

**THE TWILIGHT OF FORKS?: THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL
INFRASTRUCTURE ON FILM TOURISM AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT IN FORKS, WA***

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ABSTRACT

In the midst of economic decline caused by a drop in forest-related jobs, Forks, WA was ready to redefine itself by the early 2000s. With the help of Stephenie Meyer’s successful *Twilight* series, which was set in Forks, community leaders embraced the opportunity for economic development by enhancing film tourism to the town. The purpose of the present study has been to evaluate how a community’s social infrastructure affects film tourism success and how film tourism affects community development. It accomplishes this by examining secondary data, survey data, and semi-structured interview data of residents and leaders of Forks, WA, setting of the *Twilight* series, before and after the films. Findings suggest that the marketing activities that Forks implemented were successful in bringing in *Twilight* fans and that film tourism had a positive impact on the local economy. However, while film tourism has benefitted local government and some local businesses, it has not financially benefitted everyone in Forks, particularly the large Latino community and Native Americans.

Economic development is an important issue for rural communities as many communities that were once dependent on natural resources and manufacturing have had to look elsewhere for jobs. This is because structural changes and technological advances in these sectors, along with advances in shipping and “free trade” policies, have led many of these jobs to move to less developed countries, thus posing a threat to the survival of rural communities as homes and places of work (Flora and Flora 2008; Sharp et al. 2002). This has led many communities to seek new forms of economic development. While some communities attempt to recruit outside business and industry to locate to their areas, other communities generate and encourage local businesses and other entrepreneurial activities from within the community. One economic development activity that can encourage local business growth is to increase tourism to the location. A more specific form of tourism that some communities have used to increase the local economy is film tourism, defined as tourism to a particular place or attraction because of the destination being portrayed in a television series or movie (Hudson and Ritchie 2006).

In seeking to understand the relationship between film tourism and the particular places visited, analysts and policymakers have studied a variety of factors

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that increase film tourism as well as consequences of film tourism on local people. Characteristics shown to influence film tourism include destination marketing activities before the release of the film, such as inviting travel media to film the location and producing a “making of the film” feature (Hudson and Ritchie 2006); and destination marketing activities after the film’s release, such as selling film memorabilia and developing a dedicated website for potential tourists (Hudson and Ritchie 2006). Film tourism may lead to economic, environmental, and social consequences.

While researchers see the need for examining the characteristics that lead to effective film tourism (e.g., Hudson and Ritchie 2006), most research has focused on what the producers, public relations personnel, local chamber of commerce, and other specialized positions or agencies can do to promote film tourism. Very few studies have examined how community characteristics can lead to effective film tourism. Furthermore, although several studies have examined the influence of film tourism on the economy and local residents (Busby, Brunt, and Lund 2003; Croy and Walker 2003; Gundle 2002; Kim and Richardson 2003; Schofield 1996; Tooke and Baker 1996), they focus more on visitation numbers and carrying capacity to cope with large increases in visitors. Other more direct measures of economic development and the economy, such as job creation and poverty figures, need to be examined. Moreover, such direct economic figures need to be researched and compared across different groups of local residents. Serious questions remain regarding how social characteristics of a community can lead to an increase in film tourism and how much economic benefit is produced. The purpose of this study has been to evaluate how a community’s social infrastructure affects film tourism success and how film tourism affects the local economy. This was done by examining secondary data and semi-structured interview data of residents and leaders of Forks, WA, setting of the *Twilight* series, before the films and after the films. In addition, the study addresses the issue of who benefits the most from film tourism. Such a study is important to show practitioners and other leaders in the community how social characteristics of a community can increase film tourism and which characteristics to try to improve. It is also needed to inform practitioners regarding who benefits from film tourism and who does not. This can lead to future economic strategies designed to focus on those who do not directly benefit from film tourism.

Local Economic Development and Entrepreneurial Social Infrastructure

Community-level economic development involves direct or indirect actions that result in the creation of local jobs and a rise in the real incomes of residents (Shaffer and Summers 1989). Historically, federal and state governments have been responsible for the role of economic development. In the past, federal and state governments boosted local economies by providing subsidies for home ownership and revitalization of neighborhoods and investing in physical infrastructure projects, such as highways, utilities, libraries, bridges, dams, and recreation facilities; which subsequently employed those who were out of work (Green and Haines 2008). While the recent recession has led to similar types of stimulus packages designed to retain and create jobs, state governments have adopted a variety of other methods for stimulating economic development, ranging from enterprise zones and right-to-work laws to technology parks and public venture capital firms (Leicht and Jenkins 1994). While state governments continue to actively promote economic development for their constituents, economic development is increasingly seen as a local responsibility. After the recession of the 1980s, many local government officials took action to pursue new sources of revenue to retain residents and preserve the community atmosphere (Green 2003), and continue to pursue new options with the most recent recession.

Researchers have distinguished between different types of economic development strategies that towns employ (Flora et al. 1992; Sharp et al. 2002). One type of activity, industrial recruitment, involves efforts to attract outside firms and industries to locate to the town (Crowe 2006, 2008; Sharp et al. 2002). One attractive feature of industrial recruitment is its ability to generate many jobs in a relatively short time. In contrast to industrial recruitment, a second type of activity, self-development, fosters local businesses and other entrepreneurial activities along with relying on local resources to aid in development from within the town (Flora et al. 1992). Examples of self-development activities include revitalizing downtown businesses, promoting local tourism, and retaining or expanding locally owned businesses.

Several studies have shown a link between high levels of social infrastructure and economic development. Flora et al. (1997) showed a positive association between the implementation of economic development projects and the presence of an entrepreneurial social infrastructure. In particular, communities that accept controversy in the community and depersonalize politics (what Flora et al. call “legitimacy of alternatives”), have financial institutions that contribute resources to local development projects, and possess horizontal and vertical linkages to other

communities and governments have higher levels of economic development. By comparing two nearby communities, Salamon (2003) concluded that the inclusion of newcomers in projects and decision-making, widespread support of local businesses, and successful resolution of conflict contribute to higher levels of effective community action.

Regarding the two forms of economic development, Sharp et al. (2002) have argued that a community's social infrastructure is more positively associated with self-development than with industrial recruitment. This is because self-development relies greatly on local resources and diverse leadership, while industrial recruitment relies more on government policy and funding. Crowe (2006, 2008) also provided evidence that high levels of social infrastructure are positively correlated with self-development.

Film Tourism and Development

While research on the influence of a community's social infrastructure exists for many types of economic development, it is lacking with respect to development based on the exchange of commoditized cultural resources. Tourism driven by the desire to visit places and key venues depicted in films is one form of cultural commodity. Kim and Richardson (2003) provided empirical evidence that popular films influence one's perceptions about the film's setting. In a short time, popular culture portrayed in films and other outlets can change a destination's image. Favorable destination images because of popular motion pictures can lead to an increase in tourism. This is called film-induced tourism. As the entertainment industry, cinema admissions, and international travel have grown, film tourism has increased worldwide (Croy and Walker 2003; Frost 2006; Hudson and Ritchie 2006). Hudson and Ritchie (2006) claimed that film tourism benefits a local economy in many ways. First, film and television can increase tourist visits to a particular place or attraction portrayed in the film or television series. Wallace Monument, Scotland saw a 300-percent increase in visitors the year after the movie *Braveheart* featured it. Likewise, various locations in the United Kingdom featured in the *Harry Potter* series all witnessed an increase in visitors of 50 percent or more (Hudson and Ritchie 2006). Second, viewing film locations can often occur year-round in all types of weather, thus easing problems of seasonality (Beeton 2004). Third, film tourism can be enduring with a film or TV show drawing tourists to a place years after the film was released or the TV series canceled. Southfork Ranch, portrayed in the *Dallas* TV series that ran from 1978 to 1991, receives more than 500,000 visitors per year (Hudson and Ritchie 2006). In a study of 12 films, Riley

et al. (1998) found a 54-percent increase in visitation to places portrayed in the films even after five years had passed since the release. This increase, stability, and endurance in film-induced tourism lead to the creation of additional businesses and services in a community to accommodate visitors and strengthen the visitor season (Beeton 2004; Hudson and Ritchie 2006).

Hudson and Ritchie (2006) suggested that a location's economic success from film tourism depends on a destination's marketing activities, the destination's attributes, film-specific factors, film commission and government efforts, and location feasibility. While a community trying to increase economic development from film tourism cannot control film-specific factors, such as exposure or length of time on the screen or the success of the film, and has little control over a destination's attributes and location feasibility, it can control marketing activities that occur before and after a movie's release. Hudson and Ritchie (2006) presented a theoretical model of the key factors that influence film tourism. In their model, they provided a list of 17 marketing activities in which a destination can engage after the release of a film to increase film tourism. These include actively promoting the destination to film studios, being actively involved in location scouting, inviting travel media to the film location, selling film memorabilia, replicating film icons/sites/scenes/sets to maintain authenticity, promoting places used in films, and providing guided tours, among other activities.

Development and Ethnicity

O'Connor, Flanagan, and Gilbert (2010) have suggested that if communities are to successfully capitalize on their own film-induced popularity, all of the stakeholders' interests should find a "middle ground" in setting appropriate goals that take advantage of the benefits and reduce the costs of tourism. Stakeholders include tourists, local community members, and others that have an interest or stake in the activity. While film tourism has the potential to lead to economic development in a community, some residents may be more likely to benefit economically over other residents. According to Polanyi (1957), the economic system consists of three forms of economic integration—market exchange, reciprocity, and redistribution. In a capitalist society, the market exchange relationship is the primary form of economic integration in a market economy. The market exchange relationship includes the capital one has to start a business and whether one borrows from a bank for startup capital. Valdez (2002) found that, among small business owners, those with larger amounts of startup capital (more than \$25,000) were more likely to be successful (i.e., have higher personal incomes

and business longevity). She further asserted that Mexicans are much less likely to have large amounts of startup capital than whites. Furthermore, in contrast to whites—who have greater access to financial capital from banks, personal savings, or other market exchange institutions (Sanders and Nee 1996)—Mexicans are rarely characterized as using relationships of market exchange, such as borrowing from a bank (Logan, Alba, and McNulty 1994; Portes and Bach 1985). Thus, racial and ethnic minorities who have high rates of poverty may not benefit from film tourism because they will not have the same access to market-exchange capital shown to positively influence entrepreneurial success.

Research Questions and Expectations

The current study answers several research questions. First, does a community's social infrastructure influence film tourism? Furthermore, what is the impact of film tourism on a community's local economy? Are some residents more likely to benefit either economically or through increased services over other residents? What factors contribute to the variable distribution of these goods among groups of residents? Since evidence suggests that a community's social infrastructure positively influences self-development (Crowe 2006, 2008; Sharp et al. 2002), it was expected that a high level of social infrastructure in place in Forks before *Twilight* would aid in the success of film tourism. It was also expected that the large number of marketing activities employed in Forks would be related to an increase in the number of tourists to the town and thus benefit the local economy. Finally, because Latino and Native American residents of Forks are much more likely to be in poverty than white residents, and do not have the same access to market-exchange capital shown to positively influence entrepreneurial success, it was expected that they would not benefit from the increase in film tourism.

Twilight and Forks, Washington

The case study of Forks, Washington is useful in addressing the study's research questions. Forks is a small rural town located amid the temperate rainforest of the Olympic Peninsula in the northwest corner of the state. Forks was settled in the late nineteenth century with farming and dairying as the main occupations. By the early twentieth century, logging and forestry were important industries in Forks. The town grew slowly and was incorporated in 1945 (Van Pelt 2007). By 1950, the town's population was 1,120 which held steady until the 1970s. With the rural turnaround of the 1970s, coupled with the rise in outdoor recreation and tourism, the population doubled to more than 3,000; with tourism and logging

providing a livable wage for the residents of Forks (Mitchell 2010). During the 1980s and 1990s, timber harvests fell in the Pacific Northwest by 80 percent due to a combination of bans on logging in federal old-growth forests where the endangered Northern Spotted Owl nested and changes that emerged from an increasing global economy. Forks witnessed a decline in forest-related jobs of almost 25 percent after 1990 (Brunell 2009). By 1999 the poverty rate of Forks was double that of the state of Washington, with 14.6 percent of families living in poverty (USBC 2000a). With the realization that the timber industry would not reemerge to its prior levels, by the early 2000s Forks was attempting to redefine itself as a tourist destination for outdoor enthusiasts and between 1995 and 2005, two new motels and nine bed-and-breakfasts opened (Van Pelt 2007).

By 2000, Forks was beginning to align economic development activities with its identity as an outdoor recreation destination. However, this redefinition came full force later in the decade with the rise of film tourism caused by Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series, which was published in the mid to late 2000s and later developed into films. The origin of the four-part *Twilight* series came from a dream Meyer had in June 2003 about an average girl and a "fantastically beautiful, sparkly" vampire (Meyer n.d.). The vampire character led her to seek a rainy setting that she found via a Google search. Coupled with being a small, secluded town surrounded by forest, Meyer believed Forks to be the perfect setting for her new book. After visiting the town in 2004, Meyer found Forks to be "eerily similar" to her imagined setting and decided to choose Forks as the location (Meyer n.d.). Such serendipitous circumstances leading up to Meyer choosing Forks as the setting of the stories, coupled with the overwhelming success of the books and films, have resulted in thousands of *Twilight* fans visiting Forks, WA since 2007.¹

METHODS

Data for this analysis were drawn from key informant interviews and surveys conducted in Forks, Washington in the summer of 2003 and follow-up interviews conducted in the summer of 2011; along with secondary data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Forks' websites, films about Forks since *Twilight*, and book chapters written about Forks since *Twilight*. To evaluate Forks' entrepreneurial social

¹Most of the *Twilight* series movies were not actually filmed in Forks. However, that has not deterred fans of the books and films from visiting Forks as key scenes were filmed in Forks and the surrounding area. Also, the town has recreated many aspects of the films that were not filmed in Forks (i.e., Bella's house).

infrastructure and economic development before the arrival of film tourism in the town, key informant interview and survey data from 20 local leaders and citizens of Forks collected in 2003 were analyzed. Informants were selected to represent one of 20 categories of individuals that characterized the community and therefore needed to be represented. Major categories included representatives of the local chamber of commerce and economic development council, local government officials, major employers, representatives of local civic groups, schools, and churches, and representatives of the Latino community in Forks. A local community coordinator² from Forks, who lived in the town and knew most of the residents, helped identify and recruit the participants. Extensive field notes were taken during each interview and were typed as soon as possible after each interview. Interviews were then coded for relevant themes. Data coding happened in two steps. First the detailed notes were sorted into large themes (e.g., social infrastructure, economic development) and then that material was re-coded into more focused themes within the general themes (e.g., network diversity, self-development).

To measure Forks' entrepreneurial social infrastructure (ESI), interviews and surveys included questions about the community's legitimacy of alternatives, mobilization of resources, and networks within and outside the community. Three variables measured the legitimacy of alternatives found in Forks. The first variable measured the bias in local media outlets. A forum variable measured the quality of forums in the community that allow different views to be expressed in an open environment. A third variable measured the open discussion of issues in other settings in the community.³ For the first category of ESI, higher scores represent

²The community coordinator was hired as part of a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Forks was one of six communities chosen to receive money to reform their high school into a High Tech High (reference). One function of the new high school was to connect the school and students with community members. The community coordinator aided in this endeavor.

³To measure bias in local media outlets, respondents were asked whether each outlet was biased or unbiased when it covered local news: local newspapers, regional newspapers, local radio station, and the Internet. The number of unbiased outlets was recorded and used for the first category under legitimacy of alternatives. Quality of forums were measured using a four-point scale ranging from a particular media outlet providing excellent forums (coded as four) to air different views on community issues to the particular media outlet providing no forum (coded as one). An additive index of the four types of media outlets was created and used for the second category under legitimacy of alternatives. The third variable consisted of nine statements about how issues were discussed in the community (e.g., "The issue was discussed at community meetings." and "Existing civic groups were actively engaged in the issue."). After each statement, the respondent marked whether the statement had

higher levels of legitimacy of alternatives. Two categories provided the data for the second measure of ESI: resource mobilization. The first category of questions asked about different financial contributions toward community projects made by financial institutions and local business owners. Respondents answered “yes,” “no,” or “don’t know” to eight questions about local financial institutional contributions including whether the top two largest financial institutions: contribute toward local development projects; provide low-interest loans to community projects; offer grants, donations, or in-kind contributions to community projects; and/or provide marketing or technical assistance to local businesses; and whether personnel serve on local boards and committees. They also ranked two statements about business owners/managers’ contributions toward local development projects on a five-point scale from strongly disagree (coded as one) to strongly agree (coded as five). An additive index was created with higher scores representing greater contributions made by financial institutions and business managers. The second category of questions asked respondents to list bond issues passed, fund drives implemented, and foundations or trusts made available to the community in the past three years. The number of passed bonds, community fund drives, and foundations that the respondent listed was recorded and used for the second category under resource mobilization. Three variables measured network diversity. The first variable measured the activity of community organizations (from a list of twelve) in economic development activities. A diverse leadership variable measured the extent to which different groups in Forks work together on community improvement projects. The third variable measured Forks’ links to other communities and to state and national organizations.⁴ For the third category of ESI, higher scores

occurred (yes), had not occurred (no), or if s/he did not know. The number of favorable answers was recorded and used for the third category under legitimacy of alternatives.

⁴Organizations included economic development; chamber of commerce; service and fraternal organizations; public or private housing development entities; professional, environmental, commodity or general farm entities women’s societies; civic groups; city government; historical or heritage societies; and church groups. Response categories ranged from very active (coded as five) to no such group exists (coded as one). An additive index was created by summing the responses to the twelve items with higher values corresponding with higher levels of community involvement from community organizations. The second variable was an additive index of how often different groups of individuals in the community took leadership roles for a community project and how often different groups of individuals worked together on a community project. Groups included women, racial and ethnic minorities, newcomers, businesspeople, and youth, among others. An additive index was created by summing the responses to the five items with higher values corresponding with a higher

represent higher levels of network diversity. Past questionnaires and surveys used by Flora et al. (1997) and Sharp (2001) in their analyses of entrepreneurial social infrastructure served as the basis for both the interview questionnaire and the survey.

Hudson and Ritchie (2006) presented a theoretical model of the key factors that influence film tourism. In their model, they provided a list of 17 marketing activities in which a destination can engage after the release of a film to increase film tourism. To ascertain how many of these 17 marketing activities Forks employed after the release of the *Twilight* series, secondary data sources such as Forks' websites, films about Forks since *Twilight*, and book chapters written about Forks since *Twilight* were consulted, along with correspondence with Forks' mayor and other leaders of Forks in 2012.

Secondary data sources such as Forks' websites and the USBC, along with book chapters on Forks, provide statistics on the number of tourists to visit Forks, overall sales tax revenue, sales tax revenue from hotels and motels, annual payroll, payroll per employee, median family income, percentage of families living in poverty, and unemployment rate. Statistics provided by the USBC, along with correspondence with Forks' mayor and other leaders of Forks in 2012, provide information on whether or not some residents were more likely to benefit, either economically or through increased services, over other residents and if so, which residents.

RESULTS

Forks' Entrepreneurial Social Infrastructure before Twilight

Right before *Twilight* was written and the movies produced, Forks, overall, had a high level of social infrastructure. With respect to legitimacy of alternatives, Forks ranked in the middle of the scale for each indicator. As Table 1 shows, mean scores for unbiased media outlets, forums provided to air different points of view, and openly discussing local issues were 2.23, 9.00, and 3.23, respectfully. It is important for a community facing change (as Forks had in the past and would in the future) to rank high on this variable so as to discuss all sides of a contentious issue and to make the best decisions for residents. As for mobilization of resources, Forks

number of diverse groups taking leadership positions and working together. The third variable was the number of issues regarding which the community joined with another community to address, combined with the number of state and national organizations to which a community belongs. Organizations included planning agencies, tourism or marketing groups, environmental groups, economic development, groups for special events, among others.

TABLE 1. ENTREPRENEURIAL SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES IN FORKS, WA

	MEAN	SCALE	YES OR NO
Legitimacy of Alternatives			
Unbiased Media.....	2.23	0-4	
Forum Provided.	9.00	0-16	
Discussion of Local Issues.....	3.23	0-9	
Resource Mobilization			
Financial Institutions.....	10.54	0-18	
Bonds, Funds, Referenda.....	2.62	>0	
Network Diversity			
Diverse Leadership.....	23.00	0-30	
Civic Organizations.....	36.00	0-60	
Community Linkages.....	9.23	0-19	
Destination Marketing Activities after Film Release			
Outreach Activities			
Invite travel media to special release of the film.....			Yes
Develop a dedicated website for potential tourists.....			Yes
Post links on website to film tours run by local tour operators.			Yes
Create electronic links to the destination on the film website.			No
Engage in joint promotional activity with inbound tour operators.....			No
Work collectively with other public organizations and tourist authorities to promote film locations.....			Yes
Engage in joint promotional activity with film companies....			No
Attract continuous media attention to the location at each release window (DVD, etc.).....			Yes
Promote hotels and guest houses that were used in films.....			Yes
Enrichment Activities			
Post signage and interpretation at the location.....			Yes
Sell film memorabilia.....			Yes
Replicate or maintain film icons/sites/scenes/sets to maintain authenticity.....			Yes
Host events that continue the pull of the film beyond its natural audience peak.....			NA ^a
Package additional attractions to lengthen tourist stay.....			Yes
Have guided tours and/or film walks.....			Yes
Produce film and site maps for tourists.....			Yes
Create exhibitions or displays of memorabilia from the film. .			Yes

NOTE: ^a Not all films have been released and therefore have not yet peaked.

ranked in the middle of the scales for having financial institutions contribute toward local development and for the number of bonds passed, fund drives implemented, and foundations created. Mean scores for the two variables were 10.54 and 2.62, respectfully. While these variables are important for stimulating other forms of development, resource mobilization is not as necessary for successful film tourism. Finally, for network diversity, Forks ranked high on the scale for having diverse leadership and in the middle of the scales for active civic organizations and extra-community linkages. Mean scores for the three variables were 23.00, 36.00, and 9.23, respectfully. Taken together, Forks appeared to be in good standing to receive future change caused by *Twilight* and to capitalize on film tourism. This is illustrated by a quotation from an executive of the economic development council:

I see the tribe as a very strong point in drawing people to the area (from an economic standpoint). The Quileutes in La Push is better known than Forks is to outsiders. Right now I am planning a convention center and eventually want to bring Europeans on one week tours of native culture and life. I see the tribe as a big drawing point on tourism. Forks is going through a transition from a logging community to a tourist community—whether they like it or not. (Forks, Summer of 2003).

While the executive did not foresee the books and movies from the *Twilight* series being a pull for tourism to the town, he did acknowledge and openly embrace that change needed to occur for Forks to have economic development. While the people of Forks had no control over it being chosen as the setting for the *Twilight* books, by having a fairly high level of entrepreneurial social infrastructure, it had strategic readiness to respond when the opportunity presented itself.

Film Tourism and Economic Development

Film-induced tourism. The *Twilight* films have brought tourists into Forks by the droves. According to the Forks Visitors Center, 75 visitors signed the visitor's book in January 2005 (before the release of the first book in the *Twilight* series). In December of that same year the number was 74. However, by 2007, *Twilight* fans began making the trek to Forks to experience the setting of the books and movies. By 2008, thousands of *Twilight* fans were visiting Forks (Cook 2008). In January of 2008, 2,003 visitors signed in to the Forks Visitors Center. In August of 2008, 4,186 visitors signed in, which until then was the monthly high. In November of 2008, the first *Twilight* movie was released as a major motion film. By July of 2009,

the number of visitors to sign in to the Visitors Center for that month soared to 16,186. December of 2009 saw 2,540 visitors sign in to the center, a 3,400-percent increase from December 2005. Visitors who signed the guest book were from all parts of the United States as well as from other countries, including Germany, England, Australia, and Japan.

To take advantage of the *Twilight* phenomenon and the fans that visited Forks, the town began to reinvent itself to cater to those fans (and their money). Of the 17 destination marketing activities that a community can implement after the release of a film (identified by Hudson and Ritchie (2006)), Forks had carried out 13 of them (see Table 1). They employed both outreach and enrichment activities. Outreach activities are efforts that marketed Forks to *Twilight* fans with the goal of bringing film tourists and their money into the community. Enrichment activities are actions that the community employed to make Forks more appealing and tourist-friendly with the goal of tourists extending their stays, returning to Forks, and/or relating their positive experiences to others.

Examples of outreach activities that Forks implemented include having multiple web sites that have pages dedicated to *Twilight* information. For instance, the Forks Chamber of Commerce website has a page on it that details all of the *Twilight* events in the community, such as Stephenie Meyer Day—an annual event that occurs in September. It also has a link to an online store where one can buy *Twilight* and Forks merchandise. Other websites include Dazzled by Twilight, which is a tour-operating company in Forks; and Twilight in Forks, which is a *Twilight* travel guide to Forks. In addition, Stephenie Meyer's website has a link to Forks, which links to the chamber of commerce webpage. Forks also has a presence on social media websites like Facebook. Forks' city page and Discover Forks, WA are two Facebook pages that promote *Twilight*-themed events like Stephenie Meyer Day and Bella's Birthday Weekend. They also link to *Twilight* Tours on Forks Facebook page.

Examples of enrichment activities that Forks has implemented include restaurants having *Twilight* named dishes⁵, residences being designated for the Swans and the Cullens⁶, film memorabilia being sold in stores, tours being operated, festivals celebrating *Twilight*, and town signs being moved to safer locations. The

⁵Some examples of *Twilight*-themed dishes include Big Bad Wolf Burger and Volturi Salad.

⁶The main character, Bella Swan, is a teenage girl who falls in love with Edward Cullen, a teenage vampire. The Swans live in a modest home in Forks, WA; while the Cullen family lives in a large lodge-like home hidden in the forest outside of Forks.

previously mentioned convention center that was being planned in 2003 by one of Forks' leaders was converted into a guest lodge and was opened in time for the onset of *Twilight* tourists. The owners have kept to the original plan of taking visitors on tours of native culture and life. They offer a fishing guide and nature guides of the surrounding forest and beaches. While many who stay there visit Forks for the environmental recreation, guests at the lodge also include *Twilight* fans. While many guests initially hear about Forks because of the film and some visit solely because of *Twilight*, they also partake in the other recreational activities that town leaders promote. Examining guest reviews of the lodge on tripadvisor.com makes clear that guests have traveled from all around the United States and the world, including Sweden, Israel, and France. Some visited specifically to visit sites portrayed in *Twilight* or *Twilight* cultural events like Stephenie Meyer Day. However, most reviews spoke of enjoying outdoor recreational activities and venturing around the peninsula, including reviews written by *Twilight* fans (Tripadvisor 2012). Most reviewers spoke highly of the lodge and its owners, and many also spoke highly of the local residents, claiming them to be friendly and accommodating. This is one example of how Forks' high levels of entrepreneurial social infrastructure allowed for the community to be strategically ready to implement several marketing activities to take advantage of the increase in film tourists.

Hotel-motel taxes and total sales tax. The taxes from staying at hotels or motels in Forks have steadily increased since 2003 (see Table 2). However, the increase from 2006-2009 (after the *Twilight* books and first films were released) was 10 times the increase from 2003-2006 (before the films were released). Similarly, total sales tax for the town of Forks has steadily increased since 1995. However, the increase between 2006 and 2009 almost equaled the increase between 1995 and 2006 (Mitchell 2010).

TABLE 2. HOTEL-MOTEL AND SALES TAX BY YEAR FOR FORKS, WA

Year	Hotel-Motel Tax	Year	Sales Tax
2003.....	\$84,000	1995.....	\$295,000
2006.....	\$88,471	2000.....	\$321,067
2008.....	\$105,879	2006.....	\$353,837
2009.....	\$133,585	2009.....	\$405,195

Local businesses and payroll. While it appears that film tourism has led to a sharp increase in hotel-motel and sales taxes collected by the town, the effect on local businesses and payroll is not so clear. While the town experienced an 11.7-percent

increase in total population between 2000 and 2010 (USBC 2000a, 2010a), according to the U.S. Census Business Patterns (USBC 2012), the total numbers of establishments, retail establishments, accommodation and food service establishments, and paid employees all fell between 1998 and 2009 (see Table 3). This is in contrast with the state of Washington, which experienced consistent increases in the total number of establishments and paid employees between 1998 and 2008 (although it also saw a decrease between 2008 and 2009). While Forks experienced some recovery between 2003 and 2008 in the number of paid employees, 2009 saw a decline. Similarly, while the annual payroll grew by almost nine million dollars between 2003 and 2008, it fell in 2009. However, while fewer people are employed in Forks, the average income per employee has risen. This is consistent with the average income per employee for the state of Washington. While wages in Forks has grown since 2003, employee wages still fall below the average for the state (\$18,090 below the state average in 2009).

Unemployment and poverty. The 5-year average (2005-2010) unemployment rate in Forks was lower than in 2000 (7.0 and 8.9 percent respectively). While unemployment for the nation was higher in 2011 than in 2003 (8.5 percent in December of 2011 and 5.7 percent in December of 2003), because of the recession that began in December 2007, unemployment figures for Forks were lower than the national average by 2010 (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012). As Table 4 shows, the percent of individuals in Forks that fell below the poverty line stayed about the same between 2000 and 2010, from 20.5 to 20.4 percent (USBC 2000a, 2010a). The poverty rate in Forks was higher than the national average for both years (11.3 percent in 2000 and 14.3 percent in 2009). These statistics in combination with the statistics on average income per employee suggest that tourism caused by *Twilight* may have had a positive economic effect for the local government and for some individuals in the town of Forks. However, it may not have benefitted everyone in Forks.

Distribution of Economic Development since Twilight

Local businesses. Local businesses that cater to tourists and their needs seem to benefit from film tourism caused by *Twilight*. Hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts have seen their occupancy go up since 2008. Retail stores have also seen business increase. A variety store that would take between \$500-\$800 on a typical pre-*Twilight* summer day took between \$5000-\$6000 a day in the summer of 2009 (Mitchell 2010). Local business owners include established residents and newcomers to Forks. One newcomer who has capitalized on the growing *Twilight* tourism in

TABLE 3. BUSINESS INDICATORS FOR FORKS, WA AND WASHINGTON STATE, 1998, 2003, 2008, 2009^a

	1998	2003	2008	2009
Forks, WA				
# of establishments.	195	185	162	154
# of establishments (accommodations and food services).	28	30	23	23
# of establishments (retail trade).	25	22	24	23
# of paid employees.	1,570	1,275	1,317	1,272
Annual payroll.	\$30,026,000	\$27,915,000	\$36,693,000	\$35,857,000
Payroll per employee.	\$19,124	\$21,894	\$27,861	\$28,189
Washington State				
# of establishments.	161,473	167,272	182,207	177,276
# of paid employees.	2,134,598	2,293,222	2,536,645	2,385,282
Annual payroll.	\$73,268,188,000	\$90,586,818,000	\$115,284,564,000	\$110,389,623,000
Payroll per employee.	\$34,324	\$39,501	\$45,447	\$46,279

NOTE: ^aData provided by U.S. Census Business Patterns

TABLE 4. TOTAL POPULATION, POVERTY, AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN FORKS, WA BY ETHNICITY, FOR 2000 AND 2010

	2000	2010
Total population.	3,120	3,532
Percent white.	81.5	67.7
Percent Latino.	15.5	26.0
Percent Native American.	5.0	6.6
Percent of all residents below poverty.	20.5	20.4 ^a
Percent of white residents below poverty.	17.5	6.8 ^a
Percent of Latino residents below poverty.	49.0	56.5 ^a
Percent of Native American residents below poverty.	41.4	31.4 ^a
Percent of all residents unemployed.	8.9	7.0 ^a
Percent of white residents unemployed.	8.6	5.4 ^a
Percent of Latino residents unemployed.	12.6	12.9 ^a
Percent of Native American residents unemployed.	7.5	10.0 ^a

NOTE: ^aData comes from 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

Forks is the owner of Dazzled by Twilight, a shop devoted to all things *Twilight*, and offers three tours daily (four in the summer). Dazzled by Twilight is owned and operated by a family who moved to Forks from Vancouver, WA after *Twilight* was released (Dazzled by Twilight n.d.).

White residents. While poverty has remained the same since 2000, it has been cut in half for white, non-Hispanic residents (see Table 4). In 2010, the poverty rate for white non-Hispanic residents of Forks was 6.8 percent, which is lower than the national average. The unemployment rate for white non-Hispanic residents had also decreased since 2000 to 5.4 percent. Likewise, the owners of stores, restaurants, hotels, and other businesses that financially benefit from tourists are mostly white.

Latino and Native American residents. While the USBC (2000a) documents the number of Latinos living in Forks at 484 in 2000 and growing to 1155 in 2010, some residents of Forks claim that the number is much higher. During an interview in 2003, one resident who worked with the Latino population claimed that there were between 1500 and 2000 Latinos in the community (many part-time residents). According to that source, the Latino community was very isolated from the white population although the wall was slowly being broken. Five trailer parks housed most of the Hispanic population, with two of them kept up and good looking and three that were run down. The number of Native Americans living in Forks is much smaller, with 156 living in the town in 2000 and 233 living in the town in 2010. Most of the Native Americans in the area live on the nearby Quileute, Makah, and Hoh reservations.

While poverty rates have been greatly reduced for the white residents of Forks, poverty rates have grown significantly for the Latino residents of Forks, while the disparity in poverty rates between whites and Native Americans has risen (see Table 4). The percent of Latino residents below poverty rose from 49 percent in 2000 to 56.5 percent in 2010, while the percent of Native American residents below poverty in Forks decreased from 41.4 percent in 2000 to 31.4 percent in 2010. In 2010, Latino residents had poverty rates eight times those of white residents living in Forks while Native American residents had poverty rates five times those of white residents. This is a significant increase from 2000, when poverty rates of Latino residents were just less than three times those of white residents living in Forks, while Native American poverty rates were twice that of white residents. Similarly, while unemployment rates declined for the white residents of Forks, unemployment rates rose for the Latino and Native American residents of Forks. Unemployment increased to 12.9 percent for Latinos (up from 12.6 percent in 2000) and 10 percent for Native Americans (up from 7.5 percent in 2000).

Whereas many businesses have seen growth from film tourism, according to one longtime resident of Forks, Latino and Native Americans are not owners of these businesses. A few Latino businesses exist in Forks, such as Tienda Latina, which was the first Latino business in Forks opening in 1992 (Van Pelt 2007). However, these businesses mainly cater to the Latino population, which is currently under threat by Washington State Border Patrol on the peninsula⁷ (Yardley 2012). Most employees of local businesses, both those who deal directly with people (e.g., clerks) and those who work in the background (e.g., custodial), are white. In 2000, very few Native Americans and even fewer Latinos held occupations as officials, managers, professionals, administrative support, or service workers in Clallum County, which includes Forks and the larger town of Port Townsend. Instead, the largest percent were unemployed or worked as laborers or helpers (USBC 2000b).

Most of the Latinos who live in Forks are employed in the wintertime picking salal, a wild shrub that keeps well and whose branches are used in floral arrangements around the world, and selling it to greenhouses (Yardley 2012). The picking work is seasonal and the pay is low. Salal picking starts in late summer and slows around May. The pickers then switch to moss and other groundcover during

⁷While Forks is not near the Canadian border, it is 60 miles from Port Angeles, which is the nearest port of entry to Canada. Port Angeles provides a ferry from the Olympic Peninsula to Victoria, Canada. The Border Patrol claims jurisdiction over all land within 100 miles of any border (Shapiro 2011).

the summertime (Shapiro 2011). The conditions can be strenuous and sometimes hazardous (Van Pelt 2007).⁸ Many are immigrants to the area and are transient. Most come from Mexico and Guatemala (Welch 2006). According to the U.S. Census's (2010b) American Community Survey, 165 claimed to have moved there in the past year from a different state and 24 claimed to have moved there in the past year from abroad. Furthermore, almost half the Latino population in Forks is under the age of 17. Almost one-third (31.2 percent) of children age 0-17 in Forks are of Hispanic origin⁹ (Quillayute Valley School District 2012). Given the low pay of salal pickers and the large proportion of Latinos who are children, many Latino children are in poverty. Given that most Latinos and Native Americans are employed in low wage jobs that are not connected to the tourist industry, and that high levels of poverty and unemployment exist for both groups, it appears that film tourism caused by *Twilight* has not had the financial benefit for many Latinos and Native Americans that it has had for some white Forks residents.

CONCLUSION

This study addresses how a community's social infrastructure influences film tourism success and how film tourism influences the local economy. Furthermore, it examines who benefits the most from film tourism. Overall, the findings suggest that a community's social infrastructure can put a community in a position to successfully implement film tourism as an economic activity. By seeing other alternative solutions to problems as legitimate, being able to mobilize resources, and having diverse networks, the community of Forks was ready in 2003 to accept and embrace economic change. This is illustrated by one businessman's perspective on the change *Twilight* has brought to Forks:

Every action has the possibility to bring change to any community...Over the years we have seen opportunities come and go...As we adapt and

⁸With advances in transportation and communication technologies and an increasingly global economy, the harvest of salal and other groundcover has become a booming business. Since the 1980s, the brush-picking business has grown as much as 10percent a year (Welch 2006). Salal pickers are self-employed and work up to 16 hours a day. They sell to businesses that then distribute it around the United States and to Europe. Greenery picked in the forests near Forks is sold at Wal-Mart and Costco stores as well as other large retailers and small floral stores (Shapiro 2011).

⁹In 2011, 17.2 percent of students in the Quillayute Valley School District were Latino, 2.8 percent were in transitional bilingual programs, and 1.5 percent were in migrant programs (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2012).

welcome new gifts, such as *Twilight*, we are reminded to look at all changes as new opportunities and make the best of them no matter how long the impact (Mitchell 2010).

They were then able to implement many marketing activities directed at bringing in *Twilight* fans and, once they were there, having them stay and spend money in the town.

Future research is needed to test whether a high level of entrepreneurial social infrastructure and implementation of marketing activities lead to an improved local economy in other places with film tourism. Is the huge success of the *Twilight* series driving the improved local economy in Forks? Would such local marketing efforts paid off if a less successful film were set in the town? Furthermore, would such marketing activities lead to an improved local economy in places without other recreational activities to keep tourists busy and wanting to return? Forks is located in a temperate rain forest where ample outdoor recreational opportunities exist. Future research should test whether or not such economic success from film tourism is witnessed in places with fewer available recreational activities.

The findings also suggest that the marketing activities that Forks implemented were successful in bringing in *Twilight* fans and that film tourism had a positive impact on the local economy. The number of visitors to Forks continued to increase year round after the first movie was released. While the success of the film itself was enough to bring many tourists to Forks, the townspeople found ways to market the location around *Twilight* to draw in even more tourists and to keep them around, spending money, and coming back. One such story on the chamber of commerce's website tells of how a German travel agent visited the town to find more information about the area for her company and to discover why her customers should visit the area. Because the woman did not know English and the tour guide did not know German, there was much gesturing, pointing at things, and silence on the tour. However, the tour guide emailed the agent using Google translator and received a reply from her, claiming how friendly everyone was and how although she was alone she was not lonely or bored on the trip. She wanted to return with her family in the future (Andros 2012). This is an example of how the townspeople have been successful at keeping tourists in the town and making them want to return (implementing enrichment marketing activities). Forks' economy has improved since the onset of *Twilight* fans visiting the town. Hotel-motel and sales taxes have significantly increased, bringing in increased revenue to the town. Annual payroll and average income per employee has also increased.

However, findings suggest that, while *Twilight* has benefited some in the town of Forks, it has not financially benefited everyone. Local businesses, which have mostly white owners that can market themselves around *Twilight*, often benefited from tourism surrounding *Twilight*. However, Native American and Latino residents did not witness the same benefits caused by the increase in film tourism. Unlike their white counterparts, Latinos witnessed a significant increase in poverty rates and unemployment and Native Americans witnessed a significant increase in unemployment. By 2010 poverty rates were eight (Latinos) and five (Native Americans) times those of white residents. Likewise, very few were employed in jobs that directly benefitted from tourist dollars.

The case study of Forks illustrates the importance of community leaders, researchers, and policy makers considering not just how film tourism can benefit a place's overall economy, but how it affects different subpopulations residing in the town. Clearly, the benefits of film tourism are reaching white residents of Forks more than Latino and Native American residents. As Forks becomes more diverse, community development workers will need to reconceive development as a multicultural process. Checkoway foresees such reconceived development as "a process that represents diverse groups and increases communication and collaboration among them" (2011:10). Community leaders will need to find ways to lower unemployment and poverty rates for all ethnic groups to avoid becoming further segregated. This can be accomplished by employing more Latino and Native Americans in jobs benefitting from film tourism or by focusing on giving more jobs livable wages that are not associated with film tourism to these residents.

A possible implication of these arguments is that places marketing film tourism may want to try to promote the town in a way that economically benefits all residents. Perhaps by showcasing the cultural capital of all ethnic and racial groups in places with film tourism, tourism that originates with a particular film may lead tourists to seek non-film related experiences in the community. Such actions may financially better the lives of all community members, despite race or ethnicity, as well as lead to a more enhanced tourist experience.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

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