I had to express my opinion.

Later he states: “I am much happier to be traveling now than I was 4 or 5 years ago.”

Poignant to this study is the concept that certain individuals, based on their internalized political views, are more comfortable traveling under the Obama administration. In other words, the respondents compare their internalized views while traveling during the Obama administration as opposed to the Bush administration. It is possible that travelers receive cues from the nationals of the country they visit and/or other travelers. A 24 year old American respondent explains:

Yeah, I’ve actually had more people seem more receptive and are interested in what’s going on with the new administration. They seem to be more open-minded towards it then they, you know, they were very much negatively impacted by the previous administration (Bush) and now they’re ‘Uh, maybe things have changed.’ It seems like they are more receptive, open minded about it.

The same 24 respondent provides an example from her visit to the Middle East:

They would seem to know I was an American. I don’t know how because they would always say ‘Go Obama’ ...I think two years ago it would’ve been maybe different. But I think, now, there’s this sense of optimism in that part of the world (Middle East).

Identity Adaptations

One particular respondent notes that being from New York is a “cooler way of saying ‘I am an American.’” He notes that he says he’s from New York because the fact “illicits a great response. Everyone loves New York.” Admittedly, he is a bit more cautious at how he uses the terms “Jew” and “Jewish” in social situations largely because

the respondent does not identify with the religion or the politics associated with Israel. If asked, he would identify himself as a “Jew” but not as “Jewish.” Within his explanation, he makes a distinction between the two terms as one being a nationality driven and the latter being associated with a practicing religion. Despite his personal distinctions, he states that he does not “lie” or “hide.”

Similar to the previous respondent, another Jewish-American respondent describes his nationality preference. “It’s [being Jewish] also [in addition to being an American] something I wouldn’t always want to bring up everywhere.” Interestingly, Bolivia is popular among young Israeli travelers despite the expulsion of the Israeli ambassador. The respondent’s traveling partner takes note of the aforementioned fact, but the respondent mentions that it is more of “intra-traveler hostility” that he is concerned with. “It’s not just an anti-Israel traveler thing it’s an anti-Israel thing. Israel is going to encounter all sorts of hostility anywhere they go from all sorts of people.” This particular traveler mentions the need to “blend in” and would rather integrate as an American than a Jew among other travelers. In addition to the aforementioned preference, the respondents blending-in preferences extend to attending Spanish speaking tours of the local attractions and being spoken to in Spanish while in Bolivia.

One participant carries a Chilean passport, a United Nations passport and a United States “Green Card” but was born in La Paz, Bolivia. Essentially, the participant juggles 4 identities and depending on where he is and to whom he is speaking with depends on which identity he portrays. The identities that he chooses from are as follows: Chilean-American, a Chilean, an American and Bolivian. The choice of a nationality while

traveling in Bolivia depends on whether he is speaking with a Bolivian colleague, a tourist or local.

The diplomat notes the complexity of the situation because Bolivia harbors far more resentment towards Chile due to a late 19th century war, the War of the Pacific, where Bolivia lost access to the Pacific Ocean and became a landlocked country. The respondent explains that the social fabric of Bolivia is far more concerned with the loss of access to the sea than the relationship between the United States and Bolivia. He explains that being a Chilean is far more noteworthy, for Bolivians, than being an American and can be far more difficult for him to maneuver his way through Bolivia as a Chilean due to the War of the Pacific. The dissatisfaction that Bolivians carry towards him as a Chilean are primarily expressed by “People make(ing) comments. Nobody yelled at me or tried to hit me or anything like that. They say kind of derogatory comments about Chile or stuff like that.” Due to Bolivia’s history with Chile, the diplomat will choose an American identity over a Chilean identity while traveling/working in Bolivia. He states, “It’s a sensitive topic (loss of access to the Pacific Ocean) for them (Bolivians) and I’m trying to be respectful to them because it’s a very big issue for them here.” He also has another rehearsed response for Bolivians:

...sometimes I say ‘I am Chilean’ and that I am a Chilean who wants to- that we should give up territory for Bolivia so that they have access to the sea and they really like that...so sometimes I say ‘I am Chilean. I am for, in favor, of giving territory to Bolivia for the sea.’

Interestingly, the historical context between Chile and Bolivia does not interfere with his introduction while in the company of European travelers during his visits to

Bolivia. The diplomat explains he is more likely to identify himself as a Chilean to European travelers when he is in Bolivia. To the American travelers, in Bolivia, he says he lives in the States and is Chilean. When the participant is working in Bolivia and interacts with street vendors he will identify himself, if asked, as born in La Paz, Bolivia. While working in Bolivia, the participant states:

In terms of my work, we're doing some projects here in Bolivia with the government and stuff like that. Because I was born in Bolivia it was very important for our group, our team that is here working, that I was Bolivian. It looked very good in the eyes of the Bolivians that were are doing this development project in Bolivia and there is somebody that is connected to Bolivia by birth...because you're more adept at figuring out the reality here and you would be more conscious of the political situation, economic/social and especially with the social fabric of the country.

Avoiding Certain Countries

Participants expressed avoiding present/future travel to seemingly unsafe countries. The participants expressed, from an American perspective, which countries were unsafe and presumably unfriendly towards Americans. The modification of behavior and future dress were expressed alongside the absence or presence of stamps in passports that would allow or be an impediment towards future visitation of some countries. The Middle East was a region to be avoided by some respondents. In one instance a 29 year old American nurse mentioned the possible need to modify her clothing with the help of her Israeli counterparts:

It's probably going to be I am going to end up avoiding the neighborhoods [in Israel]. I have friends there that are Jewish/Israeli heritage and they're not allowed to go to certain neighborhoods. Bethlehem is in the Gaza Strip [the interviewee stated this incorrectly] so I might not advertise my nationality there...if they ask me, I might say 'I'm Canadian' there but I don't know what I would say. Or I might say I'm from the West and leave it up to them to figure it out.

It is unclear how this particular respondent "advertise(s)" their nationality in an otherwise "safe" environment. It is possible, based on the preceding statement, culturally appropriate clothing is indicative of nationality according to this respondent. The same respondent elaborates her perspective:

In certain neighborhoods I think I might be harassed...I think it's more about learning to adapt to the surroundings and looking at how other women are dressing. I just don't want to stick out like a sore thumb. I don't want to be walking down the street and be like 'Oh yeah, that person is traveling.'

The respondent continues: "I have friends in Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem and I am hoping that if I do not have culturally appropriate clothing they will let me know and take me to the market and get me something different."

A 65 year old American participant mentioned Venezuela, under Hugo Chavez's rule, Russia and Cuba as countries he will more than likely avoid due to the animosity that the leader expresses in Western media outlets, the word of mouth feeling that one is unable to travel freely without a sense of being watched and the personal feelings being harbored by the respondent, respectively:

Would I go to Venezuela with the political situation?...Would I go back there now? No, and it's not on my bucket list due to the fact that Chavez is so strident against America and, whatever, would probably color my feelings a little bit. I wouldn't go back there just to even support him and bring money into him. Why would I?

He continues with:

I have not had any great interest in visiting Russia. I mean, now that it's more liberal and the walls are down and all the rest of that-probably. Although, I still get the perception that they spy on you and will follow you around and that you still truly are not very free there. And that affects my interest in going there because I really don't feel like being...hassled...followed and spied on or whatever. I just don't feel like it.

The participant was born in Cuba to diplomatic parents and shares an extreme dislike to the current regime. The avoidance of Cuba primarily consists of the fact that the participant's family's belongings and land were expropriated during the Cuban Revolution of 1959. The participant expresses his personal deeply embedded personal discontent:

I've had mixed feelings about going back until Castro is gone...The strong feelings towards Cuba are highly personal. They have nothing to do with more of a rational view of the situation. I've been getting more rational as I've gotten older. Time heals all wounds. My abuelos [grandparents] lived in Cuba from 1905 to 1960. They built a life there, had a lot of possessions, etc. We were all kicked out, expropriated. Sort of affects the way you feel about a country.

Additionally, this participant has a slight issue with his passport indicating he was born in Cuba:

That's one of the other reasons I haven't wanted to go back to Cuba is because my passport, to the extent that they see it, clearly says I was born in Cuba and I am then carrying a big chip on my shoulder about it all. I am not a very politically oriented person and I might open my mouth and get in trouble and I don't want to get in trouble in Cuba [laughter].

The notion of passports and the direct information that they carry, was also noted by a few participants as a future or past detriment and/or consideration to their travels. Two Jewish respondents noted the importance of having an Israeli stamp in their passports denoting their prior visit to Israel and whether the stamp had an influence in their decision to cross borders into non-Israeli friendly countries. In addition to an Israeli stamp denoting a visit, one of the Jewish respondents replies that being Jewish "...isn't something I wouldn't always want to bring up everywhere." The same American does not go "...to a country where they would really scrutinize your passport," although prior to receiving his new passport free of Israeli stamps he traveled to Albania with an Israeli stamp in his older passport.

The second Jewish respondent was surprised to learn that the mere presence of an Israeli stamp would not allow him access to certain countries. After learning that some countries would not allow him entry and without knowing which countries would not allow him entry he stated that he "...wouldn't go anyway" and he has no "...fascination at all with their cultures" followed by an expression of disinterest and further commented that those countries denying him access are "dry" and "sandy." It is possible to infer

from the data, that tourist ignorance is a catalyst for misunderstandings between tourists and host countries.

Although some respondents expressed the intention to avoid present or future travel to particular countries other respondents expanded their concerns and dispelled the idea of avoiding particular regions. One Bolivian born, American passport-carrying citizen exclaimed that she would consider obtaining a Bolivian passport in order to avoid visa fees charged to American citizens in countries such as Brazil and Argentina. The view of obtaining another passport to avoid fees as opposed to avoiding countries seemingly surpassed the respondent's need to "blend in" or matters of personal safety. One American respondent dismissed the idea of the Middle East as being unsafe or unwelcoming after experiencing the Middle East:

...When I thought just casually thought 'I might go to the Middle East.' I thought 'It's gonna be scary.' My parents were really worried but then I just happened to be at the Syrian border and decided to try and cross even though I didn't have a visa...

After crossing the border:

People were so kind. It was very interesting. In Syria, the most common word I heard in English was 'Welcome.' People would stop me on the street and they would say 'Thank you for visiting my country.' They know I was American, they assumed. I mean, that is just shocking. You would never-someone of any descent and certainly not someone from Arab descent would we [Americans]

say ‘Thank you for visiting America. Welcome to our country.’ Never, ever do that. I am in love with the Middle East.

The respondent continues:

...Lebanon’s people were really, really nice to me. I never paid for baklava or falafel because people would just give it to me on the street. I would be in a store for God’s sake willing to pay my, like, 25 cent for whatever- a piece of Baklava and they would be like ‘No, you’re a guest- that’s fine.’ So, I don’t know how it would compare if I had been a European. Would it have been the same? I don’t know if it had anything to be with being an American, specifically, or my being an American didn’t matter- didn’t hurt things.

Bolivian Border

The Bolivian borders were most notably places of tense exchanges. Most American respondents perceived the Bolivian borders or Bolivian embassies as places of tense arguments with officials, haphazard fee exchanges, and the notably time-consuming required paperwork.

I may have had a slight incident coming in here to Bolivia, actually... We had to go through security, again and they pulled aside my carry-on. They had an issue with the fact that I had a corkscrew. One of these little encased plastic ones that you are given in a hotel, or whatever, a nice hotel... I thought in the act of giving it back to me that they were going to overlook it this time and let me go through so I put it back in my bag and started to walk away and then they gave me some flack. I didn’t quite understand what they were saying. My Spanish hadn’t

picked up quite enough to catch on to what they were saying. But they were saying ‘No, you have to check it.’ I said, ‘If that’s the case, take it.’ I pulled it out and tossed it to them and said ‘Throw it away.’

After explaining that he recognized the mere act of tossing the corkscrew to the officials was “bad form” and could be interpreted as arrogance the respondents continues with: [Bolivian officials] Threatened that I couldn’t get on the plane, wanted to see my passport, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,blah. I was just in a hurry. It was just like ‘Hey, if you want it here it is. I’m outta here.’ Further questioning of the respondent during the interview displayed the respondent’s perspective that his behavior, arrogantly tossing the item to Bolivian officials and being an American, led the officials to scrutinize and delay the respondent further, “Probably a bit of both, I’m guessing. I’m sure they guessed- in security they don’t see your passport but they might have made a guess that I was a gringo.” It is important to note that the Bolivian officials were not interviewed during the data collection and the perspectives reported in the data are solely based on the respondents.

One respondent, while trying to renew a visa, experienced a Bolivian official using his authority as means to make the acquisition of a work visa more difficult:

...At this point the consulate came out and he looked at me and he looked at the secretary and said ‘What’s he doing here?’ She was, like, ‘He wants a visa.’ Like it was some absurd request. So he takes me to the wall where there are these simple requirements for a visa and he (says) ‘Get this shit and then you can talk to me.’ I was like, ‘I have it in this folder.’ He was like, ‘Are you talking

down to me? Do you think you're special because you're an American? Do you think you have special rights because you're an American? Do you think you get to skip this shit because you're an American?' And I was like 'I don't understand where this is coming from. I just said that I have this folder that has all these documents.' He was like, 'I don't like the way you're talking to me.' There was zero tone in my voice, I swear to God. And so he was like, 'I don't like the way you're talking to me. I don't like your attitude. You think you can just come in and get this visa from us because we're 3rd world or something? Who do you think you are?' And then he went back to his office...And so the office was closing at 5 and at 5 I was still sitting there with no one having looked at me for 2 hours, at least, and the consul yells from his office 'Is he still out there?'

After being invited into the border official's office the story continues with:

I went into his office and he's like, 'Show me your documents. Show me your documents.' I show him the documents. He was like, 'You're missing the work ministry stamp.' I was like, 'Sir, I swear to God, I asked everyone and with all due respect these are all the documents that I was told to have.' Then he freaked out again and said, 'They don't make the decision. I am the consulate. I decided who gets to enter.'...The entire time he was like, "They don't make the decision in La Paz. I make the decision. This is my stamp. You're not getting anywhere without my stamp.'

After one more day of tense negotiations and seemingly random requirements the respondent continues:

So I just sat down and the consul came out and he signs it [passport and/or visa] and he hands it to me but he doesn't release it and says 'This is really hard, wasn't it?' And I was like, 'Yeah, it was really hard.' And he was like, 'Life's hard' and then he went back into his office...He loved it. Like, I know he is still getting off to it. But, if I were the consulate to some provincial backwater bullshit and had nothing to live for maybe I would do the same thing.

The respondent, remarks retrospectively:

And I couldn't talk back because he would interpret it as an American characteristic or even as sassily explaining my situation. I couldn't do that because he wouldn't interpret it as me as an individual but he'd be like 'God damn you, Americans. You come down here and act like you own the world.' That was the biggest difficulty.

Not uncommon within the respondent's narratives, are the various accounts of being robbed of money at Bolivian borders. Most accounts were associated with receiving incorrect change or the absence of expected change when paying for visas.

...I had the most trouble getting across the border and I definitely was asked to give a bribe and I had money taken from me...the visa for Americans is 130...I had a hundred, a twenty and a ten. It was money from the States it wasn't money I changed in Peru or anything...and they said 'Oh, this a fake, fake hundred. No,

no, no. You have to go change your money out in the street. Come back with twenties.’ So I do, of course. They want 5 twenties. ‘Oh, these twenties are fake, too.’ In the process of him taking the money, looking at it, taking the money, looking at it-he took extra money. But, it was ten dollars and at that point...I just said ‘Fine, take my damn extra ten dollars. My visa is \$140,’ and I got on my bus and went on my merry little way.

Another respondent describes his the feeling of being “singled out” at the Bolivian border because he was placed in a separate line from the non-American travelers that “just got a stamp” while he had to pay a visa fee. He remarks:

I was treated perfectly fine except for when the guy didn’t give me my change back and I asked him for it and he said ‘I already gave it to you.’ It was only five bucks but it was hysterical. He was like ‘No, I gave it to you.’ I’m like ‘Look, I only had that money.’ So I said...‘I had a 140 dollars with me...It’s not as if I don’t have money. I don’t need to steal five dollars from you.’ You know. But I asked him in a very nice way. I said ‘No, I am absolutely positive. It’s in none of my pockets and naturally that’s where I could’ve put it. I wouldn’t have thrown it on the ground and I wouldn’t have come to you if I felt like I took it back.’ I said, ‘I honestly did not get it from you because you said you would and you threw me in another line and a lot of things became confused and then I walked out the door.’ And all of them were like, ‘No, no, no. He gave it to you.’ I’m like, ‘All right, I get it. This is Bolivia.’ (laughter)

During the process of obtaining a visa, one respondent was swindled of his cash by a taxi driver and an official at a Bolivian border crossing:

Anyway, so I leave the consul to cross the border and get this stamp and I'd asked the consul 'How should I get there? Can I walk across?' He said, 'No, you need a taxi. I'll call you a taxi.' And so there was this taxi waiting outside, 'Cuanto para cruzar la frontera?' [How much to cross the border?] And he told me 'Thirty dollars.' I said 'No, that's too expensive.' And he said, 'No, the consul said that's the price you agreed on.' And I was like 'Of course, he did...'

One family was swindled by Peruvian officials at a Peru/Bolivia crossing. The American family of 5 was traveling by bus and in the process of crossing the border from Peru to Bolivia, Peruvian officials were able to extract \$100 from the family. The details are not known as the family was not fluent in Spanish but the father felt like a "target at the border" as the bus of travelers were held up for 1 ½ hours while the debacle was being sorted out. To facilitate the border crossing, a Dutch traveler offered the family \$100 for their losses. The mother of the family "felt bad being an American" during the incident and essentially delaying the other passengers on the bus. The Bolivian officials were able to extract the \$100 dollars from the Peruvian officials and returned the money to the family.

Respondents commented on the time constraints involved at the border. The time constraints were mentioned as a minor obstacle and others, as previously mentioned, coincided with incidents. The travelers often justified the purposeful border selection, separation and costly visa fee for traveling American citizens as "reciprocity" to the requirements for Bolivians entering the United States, much the same way it is done with

Brazil and a few other countries that practice acts of reciprocity. Consideration must be given to the notion that American citizens are not actively knowledgeable with regards to the visa requirements and their ignorance of such requirements has delayed their entry.

Common threads of discussion included:

They scrutinized every single detail about his U.S. passport and kept him there.

They moved him to the front of the line but then he stayed there at the end when everybody else had gone. Our bus was waiting for, like, 20 minutes for him...they were trying to make his life a little bit more impossible than everybody else's just by virtue of being an American. And that is also added to the fact that he had to pay \$135 to get in whereas I paid zero dollars...

Others mention the seemingly random requirements needed at the border:

...It's an inconvenience for sure but it makes sense. I was traveling with a French girl at the time. She got through and had to wait for me for about 25 minutes while I was in line to do all the paper work and stuff...I made sure I had enough money, you know? Correct change I was told to bring. Correct change. Sometimes, I heard, they don't have correct change. So, I had the money and I got in line and he handed me a thing and I filled it out. I didn't have a copy of my passport or my immunization card. Obviously, somebody is really intelligent because the little old lady next door in the first building has a copy machine. So I went over there and got my copies, came back, got in line, filled it out or finished that up, then you go and get back in the other line with everybody else for your actual entry stamp...it was little bit more of a hassle to do.

Another respondent describes crossing the Bolivian border with friends as:

'Cause I was traveling with X from England and X from the Netherlands. They just walked in, they filled out just the general paperwork, they stamped their passports and they were on their way and they're like 'Oh, you have to fill out the visa.' And so I had another whole page of stuff...I was just wiggling out about it, anyway. They can enforce whatever requirements they want to, you know?...You hear about different government agencies being corrupt or kind of, like, at different times enforcing certain regulations or that type of thing.

Two respondents who were born in South America but were now citizens of the United States felt that their documents were scrutinized far less. One respondent was an American passport carrying traveler born in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, living in Chicago and was not charged the visa fee commonly charged to American travelers due to her birthplace. The respondent explains:

...my birth certificate says that I was born out here. I was thinking of looking into it because having an American passport, in Argentina, I had to pay \$140. I didn't have to pay anything in Bolivia because it says I was born in Bolivia...I've only been stopped once and asked for my passport, just randomly...going into Copacabana...he asked me and when I gave him my passport he said 'American.' I was like, 'No, I was born in Bolivia.' So he's like, 'Oh.' He didn't even really check it after, I was, I told him I was born in Bolivia.

Another respondent living in New York City born in Argentina further explains:

It's the Documento Nacional de Identidad and there is no expiration date on it. I kept it and decided to come into Bolivia with that even though it is not technically a passport. It is not technically something you can travel with outside of

Argentina. It's just sort of like an I.D. card. I decided to give it a try, anyway...the point being when I got to the Bolivian side, once I started speaking in Spanish without an accent and they saw the word 'Argentina' it didn't even matter. I could've been holding a napkin in my hand. It didn't matter. They just barely looked at it and started chatting about soccer. We talked for a few minutes and they're like "Ok, amiga. Ciao." They didn't even look at my document which technically is not legal to travel with. They didn't even care...it's a picture of me as a little girl but there's no expiration. Not that they cared because they didn't even look. They didn't look at my paperwork either where it said that my nationality was U.S.A. They didn't even look at it.

These interviews provide insights into the affective, behavioral and cognitive processes of American travelers negotiating their nationality.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore how and why American tourists negotiate their national identities while traveling abroad—specifically, while traveling in a country of opposing political ideologies. Based on the emergent themes in the previous chapter, this chapter reviews the results using the predominant themes from the interview and the literature review as a guide for discussions. Management Implications follow the discussion and the findings of this study suggest implications for future research. This section is outlined by the four emergent themes that guided the current study.

(Un)Apologetic Americans

Several American respondents report feeling a sense of guilt and regret with regards to American foreign policy. Other Americans do not express the need to feel apologetic. Based on the interviews, the apologetic American provides assurance and explanation to the opposition that the American views portrayed in mass media outlets do not reflect the views of the respondent. The apologetic American also arrives at a moment where he/she becomes despondent and essentially “shut down” or become defensive. It is possible that the inherent stresses of traveling coupled with the need to defend the view that one represents to others creates an impetus for harassment as mentioned in the de Albuquerque and McElroy (2001) article. As previously cited (Richter, 1983 and Richter & Waugh, 1986), travelers from specific countries can be viewed as symbolic representations of unsympathetic governments and representations of opposing ideologies.

One coping mechanism, employed by an American respondent, reminds us of the powerful instrument that educating oneself and being overall aware of foreign government policies is of a particular benefit when confronted by others. The respondent explains that when he is confronted by others he does not feel responsible but rather poses the question, “How can *you* support some of the things *your* government does?” He continues by posing the question to the provoker as, “Do you internalize your country’s history and politics? No, you criticize them.” The redirection mechanism that this particular respondent employs allows him and the provoker to discuss, in a rational manner, and allow for mutual understanding.

On the contrary, a few respondents, after reading *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* by John Perkins, and learning about the School of the Americas felt far more culpable while traveling as Americans. The culpability was far more internalized and not necessarily expressed in conversation with others, but they were less likely to engage in debates and merely agreed with the provoker. Unlike the previous respondent, their coping mechanism consisted of acknowledging the culpability, apologizing and taking a “mental note” of the points of contention.

It can be surmised through Ward, Bochner and Furnham (2001: 40), that the aforementioned behaviors of the apologetic or unapologetic American, as a tourist, are better understood by focusing on the motives for travel, the cultures of origin and destination and the length of the visit. Ward, Bochner and Furnham assert that the majority of intercultural encounters, positive or negative, are more than trivial encounters and the main source of conflict is based on the absence of familiar cues, persons and activities. Further, Jackson, White and Schmierer’s (1996) study found that tourists rely

upon internal explanations for positive travel experiences and tend to explain negative travel experiences as being related to external factors.

As related to the psychology of intercultural contact between an individual and the host group, mentioned earlier through Bochner's study (1982), these respondents implemented two of the four response styles when confronted. The respondents, according to the author's understanding, are Marginal or Mediating respondents. The individual effect on the Marginal respondent will cause conflict identity, confusion and over compensation. This effect was observed throughout the interviews and expressed as the need to apologize. The individual effect on the Mediating respondent, according to Bochner's typology, will be personal growth. Ward et al described such mediating respondents as rare but existing.

George W. Bush Administration

The defining events, characterized by political scientists, of the George W. Bush Administration include unpopular foreign and domestic policy, spearheading another Gulf War in Iraq without United Nations authorization which culminated in high anti-Americanism and costly effects to the United States for the war and reconstruction effort (Nye, 2004; Emerson, 2010 & Leogrande, 2007). The western media biases, more often than not, depicted a negative image and opinion of former President George W. Bush following the failure to find weapons of mass destruction, the increased marginalization of US citizens, Washington DC, and international citizens (Eshbaugh-Soha & Peak, 2008; Peake, 2007; Fox, 2009 and Dumbrell, 2002) . The administration and its allies created more xenophobic reactions in the regions affected (Inglehart, Moaddell &

Tessler, 2006; Nye, 2004) and presumably affected the safety and overall popularity of citizens originating from participating nations in the Iraqi invasion.

The majority of respondents, when asked if they perceived a difference between traveling during the Obama administration rather than during the Bush administration, mirrored the sentiments of Bush opposition. Those respondents who did travel during both administrations expressed feelings of being far more comfortable traveling during the Obama administration. Interestingly, most tourists did not know that USAid, Peace Corps and diplomatic relations had dwindled to a minimum between Bolivia and the United States of America. The extent of the travelers' information regarding Bolivia came in the form of State Department warnings and guide books. Most respondents were concerned with their general safety prior to arriving in Bolivia but due to the absence of warnings on the State Department website depicting Bolivia as an unsafe destination for Americans, respondents opted to continue with their travel plans to Bolivia. One respondent, after learning that the Peace Corps was ordered out of Bolivia and diplomatic relations were soured, claimed she would not have visited Bolivia if she had known the information prior to her visit.

Based on the interviews, it is plausible to infer that the administration of the traveler's country of origin affects the relationships between traveler and host as well as intra-traveler experiences. To the extent that different administrations may result in different experiences for the traveler is difficult to determine but begs further inquiry. Often, with traveler risk perceptions the host country's political instability is assessed as a possible detriment and allows travelers to consider other alternatives. The interviews

show that, although related, the current political administrations are less impactful than the reported political instability of the country visited.

American Identity Adaptations

The adaptations adopted by travelers range in severity. Adaptations include distancing oneself verbally from one's homeland and its political administration, identifying oneself with a region within a country as opposed to the entire country, remaining silent, dressing culturally appropriate, using ethnic origins to identify oneself, relying on the proficiency of a learned second language and feigning proficiency of languages. Although, many of these adaptations were incorporated by travelers only a handful were used exclusively in Bolivia by the respondents.

Interestingly, the majority of respondents did not deny their citizenship or their national identity. Most did not have another language to rely upon or another identity to depict. Instead, they sought to minimize scrutiny, minimize visa costs, minimize the possibility of a contentious argument and consciously did their best to dispel the notion that all Americans traveling abroad are ignorant, arrogant, egocentric and wealthy. As noted by Murphy (2000), nationality differences/comparisons are the third most discussed topic among backpackers during initial contact with one another. It is likely that nationality differences/comparisons are a normal element while traveling. It is plausible that the more experienced respondents, in their travels, are reacting to the probing as a standard and customary occurrence and found no need to adapt their identity. It is also plausible that travelers who were fluent in only one language and coming from a relatively stereotypical homogenous culture have fewer opportunities to negotiate their nationalities in a truthful and believable manner.

Regardless of adaptations employed, younger travelers sought cultural understanding, broadening their knowledge, a sense of adventure and time to rediscover their sense of self. Older respondents drew upon previous travel experiences during earlier US administrations before Bush and Obama. The Chilean respondent had a well-rehearsed and well-thought out response to those (Bolivian inquiries) that inquired about his origins taking into consideration the regional strife between Chile and Bolivia. One American respondent, although born in Cuba to American diplomats, did not deny or negotiate his nationality. Instead, he harbored highly personal feelings against the current political regime based on the fact that his grandparents' assets were seized following the 1959 Cuban Revolution. He did not harbor resentment towards Bolivia despite the shared political relationship and historical ties between Bolivia and Cuba.

Based on these interviews, it is possible to consider the notion of one's own heritage in relation to geopolitics. These respondents, maintained in line with the political heritage of their families. Loosely speaking, the older respondents, having knowledge gained from their sum total of experiences as children of diplomats among differing political ideologies, adopted the political heritage of their predecessors. Whether or not the formative younger generation is adopting the same political heritage as their predecessors or family members remains to be assessed.

Countries Avoided by Tourists

The countries avoided by tourists align with the risky countries reported in the literature. Reasons vary from respondent to respondent but the overall sentiment is one of an ultimate safety concern for well-being or current relationship or lack thereof with particular countries. Sönmez and Graefe (1998) argue that tourist risk perceptions and

safety are the strongest predictors of avoiding a region. Few respondents provided thorough, well-thought out reasons based on solid knowledge that explained their avoidance of a country besides the fact that the United States had engaged in war with it.

The United States was engaged in war in Iraq, retained forces in Afghanistan, and tension escalated between the US and Pakistan during data collection. Respondents voiced their future intentions to avoid the Middle East as a region presumably because of the political relationship with Iraq and deployments of more military personnel in Afghanistan. Pakistan is often portrayed as lawless and under the rule of Al Qaeda, which might explain why it is on the list of countries to avoid. The Middle East was synonymous with these countries and viewed as an unsafe region by the respondents. The respondents that have visited the Middle East—specifically Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia—reported the opposite of the perceived fears of some respondents.

One young woman expressed a very different view. After visiting Syria and Lebanon, she was “in love” with the Middle East and felt welcomed. One interview that was not included in this study, from a 23-year old German, showed that she was mistaken for an American while accompanied by two American companions while visiting Iraq. The respondent was visiting the Kurdish region of Iraq that had been liberated by the American military forces under Saddam Hussein’s regime and was surprised at the welcoming she and her American companions received

...people on the street just assumed we were all American because we looked Western and they loved us and they were, like, “Oh my God. Americans! You are so great.” I was like “What’s going on here?” And then they told us,

which I should have known but I didn't, that the U.S. Army liberated the Kurdish minority...so they [Americans] were like the heroes, the biggest heroes.

A 2013 article by Seabra, Dolnica, Abrantez and Kastenholz suggests nationality as a proxy instead of Hofstede's "cultural background" that is used to explain the dimension of uncertainty avoidance. Using the uncertainty avoidance dimension in Hofstede's cultural dimension model, uncertainty avoidance is identified as a determinant of travel planning behavior (Money & Crofts, 2003) when applied to the cross-cultural consumer behavior research in the tourism sector. Hofstede's Uncertainty Avoidance dimension is contradicted by Seabra et al's (2013) findings. With reference to the American respondents in Seabra et al's study, Americans are considered to be representative of two of the seven typologies proposed in the study: *all risks concerned* and *health and personal risks*. Based on these findings, the tourism industry must have several marketing strategies which include a well-developed and well-communicated safety proposal in terms of destination offering and product offering in the forms of reasonable health facilities that maintain health and personal integrity.

Bolivian Border

The Bolivian border is a setting where travelers and local authorities interact and can prove to be detrimental to both parties' understanding of one another. The interaction can be a mundane and bureaucratic process, an interaction where arbitrary rules apply or essentially a power struggle where crossing the border into Bolivia becomes a tedious and emotional process. Most American respondents, when questioned about their experience at Bolivian borders (land or air), painted a colorful story. Two respondents who did not experience any border strife intuitively questioned the process

by which the United States allows entry to Bolivian nationals. In other words, due to the high visa fees, the physical process of separating US citizens from the other travelers and the number of technical requirements and formalities caused the respondents to reflect and empathize with the difficulty that Bolivian nationals must undergo to enter the United States. Almost all American respondents were informed that the border processes and high visa fee was a form of formal reciprocity for how Bolivians are treated when trying to visit the United States.

The document at the foundation of the requirements and subsequently a catalyst to traveler and Bolivian administrators' behavior is the American passport. As alluded to in O' Byrne's (2001) article, the passport and as it relates to border controls and mass tourism, "can serve as a means of both opening up barriers and restricting them," (p. 410). O' Byrne also states that the passport is both a symbolic and political legal document that serves to "uphold a cultural definition of national identity." It is this national identity that is inescapable, except to a fortunate few, from a visa fee of \$135. The other requirements such as proof of a Yellow Fever vaccination, passport-type pictures, proof of return flight to home country and proof of economic solvency are seemingly arbitrary requirements. Most respondents found that the point of contention at Bolivian borders was associated with the visa fee of \$135 with one respondent's failure to have respect for Bolivian authorities following a bag search in the Santa Cruz, Bolivia airport.

Interestingly, the South American born respondents, the Argentinean woman and the Bolivian born woman employed different tactics when entering Bolivia. Both women entered Bolivia by land but both possessed different types of legal documents. The

Argentine woman separated herself from her American traveling companion and presented an outdated Argentine Identity Card. The Bolivian-American possessed only the American passport but was not charged the fees that are supposedly required of American citizens due to the fact that she was born in Bolivia. Not known is the behavior portrayed by the United Nations and Chilean passport respondent. Presumably, based on his nationality adaptation behavior in Bolivia towards Bolivians, he enters with a United Nations passport.

Although this study strives to decipher the affective, behavioral and cognitive responses of the respondent who travels to a nation of politically opposing ideologies, it is difficult to assess those responses in the context of the Bolivian border scenario due to the complex and seemingly arbitrary rules and actors involved in the scenario while crossing borders. Prudently stated, most of the respondents interviewed cannot negotiate their identities at the border due to the fact that the respondents interviewed, for the most part, possessed only one passport which identified them as a citizen of the United States. For the respondents to enter Bolivia, they were required to pay a \$135 visa fee. The Americans, with the exception of very few, could not avoid paying the visa fee to enter Bolivia. The Bolivian officials, at a very clear advantage over the Americans, could attribute the seemingly deceitful money exchange to the idea that the American was at a very clear disadvantage (primarily the inability to communicate due to lack of language skills, visa requirement ignorance and need to cross into Bolivia). Unfortunately, as stated earlier in the study, tourists tend to explain negative travel experiences as the fault of external forces. Therefore, in the cases where money was inexplicably missing after paying a visa fee, the external forces responsible for the negative experience are the

Bolivian authorities and perpetuate the notion that a tourist has no recourse and is at the mercy of the foreign Bolivian authorities.

Management Implications

The American travelers to Bolivia have expressed overall positive experiences in Bolivia despite the opposing political ideologies between the United States and Bolivian administrations. The Bolivian experience has spurred thoughtful discussion and further inquiry into Bolivia's economic, historical and cultural position in the world within the minds of the respondents. However, there is always room for improvement to lessen the perceived and realistic strife that impedes further understanding. This section provides recommendations based on this study.

During the collection of data the author took note that the eastern Bolivians, themselves, have trouble with the image that is portrayed of Bolivia to travelers. The image that is portrayed in Lonely Planet guide books is one of an indigenous Bolivian in his or her traditional dress paddling on Lake Titicaca in a canoe made from reeds. It is important to note that the eastern and western sides of Bolivia have two distinct cultures, forms of government and prejudices. The tension between the two sides is so strong that rumors of seceding from the western side of Bolivia were strong topics of discussion for the easterners and portrayed throughout the central plaza in Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

The eastern Bolivians were disheartened and ridiculed the images that travelers are receiving when viewing the author's guide book. The Bolivians suggested places that embodied more flora, fauna, and gastronomy that take place in less depicted areas of Bolivia such as the Jesuit Missions Circuit located on the Bolivian/Brazilian border, Tarija (wine country), closely located to the northern Argentine border and Cochabamba

(gastronomy). The western side receives the majority of travelers. Images of snow-capped mountains, Quechua and Aymara natives, colorful textiles and archaeological ruins are abundant in guide books. Bolivia's "Death Road," (also known as Camino de las Yungas, a 70 km stretch of road claiming 200-300 lives a year) a native market with llama fetuses is situated closely to the part of La Paz that primarily hosts travelers and the famous city of El Alto are common images depicted in travel guides. Rarely, are the eastern attractions depicted as a main attraction in the geographical region that receives most visitors (La Paz).

The distinct political cultures between east and west are not known to most tourists. Although most respondents were unaware of the political relationship between the US and Bolivia, they were aware of some indescribable form of tension between the two countries. By emphasizing the diverse opinions, cultures, attractions it may well be possible to improve the overall image to the world, thereby improving the foundational images by which Bolivia is known. One of the main sources of surprise to the respondents is the fact that most of the Bolivians they encountered in the service industry possessed feelings of dissent towards Evo Morales.

Notably, negative experiences were encountered during the moments of cash transactions while paying the visa fee at the Bolivian borders. Most, if not all, of these experiences took place at a land crossing and not the airport. Two idealistic suggestions are made by the author to facilitate the transaction without any notions of corruption or thievery. The first suggestion is to employ English-speaking Bolivian administrators at every border crossing, who gather the documents and monies and are solely responsible for American travelers or others who require a visa. Immediately, upon payment, the

traveler should receive an automated receipt. Cash is the preferred method of payment but if travelers could also pay with other means prior to arriving at the border such as a tourist visa application process facilitated through Bolivian embassies or shared regional banks that provide a formal mechanized receipt might prove useful. Another possibility could be to place the responsibility of collecting tourist visa fees on the bus companies that transport people across Bolivia's borders. Once again, the importance of a mechanized proof of payment is by far the most important element of these suggestions.

The author also found the requirements to enter Bolivia notably absent on the internet. The author was traveling as a Mexican citizen, and finding the requirements for entry on Bolivian government pages was difficult. Ultimately, the author called the Bolivian Embassy in Washington, DC, to verify sparse information found on the internet. Therefore, the suggestion to improve the Ministry of Cultures Department of Tourism website with key information would prove useful. As of writing, it is difficult to ascertain whether the website is funded and supported by the Bolivian government. Images of Bolivia's attractions are abundant on the website, but entry requirements are still unavailable.

Lastly, this suggestion comes from a respondent who was not included in the study. This particular respondent, once he determined he would be visiting Bolivia not only checked the US State Department's information about Bolivia but checked other countries' diplomatic relationships with Bolivia. Therefore, the author suggests links to other countries' travel warnings to their citizens as a form of comparison. The respondent who used this tactic decided to visit Bolivia once he learned that Bolivia posed no threat to other nations.

Implications for Future Research

This study was intended primarily as an exploratory analysis of the affective, behavioral and cognitive responses of the American traveler in Bolivia as related to the traveler's nationality which is of a politically opposing ideology. A greater level of understanding could be attained through Bolivians as well as their American counterparts. This study is limited to a handful of American travelers in Bolivia. A more in-depth view could be understood, if allowed, through the perception of the Bolivian and American governments. Furthermore, a larger sample of tourists from various nationalities would allow for more statistical techniques and cross comparisons.

As tourism plays an integral part in mutual understanding and division, more studies on the behaviors of tourists at borders would provide further understanding. Specifically, land border crossings and how tourists behave and perceive treatment at borders would prove beneficial. Of particular interest would be to assess business traveler adaptations compared to the leisure tourist adaptations in nations with opposing political ideologies. Also, specifically targeting an audience with more than one citizenship would be particularly fascinating. Furthermore, how Bolivian officials perceive tourists by their nationalities would be extremely interesting. Finally, the notion of political heritage and the overall travel habits of travelers with strong ties to familial political/religious beliefs would ultimately be a positive direction for further study.

Conclusions

The goal of the study was to determine whether or not American travelers negotiate, adapt or repudiate their nationality while visiting a country with opposing ideologies and if so, how and why. Results indicated that the American travelers in this

study were more comfortable and less apologetic while traveling during the Obama administration and reflect a feeling of being far less comfortable and more apologetic during their travels as an American during the Bush administration. Although the American travelers in this study were prone to feelings of culpability, they did not deny their nationality as a means of avoiding conflict. The results also show that Americans have a general concern when traveling to other countries while engaged in war with a particular region but does not consider opposing ideologies a threat to their safety and do not engage in fully educating themselves about the relationship between their country of origin and their destination. The study also concluded that tourist's experience forms of perceived corruption at Bolivian land borders and feel "singled out" as Americans.

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APPENDIX A
INFORMATION LETTER-INTERVIEW

Date _____

Dear _____:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Dallen Timothy in the College of Public Programs at Arizona State University. I am conducting a research study to understand traveler's tendency or non-tendency to negotiate their national identities.

I am inviting your participation, which will involve a 1-3 hour interview that allows me to examine your past or current usage of a nationality that is not your country or origin in order to avoid confrontation. You have the right not to answer any question, and to stop the interview at any time. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. You must be 18 or older to participate in the study.

Although there is no benefit to you, possible benefits of your participation are allowing the academic community to better understand *why* travelers negotiate their national identities, under *what* circumstances do travelers negotiate their identities and *how* their identities are negotiated. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation. Your responses will be confidential. At no time during the audio recording will your name be asked and if your name does appear in our interaction, during the transcribing process (which will be completed by me) your name will be omitted from the transcripts. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used.

I would like to audiotape the interview. The interview will not be recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be taped; you also can change your mind after the interview starts, just let me know. The digital audio recordings and their transcripts will remain within my locked personal computer. Once the contents of the recordings have been verified by a computer software program and the thesis completed, the confidential audio recordings will be stored in my personal locked computer for future presentations and publications.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: Dallen Timothy, Ph.D at 001-602-496-0160 or Dallen.Timothy@asu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the Arizona State University Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at 001-480-965-6788. Please let me know if you wish to be part of the study.

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Basic Information

What is your name? Occupation? Where were you born? Where do you live? Where were your parents born? Where did you grow up? What languages do you speak? Are you fluent in those languages? Do you have dual citizenship?

Places of Travel

Where have you traveled to? Do you travel alone? Do you travel in a group? How long do you generally stay when visiting other countries? Do you think about which passport (if possess more than one) you will use prior to departing? Do you stay with local families? Do you stay in hotels? Do you stay in all-inclusive resorts? Do you interact with the local people while you are traveling or are you mainly with other travelers? How do you keep yourself safe? Where would you like to go in the near future?

Cultural Identity

Which country are you most affiliated with-your point of departure, your place of birth or another location? Which passport do you travel with-one, two or more? When you interact with the host country what nationality do you claim? When you interact with other travelers what nationality do you claim? Do you claim a nationality at all, besides the formal presentation of your passport at borders, hotels or banks?

Negotiating Identity

Where do you say you are “from” when you are approached by locals? Where do you say you are from when you are approached by tourists or other travelers? Do you feel your identity is formed by what others believe you to be? In general, where do you say you are from when you meet people in general while traveling? What if you’re traveling for business, do you adjust your nationality answer? In what other cases do you adjust

your nationality to suit your destination? What do you feel are the advantages of using one nationality as your identity over another? Have you ever used another language to support your claim to a nationality? Have you ever pretended to be someone else in a social situation while traveling? If so, did you pretend with tourists or the locals? How did you pretend to be someone else? If someone assumes you are a *different* nationality then you really are-do you correct them? Do you claim to have visited the locale more than once, even if the visit is actually your first time? Do you ever claim to be a local? Do you claim to have family in the locations that you visit? When traveling with others, do they adjust their nationality when interacting with others-either through changing their accent or a forthright claim to another citizenship?

Patriotism

Are you a supporter of the current political administration of where you reside? Do you consider yourself aware of international and national current events? Do you travel to places that have similar or the same political views as you? Are you patriotic? Do you think that someone who negotiates their national identity is more or less patriotic than someone who does not adjust their identity? Under what president's terms have you traveled?

Harassment or Non-Harassment Experience

Have you ever experienced harassment while traveling? Tell me about the incident(s)?

Why do you think you were targeted? How do you keep yourself "safe?"

