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Sense of Place in an Unincorporated Community:

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Sense of Place in an Unincorporated Community:
A Study of Lutz, Florida

by

Samuel Scott Sanderson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of Geography, Environment and Planning
College of Arts and Sciences
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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to a number of individuals who have prompted, cajoled, encouraged, challenged and given me the boost to complete this task. First, I must dedicate this to my wife, Carol, who not only has had to listen to my anguish and frustration when I felt overwhelmed, but also had to graciously give up time on our only computer and ignore the mounds of papers that overtook the study. She, in addition, has become my advocate, confidant and secretary. I could not complete this without her.

Secondly, I would like to dedicate this to my family, friends and acquaintances especially Becki, Paul, and Katherine. They provided the perspective of someone who has gone through similar battles, and encouraged me to continue. My parents, John and Hannah Sanderson have also been a great source of encouragement, which sometimes came financially. Again, without these individuals, I would have likely not finished.

Likewise, I must dedicate this to my faith community. The local church that my wife and I attend has helped in providing encouragement and support. Finally, I must include my two “children” Casey and Sheba—my Shih Tzu dogs. They became my study buddies and often by going on a walk, helped me to work out a difficult problem and/or refocus. Though Casey has left this world, his presence in writing this paper was huge. His death, just days before my defense, announced that he had done all he could do, that his days of encouragement and love had brought me to where I needed to be, and gave me a final jolt of support, for I know that he was watching with tail-wagging yearning for me to finish

Acknowledgments

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Additionally, I would like to thank the members of my committee who have been with me since the beginning of my research: Kevin Archer, Ph.D. and Sara Green, Ph.D. for their encouragement and insightful comments.

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Abstract

Residents of communities that are at the edge of the rural-urban divide are likely to have many senses of place reflective of the changes occurring around them. As the place where they have resided in and identify with becomes transformed by changes in land use and social composition, these residents may be forced to either adapt or leave. Often overlooked, these individuals may feel as if the place where they have long resided is no longer their home. As the familiar routes, stores, and neighborhoods give way to new highways, big name stores, and exclusive subdivisions, their understanding of its sense of place becomes challenged.

This thesis seeks to understand changing senses of place among residents in Lutz, an unincorporated community at the edge of the city of Tampa in Florida. Using a humanistic geography approach which focuses on individual perceptions, nine semi-structured interviews were conducted on questions related to community boundaries, everyday experiences of demographic and land use transformations, and possible futures of the community. Further background on the community was collected by traveling through it and analyzing media accounts which provided both historical and contemporary perspectives on its cultural landscapes.

One of the main findings of this thesis is that the unincorporated nature of this community adds a unique dimension to discussions of its socio-spatial transformations since the role of boundaries in sense of place becomes complicated here. Thus, in contrast

to firm lines drawn by cartographers or postal agencies, cultural boundaries have a high degree of subjectivity and are often at odds with official demarcations. Overall, this thesis highlights the value of focusing on residents of unincorporated communities in order to build more complex notions of place-based identities.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Contemporary understandings of place-based identities are often focused on the role of boundaries in place-making. According to the concept of a ‘global sense of place,’ places are located at the confluence of flows arriving from the outside, so that the boundaries of a place are always fluid and contingent and a variety of different experiences are encapsulated within a place (Massey 1990). Inverting this formulation, a ‘local sense of place’ would then be constructed around a clearly demarcated unit where separations between an inside and outside would be more pronounced and the sense of place would be organized around homogeneity. However, what about places that may not be clearly bounded and yet retain a strong sense of local attachment?

This thesis seeks to focus on a place that does not neatly fit into the notion of place as attachment or place as flows. Its case study is Lutz, an unincorporated community near the city of Tampa in Florida that is facing the pressures of suburbanization. The study seeks to understand how spatial and social identities are constructed in milieus at the edge of city boundaries. In Lutz, as is the case throughout much of the ex-urban United States, the rural idyll of a close-knit community is being supplanted by the growth of a suburban enclave that is becoming part of the larger metropolis of Tampa. The ways in which this change is reflected in the sense of place of residents of Lutz is sought to be examined through this thesis. Lutz was first designated as a separate community in 1913 for the purposes of establishing a post office and distinguishing it from surrounding communities. At that time, it was a small community centered on a train depot

in the rural farmlands north of Tampa. Despite the fact that residents built schools, churches and businesses, the borders of this community were never formalized. Thus, Lutz did not develop its own charter to become a town in its own right. This could be the reason why, when the population of Tampa expanded into this area as a result of urban sprawl, there seemed to be less regard for already existing residents, a regard that would probably have existed if they were residents of an incorporated community. This situation has created tensions in Lutz's identity. Local residents, and others who have worked in or visited this area for a long time, have developed a cultural awareness of Lutz that has been challenged by recent transformations.

To understand how sense of place manifests itself in the everyday lives of residents, this research elicited viewpoints through individual interviews. In the process, it raised three questions related to sense of place:

1. Where do residents locate the boundaries of Lutz and in what ways do they view these boundaries as fixed or fluid?
2. What is the daily experience of living in Lutz and how has that changed over time?
3. How do residents envision the future of Lutz and their place within this community?

This study seeks to contribute to existing studies of place-based identities in two ways. First, it seeks to understand a place that does not neatly fit into the conventional categorizations of urban or rural, town or country. The lack of official incorporation adds another nuance as place-based identities linked to Lutz have been formed despite the indeterminacy of Lutz's boundaries. Second, this study seeks to understand how attachments to place render people immobile, despite the spatial and social transformations in their surroundings. While mobility has become a key lens through which the contemporary human condition is sought to be understood, the ways in which

mobility is accompanied by various kinds of immobility are highlighted by this study. The rest of this thesis is organized into seven chapters: two chapters that outline theoretical and methodological frameworks, two chapters that provide historical background and contemporary perspectives on Lutz, and two chapters that provide individual and thematic analyses of the interviews conducted with residents of Lutz. Chapter Two explicates the notion of sense of place and its connections to homes and boundaries. Chapter Three outlines the methods utilized for this research, including visual analysis, content analysis and interviews. Chapter Four introduces Lutz in more detail through examining its landscapes. Chapter Five considers newspaper accounts of the community and covers recent conflicts over new land uses in the area. Chapters Six and Seven analyze interview data, the former focusing on each interview respondent separately, and the latter analyzing how the interviews addressed each of the three main research themes (boundaries, everyday experiences, futures). Overall, this thesis seeks to understand how experiences of place when transformed into memories of place serve to strengthen people's resolve to stay despite the transformations wrought by processes of urbanization.

Chapter 2

Understanding Sense of Place: Review of Literature

'Sense of Place' is difficult to accurately describe due to its individualistic and subjective connotations. Rife with context, sense of place evokes images and experiences that are necessarily unique to an individual. In addition, a particular place may evoke multiple senses of place. As a specific area changes, in terms of demographics and land uses, the understanding of sense of place is also likely to be in flux, resulting in tensions between diverse social groups. This is occurring at the rural-urban intersections of Lutz and northern Hillsborough County.

Modernist approaches to urban transformation analyze the economic and technological aspects of place by emphasizing the general and the large-scale as opposed to the unique and local. However, following the earlier humanistic and more recent post-modern turns, human, social and cultural geographers have delved into the qualitative dimensions of place, and provided a rich vein of research into the relationship between an individual's environment and their *Weltschauung* (world view). These studies have moved away from a focus on space as an empty container merely providing a background to the unfolding of social and cultural processes to a recognition of the importance of space as a participant in and reflection of culture (Gregory and Urry 1985; McHugh and Fletchall 2009). In the process, the emphasis has shifted to a 'thick' sense of everyday places (Geertz 1983).

This thesis borrows from studies of place, especially those which utilize the phenomenological approach (Pickles 1985). Yi-Fu Tuan's influential book, *The Sense of Place* (1977), advocated that intimate knowledge of an area was paramount to constructing a sense of place. Tuan argued that,

learning is rarely at the level of explicit and formal instruction ... [for example] a child is walked to school a few times and thereafter he can make the trip on his own without the help of a map ... [Another example:] We are in a strange part of town: unknown spaces stretch ahead ... In time we know a few landmarks ... Eventually what was strange and unknown space becomes familiar place (199).

A similar approach has been taken by Edward Casey, a philosopher, who stated that

There is no knowing or sensing a place except by being in that place, and to be in that place is to be in a position to perceive it. ... [Therefore] to live is to live locally and to know is first of all to know the places one is in (1997: 18).

This chapter will outline the different ways in which sense of place has been sought to be studied in order to provide a framework for the study of Lutz. In the process, it will consider the role of social and cultural identities in building a sense of place, and how attachment to home and a bounded sense of place shape individual experiences of place. Tuan's and Casey's humanistic philosophy of place are thus sought to be connected to case studies of how sense of place emerges within specific social and cultural milieus.

Social and Cultural Senses of Place

The role of social identity in shaping sense of place has been an important aspect of research on this concept. Age, race and religion have been among the dimensions of identity that have been utilized to understand how sense of place varies across the residents of a place. As Bijoux and Mayer (2006, 44) have argued, sense of place has to be understood as a differentiated experience, so that '[i]n an everyday capacity, the same physical place can be mundane and commonplace to some while being challenging and exotic to others ... [for] it represents different things to different people.'

One of the key dimensions of developing a sense of place is age and the proposed thesis utilizes long-term residence as one of the key markers of attachment to place. Changes in sense of place with increasing age has been documented in many studies of place (e.g. Warnes 1982; Rowles and Ohta 1983; Nair 2005; Hardhill 2009). Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) provides an analysis of how sense of place varied between young children and older adults. As Tuan argued, worldviews become more expansive with the passage of time. For the toddler, the spatial dimensions of the known world were within his or her home. As the child became older, the size of their known world expanded to include the school, neighborhood and town (26-30). However, despite this ever-widening worldview, it was the home that continued to function as a place-based anchor (30).

The role of religious identity and symbols in constructing a sense of place has also been documented in detail. Thus, a study by Howe (2008) explored the symbolic effect of signage, particularly the public display of the Ten Commandments and how that defines the insiders and outsiders of a community and creates a sense of place. With regard to Lutz, this study seems particularly apt as one of the defining symbols of northern

Hillsborough County is the large palace-like Idlewild Baptist Church. Located on Dale Mabry Highway, a major north-south corridor, this large church sticks out from the surrounding rural countryside. Yet the size of this structure is just one characteristic of its symbolic weight within the region. Drawing parishioners from all across the metropolitan area, this large church is identified with a particular denomination—Southern Baptist—that is known for not only for its conservative values but also for its overwhelmingly white membership. Both of these criteria seem reflective of the population of Lutz.

Race becomes another significant social identity in understanding sense of place. Johnson and Floyd (2006) explored differences in two rural towns in South Carolina, one predominantly black and the other predominantly white, in terms of their responses to the dynamics of urbanization and changing senses of place. They noted that while the predominantly black rural community actively sought business and transportation changes that the residents thought would be economically beneficial, the white community opposed these changes, seemingly less concerned with economic benefits and more concerned with maintaining a sense of place. The authors state that ‘the opposition to development was an act to protect what they value about their town’ (14). For whites, the sense of a place seemed to be tied to their past, while for the blacks, sense of place had become subsumed by a discussion of economic development, based on the belief that without a viable economy the community would cease to exist in its present form. The role of race in shaping sense of place thus becomes important to consider.

Attachment to Home

The emotional pull of home perhaps explains how places such as Lutz are comprised of groups that stridently try to retain its historical character, particularly

among residents who have resided here since their childhood. I know that I have an image of my childhood hometown located in southeastern Kentucky, and that even though change and progress have inevitably occurred; I continue to hope that it retains some of its earlier spirit. This seems a rather universal occurrence, in that as much as change is desired and seems inevitable on some level; there also remain strong memories of earlier times. Thus questions concerning how urban transformations have challenged attachments to place that residents of Lutz have developed are important to consider.

Such attachments to home have been studied in the context of elderly populations. McHugh and Mings (1996) studied the migration patterns of the elderly and discovered the strong appeal that home had for many. Twelve snowbird couples were profiled at their summer residences. Although these couples initially enjoyed the separation from their permanent residence, they soon longed to return to that home. One of the elderly women, Zita, who with her husband wintered in Arizona, was unwilling to permanently leave her Minnesota home because, in her words, ‘the kids would be pretty miffed if we settled down here’ (537). Thus Zita, although attracted to the warm weather and friendly environment of Arizona, nonetheless remains committed to her place in Minnesota. As the authors conclude, ‘affiliation with home among rooted elders is inextricably linked with personal and family histories’ (539). If this is true for the elderly who enjoyed travelling and wintered away from their home, then surely it would seem to follow that the attachment to home would be even greater for those elderly who remained in place. The proposed thesis aims at examining how attachment to home, often occurring due to long-term residence, shapes the unwillingness to move from a community even as it may be rapidly changing.

The architecture of homes is also a key element in the construction of sense of place and displays the role of class differences in the shaping of a local sense of place. Krafft and Adey (2008) illustrated how architecture evoked a sense of identity and belonging. In Lutz, commercial architecture is an important marker of difference between its older and newer parts. Thus older buildings, currently comprising the historic core of Lutz, have an unadorned yet functional style, and seem to convey the aesthetics of a rural close-knit community where everyone was known and most of the inhabitants were of the same economic class. Newer structures, for instance the aforementioned Idlewild Baptist Church, can be identified with suburban architecture. Similarly, locally owned grocery stores, gas stations, and churches provide glimpses of Lutz's past with newer chain groceries and supermarkets signifying the consumer habits of newer residents. Residential architecture also serves to differentiate older and newer parts of Lutz. Thus, older houses are typically wooden structures with some brick. Most use a ranch style or a two-storey A-frame, and seem to be characteristic of the middle class. Alongside, many of Lutz's residents reside in trailer parks. In contrast, suburban houses are almost exclusively brick or stone, multi-leveled, with large yards indicative of a wealthier demographic.

Bounded Places

The ways in which social and bodily constraints shape sense of place is an important element of understanding personal geographies. The rise of gated communities is one aspect of urbanization that has become the subject of much analysis. For instance, Grant and Rosen (2009) explored gated communities in Canada and Israel and wrote about the role that those boundaries have had in regulating, defining and maintaining a

sense of place. Class identities are thus inscribed into material landscapes. In the western part of Lutz, upscale gated communities are being constructed, such as Cheval which has a full size golf course, man-made lakes, and riding stables. While such gated communities function as upper class enclaves, not far from them are trailer parks and wood-frame homes in what was originally considered Lutz and now comprises the older eastern section of the community. This division ensures that there are at least two senses of place that characterize the experience of residing in Lutz.

Within studies of rural to urban change, the focus on conflicts between old and new residents has usually focused on the mobility of the new residents but has rarely focused on the immobility that may characterize the experience of place among older residents. The connection between immobility and sense of place is well captured in Rowles (1978) study. Rowles narrates the lives of five elderly individuals from a working-class inner city neighborhood who contend with a variety of health issues. Using 'lengthy accounts of the individuals in order to reveal the participants as creative human beings, adjusting in highly individualistic ways to changing personal and environmental circumstances' (xix), Rowles showed that an incorporation of the role of age and disability provides a more careful understanding of place, not as a fluid amalgam of diverse populations but as a field of entrapment. Thus, residents who could not detach themselves from place had to fend with transformations through their own devices. Given the demographic profile of Lutz, the issue of older populations and their perspectives on contemporary suburbanization becomes an important element in considering constructions of place.

By examining sense of place in terms of its social and cultural dimensions, the emotional pull that is experienced towards places identified as home, and the extent to which attachments to place render people immobile despite changes in their surroundings, this thesis seeks to understand Lutz as composed of multiple senses of place. The extent to which formal administrative incorporation is not the only marker of place attachments thus can be usefully examined through a focus on Lutz.

Chapter 3

Studying Sense of Place: Research Design and Methods

This study uses qualitative methods to understand sense of place among residents in Lutz. The specific techniques adopted are visual analysis of landscapes, content analysis of media reports, and semi-structured interviews. The overall aim is to approach place through the lens of humanistic geography and remain attentive to multiple perspectives. According to Tuan (1977: 18),

[a]n object or place achieves concrete reality when our experience of it is total, that is through all the senses as well as through active and reflective mind. Long residence enables us to know a place intimately, yet its image may lack sharpness unless we can also see it from the outside and reflect upon our experience.

By entangling experience with reflection, this study seeks to more fully trace the meanings of the particular place that is Lutz. This study also seeks to extend the philosophical and historical methods of humanistic geography by combining it with qualitative methods.

Visual Analysis of Landscapes

The private automobile is one of the principal vehicles for gathering everyday senses of place. Thus, the nature of landscapes and their transformations are often experienced in the process of driving through neighborhoods. Utilizing this method of observation, I conducted a visual analysis of the varied landscapes of Lutz by driving

through its main roads. In my journal about these journeys, I noted the presence and characteristics of residential dwellings, local businesses, commercial signs, open spaces and greenery, as well as large retail and grocery stores and prominent churches. These material traces act as cultural indicators, providing unique markers of the sense of place of Lutz as well as signaling changes in spatial and social arrangements. This form of visual analysis also adds my own sense of place of Lutz to this research, thus providing a useful point of reference for the conduct of interviews with residents.

Media Representations

I examined the two major newspapers of this area, the *St. Petersburg Times* (recently renamed the *Tampa Bay Times*) and the *Tampa Tribune*, to gather news items on Lutz. I paid special attention to two kinds of news items: those that sought to evoke a sense of Lutz as community and those that focused on conflicts over changing land uses. I also considered a community publication, *Lutz News*, to note the kinds of businesses that are being advertised and the social identities that are reflected in its text and images.

The use of newspapers was especially important in understanding the concerns and struggles of the residents of Lutz. A key reason for this is that they elicited responses from residents, instead of speaking on their behalf. Since local newspapers generally report on stories that are occurring in the moment, they also offer crucial analysis of contemporary perspectives. Struggles in Lutz can be categorized as battles between a progressivist view of Lutz that sees it as a burgeoning part of Tampa and the preservationist view that wishes to conserve the rural ambience of Lutz and keep it separate from Tampa.

Interviews

This study is based on interviews conducted with nine residents of Lutz. Interview respondents were initially sought to be recruited through multiple avenues, including various churches in Lutz, the Facebook page for Lutz, the Lutz Historical Society and the Lutz Senior Center. Ultimately, churches proved the most successful avenue of recruitment, partly pointing to the value of churches as centers of sociability in the community, and partly attributable to my own membership at a church in Lutz. Out of the nine interview respondents, seven were recruited through churches: six attended a Lutheran church and one attended a Methodist church. The United Methodist Church is one of the oldest in the Lutz area and was the home church of many of the pioneer families. The Lutheran Church is located in the newer section of Lutz and has been in existence for around 30 years. This is the church attended by my wife and me, even though I was not particularly familiar with its members. This research therefore provided an opportunity for me to more intensively engage with the community in which my church is located. Respondents were also recruited through my connections with school teachers in Lutz. Thus, the two respondents that were not recruited through the Methodist and Lutheran churches became part of this study when they expressed an interest in sharing their views having heard that this study was being conducted.

Six respondents had lived in Lutz for 20 or more years and three of them were born in Lutz. These can be defined as long-term residents. The others had lived in Lutz for less than 20 years. One respondent had worked in Lutz's elementary school for more than 20 years, but had moved to live in Lutz only five years ago. However, she pointed to her time working in Lutz as a marker of her long connection to the community. All

respondents were white and one was of Hispanic ethnicity. Seven of the respondents were women and two men were part of the interviews. Two respondents were in their eighties and retired. The rest were employed, some part-time. While interview respondents cannot be considered broadly representative of Lutz, the fact is that many were senior and retired enabled me to fulfill my objective of understanding the experiences of the elderly, who may become trapped in space. A list of interview respondents is provided in Appendix I.

In-depth interviews with individual respondents were based on an open ended questionnaire (see Appendix II). These interviews took the form of conversations, so that respondents had the freedom to bring up topics of their choice or turn existing questions in directions that were more interesting to them. Five of the interviews were conducted in the homes of the respondents, three in the church, and one was conducted in the respondent's work place. Though homes were my preferred setting for the interviews so that respondents could be visually located in the Lutz landscape, the choice of location for interviews was left up to respondents. Each interview was taped with permission or hand-written notes were taken where the respondent did not want the interview to be taped.

Overall, by combining analysis of interviews, media accounts and landscapes, this study seeks to provide a more intensive engagement with place. Specifically, the aim is to more clearly understand what is at stake in struggles over urban development in Lutz and whether the rise of new subdivisions is steering the community towards becoming an upscale suburb that no longer has any place for its rural roots.

Chapter 4

Visual Analysis: Landscapes of Lutz

This chapter outlines my observations gathered through traveling across major roads and boundaries of Lutz. These observations expose the uneven nature of commercial and residential development since trailer parks and run-down buildings appear interspersed with manicured lawns, gated communities and boutique stores in Lutz. In this chapter, I discuss the historic core of Lutz and two of its main roadways, along Dale Mabry Highway and Lutz Lake Fern Road. This study of landscapes thus focuses on the western boundary of Lutz which is where the major intersections are located and most of the development is taking place.

Downtown Lutz: Historic Center of the Community

The historic section of Lutz is laid out as a village with the church and train depot anchoring it. Less than one mile south, on Highway 41, is the old Lutz School house. It is a two-storey red brick building that for years was the only school in the Lutz area. Generations of children attended school there and, as the recent push to have it become designated as a landmark shows, it evokes a strong sense of place. Though not in use as a school, it still remains a cultural symbol of a time when the community was close-knit. Behind the iconic structure, the new Lutz Elementary School was built. This school is designed as a one-storey U-shaped building resembling other local elementary schools and is hidden from the highway, seemingly in an attempt to conceal it from those who may see the old school house as a more appropriate symbol of Lutz

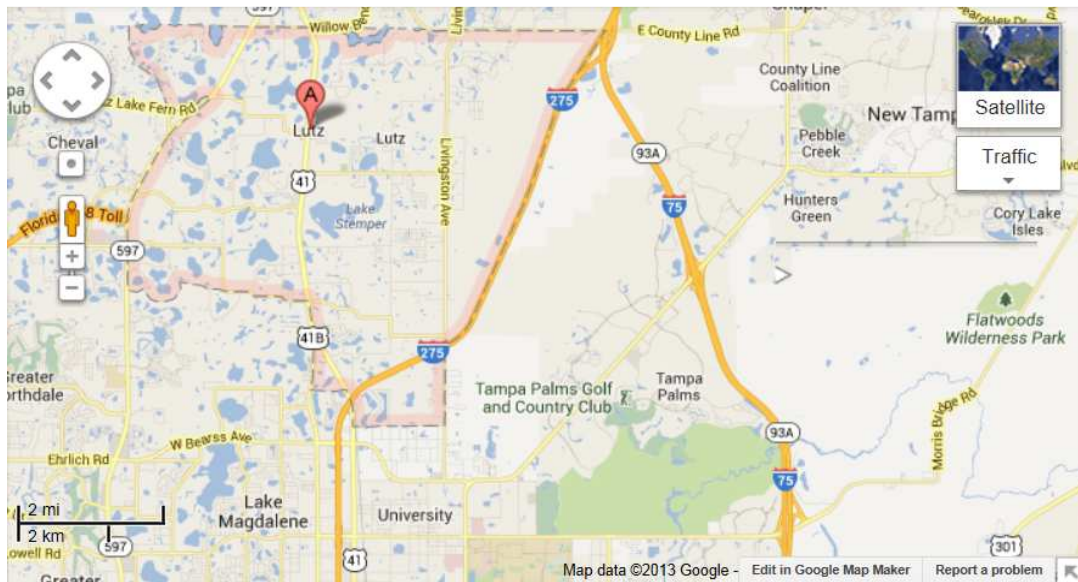


Figure 1: Boundaries of Lutz and its historic center (Source: Google Maps)

1st Street begins just before the railroad tracks and running south appears more like a large parking lot for the small stores, library and nearby historic train depot. On the northern side, the red brick, one-storey branch library faces east towards Highway 41. In front of it is a large open green space which leads to the railroad tracks that parallel the north-south highway. On the south side of this intersection are small business establishments, one of which has on its walls a painted mural of Lutz. A monument dedicated to military martyrs lies just north of the depot. It is surrounded by a small garden. An off-leash dog park is located in a fenced off area and the end of 1st Street wraps around a local butcher shop. In front of the butcher shop, 1st Street turns into 1st Avenue, marking the center of Lutz.

Dale Mabry Highway and Calusa Trace

I began my exploration of Lutz at the intersection of Dale Mabry Highway and Van Dyke Road. Though there are no boundary signs at this intersection, I contend that it

lies at the southwest corner of Lutz. This is partly because all businesses along the east-west Van Dyke have Lutz addresses, so that for the Post Office this road demarcates Lutz. There are no residences here, except for an apartment complex, as this has been zoned for commercial uses. South of Van Dyke Road, the Tampa subdivision of Carrollwood is located.

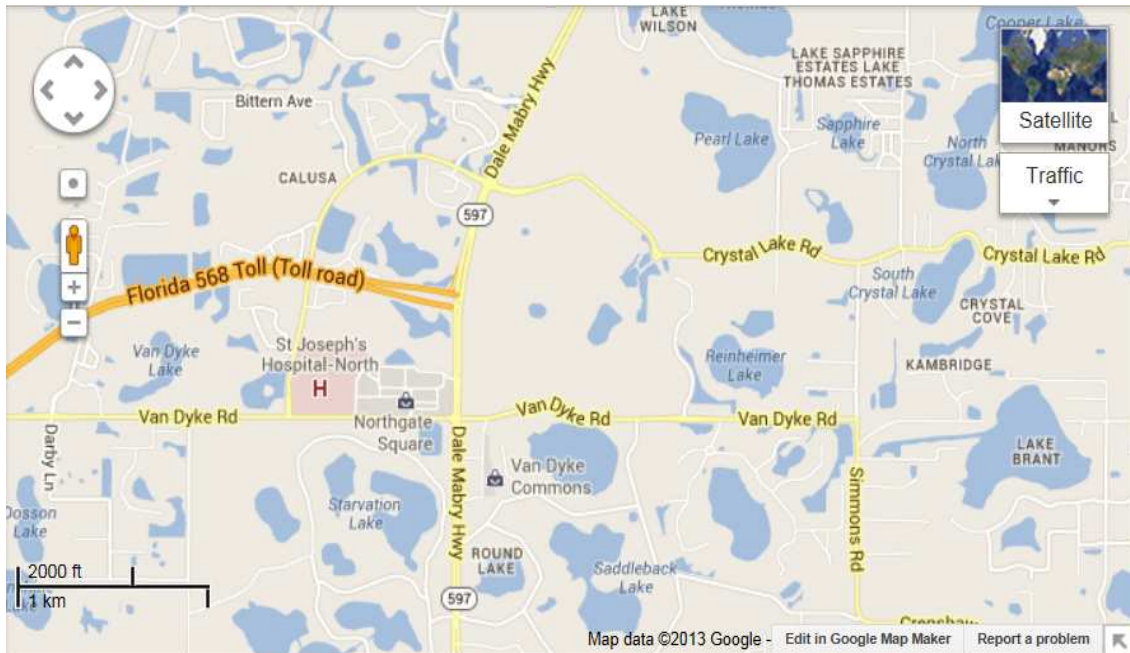


Figure 2: Dale Mabry Highway (Source: Google Maps)

Travelling north along Dale Mabry, I observe an upscale strip mall, one of the few anchored not by a grocery store but by a clothing store. A McDonalds Restaurant and a Walgreens Drug Store sit at the extreme north-east corner of this intersection. Across Dale Mabry Highway is a large city park, Lake Park. From the highway all that is visible are the trees and the overgrowth of weeds along a rustic fence. Large blue water storage tanks lie just south of this intersection and are also visible from the highway. At the southwestern corner of the Dale Mabry/Van Dyke intersection, urban development cedes

to wild flowers, grasses and trees that signify a return, at least in this small space, of untamed countryside.

Crossing the intersection of Van Dyke Road, heading north along Dale Mabry into the unincorporated community of Lutz, I quickly notice how the landscape changes from commercial urban development to a rural landscape lined with trees and ditches overrun with weeds, with one exception. This is a strip mall that curves around the corner with a gas station and a Burger King. A Publix grocery store also is positioned on the corner, but away from the highway across a parking lot. Across the road, on the east side of Dale Mabry Highway, is an idyllic country farm, with a white two-storey wooden house and fenced-in fields left wild for grazing animals. This seems to announce to the traveler that they have left the city.

Very quickly on the west, the grand entrance of Calusa Trace, a deed-restricted gated neighborhood, appears. As one turns into Calusa Trace, brick walls with large flower pots and well manicured grass identifies this as a wealthy enclave on the edge of the city. Since there is less commercial build-up and more green space, the four-lane Dale Mabry Highway seems wider here. Across from the entrance to Calusa Trace is the turn towards Idlewild Baptist Church (2010), the largest church in the area. This is a massive structure especially in contrast to the A-frame homes and small farms that lie right behind it.

Lutz Lake Fern Road and Cheval

For the second excursion, I drove eastward along Lutz Lake Fern Road. This has become one of the major east-west routes in northern Hillsborough County for it connects the older downtown section with Gunn Highway. This is especially true since the opening

of a traffic interchange with the Suncoast Parkway, which in turn was precipitated by the building of Steinbrenner High School, a new school that finally opened after lengthy protests by local activists who argued that it would increase traffic and development. As I began driving along the road, I could smell, through the open window, the smell of dirt and clover indicative of a rural countryside. The notable absence of houses further validated that this area had been—and to some degree still was—farmland. Traffic however was steady, and I was not able to slow down. Additionally the road, though straight, had little to no shoulder in spots and so provided little opportunity for me to pull over. There was no sidewalk either.

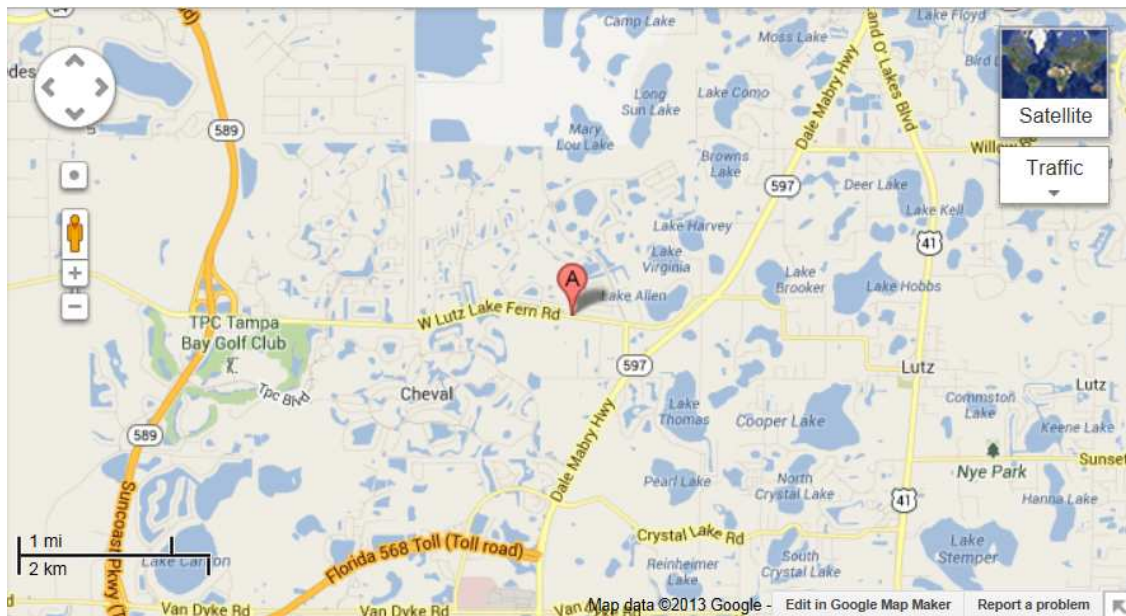


Figure 3: Lutz Lake Fern Road (Source: Google Maps)

New developments had begun transforming the road, for as I approached the Suncoast Parkway on the north side of the road, a small parking lot had been created complete with black asphalt and painted spaces. This parking lot was for those who wished to ride bicycles or walk along a nature trail that runs beside the Suncoast

Parkway. The trail is paved and is seemingly quite popular as the lot was nearly full of cars. The fact that this exists suggests a suburban model of development, as the planners who designed the trail were clearly not seeking farmers but young, active urbanites. Thus the trail can be seen as a symbol of the type of transition that Lutz envisions in its future.

As soon as Lutz Lake Fern Road crosses under the Suncoast Parkway, rural farmland completely gives way to a suburban motif. On the north side of the road, Steinbrenner High School is located adjacent to McKitrick Elementary and Martinez Middle Schools. These three schools, all relatively new, form a border between the rural and the urban. Across the street, on the south side of Lutz Lake Fern Road, I quickly noticed the back of upscale homes behind a large wooden fence. These homes are part of Cheval, an upscale deed restricted community, complete with riding stables and a golf course. As I leave the schools and upscale subdivisions behind, the scenery just off the road reverts back to wildness with little visible commercial development until the intersection of Dale Mabry Highway

The landscapes of present-day Lutz vary from rural to urban and from sites with historical connections to those that are firmly anchored in new social and economic identities, so that varied senses of place and the ways in which these are being transformed are reflected in material traces. This visual analysis however should not render landscapes as static viewpoints. Instead, conflicts between existing and proposed land uses have been a prominent aspect of the politics of residing in Lutz and its landscape is the outcome of such struggles. The next chapter seeks to provide insights into the processes through which Lutz's landscapes have been produced by drawing on historical and media accounts of the community.

Chapter 5

Media Representations: Conflicts over Growth and Land Use

Rapidly changing urban landscapes are a key part of the experience of economic development, and studies of demographic transformations in the U.S. have recorded such changes under the rubric of gentrification, suburbanization and ex-urbanization. The economic and political aspects of such change are also connected to personal and emotional experiences. Personal tolls are heightened in the case of those who are less mobile and hence cannot always be able to match the pace of surrounding transformations. The proposed thesis seeks to examine how social and cultural changes affect the sense of place for residents of Lutz and its rural surroundings in northwestern Hillsborough County, an area that is in the midst of transition from rural to suburban. More specifically, this thesis delves into individual feelings of attachment to older and newer parts of Lutz in order to understand whether local residents of Lutz are willing or unwilling participants in the rapid transformation of their local space. Lutz thus becomes an important case study for understanding lives at the frontlines of rural-to-urban change.

Lutz is located northwest of the Central Business District (CBD) of Tampa, Florida, and straddles the boundaries between Hillsborough and Pasco Counties (see Figure 1 in Chapter 4). It is representative of a locale that has been and is continuing to be transformed by outside forces resulting in a radical change in its ethos. While a rural part of unincorporated Hillsborough County, Lutz is increasingly beginning to resemble the suburbs that ring the city of Tampa. The new community that is developing here is

overriding the still visible older locale. New schools, churches and businesses are springing up which may be making long-term residents feel like strangers in their own communities. More congested roads, often with more lanes; stoplights and signage further add to the strangeness that long-term residents may feel. Within Lutz, a separation between old and new parts of the community is likely to ensure that old and new residents rarely intermingle. Moreover, many new inhabitants, whether they are permanent or transitory, seem to be younger and more diverse than the already existing population. This further accentuates the sense of social isolation of long-term residents and for those who are relatively immobile due to age or disability, this could result in a feeling of being 'prisoners' in a landscape that is no longer familiar but cannot be either changed or abandoned.

The changes occurring in Lutz appear indicative of larger trends occurring throughout Florida and the U.S. American society, in changing from an industrial to a service based economy, is in the midst of whole-scale transformations prompted in part by changes in technology. These technological changes allow, among other things, the compression of space and time, whereby telecommuting and home-based work are becoming more prevalent. This is making it possible for people to live further away from downtown offices and other employment centers prompting the rise of residential neighborhoods in suburban and ex-urban areas. The social dynamics in Lutz seem to be characterized by both support for and resistance to such changes. Thus, in-migrants to this area and those who are attracted to suburban lifestyles are in conflict with those long-term residents who wish to retain the rural appeal of this place. This chapter provides an

introduction to some key struggles emerging from the conflicting senses of place that currently characterize Lutz.

Preserving Historical Landmarks

Lutz has had a relatively long history as a distinct place (MacManus and MacManus 1998; Zavertrnick 1995; Goheen 1993). Originally formed as a railroad stop in 1913, it allowed access to Tampa for the few farmers who lived in the area. The demographics of Lutz were overwhelmingly white during this period. Eventually, because of the train depot, a small community was formed, including an elementary school and a church. The brick school still remains and has been historically preserved as a cultural marker. The rural nature of this region, visually represented by orange groves and cattle, persisted even though urban sprawl was occurring in the nearby Tampa area after World War II. Currently, Lutz Baptist Church, still located at the intersection of the two main roads and about a mile from the train depot, continues to link the community together as a specific locale. Additionally, festivals and events, such as the appointment of a 'gub'nor' of Lutz, help to solidify community.

An early article that highlights struggles over historical landmarks in Lutz can be found in the *Tampa Tribune* of July 1st 1965 and is titled 'Lutz divided on keeping the old depot' (Davis, 1965). The seeming core of Lutz's identity, its origins as a railroad stop, had thus become a site of contention. A few years later, the *Saint Petersburg Times* (Wilson 1973) dealt with the same topic examining the conflict between commercial versus residential zoning laws and how these would demolish a circa 1920s gas station.

Experiences of Urban Growth

One of the earliest discussions of Lutz's potential for urban growth occurred in newspaper articles of 1985-86. On January 13, 1985, the *Tampa Tribune* ran a two-page article that featured Lutz as a neighborhood of Tampa and summarized its newfound status as follows:

'once an open area for pastures, orange groves and farm land, Lutz had become a developer's paradise conveniently nestled between Land O'Lakes and the University of South Florida.'

Towards the end of 1986, struggles over growth in Lutz became the subject of media attention. A December 25 article in the *Tampa Tribune* situated the community 'at the crossroads between the urban and the rural.' The following day, the story continued with an exploration of zoning issues with a map provided by the Lutz Civic Association showing densities and zoning regulations for the area. The following year, the *Saint Petersburg Times* (Dolan 1987) quoted a University of South Florida professor in the Department of Anthropology, Professor Alvin Wolfe, who took a serious view of the issue that 'the county has no immediate plans to run water or sewage lines into the area.' Lack of such services would severely curtail the growth of Lutz.

The opening of Veterans Expressway in 1994 and the widening of U.S. 41 north into Pasco County made this area less isolated, prompting more people to move in. Many were probably attracted in the beginning to the remoteness of the Lutz area and its rural appeal. But as more and more people began to move in, those who had lived in the area were squeezed out of their agricultural livelihoods. As the land became more desirable, property values rose. The result, in many cases, seems to have been that many decided to

sell their property to developers. Thus, Lutz has not been able to avoid suburbanization, though in delaying the onset of urbanization it is likely that the community has developed its own identity as a site of struggle against the urban sprawl that characterizes much of Florida (Murphy 1988). This is especially noteworthy in the case of Lutz due to its proximity to Tampa, and the community becomes an example of how urbanization does not proceed in uniform fashion but is likely to leave relatively rural pockets which then become available to be capitalized by the next sweep of urban growth.

In the aftermath of urban growth, Lutz comprises two distinct locales. One is characterized by more rural, older, poor, and predominantly white residents. Yet, to the west and north of the town center, a 'new' Lutz has developed and comprises residents in a higher socio-economic bracket. New gated subdivisions are located in the northwestern section of Hillsborough County and use either Veterans Expressway or U.S. 92, commonly known as Dale Mabry Highway which is a major north-south thoroughfare, to connect to Tampa's CBD. The social division of Lutz is thus reflected in its physical landscape providing a geographic basis for multiple senses of place here.

As an example of the suburbanizing senses of place that constitute Lutz, consider the May 12, 2010 edition of *Lutz News* (Anon 2010), a community publication. On the front page, it had a photograph of four students from a local elementary school, three of whom were white. Another picture showed managers of a local Publix grocery store presenting a check to the United Way of Pasco County. Of the nine people pictured, all were white and six were males. These pictures reveal the demographic characteristics that shape the sense of place of Lutz. Advertisements in this magazine are geared towards the middle or upper class. For example, in the edition mentioned above there was a half-page

advertisement devoted to the opening of the Plant Shop, appealing to homeowners who have both the space and money to invest in trees. Another half-page advertisement was for the Absolute Salon, which offers full body waxing, Swedish massages, and facials. This suggests a wealthier and more cosmopolitan demographic than one traditionally living in a rural farming community.

However, the kind of urban growth that has occurred in Lutz is often depicted in a negative way. Thus a feature article in the *Saint Petersburg Times* (Coats, 2006) described Lutz as follows:

It's dull It's deadly dull. [Y]ou can get Chinese food, a burger, or the fare from two upscale cafes but after that your options are limited. ... civic leaders, fearing the spread of Carrollwood-type sprawl, have kept development to a minimum by insisting that the area use wells for water and septic tanks for waste.

For some, therefore, Lutz has been very slow to add urban amenities which make it a less desirable locale for well-heeled urbanites.

Struggles over Place

The community of Lutz has, in large measure, shifted to the west. Yet since the older community still exists, conditions are created for social conflict. While newer residents are in the process of transforming Lutz into an upper middle class suburb of Tampa, long established residents appear reluctant to join them and some have actively sought to restrict growth and development in Lutz. Those who have lived in this area for a long amount of time generally seem reluctant to change its rural flavor, and have worked feverishly in restricting economic development. This leads to questions about

which groups are able to control and represent space. In other words, is Lutz on the way towards suburbanization or will it continue to retain characteristics of a rural enclave? Roads, schools and hospitals are some of the sites in which struggles between two different notions of Lutz's future become visible.

The recent growth spurt in Lutz is associated with the road building undertaken in this area since the 1990s (e.g. Anon 1989; Brennan 1994; Reese 1994; Anon 1995; Lee 2000; Anon 2001). These include the Veterans/Suncoast Expressway as well as improvements to local east-west routes that opened this area to coastal communities on one side and Interstate 75 on the other side. Yet, as mentioned above, urban growth had previously bypassed this area, so that growth has traditionally been concentrated along the I-4 corridor eastward towards Orlando, or I-75 north towards Ocala. Lutz, located north of downtown Tampa, and west of the prominent traffic corridors, was therefore largely overlooked in migration patterns, adding further to the isolation of this area. This may have partly been connected to the many lakes that dot this area and make it unsuitable for large-scale residential development. But it was also linked to community-level organizations that sought to retain the rural character of Lutz.

Some community groups within Lutz appear quite steadfast in their insistence that their town remain distinct from other suburban communities and hence maintain its own separate identity. For example, the Lutz Civic Association and the Coalition 4 Responsible Growth have both been created to deal with preservation and zoning issues. Their concerns came to the fore in the struggle over new road construction.

One major struggle occurred in 1993 when the Florida Department of Transportation planned to build a new toll road — the Suncoast Parkway — from Tampa

and into Pasco and Citrus counties, two counties located north of Tampa that were seeking economic development (Woitas 1993). In opposition to this plan, a local group was formed that quickly began writing letters to the local papers and making signs to protest the construction of this road. The principal reason was that it would increase traffic. In addition, many wondered if such a road was necessary given that U.S. 41 already provided a north-south link between Tampa and the above mentioned counties. The protest, however, was short lived as construction on the new road soon began. Part of the failure of the protestors to restrict this road was probably due to the interests of those living outside of Lutz and Hillsborough County, as they would primarily benefit from the new parkway.

Similar struggles have also occurred in the past. An October 19, 1989 article in the *Tampa Tribune*, titled 'Freeway may be costly for Lutz' (Mohan and Fechter 1989), quotes Sonny Edwards, a self-described activist regarding the building of an east-west road that had been planned to connect Dale Mabry Highway with Interstate 275. In Edwards' words, 'If built, the road would sacrifice one of Hillsborough [County's] strongest rural areas and wreak untold damage on the wetlands.'

Another prominent struggle was over the construction of a new high school. Executive Director of the Coalition 4 Responsible Growth, Denise Layne (2007), spoke about concerns that this group had about the high school. She stated in an interview given to the oral history project at the University of South Florida (conducted June 25, 2007) that though they recognized the need for a high school, none of the areas where the county wanted to build it was acceptable, for it would have required a four-lane road which would have led to undesirable urban growth. However, this school was ultimately

built – Steinbrenner High School opened at the intersection of Lutz Lake Fern Road and the Suncoast Parkway on August 25, 2009. Between 2009 and 2010, the students at this school increased from 1,600 to 2,000. Lutz Lake Fern Road, previously a two-lane winding country lane, had to be expanded into a four lane road with an access ramp on to the parkway. Not only has this road provided residents of northern Hillsborough County with a new school, but it has also made it much easier to get into the center of Lutz where the church, depot and old school house are located. Instead of driving along a narrow country road with primarily residential traffic, the improved road, while still mostly two lanes, has become crowded with increased residential and commercial traffic. Concerns about noise and safety seem to be on the minds of residents who daily travel this road.

These concerns appear warranted. An example of the dangers can be seen in the increased collisions that have occurred in this part of the county. In one highly publicized tragic example, a young boy was struck and killed riding his bicycle near the intersection of Dale Mabry Highway. This has become a major junction, especially since a branch of one of the county hospitals was being built nearby. Concerns over noise have also become important in Lutz. According to an article in the *Tampa Tribune* (2001), noise was one of the major reasons cited by those who opposed the expansion of the Suncoast Parkway, especially noise associated with loud trucks leaving construction sites.

Some other services however have been less contentious. An article in *The Tampa Tribune* by Manion (1986) foreshadowed the desire of Saint Joseph's, one of the major Tampa hospitals, to build a branch in Lutz, though they ultimately settled on a clinic at that time. Finally, in 2006, Saint Joseph's Hospital Northwest was built, possibly due to increased migration and changing demographics in which more affluent families were

moving into the area. This location of the hospital was welcomed by all and was one of the least contentious land use decisions.

Lutz therefore reflects the conflicts over suburban growth in many ways, through struggles over roads and possible tensions between old and new residents due to social and cultural differences. The main question that arises therefore is: If the residents of the newer part of Lutz perceive themselves as suburbanites, how do the long-term residents, especially those associated with, and living in, the older section of Lutz view themselves? Does the yearning for deer visible in the yard, as described by a local resident as one of her pleasures, coexist with the need for strip malls, expressways and manicured lawns of a gated community? This study seeks to understand such dynamics through enabling residents to speak for themselves and their voices are documented and analyzed in the next two chapters of the thesis.

Chapter 6

Analysis of Individual Interviews

Humanistic geographers value the role of personal experiences and narratives in developing a sense of place. This study of Lutz seeks to provide such perspectives through in-depth interviews with residents. The visual descriptions of landscapes and outlining of community-based struggles over land use changes undertaken in the previous two chapters set the stage for the interviews below. In this chapter, each of the nine interviews with residents is individually discussed to highlight how the sense of place of Lutz was evoked. Findings from semi-structured interviews, a social scientific method, are thus communicated in the form of vignettes, a literary style which enables the actual unfolding of the interview to be closely followed. The aim here is to maintain the unique voices and identities of the respondents. All names however are pseudonyms in order to maintain anonymity. The interviews are arranged in terms of length of stay in Lutz: beginning with residents who have lived in Lutz all their life, moving on to those who have been here from 20 to 40 years, and ending with residents who have been in the community for less than 10 years. A description of interview respondents is presented in Appendix I.

Irene Bosch (and her husband, Isaac)

Irene Bosch has deep ancestral roots in Lutz. She mentioned that her maiden name was Wilson. Her parents and grandparents are buried in the family cemetery off Wilson Road, the road where the couple also resides, so it seems reasonable to conclude

that her ancestors were among the original settlers. Irene's husband, Isaac, is 85 years old and has lived in Lutz all of his life. However, his family has no road named after it, nor do there appear to be many Bosches in the area, so perhaps his roots do not run as deep in the community as hers. They are members of United Methodist Church, one of the long-established churches in the Lutz area and one associated with pioneer families in the area.

Irene answered most of the questions, occasionally asking her husband to clarify some point or mentioning some story for him to tell. One story that he told concerned him driving the school bus home when he was only sixteen and still in high school. As Isaac stated, it was often the case that the bus driver would drop the children off at school and then wait in a bar until the school got out. On this occasion he got drunk. So he asked Bill, one of the older boys, to drive the bus home. Although they appeared responsible, the students took this opportunity to get into mischief. As they drove by the saw mill, the bus was stopped so that the children could play in a mound of sawdust. After this was done, they all climbed back in the bus and continued on to their homes.

This led to a discussion of how such an event could not occur today. According to Isaac and Irene, the children in this story were safe, not because Isaac was a responsible driver, but because there were very few cars on the roads back then. Irene then talked about a city worker who borrowed city equipment and cleared land for the church on his own time, an event that like the school bus incident would cause much consternation today. As Irene put it,

But you see people weren't so picky, they weren't to the point where they were looking for a mistake that they can point their fingers. It was a community that worked together. It was so nice.

They did not seem interested in the question of the boundaries of Lutz. However, Isaac stated that originally Lutz went ‘all the way to Fletcher Boulevard,’ while to the north it included State Highway 54 in Pasco County. The impression that I got from them was that discussions about borders were irrelevant since the area is changing. One of the positive changes they mentioned was reduction in distance to shopping centers.

Irene: Years ago you had to go clear to Sulphur Springs, if you wanted to get a bottle of aspirin or a pound of coffee. And it took a long time because we did not have good roads, or automobiles.

Isaac: You’d go shopping, and it would be dark before you got home.

According to Irene, what she liked best about living out here was that ‘everything I need is in about seven mile radius of where I live.’

Their major complaint related to the loss of swamp land due to development. As Irene put it, ‘I don’t see anything wrong with this population growth, as long as they ... study the natural flow of water.’ New developments, they argued, were being built right over swamp land. As Irene described it,

You go up there to the end of Livingston, you see how they are tearing all that down, and that was all swamp. Okay, go on 54 and head west, and you will see the offices and condos they are building back there and right where you are going to turn in, there is a big swamp. They are all connected. ... Just think where does the sewage go, where does the septic tank go? ... When the rain comes, that is their natural reservoir. Now where does it go?

I had assumed that having lived in Lutz all their lives, they would be most disgruntled at the changes occurring around them. This was not the case. In fact, they seemed to embrace the changes, advising caution only to the extent that flooding would occur or water become contaminated due to the draining of swampland. They did regret that the community doesn't get together anymore, and that the small town ethos had gone. Upon reflection, I began to realize that their acceptance of change has probably been one of the secrets to their longevity and happiness, for no doubt within their eighty-plus years, they have lived through much change, both good and bad.

Roy Dunn

Roy Dunn has lived in Lutz for 37 years. Originally from New Jersey, Roy moved to Tampa in 1966 when he was stationed at McDill Air Force Base. In 1970, after his tour in Vietnam ended, he returned to Tampa. Five years later, he moved with his family into a home off a two-lane country road in Lutz. The home, as I learned, was typical of the early houses for it was built in the middle of an orange grove. Roy expanded the home which was in disrepair and, among other things, pitched the roof. Later, he added a small shed on his property that he used for his woodworking. Still living in that same house today, Roy Dunn raised two children and became an influential person within the community.

Mr. Dunn is quite knowledgeable about the history of this community. He even told me that the area was originally called 'Stemper' – a fact that only the most devoted historian of the area would know. As a handyman, he contributed to restoring the train depot, a historical landmark in Lutz. After the sharp curve in front of his home resulted in many car crashes onto his property, Roy made a sign to warn motorists that they needed

to slow down. Finally he convinced the county to put a speed bump on Lake Crenshaw Road, for he states, 'on Friday and Saturday night it used to be a racetrack.' Now that the speed bumps have been added, the area has become much quieter.

Roy began to volunteer at the local Catholic Church after his retirement. Since he raised a family here, he has developed a strong sense of community. Local Little League baseball games were for him an example of community building. During those games, Roy would converse with the other parents who became his friends. He laments, however, that as his children have grown up and moved away, he is not as knowledgeable as he once was about the events of the neighborhood.

Overall, Roy maintains that he is satisfied with living in Lutz. Talking about the increased development in Lutz, as exemplified by the new Super Wal-Mart, he states that,

It's one those things where you either adjust to it or you move to Brooksville. And even in Brooksville they have it. It's just going to happen and you have to adjust.

The fact that his children live nearby—a son in Zephyr Hills and daughter in north Tampa—this no doubt plays an important role in maintaining his sense of attachment to place. Moreover, he has lived in the area as a land-owner for many years. Another significant aspect of his attachment to place is that he has witnessed the transformations of Lutz. According to Roy,

When I moved here, Lutz had a very bad reputation. ... Moonshine [was produced here], it was wild times. [But now] it is country-ish moving toward suburban-ish.

Nora Davenport

Nora Davenport is single and in her eighties, living alone on a fixed income. She is also physically handicapped, yet active in the Lutheran church. In the interview she reminisced about the past, seemingly discontented with contemporary life. She is a long-term resident of Lutz having resided in the same house for 35 years. The interview with her was conducted in her kitchen on an old white Formica table.

Nora moved from Wisconsin to Florida when her then husband obtained a job in Fort Lauderdale. But while she was in the process of moving, her husband lost his job. The house in Wisconsin had already been sold, and Nora was now responsible for her two young children – ‘my son Jeff was four’ – and two dogs. She moved then to Mobile, Alabama, her husband’s hometown, in an attempt to cope with the new situation. Meanwhile, her husband found a job in Tampa and ultimately the family was re-united here. This reunion however turned out to be short lived as a year later they divorced.

Thus began what was a difficult time for Nora and as she put it ‘here I am head of the household, [with] no job and no money.’ Nora then regaled me with tales about some of the jobs she had to take – at a local bakery; at a department store, where despite being promoted to manager, she quickly lost her job; even as a hired hand at a local dairy farm, where she milked cows and did other tasks even though her fellow male employees did not think these were appropriate for a woman.

Nora did not remarry, nor did she move from the little house she had originally moved to which at that time was in a new subdivision surrounded by orange groves. She was quite knowledgeable about changes in Lutz, particularly in regards to the encroachment of wealthy people, whom she views with some caution. For Nora, Lutz is a

small rural community – she vacillated between suburb and town – whose way of life is threatened by new arrivals with their huge mansions and deed-restricted subdivisions. She thus misses the natural beauty and rural ambience that the place used to have when she first moved here. As she describes it,

There was this house, and that one across the street, and nothing on the boulevard, nothing on the right side of the boulevard until you went way down. ... the kids, my Jeff, would play in these vacant lots where the weeds were this high. You couldn't see them.

She also remembers 'all these pine trees' and 'orange groves on both sides of the road' that were home to bob whites and mockingbirds—two birds she noted for their unique sounds. For Nora, these plentiful sights and sounds of nature were the principal pleasures of Lutz.

When asked if she thought Lutz would become subsumed within Tampa, like Carrollwood, she replied,

Not in the near future. There are too many people that like it like this, and the new people that move in are young couples, it's their first home. There has to be an area for families who are starting, who need a first chance to buy a house.

According to Nora, the people of Lutz are characterized by their modest economic status.

None of us are filthy rich, but we survive. The families are just average working people. There isn't one person, who you can say, ooh, they have a

lot of money ... it's like this is the area where you go and clean house and cut grass or do the handyman's work for all of the surroundings.

Later she describes the difference between the older, more rural section of Lutz and these newer subdivisions as 'daylight and dark.' She laments that traffic has become worse, as there are now 'houses, houses and houses.'

For Nora, the biggest change is the loss of community identity. As she puts it, Oh, I'd rather have it like when I first moved in. Now we don't know our neighbors, [for] everyone has to work. The kids aren't outside playing; they are with their machines. You miss all of that. You know your neighbors just enough to say, 'Good morning' or 'how are you' ... Nobody visits.

Her ambivalence in describing Lutz seems to reflect a sense of changing place identity. At the very beginning of the interview she matter-of-factly stated that Lutz is a 'suburb of Tampa.' Later however, she opined that 'It's a little town. It's a small town, most definitely.'

Betty Nell Blaine

Betty Nell Blaine has lived Lutz since 1982. She is originally from Tampa but had been away for 12 years till 1982. In the time she was away, she was traveling with her husband who was in the army. Her husband however was not mentioned during the interview. Betty is well educated and has a Bachelors degree from the University of Tampa as well as 18 hours towards a Master's degree. She has been employed as a special education teacher for severely disabled children. Recently retired from Lutz area schools, she remains active in the community. Among other pursuits, she plays the organ

at the Lutheran Church. Betty lives on one side of a small L-shaped duplex in a subdivision located just outside the Pasco county line in Hillsborough county. The house has a single car garage and the front yard is very small with no trees or shrubbery, making it easy for a single woman to maintain.

Two aspects of interviewing her seemed to strike me as especially significant. First, throughout the interview, she held on to her copy of a booklet from the Lutz Baptist Church which provided some details about the community. The extent to which churches contribute to a sense of place became especially vivid in her use of the booklet. Second, race emerged as a prominent aspect of her sense of place of Lutz. She mentioned rather adamantly at one point that there were no blacks in Lutz, but later seemed to reconsider this remembering an old black man who lived in a small shack and managed the orange groves. Then, when asked if she has taught any black kids, she replied: 'No, there weren't a lot of black kids.' According to her,

one way my kids knew that there were black people, in the [school] district was when we let them know. [in a softer voice] They just did not know ... it was a long, long time before there were any black kids [in the school].

To me, it seemed that this topic created some unease for her.

When asked what it was like when she first moved to Lutz, she said that
When [I] moved to Lutz it was a small community. Most of the men worked in Tampa, so many of the women stayed home. There was only one grocery store, one drugstore—which has since changed its name from Eckerds to CVS, but is on the same corner of Highways 54 and 41 —one

elementary school Sanders Elementary (on the Pasco side) and one middle school Pine Middle School.

Continuing to evoke her sense of place of Lutz, she mentioned that

Everybody knew everybody. You didn't lock your doors, or put your garage door down. ... We would [all] get together—we lived in a cul-de-sac—and we'd all get together once a year, with a big huge family street party ... [And] you never had to worry about anything, no crime at all. No! I mean you could leave your doors unlocked; you could leave them open. Shoot! Now you can't even walk out to the mailbox without locking your door.

The image of a close-knit idyllic community where everyone looked out for each other thus emerges very strongly in her interview. Alongside, this was also a community that was homogenous in terms of its racial characteristics.

Irma Quakenbusch

Irma Quakenbusch is a native of Tampa. A middle aged woman, she confided that she has lived in Tampa her whole life, except for a brief time in Arizona with her husband shortly after they were married. She is now single, living alone in the same subdivision as Betty Nell Blaine, who recommended her to me. Irma requested that the interview occur somewhere besides her home. The interview occurred in the Lutheran Church while she was folding church bulletins as a volunteer. Thus, this was a very public interview, occurring in the main assembly hall of the church with other church members walking in and out. I was unable to obtain much information about her personal life, as she seemed to rarely deviate from the script.

Irma views Lutz as a neighborhood of Tampa that straddles two counties and mentioned that she lives in Lutz Pasco. Asked how long she has lived in Lutz, she responded that

We moved there when my son was eight and he is 33 now. Eight years before that we lived off of Bearss Avenue and I consider that part of Lutz too.

Generally positive about living in Lutz, Irma does however wish that it had better restaurants. She has no qualms about recent developments.

I don't care that it is not a small town. We have a regular fire department now, instead of a volunteer fire department, and that is a good thing. I don't see growth and progress as a negative.

Irma objects to those who wish to keep Lutz rural.

No. I don't care what you can do, [but] you can't keep it the same. You have the amenities, the police and all that. They want the stores; they just don't want them in their neighborhood. ... Change is part of life. So, with it comes some good stuff and some bad stuff.

Irma makes a distinction between Lutz, which for her is part of Tampa, and Land O'Lakes, just to the north, that is for her more rural and less sophisticated.

It's when you get up in Land O'Lakes that you have issues. You think Land O'Lakes is moving up [i.e. progressing] until you go to the Swampfest, and you see the good ole Land O'Lakes people - the Lakers. But the issues are different than those that live in Lutz. ... You have people who have no teeth and others who have money.

Though she does not use the term, Irma seems to be referring to ‘the Crackers’—a regional term for the backwoods, unsophisticated ranchers and farmers of Old Florida. A class distinction is thus posited by Irma between rural Land O’Lakes and the better off Tampa residents. For her then, Lutz appears to be on the urban-rural dividing line, explaining perhaps her interest in development for this community as a way to separate it from its rural counterparts.

Sandy Wurlitzer

Sandy moved to Lutz in 1988, as a recent widow with two young sons. Before this, she was living in Chicago with her mother and children, but at some point decided that a change was needed. Some relatives had moved to Tampa in 1983, and this combined with the death of her husband and a sense that her sons needed a place to grow up, motivated her move. She had visited other cities, ‘and, then I came to Tampa ... and I landed in Tampa and saw all the beautiful floral outside the Tampa Airport ... and so I talked to mom about it and we decided that we would go back [to Tampa].’

Sandy is now 71 years and lives alone. Her health is not good, and she is often in pain making her relatively homebound. Her grown sons live nearby and visit often. Seven cats live with her and seem to have the run of her house. A member of the Lutheran church, Sandy sometimes sings in the choir. Her home is in an older subdivision that is off State Road 54—also known as County Line Road, the main east-west thoroughfare in this part of the county. Route 54 is a commercial four-lane road lined with car dealerships and strip malls. It is easy to miss the subdivision since the sign marking the entrance is unobtrusive and crowded by newer signs which are advertising local businesses. This looks like an older subdivision, populated primarily by the working class. The homes are

small, single floor dwellings. There are many trees and sidewalks here. Yet, the area is not completely filled in, for on the south side is a rather large ranch. On the day I interviewed her, I noted about twenty cattle grazing in its pasture.

Sandy was eager to be interviewed but insisted that she did not live in Lutz, even as the place name appears on her address. In her opinion, Lutz was not a proper place because

You don't have a city existing in two different counties. A city exists inside a given county – not two. And it's, as I said, it's only because we receive our mail through the Lutz post office [that we can be considered to be residing in Lutz].

When I asked her what this area was like when she first moved in she mentioned rural nature as one of the key attributes.

[It was] very rural, very bucolic. There were a lot of cattle out here. ... Everything behind us was undeveloped, and you could hear the cattle. ... We didn't see them, but we could hear them.

She lamented the recent changes to the area.

Unfortunately as State Road 54 widened and widened and widened again, it was more and more difficult for people ... to be able to walk across. It was virtually impossible. So most of the folks would drive over, and it wasn't as convenient....If you're in the car, you might as well go elsewhere [to shop].

The extent to which new roads disconnect existing community ties becomes vivid in this experience.

Theodore Quick

Theodore Quick, one of the two men interviewed, is a university professor. He was one of three individuals that requested to meet at a place other than his home. This interview thus occurred in his office. Professor Quick wanted the interview questions ahead of time via email, so he was prepared for the interview. He was at work and the interview was planned for one hour. Relatively little was revealed about his personal life, seemingly by design, during the interview. Becoming a university professor was a second career for him; previously he had been an Army chaplain. He mentioned that he was married, and that his father-in-law lives with them. The fact that the elderly man was quite ill was stated as the reason for this office interview.

Professor Quick resides in a deed-restricted community, located in northwest Hillsborough County in the newer section of Lutz. One of the first to move into that subdivision in 1999, he picked the site for his house and had to wait for the contractors to build it. His reason for moving to Lutz seemed typical of many suburbanites.

[It was] just far enough away from the city to have kind of a feeling of the great outdoors. ... but yet close enough to be able to have access to all the modern conveniences that are available in a metropolitan area.

Similar to Sandy Wurlitzer, Professor Quick did not think that he lived in Lutz. Rather, since he lived on the west side of Dale Mabry in the newer section, his house was too far away from the center of Lutz. He agreed with that there are two different parts of Lutz, the older section in the east and the newer (and wealthier) section west of Dale Mabry Highway.

Professor Quick recognized an inherent conflict between the claims to space of the two groups. In his words,

There is the old traditional [group] that wants to keep it rural, and the new Lutzians. We like country too, but we also like to see development [such as] sidewalks. [So] there is no way that you can have it both ways.

He liked living in a deed-restricted community in spite of the regulations. In his words,

there's got to be some kind of rules –you want a nice house and to know your neighbors [do] too. So that there is not going to be a rusting hulk of a 1948 Dodge in their front yard. ... So right away that attracts a certain kind of homeowner, that's not the traditional Lutzian homeowner who kind of wants to be independent.

Sidewalks and modern roads are high on the list of attributes that Professor Quick wants in Lutz, as are the big box stores, for he states that it is 'nice to have a big Wal-Mart and Publix close [by].'

Overall, Professor Quick welcomes the changes to Lutz and does not seem to pine for rural nature. At least, his desire to be part of nature is balanced by a need to be close to a major metropolis and Lutz to him is this best of both worlds.

Vicki Zimmermann

Of the nine interviewees, Vicki Zimmermann is the least familiar with Lutz, having lived here for nine years. Originally from Long Island, New York, Vicki is a divorcee who moved to Lutz in 2004. The presence of family here led to her move.

I wanted to live midway between my mom's two sisters who lived in Tampa and my mom's best friend who lived in New Port Richey. I wanted to come to Florida because it was less expensive than Long Island, and I was struggling ... and I wanted to teach and I knew that I had a better shot of teaching here than I did in New York [City], with my degree in Elementary Education being so old, and I also wanted to live near to these old ladies. ... So, I actually found my apartment over the phone. I would call and ask, how far are you from New Port Richey and how far are you from ... University Plaza where my aunts lived.

Vicki likened Lutz to parts of Long Island. The impetus to move away from the congestion of the big city seems to her to be the same in Tampa as it is in New York City. She notes that the farther one goes on Long Island, the more rural it becomes. For her, the rapid change that is occurring in Lutz is of the same type that is occurring elsewhere. In other words, there is a ubiquity in this situation, as Lutz is becoming another suburb—a pattern that is played out around the world when rural lands become incorporated through urban sprawl.

For Vicki, Lutz is suburbia. Though recognizing that the farther north one goes, the more rural it becomes, she focuses on modern developments as emblematic of the community, believing that rapid transformation is a good thing. She characterizes herself as

one of those people who love to see progress. I mean I don't want to see no trees ... but I like that fact that there is a hospital. When I first moved

here, there wasn't. I don't want it to take forty-five minutes by ambulance to take me to the hospital. So, I was very happy to see more shops.

However, Vicki opposes shopping at the local Super Wal-Mart, preferring instead to visit local stores as well as the local library.

Vicki is thus not particularly motivated by the rural ethos. Rather, she stated that she would be fine living in the city, even if that meant in an apartment above a store. Out of all of those interviewed, she was the most urbanized.

Esther Perez

Esther Perez, a middle-aged Hispanic divorcee has lived near Lutz for over 30 years. When her marriage ended six years ago, Esther relocated to a subdivision which is part of Lutz. She currently lives with two cats. Esther vividly remembers the past when she worked at an optometry shop and, with her husband, coached the Lutz girls' softball team. She is currently working as a teacher's aide and babysitting her toddler grandson. Esther works with my wife in a special education classroom at a local elementary school located in Tampa. Upon learning the details of my research, she eagerly agreed to participate, and this interview was conducted in her home.

A native of Jacksonville, Florida, Esther moved to Tampa in 1973 shortly after her marriage. Her ex-husband, who was never mentioned by name during the interview, was originally from this area and worked as a pharmacist. She ran an optometry shop at the intersection of Bearss and Florida Avenues. Developing a reputable business, Esther came to know many of the long-established families. Over the course of the more than hour-long interview, Esther talked about many of the wealthy landowner families. One family for example, for whom one of the city streets is named, still owns and runs a well

known vegetable stand. Another family sold much of their property and, according to Esther, has moved to the Cayman Islands, an example of the level of wealth that they accrued. Others helped found a local church. These farm families ‘owned more than three-fourths of the property [in northern Hillsborough County].’

Esther was unsure of the boundaries of Lutz. When asked if the community crosses into Pasco County, she replied, ‘Yeah, I think it does now, but I don’t think it did then.’ Upon further reflection, she mentioned that,

it definitely does now cause whenever I order anything on the internet that is what they ask me [which county do you live in] ... That did not happen a few years ago.

However, she does have a strong sense of place despite this lack of attention to boundaries. According to her, ‘it was a great place to raise kids.’ The reason, in part, was that Lutz was a close-knit community where

there was always an adult around to talk to. The [children] had their parents and everybody else’s parents. They felt very comfortable talking to adults.

She also preferred the rural ambience of Lutz where ‘people enjoy their privacy and having land [and] not [being] on top of each other.’ For her, winding country roads defined Lutz as a rural area through which one should drive very slowly.

Esther concluded her interview by joking about the frequent mispronunciation of the place name by non-residents.

Lutz Florida, with a short u sound. ... that's how you know if they know what they are talking about. ... If you call it Loohtz, then you're not from around here.

Many Senses of Place in Lutz

The nine individuals who participated in the interviews ranged in their views about Lutz. Some were quite reticent and kept their personal life out of the discussion, while others were friendly and gregarious, often going off-topic to talk about a personal issue. Three of these individuals thought that they did not live in Lutz and that it was relevant only as part of their address label. Degree of attachment ranged from relatively new resident Vicki Zimmerman, who appeared to have virtually no attachment to place, to relatively long-term gatekeepers, like Irene Bosch and Roy Dunn, for whom Lutz is their home and identity. The latter cannot see themselves living anywhere else. Esther Perez provides an interesting variation to such attachments as her close connection to Lutz comes from working here for many years, even as she has actually been living in Lutz for only five years.

Concerns about the changes occurring in Lutz do not neatly map onto length of stay in the community. Some long term residents, such as Irene Bosch, Roy Dunn and Irma Quakenbusch, do not have problems with the changes occurring around them. Others miss the close-knit community ties and rural ambience of Lutz's past. The class identity of Lutz is also mentioned with Nora Davenport connecting Lutz to a working-class identity and Theodore Quick and Irma Quakenbusch more amenable to its more upper-class urban identity. Race is mentioned only by Betty Nell Blaine, but can also be considered as a subtext in mentions of community ties and issues of crime. The next

chapter reflects further on the similarities and differences between the interviews in terms of the themes of interest to this study.

Chapter 7

Analysis of Common Themes

This chapter organizes the discussion of interviews around three themes that were prominently discussed in all interviews: boundaries of Lutz, place identity in Lutz, and the future of Lutz. These themes enable the interviews to be compared so that the many senses of place of Lutz can be appreciated.

Boundaries

Boundaries are an important component of place providing a frame of reference and a seemingly stable basis for place identities. Although maps of Florida locate Lutz as a distinct community north of Tampa (see Figure 1 in Chapter 4) - straddling the border of Hillsborough and Pasco Counties and surrounded by similar unincorporated communities of Keystone and Odessa to the east, Lakeland, Land O'Lakes, and Wesley Chapel to the north and west, and Carrollwood to the south – this representation fails to reveal the contradictory and fluid notions of Lutz. Local residents know an area in an intimate way, and for them the boundaries may or may not be as fixed as it appears on the map.

In discussing boundaries with the residents, my intent was for each to explain where they thought Lutz was located. I wanted especially to record if they regarded Lutz as a discrete area, or merely a part of a whole, in this case the whole being the Tampa metropolitan area. One of the results of this inquiry was the realization that many of the residents of Lutz seemed puzzled by the boundary issue. Contradictory responses suggest

that a firm label for the location of Lutz remains somewhat elusive. I would argue that the issue of incorporation is a key aspect of the fluid notion of Lutz as exemplified by these two questions raised by respondents: whether Lutz is part of Tampa or is a separate community that while inexorably linked to Tampa nonetheless exists independently, and whether Lutz is contained wholly within Hillsborough or whether it also spills into neighboring Pasco County.

In regards to incorporation, Lutz residents can be seen as comprising two sides of the rural/urban continuum. Their view of boundaries seems aligned with their location on that imaginary line. Those maintaining a metropolitan identity, in that they seem more comfortable in an urban setting, are those who argue that Lutz is a part of Tampa. This sentiment is expressed succinctly by Irma Quakenbusch: ‘I don’t see Lutz as a separate place with a separate identity. I see it as part of Tampa.’ It is also expressed by the relatively new arrivals, Vicki Zimmerman and Theodore Quick. On the other end of the spectrum are those who primarily identify Lutz as a rural community (Sandy Wurlitzer, Irene Bosch, and Roy Dunn).

Yet, these designations are often arbitrary and malleable as many of the respondents presented themselves as either unsure of the boundaries or unconcerned about the issue. For example, although Irma Quakenbusch in the aforementioned quote sees Lutz as a part of the Tampa Bay metropolitan area, she identifies her residence as Lutz Pasco, underscoring that for her there appear to be two Lutzes, one in Hillsborough and one in Pasco. For Irma, the focus appears to be Tampa—this is where she was born and raised, and where she currently works.

Discussions regarding the boundary of Lutz involve debates over county location. Even professional mapmakers and the U.S. Census disagree. Some place Lutz in Pasco County, others view its location as Hillsborough County. In this dispute Irma Quakenbusch, Betty Nell Blaine, Irene Bosch, Roy Dunn, and Esther Perez, all insist that the community straddles both Hillsborough and Pasco Counties. Most of them place the northern border at State Road 54, which is also known locally as County Line Road. Esther Perez, though confiding that she was unsure of the northern boundary, nevertheless believed that Lutz extends northward to Route 52—the next major intersection—about 6 miles north of the Hillsborough county line.

On the other side of the argument, Sandy Wurlitzer stridently asserted that the community of Lutz resides solely within Hillsborough County, and opened the interview by stating that, ‘technically I live in what’s called Lutz Pasco.’ Sandy then explained that the name Lutz appears on her mailing address as a result of the postal routes. Thus, she does not really consider herself a resident of Lutz as that is in Hillsborough County. Her evidence for the location of Lutz is that

when we first moved out here the fire department that responded was the Lutz fire department. After a few years [we] got notification from [the fire department] that they wouldn’t be serving this area, because Hillsborough County wasn’t paying them.

Moreover she mentioned that,

when we moved out in ’88, no one even knew if this place existed. If you were from [Lutz, then] the standard assumption was that you were from Hillsborough County.

Thus, from her statements it appears that south central Pasco County was largely rural in 1988 when she arrived, to the point that the closest medical and postal services came from Hillsborough County to the south. Early residents of this area, then, out of practicality included themselves as part of Lutz to be included in Hillsborough county.

In the case of Theodore Quick and Vicki Zimmermann, both were unaware that they were living in Lutz. Professor Quick discovered that he was living in Lutz through a telephone survey. Ostensibly he felt that he lived in a section of Tampa or rural Hillsborough County. As this statement indicates, his primary focus was the metropolitan area of Tampa. The same appears true for Vicki Zimmermann and she mentions that, 'I kind of tell people that I live in the Tampa area. I kind of feel like Lutz is just part of the Tampa area.' Thus Lutz becomes a neighborhood, a part of the bigger city that ultimately blends into the larger urban place. As such it is of little importance if the hospital or school or even local stores are in the community of Lutz or in some other neighborhood of Tampa. The important aspect is that they are conveniently located.

A third group also emerged, consisting of Betty Nell Blaine, Nora Davenport and Esther Perez, who were completely uninterested in boundary issues. This group did not seem concerned that the new development occurring in the western part of Hillsborough County and in southern Pasco County used the name 'Lutz'.

Everyday Experiences of Place

In this section, I want to draw out some ways in which people talked about the reasons why they are residing in Lutz and what is unique about Lutz as community. In terms of moving to Lutz, some expressed a desire to live in a rural to semi-rural area outside of the city limits, as in the case of Theodore Quick. Some chose Lutz as a

gateway to somewhere else, as in the case of Vicki Zimmermann who was initially led to the area as it was near relatives that lived in New Port Richey and yet close to urban amenities. These responses suggest the in-between identity of Lutz.

Some respondents viewed Lutz itself as possessing a unique ethos. Roy Dunn initially chose Lutz because it was on the way to his work in Brooksville. However, the purchase of a house and land, along with raising a family, transformed Lutz into more than a spot on the way to somewhere else; it became home. Consequently, becoming a landowner strengthened his resolve for keeping development in check. As an invested landowner, Mr. Dunn became concerned at the increased driving that had been occurring on Lake Crenshaw Road in front of his home.

I hate to say to this but, if you are going to use this as a major thoroughfare - people walk out there and they should have sidewalks and they shouldn't be walking on the road. I found that very dangerous.

He goes on to state that he did not want Lake Crenshaw Road widened, but that the county decided that it needed to be done. Keeping this road narrow would effectively restrict its use as a major thoroughfare and allow it to remain largely undeveloped. As if to reinforce this idea, upon leaving his house after the interview, two large sandhill cranes were walking along the road, seemingly oblivious and at peace with the development around them.

Future of Lutz

Each respondent was asked directly about the future of Lutz. On one level, this was a closing question that allowed the respondents a chance to reflect and perhaps add a final salient comment. But my desire to ask this question arose also from basic thrust of

the interviews that sought an understanding of how these individuals perceived the changes in their surroundings. Discussions about the future of Lutz revolved around its possible incorporation into Tampa and its changing demographics.

Most of those who believed that Lutz would survive in some fashion and would not be completely integrated into Tampa were long-term residents with a strong sense of attachment to place. According to Betty Nell Blaine, 'Lutz will never change. It will never ever be anything but Lutz. ... I don't think they will ever incorporate.' According to Sandy Wurlitzer,

Yes, I think it still keeps some of its rural flavor, and I think there is a draw to keep it [a bedroom community]. .. People want a bucolic, that openness and all that. ... They like hearing cattle out there.

Roy Dunn argues that Lutz will 'fight incorporation' and 'will try to remain separate as long as it can.'

There were others who believed that Lutz was going to be incorporated into Tampa. According to Irma Quakenbusch, she thought of Lutz as a neighborhood.

I don't see Lutz as a separate place with a separate identity. I see it as part of Tampa. ... You are going to see change in neighborhoods ... I think change is good.

She adds that, for her, 'my sense of identity comes more from people in my life, than it does from what area I live in.' Professor Theodore Quick opines that

I don't see how Lutz will hold out. ... it may end up being an island surrounded by development. ... It may be 20 or 30 years but they're going to be absorbed [into Tampa].

Overall, whether in terms of boundaries, land use or incorporation, the nine respondents in this study often espoused diametrically opposed views. One way to view such differences is to understand them as fault lines in the community which will lead to conflict and ultimately result in one particular viewpoint becoming dominant or at least dominantly expressed in the landscape. The other way to view all this is to suggest that it is this very diversity of viewpoints that will make Lutz a valuable place for both new arrivals and long-term residents, since the place can mean different things to different people. Sense of place in unincorporated communities thus seems open to being partly crafted at the level of the individual.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Local residents have observed first-hand the transformations occurring in Lutz and surrounding areas. For these individuals, Lutz has become a special place that they consider home. Even though urban sprawl has been remaking their community into a suburb of Tampa, most stated that they did not want to live anywhere else.

The community of Lutz originated in 1913. During these one hundred years it carved out its own niche within the greater Tampa Bay area as an emblematic small rural village surrounded by cattle ranches and orange groves. A local one-room school, which still stands, was built, as well as a few churches, a post office and a train depot. Generations of pioneer families, some descendents from the original ‘Florida Crackers’ who had settled in the area in the 19th century, created a village that appeared to have all the trappings of a small town, even to the point of having a yearly parade and festival centering around the appointment of a so-called ‘gub’nor’ –a completely ceremonial position.

Yet rapid transformation has challenged this notion of a sense of place for the inhabitants of Lutz, as those recognizable features of a rural area, such as the sound of cattle lolling, the sweet fragrance of orange groves, and the sighting of deer and other animals have begun to disappear. Each of these rural symbols that were mentioned by the interviewees as a strength of the area and something that evoked positive feelings were being replaced by the accoutrements of suburban life, such as deed-restricted

communities which established rules for property management. Large retail stores have moved into the area bringing with them an influx of traffic and congestion. In this regard, much of what has been occurring in the community of Lutz appears ubiquitous, merely a local example of the encroaching of urban land uses into rural communities that has occurred throughout the U.S.

However, a distinguishing feature of Lutz is the fact that it has never been incorporated. I contend that for much of its history this had not been a problem since the community was close-knit, consisting of the same families who were involved in the same businesses. Most attended one of two long-established churches, and patronized the same stores. There existed a homogeneity in which the lack of incorporation was not seen as problematic.

But this unincorporated status has now allowed for unfettered urban sprawl into northern Hillsborough County and southern Pasco County. On the one hand, the larger municipality of Tampa, desirous for land to be allocated for commercial and residential development, views this rural area as easily accessible especially since it is unincorporated. On the other hand, though local groups arose to fight the expansion, since the area was not incorporated into a town, these groups had no formal way to curtail growth.

One of the more interesting results of unincorporation is that areas that had been ranches and orchards and were not traditionally considered part of Lutz now became identified by that name. Thus, the community of Lutz has expanded north and westward, which as the interviews suggest, have blurred its boundaries, in effect creating at least two distinct communities known as Lutz—one a wealthy, deed-restricted suburb and the

other the historic small village centered around a library, Baptist Church and unused train depot.

Recognizing that Lutz Florida has been—and continues to be—in the midst of a transformation of its space and environs validates its use as a case study for examining how sense of place has been—and continues to be—understood by its old and new residents. Nine residents selected primarily through local churches highlighted the evocative and complex senses of place that Lutz represents. While each expressed a degree of satisfaction or contentment with the overall experience of living in Lutz, many felt some ambivalence at the transformation of their surroundings.

This study sought to contribute to existing studies of place-based identities in two ways. First, it understood that a place often does not neatly fit into conventional categorizations of urban or rural, town or country, but is more fluid and dynamic, based partly for instance on how urban sprawl is changing neat boundaries between places. Second, the study of local residents helps in understanding how sense of a place is shaped not just by physical parameters but also by spatial memories and emotions. This study thus draws attention to the ways in which the conditions for long-term residence are created by cultural as much as economic factors.

Future research could extend the theme of an unincorporated sense of place to other contexts. This study being humanistic sought to provide in-depth perspectives and hence was necessarily limited to a small sample. But its findings can be utilized to build a broader study that considers the cultural underpinnings of how and why long-term residents choose to stay in place despite the continuing intrusion of urban sprawl in their surroundings.

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Appendix I

Description of Interview Respondents

Pseudonym	Education	Occupation	Church attended	Number of years in Lutz
Irene Bosch (and her husband, Isaac)	High school	Farming	Methodist	80 years
Roy Dunn	College	Military (retired)	Catholic	37 years
Nora Davenport	High school	Retired	Lutheran	35 years
Irma Quakenbusch	College	Teacher	Lutheran	33 years
Betty Nell Blaine	College	Teacher	Lutheran	30 years
Sandy Wurlitzer	High school	Retired	Lutheran	24 years
Theodore Quick	Post Graduate	Teacher	Lutheran	14 years
Vicki Zimmermann	College	Teacher	Lutheran	9 years
Esther Perez	College	Teacher	--	5 years

Appendix II

Interview Questionnaire

I. Personal Characteristics

- Age
- Race
- Gender
- Education
- Occupation
- Marital Status
- Children
- Family Structure
- Religion
- Years living in Lutz

II. Definition of Lutz (geography)

- Where do you think the boundaries of Lutz are? In other words, where does Lutz end and begin? (e.g. Pasco county line? Bearss Avenue?)
- When you think about Lutz of years past, what are the places that you remember?

If these are still around, do you go there? Do you think that Lutz is essentially the same place as it was when you moved/grew up in there? Why or why not?

- Thinking back to the Lutz of your past, what word or phrase best describes the area?

(Rural? Small town? Country? Friendly? Close-knit?) Has this changed?

- What events have changed the ideal of Lutz for you? Was it the development of the Suncoast/Veterans Parkway; the expansion of Dale Mabry into a four-lane thoroughfare; the establishment of deed-restricted communities such as Cheval; the building of Super Wal-Mart and/or Super Target, or something else?
- What attracted you to Lutz (if you were not born here)? (Rural atmosphere, low-cost living, perception of safety, other) Do you think that these features are still present?
- Do you feel that Lutz is, at this time, a separate community or has it become part of Tampa? If Lutz has become a part of Tampa (unofficially), do you feel that this a good thing? Why? (better services, better roads, other) If Lutz is not a part of Tampa, in what way does it remain separate from Tampa? Do you see this changing in the future?

III. Personal Connections to Lutz (everyday experiences)

- How long have you lived in Lutz / Northern Hillsborough County? Please provide some details about this.
- Does any of your extended family live, or have they ever lived, in this area? Please provide some details about this.
- What was the primary reason that you moved to Lutz, if you were not originally from this area?

- Do, or did, your children attend school in the Lutz area? What school do they attend: elementary, middle or high school?
- What community organizations do you, and/or your families belong to (church, scouts, little league, volunteer organizations)? How important are these to you, and to your sense of attachment to Lutz? Are they central to your feelings about this area?
- Do you read *Lutz News*, or other local publications?
- Do you go to the local branch library?
- Do you primarily do your shopping in the Lutz area? Where?
- Do you see a point in the future when you may leave Lutz?
- What are the benefits (strengths) and problems (weakness) of Lutz? Have these changed over time?
- Overall, how satisfied are you with living in the Lutz area? Why?

IV. Rural to Suburban Change (future transformations)

- Do you think that Lutz, and the surrounding areas, is divided into two types of landscapes: rural and suburban? Which one do you prefer? Why?
- Is there a strong demarcation between these two types, or do they blend into each other?
- What about your neighbors? Do you know them? Has there been a change in the type of people who have moved into Lutz (single, families, minorities, wealthier) or has the composition remained largely the same?
- As more people and businesses move into the area, do you notice any new problems such as more traffic, crime, noise?

- What is your opinion of the new strip malls and stores, like Super Wal-Mart and Target?
- Are they a good fit in Lutz?
- What, if anything, would have to change in this region for you to consider leaving? Are you concerned that these changes may be occurring?

Appendix III

IRB Approval Letter

7/3/2013

Samuel Sanderson Division of Geography 4202 E. Fowler Avenue, CPR107 Tampa,
FL 33620

RE:

Acceptance of Application for Final Review

IRB#:

CR2_Pro00004655

Title:

New and Old Senses of Place in Lutz, Florida

Dear Mr. Sanderson : On 07/03/2013, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and ACCEPTED your Application for Final Review.

Please be advised that you are required to maintain complete research records including all IRB documentation, source documents, and informed consent/assent document(s) (if applicable) for all subjects who participated in this study for a minimum of five years after completion of the research (end of IRB-approval) or for the period designated by the study sponsor and/or oversight agency or HIPAA, whichever period is longer. We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely, John Schinka, Ph.D., Chairperson USF Institutional Review Board