Physical Retail Space and Place: 
The Historical Development of a Social Psychogeography of Liminal Consumption

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Abstract
Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to promote a renewed and wider adoption of a historical retail orientation towards shopping environments as key social-economic-cultural spaces that can enrich and motivate local in-the-world place characteristics. A re-orientation towards retail study in this manner is theorized to have potentially wider societal benefits than a prevalent orientation upon the exchange act of economic consumption, the modernist result of which would lead to the virtual environment substitution of local public spaces.

Design/methodology/approach – Referring to a broad range of historical literature, and a recent body of focused research, up to the current re-emergence of popular interest in the process of psychogeography, the paper discusses an underlying cultural acceptance of the communal notion of shopping forms as integral foci local space enrichment.

Findings: Both cultural artifacts in literature and film, as well as a sub-stream of research literature, strongly suggest that physical shopping environments support more than just a location for the individual to acquire or ‘consume’ products and services, but rather offer a way of understanding and orienting oneself whilst being ‘out-in-the-world’, supporting communal participation in the local. Thus, the purported individual ‘benefits’ of technology may be questioned in terms of negative outcomes in terms of value destruction of retail social capital that has been implicit in local, communal space and place forms throughout history.

Research limitation/implications – The drawbacks to the research orientation explored in the paper will be in seemingly opposing the technologically based economic rationalism of the modernist impulse in retail that has been heralded to result in an inevitable virtualization of consumption as an acquisitive process. This apparent limitation, however, is less a criticism of a consumer society or of technological process per se, and is more a questioning of negative environmental effects of a relentless modernization impulse.

Keywords – social capital, social space, locality, consumption

Paper Type – Conceptual paper

Introduction

Diversity of the cultural ecology is a desirable state of affairs, especially in opposition to the accelerating trend toward the uniform digitalization of all sensory experience, wherein an electronic ‘reader’ stands between experience and observation and all manifestation is encoded identically (Koren, 2008, p.8).

Since the publication of Pine and Gilmore's (1999) Experience Economy rally-cry text for services study, retail studies have increasingly featured an anthropological focus on shopping behaviours, blurring the previously discrete academic boundaries between retail, tourism and leisure (Falk and Campbell, 1997; Miller, 1998; Miller et al., 1998; Shields, 1992; Baker, 2000 Wrigley and Lowe, 2002; Timothy, 2005; McIntyre, 2012). Such an orientation focuses the retail historian upon shopping forms as perceived by those who use them, as a key part of their relationship with the consumers’ external world within which they move and providing for their object interactional needs. This is an alternative to a prevalent industry-internalised approach that focuses largely upon supply chain and organisational innovation issues, the customer being relegated to being a ‘cog’ in the economic
machinery of consumption as implied by service dominant logic systems (Alexander, 2010; Vargo and Lusch, 2004, 2008).

Shopping environments as the predominant public spatial form of everyday experience are as yet, in the recent history of retail research or design, not largely considered in serving any broader purpose than the housing of a consumption process of commercial exchange in the form of transactional activity, even though this has been related strongly to the notion of shopper identity construction via economic-cultural signs and symbols (Shields, 1992; Glennie and Thrift, 1996; Stobart, 2010). The main human interactions perceived in traditional-to-modern shopping environments from the 16th century onwards have remained those between the shopper and the retailer salesperson, in classical market definition terms, as coming together to agree a price of exchange (Cox, 2000: Berry; 2002; Stobart, 2007). This project alternatively considers immersed social space preferred characteristics of shopping realms, not purely as acquisition, consumption forms but as essential objects of communal orientation and being-in-the-world; as much a consumption of space, place and local community – a 'comsumption' process, if you will? This orientation towards physical shopping spaces and their place in history then poses questions around current shopping/consumption activity shifts towards the virtual realm as potentially resulting in a loss of social capital (Bourdieu, 1977; 1984[1979]; Putnam, 1995, 2000). A future predominant state of virtual ‘consumption’ practices would, by such a process, reduce physical ‘shopping’ spatial experiences in local environments. This in turn would herald a degradation of local, communal spatiality by a modernistic impulse, driven by commercial organisational drives for efficient acquisition and consumption control over communal benefits historically gained by the physical space and place enrichment that physical shopping spaces have provided. These latter benefits may, however, have been somewhat downplayed in recent decades by the post-1950 mass retail, modernising drive towards consumption efficiency that has resulted in broadly homogeneous brandscape developments in the physical shopping environment itself. This homogenisation in design has notably been at a time when retail research focus on the fields of atmospherics and servicescape have been purported to focus on experiential factors (Kotler, 1973; Bitner, 1992; Schmitt, 1999), suggesting that there is a need for a new perspective upon the nature of retail space and place design.

The study of historical development of retail forms as key socio-cultural spatial domains of living in a consumer society, can be proposed to show shopping environments as providing an essential bordering (liminal), transitional region of everyday experience of the world, standing 'between the sacred and the secular, the mundane and exotic, and the local and global' of cultural life’ (Goss, 1993, p.27), even until their most recent, homogenised, less differentiated, and most controlled physical form of the shopping mall. Retail spaces and their associated ‘place’ landscape developments, including the developing modes of analysis and design that have arisen within retail marketing theory, are therefore suggested to need to be more widely considered in relevance to their provision of everyday escape, learning and social interaction factors, up to – and with consideration beyond – the pre-virtual, modernist, socio-cultural entertainment form of the shopping mall.

The modernizing impulse: Immersive ‘out-in-the-world’ shopping space transitions and crises

Place, in whatever guise, is like space and time, a social construct. This is the baseline proposition from which I start. The only interesting question that can then be asked is: by what social process(es) is place constructed (Harvey, 1996, p.261).

Place is instead that within and with respect to which subjectivity is itself established - place is not founded on subjectivity, but is rather that on which subjectivity is founded (Malpas, 1999, p.35 – added emphasis).

The above two arguments are contrasted in an introductory text on place (Cresswell, 2004, pp.29-33) as exemplifying an argument between place as a social construct or place as ‘being-in-the-world’. The latter position, where place acts upon aspects of the subjective self and self-development whilst being ‘out-in-the-world’ is the orientation of this author’s previous studies into the varieties of cultural-commercial, leisure consumption in both growing and diminishing physical locations, liminal to everyday shopping requirements such as museum shops and music stores (McIntyre, 2009, 2010, 2011). Other proponents of this position are the philosophers J.E. Malpas (1999) and Edward Casey (1996) and the spatial geographer Robert Sack (1980, 1992). The point being made in the 'being-in-the-world' argument, in opposition to the social constructivists such as Harvey (1996), is that 'humans
cannot construct anything without first being in place - that place is primary to the construction of meaning and society. In summary terms, place is primary because it is the experiential fact of our existence’ (Cresswell, 2004, p.32) - this orientation also leading to Sack’s (1997) evolutionary term *Homo Geographicus*.

The process of people immersing themselves in and moving around space and place for leisureed transformation via increased openness to sensory-spatial effects is possibly most easily understood in relation to tourist consumption (McIntyre 2007, 2012). However, tourist literature predominantly concerns itself with the ‘pause’ effect of tourism in creating new forms of place from space as in ‘place is pause: each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place’ (Tuan, 1977, p.6). Thus a sustainable tourism concern would focus upon aspects of social construction theory, as per the Harvey (1996) quote above, or the effects of the ‘tourist gaze’ in the development or denigration of tourist locations over time, as in ‘consuming places’ (Urry, 1990, 1995). This leans towards a socio-political, Marxist production-consumption rhetoric of place – a denigration effect of touristic visitation and ‘using up’ or distorting local space to visitor demands of temporary (non-dwelling) visitation. An extension of this perceived effect in consideration of shopping spaces in general may have led to a judgement of their being of little or no importance to human well-being, to the point of them being considered as secondary, parasitical or negative, destructive forms of spatiality in terms of local identity – a position that has been challenged by the geo-economist, Colin Williams (1997, 2012), who proposes a primary economic and place enhancement function for shopping forms in society.

In local or ‘home’ environments there can be retained a kind of ‘touristic’ behaviour in terms of the exploration of, and movement around circumambient spaces of leisure consumption experience in an experientialist orientation, whereby *liminal* cultural-commercial experiences of a ludic nature can potentially be considered as acting as a *third place* within ongoing, dwelling-place terms, in relation to work and home, all three local places deemed necessary for creating ‘lived’ meaning by immersive flow and circulation for ongoing personal human development, satisfaction and pursuit of happiness purposes (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 1991, 1999; Oldenburg and Brissett, 1982). For these spaces to be effective, it may be supposed that they serve as a supportive, short-term bridge to the achievement of a sought-after personal long-term balanced health and happiness states. Given that the process of being a tourist implies a voluntary placing of oneself in a distinctly temporal experiential realm with these aims in mind, similar to desires to ‘go shopping’ as a social outing. All physical shopping sensory-spatial leisure experience can thus be considered to be somewhat ‘touristic’, particularly when related to the appearance of increased post industrial revolution conspicuous consumption of an expanded ‘leisure class’, and the rapid rise of modernist shopping environments since the late nineteenth century (Veblen, 1899).

In fact, since the 1830’s it has been reported that western leisure time and activities have steadily increased due to shorter working times and the general provision of paid holidays. Within the UK prime minister, Disraeli stated in 1872 that ‘increased means and increased leisure are the two civilisers of man’ with the main leisure benefits up to the present day broadly agreed to fall within ‘the dual effects of social learning experiences’ and an ‘internalisation of the leisure interest, so that it becomes rewarding in itself’ (Argyle, 1996, pp.7, 22-23). The social evolutionary benefits of leisure so implied follows the line of ‘social Darwinism’ attributed to the evolutionary biologists Thomas Huxley and grandson Julian, the latter stating of the process that ‘Psycho-social evolution - human history for short - operates by cultural transmission; and its units are communities based on different types of culture’ (Huxley, 1953, p.134).

Retail spaces in the western consumer world have for some time been held as holding culturally based attractions for the casual stroller or psychogeographic wanderer of social spaces of leisure, community and entertainment where unusual and distracting elements in presentation and operation affect patronage and repatronage as much as the seeking of specific products and services (Arnold, & Reynolds, 2003; Benjamin, 1999; Dholakia, 1999; Goss, 1993; Hart, Farrell, Stachow, Reed, & Cadogan, 2007; Holbrook, & Hirschman, 1982; Miller, 1981; Pearmain, 2000; Pine, & Gilmore, 1999; Vernet D, & de Wit, 2007; Zukin, 2004). Historically, and up till the end of the accepted key modernist period around the late 1960’s, retail transactional spaces were in the main still largely localised in the form of a variety of smaller, individualistic, more intimate, and less industrialized, shopping street or arcade forms (Richards; 1938; Winstanley, 1983). Nevertheless, since the mid-nineteenth century the diversity of localised retail spaces, at least in cities, has been considered to be culturally under threat from larger, more corporate retail forms, such as broader range individual
department stores that were particularly attracted free-to-roam female contingent within status-oriented, conspicuous consumption society (Aragon, 1994[1926]; Zola, 1962[1867], 1998[1883]).

An orientation towards encouraging communal, leisurely (or touristic) movement in localized space and place forms surrounding shopping activity is the renaissance of an idea that the communal shopping places support the units of cultural transmission and shape local experience, evident in that shopping, alongside religion, can be seen to have shaped local environments at least as far back as the structuring of medieval cities and towns that, to some extent, remain visible and pleasing in many UK and European locations (Kostof, 1991). Further back still, architectural archaeology has recognized that in terms of local place-shaping ‘the Romans built covered malls of shops, those in the market complex the emperor Trajan built in Rome’ (Wilkinson 2000, p.38); these still not being the first spatial shopping developments, as more broadly summarized in historical terms by Chung et al. (2001), as modified in abbreviated form in Table 1.

Considering the earliest form of ‘shopping’ public spaces as being market places, travel hubs and street traders, it is perhaps relevant to note, at what may be regarded as the current physical shopping crisis (‘death of the high street’) brought on by the internet shopping revolution, a resurgence of research interests into these and other non-shop or non-shopscape based, urban-physical space shopping forms (Benson and Ugolini, 2010; Davis, 2010; Mitchell, 2010; Portas, 2011) – forms that were, and largely still are, often coupled with the betterment of urban spaces, often in association with tourism concerns (Harris, 2009; Beer et al. 2012; Goldblatt, 2012; Marciniak, 2012). As cited on table 1 this latest modernizing impulse crisis commenced around the end of what may now be regarded as the ‘grand age of shopping centers/zones’ that commenced around 1950. Previous to this the age of department and major variety store development as ‘anchors’ on what was otherwise a traditional shopping street and travel hub ‘map’ suffered another period of transition crisis related to the de-urbanization and suburbanization of cities project. This modernizing impulse was largely a response to greater car ownership and the association of non-city, spacious living with ‘the good life’ to be earned after the tribulations of war. This movement is often located as being typified at its beginning with the restructuring of Los Angeles (Baudrillard, 1988[1986]; Soja, 1989; Longstreth, 1997), so it is perhaps relevant that, roughly in the center of this modernizing impulse, the 20 year cycle of film noir in the cinema appeared which has been at least partly taken as a cultural reaction, signifying shock and nostalgia at the transformation of cities (Hirsch, 1981; Copjec, 1993; Dimenberg, 2004) – a movement that can be seen in retrospect to be a popular culture form of research ‘workshop’ upon the nature of social and community change being experienced. Still again, previous to this was the modernizing impulse crisis of big store Vs. little store within major city conurbations as noted in the popular literature of the time, particularly relating to Parisian developments following the London Great Exhibition of 1851 (Zola, 1962 [1867], 1998[1883]), and of stimulus for some of the first serious sociological studies – artistic and scientific – concerning the changes of that that remain of interest for spatially-oriented historical retail writers and scholars (Aragon, 1994[1926]; Benjamin, 1973, 1999; Miller, 1981: Bowly, 1985).

So it can be seen that there has been a series of particularly studied shifts in shopping space alterations of the living environment – including periods of perceived social crisis and debate, visible in cultural artifacts of each sub-era, across what has been termed ‘the movement from craftsmen-retailer to international business over the last 150 years’ (O’Brien and Harris, 2013[1991], p. 7). It is the particular results of these movements in terms of the shopping spaces that now face substitution by electronic technology that are now under question, in terms of whether a historical examination of shopping forms can better instruct us in terms of how to maintain public space vitality during the current, internet-based modernization impulse.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Key Features of Retail Development</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7000BC</td>
<td><strong>Markets and market cities extant:</strong> City of Çatalhöyük founded for trade in commodities, Lydians and Chinese have specialist retail shops and ‘chains’ in major population centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500BC</td>
<td><strong>Market at Thebes illustrated as having covered and uncovered shopping ‘units’</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>400BC</td>
<td><strong>Greek Agora built as internally focused, open central atrium encircling arcade:</strong> conflation of public forum, civic duty/pride, entertainment and market</td>
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<td>110BC</td>
<td><strong>Trajan’s Market built as roofed central atrium with built in side units</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle Ages &amp; Renaissance</td>
<td>Built marketplaces dominant as civic centers: including covered and uncovered elements and specialist zones and streets for individual trades – town/city halls, palaces and cathedrals adjacent or attached – Foire St Germain, Paris established 1462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1566–18th century</td>
<td><strong>Age of establishment and growth of major city exchanges and pedestrian shopping districts:</strong> due to rise of international exchange and credit arrangements: rise of the bourgeoisie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786–1925</td>
<td><strong>Age of the covered shopping galleries, passages and arcades leading to Grand Department store city reformulations:</strong> growing grander and into halls, in-line with grand exhibition spaces – 1851 Crystal Palace, Great Exhibition, London – elegiac response to department stores replacing shopping arcades and their pleasures of hidden corners, dark interiors and interpersonal interactions, major psychographic home of the flâneurs - poetically evoked in both Louise Aragon (1994[1926]) Paris Peasant, and Benjamin (1999) Arcades Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852–1950</td>
<td><strong>Grand age of the department store and major variety chain stores as anchor for shopping centers/zones and transport routes:</strong> 1852 first department store Bon Marche, Paris (signaling another key Parisian flâneur haunt) &amp; 1859 first modern chain store: Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company, New York (1879 first Woolworths US, 1884, first Marks &amp; Spencer’s UK) – Zola (1998[1883]) <em>Au Bonheur des Dames</em> published towards mid-period - early 1900’s department stores branch out into suburbs/property development, providing extensive car parks at or nearby each branch, relative to growth of car ownership and developments in air conditioning/architecture, building and suburbanization – 1919 first shopping environment to be air-conditioned Abraham and Strauss Department store New York - 1920’s first outlet stores New England, 1929 Woolworths shops in UK=766 – 1930 first supermarket King Kullen New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940–1960</td>
<td><strong>Age of the classic US film noir cycle – poetic elegy for a disappearing world</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. 2000 onwards</td>
<td><strong>Elegies for disappearing shop spaces, including (Hornsby, 1996) and Jones (2009) – music shops 1st internet retail casualty (McIntyre and Ganly, 2012)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - ?</td>
<td><strong>Age of internet shopping growth:</strong> following the advent of the internet in 1984 and the world wide web in 1990, internet shopping starts to grow dramatically during the 2000’s and 2010’s as physical shopping declines – initially affecting the ‘death’ of sectors where posting or downloading of products or services is most suitable (music, books and small electronics) but spreading to other sectors, including food and fashion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Town and city shopping: modernist retail spatial design parameters and psychogeography

The city has been twice humiliated by the suburbs: once upon the loss of its constituency to the suburbs and again upon that constituency’s return. These prodigal citizens brought back with them their suburban values of predictability and control (McMorrough, , p.193).

The above quote may be unfair in blaming increased shopping realms of predictability and control, relative to Bentham’s or Foucault’s panoptical society solely upon consumers – although it is no doubt that compliance by consumers is key for the success of such a society. Nevertheless, a glance at the shopping pattern shifts over the last century, as summarized in table I, a ply demonstrate a shift away from and then back to a town/city central hub within the last century, resulting in shopping space homogenization elements of the suburbanization process – those of environmental homogenization, ennui and alienation – creating ‘brand zones’ or ‘clone towns’ in the late twentieth century townscapes. Towards the end of the twentieth century these ‘cityscapes’, whether located in actual cities or their smaller town simulacra, increasingly resembled the previously commercially constructed, modernist palaces or ‘cathedrals’ of consumption that construed the post war out-of-town or suburban shopping mall.

Since the 1950’s the key theoretical retail design orientations towards constructing and controlling the available varieties of physical retail leisure environments, as outlined in table II, within the timeline of recent historical development can be considered in their relative potential for designing space and place forms to support psychogeographic, exploratory behaviours of the flâneur (casual, urban stroller/man of the crowd who explores the phantasmasgregories of space and time – a spatial experiencer, rather than a buyer), the dérâve (experimental behaviour...of transient passage through varied ambiances) and the détournement (forming an integration of present or past artistic production into a superior construction of a mileau) within a society of consumer spectacle (Debord, 1958; Benjamin, 1999; Coverley, 2010). Such an orientation for the analysis of historically developed retail forms and formations follows the psychogeographic sub-stream of shopping literature over the last century, largely focused upon socio-cultural retail innovations within arcades and department stores from the nineteenth century onwards (Aragon, 1994[1926]; Benjamin, 1999; Miller, 1981; Bowlby, 1985; Zola, 1995[1883]). When considering the nature of spatial atmospheric property attribution in general, the theories of Lefebvre (1991[1974]), Baudrillard (1996[1968]) and others upon social space construction and ‘lived’ atmospheric realms, the current shift from physical to virtual consumption processes can be taken as a stimulus for revitalized interests in the design of physical consumption spaces for social good, and the mixed socio-cultural and economic diversity required to provide spatial attractiveness in the face of the possible ‘death’ of town and city centres (Dimenberg, 2004, McIntyre, 2009, 2012; Zukin, 2010 – previously a concern of the mid-1950’s-60’s, late-modernist, film noir phase of town and city redevelopment (Jacobs, 1993[1961]; Lynch, 1960).

There has been a dominant adoption by retail designers and researchers of the more scientific paradigms in table II throughout the later part of the twentieth century, and this can be linked to the rise in spatial homogeneity, or ‘clone town’ outcomes and with the rise of chain store dominance and their in-store design technologies that systemize consumer movements and purchasing behaviour targeting (Conisbee et al., 2005; Koren, 2008; Thompson, 2007). Despite such machine aesthetic developments of shopping space construction, town and city shopping centres and malls remain as magnets for socialization, particularly for young people (Farrell, 2003; Zollo, 1999). However, they exhibit a large degree of spatial homogeneity of design that may make them prone to substitution by virtual shopping forms (even possibly by the young, given their tendencies towards modernism and technophilia). As it would seem that the dominant organizational design paradigm of retail atmospherics has resulted in storescapes that appear to be essentially the same, a move towards sensory, humanistic or aesthetically pleasing, ‘artistic’ design for strolling exploration. This re-orientation of the ruling paradigms of shopping spaces may be needed of to create psychographic realms of the local, more effectively "reading" the subjective experience of the spaces of consumption as they are experienced and assessed by strollers in communal space (comsumers), for a suitably diverse cultural ecology of meaning within a heavily systemized and digitalized world – thus improving object relational systems of spatial interaction or habitus (Baudrillard, J. (1996 [1968]; Bourdieu, 1977; 1984[1979]).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail research and design framework</th>
<th>Ruling theoretical paradigm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Atmospherics</strong> (pragmatic and empirical – sales effects)</td>
<td>Behaviourist – scientific (hard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Servicscape</strong> and experiential (experience economy) – whole person sensation and perception: psychological and biophysical Gestalt theory</td>
<td>Behaviourist, sensory &amp; experiential - scientific (hard-soft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiential</strong> focusing on the nature of experience for the experiencer, as in the experience economy</td>
<td>Sensory &amp; experiential – scientific (soft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community and city place and space theory</strong> - concerning the wider environment &amp; ecology – biomorphic and biophilic</td>
<td>Humanist (social &amp; cultural)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Philosophical and postmodern spatial concepts</strong> – re. poetic evaluations of life &amp; living, the immersed experiencer: human motivations and outcomes</td>
<td>Philosophical, humanist and societal (political &amp; poetic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Architectural and artistic orientations</strong> - aesthetic, cultural and community related</td>
<td>Philosophical &amp; Art-crafting(political &amp; poetic) artistic,...pragmatic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principles of design</strong> (art, craft and practice)</td>
<td>Art-crafting (artistic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II. Major frameworks of retail design prevalent since the 1950’s, including their paradigmatic orientations

Species of spaces and a reduced diversity of 'out-in-the-world' cultural ecology

Property and possessions belong to the tactical sphere. Collectors are people with tactical instinct; their experience teaches them that when they capture a strange city, the smallest antique shop can be a fortress, the most remote stationery a key position. How many cities have revealed themselves to me in the marches I undertook in the pursuit of books! - Walter Benjamin (1999[1931], pp. 64, 69).

The advising of a move towards a more artistic retail design orientation to compete agains virtualization raises interest when one considers the recent ‘death of the music store’relative to the inner will representational effectiveness claimed for music in human experience by Schopenhauer (1969, pp.255-67). The spatial characteristics of 'physical' music consumption spaces, and their recent virtual replacement offer a valid leisure environment study to examine what is lost by digitalisation of sensory experience in a product group symbolically loaded with immersed consumer characteristics, similar in satisfactions to the book collecting habit of Benjamin (1999[1931]) – book stores now also being under threat of virtual substitution by electronic reader and tablet developments. Coming back to the cultural evolutionary theme, the threatened extinction of such species of space (Perec, 1999) within the cultural ecology nature of the physical shopping morphology could be considered in cultural evolutionary terms for an implied development impact upon, or shift for individuals, relative to the fact that stores for music and books have been amongst the most dispersed cultural, consumer spatial attractions in the everyday high street within the last 50-150 years. Focused study of music stores has identified key sensory-spatial characteristics of the particular generic shopping environments involved (McIntyre, 2009, 2011); these being compared to the shopping environment studies of Hertzog (1989) and Uzzel (1995), with reference also to the mall environmental studies of Goss (1992, 1993, 1999).

The conceptual summary of music grouped spatial factors or attributes within broader concepts of spatial dimensions that united key music consumption behaviours associated with these environments, including a key immersive dimension, similar to an immersive, spa-related, health-oriented 'bathe' nature attributed to related tourist and museum consumption papers (Croutier, 1992; McIntyre, 2007, 2010). Interpretive, investigative, and in-the-world dimensions were also found to incorporate desired consumer factors of chance/serendipity, iconography/mythology, and coherence/credibility, somewhat relative to Barthe's (1973) consideration of intra- and extra-textual coherence of consumer myth-building whilst being out-in-the-world.
Thus, cultural-commercial music stores - particularly the smaller, independent, non-corporate species of spaces - offered an artistic or creative consumption space of local socio-cultural importance in tribal searches for interpersonal relationship values; as in Bourdieu's (1977, p.184) degree or 'mode' of social capital consisting of 'social universes in which relations of domination are made, unmade and remade in and by the interactions between persons'. This less institutionally controlled, more 'bottom-up', form of social capital relates to its initial anthropological use in community studies (Jacobs, 1993[1961]), and falls within Bourdieu's (1977, 1984[1979], 1986) wide-ranging use of the term - the other extreme concerning more 'top-down' institutional domination, as mediated by institutionalised mechanisms. The chosen usage here also overlaps with Putnam's (1995, pp.664-5) definition of 'social connections' involving 'features of social life - networks, norms, and trust - that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives', amongst other meanings around networks of relationships, their assets and resources. The loss of the diversity of retail spaces - caused by music and book downloading processes - could therefore contribute towards diminishing varieties of active and creative retail experiences that define locality when 'out-in-the-world', potentially reducing the motive to go shopping, and limiting cultural consumption as being 'essentially a spatial activity - (in that) we still "go shopping" (Goss, 1993).

The differential benefits of ‘moving around’ – and inside – localised physical shopping spaces

Most of us move around a lot, but when we move we often come into contact with those who haven’t moved around, or have come from different places. This should give us a better understanding of difference (though it will always be impossible to understand everything about difference). Each time we enter a new place, we become one of the ingredients of an existing hybridity, which is really what all ‘local’ places consist of(Lippard, 1997, pp.5-6).

If authentic shopping place is being eroded and de-authencised due to modernist impulse leading, via technological substitution, to ‘placelessness’, as per place look-alikeness encouraged by travel, mass culture and media (Relph, 1976), are we therefore facing the end of place? (Cresswell, 2004: 43-49), central habitus places of locality becoming temporal ‘non-places’, as commercialised hyper-spaces and communication networks take primacy in consumption (Augé, 1995). These non-places could be linked to ‘superficial’, ‘pseudo-places’ or ‘in-between worlds’ - all of this is largely assumed to be due to the general 'speeded-up' nature of increasingly mobile, modernistic lifestyles (Tuan, 1977; Thrift, 1994). An alternative view is that mobility and interaction with peoples and environments of difference are what creates a sense of place - contributing, by their very presence, to increased experience of a diversity of cultural ecology (Lippard, 1997). The argument here is that people's mobility adds to the mix and 'hybrid' nature of developing places; the 'pull of place' existing as a geographical component of the psychological need to belong somewhere in relationship to differentiated elsewhere, as an antidote to the prevailing alienation of sameness and homogeneity in modernised, machine aesthetic experience; increased movement of people to appreciate the value of local differences being an intrinsic human drive to 'define culture and identity...to change the way we live' (Lippard, 1997, pp. 7, 20). The current internet-based threat to varieties of sensory-spatial leisure experiences by virtual substitution, in fact, increases the more 'local' one goes down the spatial continuum. This is due to the fact that major cities and tourist hubs are better motivated to retain pleasing facets of local environmental difference in order not to 'kill the golden goose' of touristic visitation; this spatial difference often being of a historically-based spatial retention.

The current modernising impulse crisis to shopping environments is not only caused by increased mobility in terms of a greater range of travel, but it is also due to decreased mobility within a local environment and resulting loss of local varieties of leisure space. In the case of the music store example the loss of such spaces is almost entirely due to internet and mobile technology advances enforcing a reduced diversity of local cultural ecology - less varieties of local shops giving less variety of 'out-in-the-world' or 'active' sensory consumption spaces. So, it would seem that increased virtual and global mobility implied for a modernistic lifestyle of the twenty-first century results in decreased local mobility, as would lead to the 'death' of local high/main streets in smaller conurbations (already partially noted due to the increased mobility of car use and travelling to out-of-town stores, bigger towns and cities in a previous stage of retail development). Therefore, placelessness not only results from the increased (de-localized) mobility caused by moderised transport systems, as was the prime historical case stated in the suburbanization and homogenization of city retail environments in a
previous modernisation impulse crisis, but also from the resulting decreased local mobility and exploration/ownership in communal, dwelling-place - giving less meaningfully differentiated local varieties of places and spaces for people to ‘go out to’ and ‘be inside of’ and ‘identifying with, those who experience it, as in ‘To be inside a place is to belong to it and identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is the identity with the place’ (Relph, 1976, p.49).

Figure 1. Historical spatial differentiation preserved: signifying psychographic stroller suitable shopping ambience in a tourist locality (Salisbury, UK)

The socio-cultural sense of place will suffer if there is a reduction of local, shared leisure spaces, leading to decreased local people-people and people-space interactions. The question asked of consumer consent for local physical store loss is whether, despite the reduced economic cost of downloading, the reduction of retail spaces and their socio-cultural value of ‘creative’ consumption spaces/places in local high streets effectively contributes towards overall to a worldly improvement or denigration? The argument can be made that such shops formed co-creative consumption spaces of value that encouraged out-in-the-world orientations and helped form their mental maps (Craik, 1943; Gould and White, 1974, 1986; Johnson-Laird, 1983), or mental representations, of an ‘active retail’ world of communal identity and belonging. In contrast, the technological promotion of ‘not going out’ (‘to shop’ locally for instance) may lead to a ‘death’ of local place values in place of global ones - people will either travel to distant places of appeal or live in a home-bound, virtual world as represented in the science fiction dystopia of ‘a very private life’ (Frayn, 1968). The concept of ‘active retail’ and ‘going out’ behaviours having distinct social and cultural benefits is illustrated in the continuum of shopping activities outlined in figure 2.
The attraction of convenient or 'easy' modernist lifestyle brandscapes, involving an overall loss in retail varieties of 'active' experience of a 'real', localised nature in high streets and other physical shopping locations - a reduction in retail social capital - is equivalent to a reduced diversity of cultural ecology due to a reduction in varieties of sensory-spatial leisure consumption. The perceived overall reduction in financial and other personal sacrifices thus involved in moving away from the search for products of value as a byproduct of psychographic, stroller investigation of local communal, tribal spaces also tallies with anthropological claims for shopping sacrifices, ownership, collecting and care of products delivering personal values of communal good (Benjamin, 1999b; Miller, 1998, 2008, 2010) - a form of communal materialism in space. This is as opposed to an individualistic solipsism in simply focusing upon acquisitive consumption as the prime focus of shopping where psychographic strolling is a byproduct, as in homogenous physical brandscapes, or eliminated altogether by online shopping. An unquestioning move away from local in-the-world interactions towards virtual, global ones should, therefore, be subject to questioning and open debate regarding the process of consumer consent. A blind acceptance of new technology in all aspects of life and leisure as being a suitably modern and desirable state has been seen to have the potential to lead to a reduced diversity of cultural ecology at a local environment level - potentially at least partially dystopian, rather than utopian in sensory-spatial, cultural-economic terms.

The question posed here is one of concern for a potential reduced diversity of cultural ecology in 'real' world, local environments of meaning as a result of a move towards interactions and transactions online. This, of course may be a futile cry in the face of the convenience of technological innovations and the fashion for mass acceptance and consent away from 'old' tangible 'things' and localised spaces to 'new' products and processes (at least in music shopping terms it would appear to be so). Nevertheless in studying historical shopping forms and the movement of people into and inside varieties of immersive leisure consumption spaces, including the partial co-creation within some of the specific attributes and dimensions of those spaces for humanistic satisfactions (Lippard, 1997), implies a number of overall beneficial processes stemming from those environments that should be recognised by future social planners and politicians to effectively maintain or maximise social and individual satisfactions via the provision of sufficient meanderings of pleasure, to provide:

- a vision of a 'social whole' (with all its functions connected) normally denied modern men and women in ordinary life and work (Selwyn, 1990: 69).

Conclusions: Theories of shopping design relative to the psychographic impulse
The current modernistic impulse in shopping space design is not satisfactorily meeting the historically proven need for a humanistic orientation towards communal belonging and psychographic strolling in
local social spaces - s desire for the "fixation in the spaces of use stability... (as) a being who does not want to melt away" whilst being out-in-the world (Bachelard, 1994[1958]; Berman, 2010[1982]). Instead, there is a primary focus upon consumption within homogeneous brandscapes. This paper advocates that 'retail organizational design needs to more fully apply itself to the creation of “a geography of difference” (Harvey, 1996) to continue to attract consumers and halt homogeneity of design of shopping space and place leading to a loss of retail social capital for all (Bourdieu, 1977, 1986; Putnam, 1995, 2000). To this end, it would seem retail space designers should not only fix upon the build of a series of scientific approach, bottom-up (environmental input) atmospherics’ elements (Kotler, 1973), or consumer-related, side-on (sensory sensation) servicescape factors (Bitner, 1992), or even a number of similarly side-on (targeted) experiential facets (Holbrook, & Hirschman, 1982; Pine, & Gilmore, 1999). Instead, a mix of these should be based upon the satisfaction of top-down, consumer-based ambient impressions of place and space to provide localised experience outcomes as per Schmitt (1999), but ones that primarily focused upon psychographic strolling nature of local environments in what could be considered to be a 360 degree store design process (see figure 3).

The suggested process for physical shopping space and place survival in the future, with its design characteristics guided by the sensory spatial ambience relative to enhanced psychographic strolling in communal space (as demonstrated to be key in the history of shopping forms), involves a heightened orientation towards providing a setting for the required humanistic sensory experiences of shoppers within the realms of their necessary aesthetic elements, more related to a humanistic arts and crafts approach than a scientific one. One of the problems of adopting only a more scientific approach to store design is that it seems to be based almost solely upon enhancing acquisition via exchange transactions at the expense of creating a distinctive environment for immersion or investigation – thus, according to Benjamin (1999[1936]), the fetish of sacred uniqueness of local spaces become eliminated by the aura of mass reproduction in the simulacra of shopping form spaces and places that the homogenous, brandscape high street and mall has become (malls not only being reproduced in local high streets, but now also being created there in terms of town/city centre and edge of town shopping malls). This mass production – a machine aesthetic of reproduced, homogenous brandscapes. Effectively, this process over time desacralizes the lure of the local (Lippard, 1997), and will inevitably lead via the modernist impulse, to the dominance of the virtual shopping environment.
on the world wide web – with no local strolling remaining to be able to create communal spaces, but only highly controlled individual purchasing in a virtual, socially atomised brandscape. This follows the logic of modernity and its organisational parameters of rationality, hierarchies of power and distancing from personal culpability - the principles of bureaucratic organisation, division of labour, and reason's guidance on which modernity is founded (Bauman, 1989). Thus the local community partakes of the iron prison of irrational rationality by denigrating local place and allowing the national and international selling logic of commercial corporations, via internet controlled acquisition, to 'own the future' by instigating 'the urge to fix problems that don't exist'(Lanier, 2013; Morozov, 2013) – in this case the need to consume things more and faster than has already been achieved in the Western world, with experience detached from outcomes unless one wishes to travel ever greater distances to touristic shopping spectacles! Only through consumer-focused atmosphere specification at a local psychographic need specification, more around attempts to analysis of key factors of desired surrounding atmospheres (Zunthor, 2006), can localized shopping habitats be sustainable effective in spatial design, focusing clearly upon their socio-cultural, spatial roaming purpose – a space liminal between the communal sacred of physical presence in the locality and the individual profane of simple acquisitive consumption of things - to effectively link acquisition and spatial experience to better offer a currency or retail social capital that is "no longer something thought, it is something lived”(Bergson, 1999[1911], p.10).

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