Lesbian Tourism: ‘Perth W.A. as an attractive lesbian tourist destination’.

Source: http://www.purplemoon.com/Stickers/rainbow-flag-female accessed on October 9, 2009

Simon Teoh, B. Tour (Tourism)

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of

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Full Name of Degree: Bachelor of Tourism with Honours

Thesis Title: Lesbian Tourism: ‘Perth W.A. as an attractive lesbian tourist destination’.

Author: Simon Teoh

Year: 2009
Declaration

I declare this project is my own account of my research and that all references are appropriately acknowledged.

.....................

Simon Teoh

04\textsuperscript{th} November, 2009
Abstract

In September 2008, the Lord Mayor of Perth announced her vision for Perth to be more ‘gay-friendly’. Her vision aroused some dissonance from the ultra conservatives. The aim of this thesis is to determine the attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian destination. The significance of this study is to understand local lesbian residents’ perceptions of Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination, and to evaluate the motivation and satisfaction of lesbian-tourists to Perth. The methodology used included participation observation at the 2009 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade; a semi-structured focus group interview of 4 self-identified lesbian Perth residents, and a purposive sample, using snowball effect, of 112 self-identified lesbians for an on-line survey. The data was analysed using content and statistical analysis. The findings were interpreted using a social constructivist approach, within a male feminist framework.

The findings indicated that slightly over a quarter of lesbian Perth residents felt that Perth is ‘lesbian-friendly’ (27%). Whilst ‘culture and sights’ was the top motivator for a lesbian vacation (94%), ‘visiting friends and family’ was the top motivator for lesbian tourists visiting Perth (71%). Slightly over a tenth of lesbian tourists were satisfied with lesbian attractions in Perth (13%). Overall, only a small number of respondents found Perth to be their first-choice ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination (6%), with an overwhelming majority wanting to see more lesbian attractions (85%), and 5% agreeing that there are sufficient lesbian venues. These results strongly suggest that Perth is not ‘lesbian-friendly’, and lacks attractions and venues as an attractive lesbian tourist destination. Recommendations for further research arising from these findings include undertaking a comparison between Perth and other Australian cities in terms of lesbian tourism.

Keywords: lesbian tourism, ‘lesbian-friendly’, tourist perception, attractive lesbian tourist destination, Perth W.A.
# Table of Contents

Copyright Acknowledgement ........................................................................................................ii  
Abstract ........................................................................................................................................ iv  
Table of Contents .......................................................................................................................... v  
List of Tables, Figures and Plates .................................................................................................... vii  
Abbreviations ................................................................................................................................. viii  
Acknowledgements ......................................................................................................................... ix  

## Chapter 1 Introduction ................................................................................................................. 1  
1.1. Background ................................................................................................................................. 1  
1.2. Tourist discrimination based on sexuality ............................................................................... 2  
1.3. Concepts and terms .................................................................................................................... 3  
1.4. Research interest ....................................................................................................................... 3  
1.5. Scope of study ............................................................................................................................. 4  
1.6. Aims of study .............................................................................................................................. 4  
1.7. Significance of study .................................................................................................................. 5  
1.8. Thesis overview ......................................................................................................................... 5  

## Chapter 2 Literature review .......................................................................................................... 7  
2.1. Introduction ............................................................................................................................... 7  
2.2. Australian gay and lesbian tourist market .............................................................................. 7  
2.3. Issues of tourist perception ....................................................................................................... 12  
2.4. Tourist Motivation ..................................................................................................................... 19  
2.5. Tourist Satisfaction .................................................................................................................... 24  
2.6. Sustainable Tourism .................................................................................................................. 26  
2.7. Tourism scholarship framework ............................................................................................... 27  
2.8. Current state of research ................................................................ ........................................... 28  
2.9. Research aims and objectives ................................................................................................... 32  
2.10. Summary ................................................................................................................................. 33  

## Chapter 3 Research design ........................................................................................................... 34  
3.1. Interpretive paradigm ................................................................................................................ 34  
3.2. Methodology ............................................................................................................................ 36  
3.3. Rationale for on-line survey questionnaire ............................................................................ 41  
3.4. Pilot testing ............................................................................................................................... 42  
3.5. Ethical consideration ................................................................................................................ 43  
3.6. Respondent sample .................................................................................................................. 43
3.7. Data analysis ......................................................................................................................... 45
3.8. Summary ................................................................................................................................. 45

Chapter 4 Results .......................................................................................................................... 47
4.1. Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 47
4.2. Characteristics of respondents .............................................................................................. 47
4.3. Aim 1 – Perceptions of Perth lesbian residents ................................................................. 49
4.4. Aim 2 – Motivations and satisfaction of Perth lesbian tourists ............................................ 57
4.5. Aim 3 – Attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian ‘rainbow tourist’ destination ......................... 61
4.6. Summary ................................................................................................................................. 65

Chapter 5 Discussion .................................................................................................................... 66
5.1. Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 66
5.2. Aim 1 - Perceptions of Perth lesbian residents ................................................................. 66
5.3. Aim 2 – Motivations and satisfaction of Perth lesbian tourist .............................................. 69
5.4. Aim 3 - Attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian ‘rainbow tourist’ destination ......................... 72
5.5. Conclusion ............................................................................................................................... 75

Chapter 6 Conclusion .................................................................................................................... 76
6.1. Overview of findings ................................................................................................................ 76
6.2. Recommendations .................................................................................................................. 77
6.3. Limitations of the study ......................................................................................................... 78
6.4. Further research ..................................................................................................................... 79

References .................................................................................................................................... 80

Appendices .................................................................................................................................... 98
Appendix 1 Useful Websites ......................................................................................................... 98
Appendix 2 Information Letter for Prospective Participants ....................................................... 99
Appendix 3 Questionnaire Rationale ............................................................................................ 101
Appendix 4 Survey Questionnaire ............................................................................................... 104
Appendix 5 Invitation Letter for Prospective Focus Group Interview Participant ..................... 108
Appendix 6 Focus Group Consent Form ....................................................................................... 110
Appendix 7 Part of Focus group interview transcript .................................................................... 111
Appendix 8 Additional comments from questionnaire ............................................................... 113
List of Tables, Figures and Plates

Table 2.1. RMMIR Gay and Lesbian Leisure Travellers..................................................8
Table 3.1. Respondent sources..........................................................................................44
Table 4.1. Most ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination.................................................................51
Table 4.2. Statistical analysis of perceptions of Perth lesbian-residents..........................56
Table 4.3. Statistical analysis of perceptions of lesbian non-residents...............................56
Table 4.4. Statistical analysis of holiday motivation of Perth lesbian-residents..................58
Table 4.5. Statistical analysis of holiday motivation of lesbian non-residents.....................58
Table 4.6. Top motivators to position Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination....................59
Table 4.7. Motivations to visit Perth..................................................................................60
Table 4.8. Likelihood to tell friends and recommend Perth...............................................64
Table 4.9. Chi-square test...............................................................................................64

Figure 2.1. Map of Australia.............................................................................................11
Figure 2.2. Rainbow flag.................................................................................................19
Figure 2.3. A typology of motivators in tourism...............................................................21
Figure 2.4. Leisure motivation scale of Beard & Ragheb (1983).......................................22
Figure 2.5. Tourism regions of Western Australia..........................................................29
Figure 2.6. Map of Perth.................................................................................................31
Figure 2.7. Map of Perth suburbs...................................................................................31
Figure 3.1. Map of Sydney.............................................................................................38
Figure 4.1. Top eight ‘lesbian-friendly’ destinations.........................................................52
Figure 4.2. Reasons for top 3 ‘lesbian-friendly’ destinations...........................................52
Figure 4.3. Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination.........................................................56
Figure 4.4. Lesbians on holiday.......................................................................................58

Plate 3.1. Rainbow flag display, Oxford St. Sydney, NSW..............................................37
# Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Long Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GAL</td>
<td>Gay and lesbian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLTBI</td>
<td>Gay, lesbian, transsexual, bisexual, intersexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMS</td>
<td>Leisure motivation scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMMIR</td>
<td>Roy Morgan Market Insight Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGLMG</td>
<td>Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDHR</td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
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</table>
Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the original owners and custodians of Perth, W.A.,
The Whadjuk Nyungar People of the South West.

This thesis is dedicated to my partner, Heinz, whose love, support and encouragement has allowed me the opportunity to engage in my passion for research.

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Finally, I would especially like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Diane Lee, for her motivation, patience, advice and guidance throughout the project.
Chapter 1 Introduction

“One’s destination is never a place but rather a new way of looking at things”

Henry Miller (1891 – 1980).

1.1. Background

In September 2008, the visionary Lord Mayor of Perth, the Honourable Lisa Scaffidi announced that Perth should be more ‘gay-friendly’ (Bennett, 2008). Scaffidi’s idea is to be inclusive in promoting Perth as an attractive tourist destination, meaning for Perth to be more tolerant and embracing diversity in welcoming the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and intersexual (GLBTI) or known in the literature as the ‘queer’ community.

However, this sentiment does not appear to represent a majority of Perth residents. The subsequent day’s press reported discords from ultra-conservatives and a church leader, suggesting that Perth should exclude ‘queer’ people (Painter, 2008). Such press appears to support the notion of Perth as a homophobic city or homonegative (Dudley, 2005). This has attracted negative international headlines signalling to the wider global GLBTI community that Perth does not embrace its ‘queer’ community, that the GLBTI residents are not valued, and that GLBTI tourists are not welcomed.

The rejuvenation stage of Butler’s (1980) tourist destination life cycle model is vital if tourism is to be sustained. Tourist market segment diversification is essential in positioning Perth as an attractive tourism destination. New potential market segments such as the smaller GLBTI segment, with its higher disposable income can provide a ‘recession resistant consumer’ (Clift, Luongo, & Callister, 2002,p.142), especially after the recent global financial crises.

Hughes (2006, p. 174) suggests that a city seeking to attract tourism is reduced largely to encouraging (perhaps incentivising) others to develop suitable attractions, and the main activities of a destination-marketing organization become the
creation of a favourable image, positioning the city-product as one that meets the needs of particular market segments and promoting to target segments

Following Hughes’ notion of developing suitable attractions in creating a favourable image of the city, Perth should diversify and invest in the GLBTI tourist segment that may lead to stronger consumer confidence during economic hardships. More importantly, the image of Perth as a ‘mature city destination’, one that embraces diversity and equality for all tourists can help sustain the tourist market.

1.2. Tourist discrimination based on sexuality

The idea that a person’s sexuality (for same-sex or homosexual) defines a person represents a form of discrimination (Flynn, 2000; Goldstein, 2003). Offord (2003) and Healey (2007) suggest that such discrimination is problematic and exists in Australian society due to homophobia. Homophobia, according to Flood & Hamilton (2005), refers to “the unreasoning fear or hatred of homosexuals and to anti-homosexual beliefs and prejudices” (p. 1). In the context of homophobia in tourism, Want (2002, p.210), cited in Clift, Luongo & Callister (2002) proposes that

If the travel industry, both gay and straight, is to become more representative, it needs to diversify its product by taking on board these concerns and issues. Perhaps only then can we begin to accept that all people, regardless of sexual orientation, have the freedom and right to travel without fear of prejudices and restrictions.

This situation is problematic because of the potential damage to Australia’s image as an attractive and welcoming tourist destination, if Australia continues to discriminate against tourists based on their sexuality. This thesis positions an argument that every human being, irrespective of one’s sexuality, can be a potential tourist and therefore should not be excluded. Furthermore, this study premises that a GLBTI tourist has the same rights as any other tourist, as this is seen as a basic human right articulated in Article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in which,

everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay (United Nation, 1948).
1.3. Concepts and terms

Some concepts and terms are discussed in the context of this study.

**Gay Tourist**

The term ‘gay’ is taken to mean a homosexual male. This term is commonly used to refer to both male and female homosexual (Hughes, 2006, p.2). ‘Lesbian’ is a term used to describe the homosexual female (Rosen, 1973). The definition of a *tourist* according to Leiper (1995) states that:

> Tourists can be defined in behavioural terms as persons who travel away from their normal residential region for a temporary period of at least one night, to the extent that their behaviour involves a search for leisure experiences from interactions with features or characteristics of places they choose to visit (cited in J. I. Richardson & Fluker, 2004, p.6).

**Gay/Lesbian**-friendly

The term ‘gay/lesbian-friendly’, is taken to indicate a ‘welcome’ to the gay/lesbian community (Hughes, 2006). This ‘welcome’ provides a ‘safe’ space for gays and lesbians. Such space includes having contents to promote gay/lesbian lifestyles with venues, attractions that fully or partly gay/lesbian run or owned, and includes non gay/lesbian businesses that are more accepting and tolerant towards the GLBTI community. Examples include gay/lesbian: precincts, hotel and bed & breakfast accommodations, retail shops, restaurants, businesses and a range of other tourism service providers. Other forms of ‘gay/lesbian-friendliness’ may involve information, advertisements and promotions by tourism authorities targeted at the GLBTI market segment, with separate or specific gay and lesbian tourist guides provided, for example destinations such as Sydney, Quebec, Amsterdam, London, Zurich (Guaracino, 2007). For the purposes of this study, the term ‘lesbian-friendly’ embraces the above concepts focusing on the female gender.

1.4. Research interest

This topic holds dear to this researcher due to his personal involvement and special interest in gay and lesbian (GAL) tourism, being a member of the GLBTI community in Perth. As
mentioned earlier, dissonance from the ultra-conservative section of Perth society to Mayor Scaffidi’s call for Perth to be ‘gay-friendly’, has stirred interest and helped situate the researcher’s quest for social justice and social inclusion of the GAL community. Additionally, in the context of tourism literature, GAL tourism has been identified as an under-researched study area (Guaracino, 2007; Hughes, 2006; C. Johnston, van Reyk, Paul, 2001; L. Johnston, 2005; L. Johnston & Longhurst, 2008; Kuar Puar, 2002; Waitt & Markwell, 2006). Furthermore, this study is in response to the lack of focus on the GAL segment of Tourism W.A., as indicated that there has been no identification by, or political will to drive this agenda (S.Buckland, personal communication, March 25, 2009). Whilst this topic involves gender study in tourism, readers are reminded that the focus is on tourism and not on gender study. As will be dealt in more detail later, through the literature reviewed, it was observed that a discrepancy exists in the amount of studies done on lesbian tourism compared with gay tourism. Hence, it is with timely conviction that such a discourse on lesbian tourism in Perth is due. There is a necessity to state the position of this male researcher, as this may pose a challenge in such a female gender study in tourism. Additionally, to address the gap in literature, this study is viewed from a male feminist’s perspective, whose predisposition respects and regards female gender study with equity.

1.5. Scope of study

This study focuses on the context of Perth as a lesbian tourist destination. Essentially, this study is a discursive exploration of the marginalised lesbian residents and lesbian tourists of Perth. Initially, the study was titled ‘The relationship between the lesbian ‘rainbow tourist’ and Perth W.A.’ (as named in Appendices). As the research developed, the thesis title evolved to ‘The attractiveness of Perth W.A. as a lesbian tourist destination’.

1.6. Aims of study

The core aim of this thesis is to address the question of Perth as an attractive lesbian tourist destination. The objectives of this study are to:

1. determine how ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth is;
2. evaluate the motivations and satisfaction of Perth lesbian tourists,
3. determine the attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian tourist destination.
Consequently, this study hopes to increase understanding and contribute towards the epistemology of Perth lesbian tourism.

1.7. Significance of study

The significance of this study is to understand lesbian tourist perceptions, giving ‘voice’ to Perth lesbian residents and lesbian tourists. Using a social constructivist approach (Gregen, 1985; Grodin & Lindlof, 1996), this study critically engages the ‘Other’ (Said, 1985), sexualised gender community through informed knowledge of their social realities. Furthermore, this study applies a male feminist interpretivist approach.

This research study is important as it adds to the body of knowledge, since the GAL literature review identified a gap that indicates a clear lack of research on lesbian tourists (L. Johnston, 2005; Kuar Puar, 2002). Whilst other studies have looked at spatial needs of lesbian tourists (L. Johnston & Longhurst, 2008), lesbian pilgrimage travel to Lesbos Island in Greece (Kantsa, 2002), studies on Gay and Lesbian Pride Parades (L. Johnston, 2005; Markwell, 2002; Mason, 2009), marketing lesbian tourism (Community Marketing, 2001, 2008; Guaracino, 2007; Hughes, 2006; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007), this study specifically focuses on lesbian tourists’ perceptions, motivations and satisfactions specific to Perth W.A.

The implication of this study can help to position Perth as a sustainable lesbian tourism destination. The wider implications for Perth and beyond, suggests further cognizance of lesbian tourist needs, wherein the tourism industry can reinvent their product provisions to meet such needs. In doing so, both private operators and governmental tourism agencies could benefit highly from such insights.

1.8. Thesis overview

Chapter two will review literature on wider tourism issues, followed by a discussion on the hetero-homosexualism binary that sets the tourist sexuality framework. Next, there will be some discussions on gay and lesbian tourism issues, with an exploration of more specific lesbian tourist issues identifying a gap in existing studies in the literature, leading into the aims and objectives of this study. A brief description of the study site will be given. A
discussion of the sustainable tourism framework will be given in the context of this study. Finally, Jafari’s (1990) and Macbeth’s (2005) tourism scholarship platforms will be discussed and identify the research gap.

Having identified the research gap, chapter three will discuss methodology and develop an appropriate design for empirical data collection. There will be a brief outline of the two interpretive paradigms applied in this study:

1. social constructivism (Gergen, 1985); and
2. male feminism (Awkward, 1995; Digby, 1998).

This is followed by the methods of data collection which include:

1. participant observation of the 2009 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade (SGLMGP);
2. focus group interview of the perceptions of lesbian residents of Perth, and
3. on-line survey of ‘self-identified lesbian’ residents and tourists using a ‘snowball’ effect.

Chapter four will present the results and findings. This will be done thematically based on the aims and objectives of this study, as mentioned in section 1.6. Chapter five will discuss these findings in the same order and relate them to the literature discussed in chapter two. Finally, chapter six will conclude with an overview of the findings with strategies for a paradigm shift that might help to capture, develop and sustain lesbian tourism in Perth. This chapter will also discuss limitations of this study with recommendations and opportunities for further study.
Chapter 2 Literature review

“A person’s sexual orientation is like their gender or skin colour. It is wrong to discriminate upon the ground of sexual orientation as on any other ground of immutable characteristics”

Hon. Justice Michael Kirby, former Australian High Court Judge

2.1. Introduction

This section presents a review of relevant literature regarding lesbian tourism, in particular, theories of tourist perceptions, motivations and satisfaction, and sustainable tourism leading to the project aims and design of this study (Anderson & Poole, 2001; D. Evans & Gruba, 2002).

A review of current theory serves three functions. These functions:

- provide some background information required to conceptualise the extent and significance of the research problem;
- identify and discuss attempts by other studies to solve similar problems; and
- provide examples of methods these authors have employed in attempts to solve these problems.

The purpose of this review is to formulate issues to be investigated and to justify research questions (Ridley, 2008).

Furthermore, an outline of the contextual reading using Jafari’s (1990) and Macbeth’s (2005) tourism scholarship platforms will be discussed. Finally, this review looks at the current state of research of this topic, identifying the research gap. The Australian GAL tourist market will be discussed next.

2.2. Australian gay and lesbian tourist market

Possibly, the only Australian homosexual (GAL) market research with regard to travel is identified in table 2.1 in this review. The 2008 Roy Morgan Market Insight Research (RMMIR) identified that in Australia, there are 424,099 homosexuals or
GALs aged 14 or over, representing 2.4% of Australian’s population (Roy Morgan Research, 2008).

Table 2.1. RMMIR Gay and Lesbian Leisure Travellers

(2.4% of Australians aged 14 or over or 424,099 consider themselves to be homosexuals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Gay &amp; Lesbian</th>
<th>Total population*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taken at least one trip for leisure purposes in the last 12 months</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average spend per night</td>
<td>$158</td>
<td>$147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booking via travel agent</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek eco-friendly tourism experience</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>67.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely to travel interstate</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Extrapolated from a sample size of 20,665 Australians aged 14 years or over, ending December 2008
'Travellers' are defined as those who have travelled for leisure purpose in the last 12 months
(Source: Roy Morgan Research, 2008, supplied by Tourism W.A. Research Department)

Of the Australian GAL leisure travellers:

- 72% (approximately 306,887) took a leisure trip of one or more nights compared to 69% of all Australians;
- GAL leisure travellers represent approximately $2.1 billion estimated yield a year;
- The average spend per night per person is $158 compared to $147 for all travellers;
- there are 122,358 or 28.9% GALs residing in Sydney, with 103,383 or 24.4% residing in Melbourne. Including country areas, two thirds or 68% reside in New South Wales and Victoria;
- almost 39% of GALs are likely to travel interstate compared to about 33% of total population; and
- almost 72% GALs are likely to seek eco-friendly tourism experience compared to about 68% of total population.

Whilst this national report is informative, it has not addressed the issues of motivation and satisfaction of Australian GAL tourists.

Guaracino (2007) informs us about the American economic power of GAL tourism. This report is based on the American Gay and Lesbian Tourism Profile 2006, with a sample size of 7500 respondents. Guaracino (2007) says that
advertising to the GAL market is profitable. 74% of respondents indicated that they are more likely to visit destinations where the government tourist office has a marketing campaign aimed at lesbian and gay men (p.39).

It would therefore appear prudent for governmental tourism authorities to promote GAL tourism because of its significant economic contribution. In the following, we will discuss the significance of the SGLMG.

**The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (SGLMG)**

In Australia, the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (SGLMG) is regarded as an iconic tourist attraction (Waitt et al., 2006). A visitor attraction, according to Swarbrooke (2002, p.4) is taken to mean:

1. sets out to attract visitors/day visitors from residents or tourist population, and is managed accordingly, and
2. provides a fun and pleasurable experience and an enjoyable way for customers to spend their leisure time.

The researcher used this event as part of the methodology, which will be further discussed in section 3.2. Started in 1978, in response to the Stone Wall anti-gay riots in New York City, the SGLMG has evolved from a political march into a spectacular visitor attraction, with significant numbers of both domestic and international GLBTI visitors. In 2009, the SGLMG recorded 300,000 spectators, 9700 participants, and 134 floats (Dennett, 2009).

Events NSW research reported that the 2009 SGLMG made a significant economic contribution to NSW. Using a face-to-face survey of over 1,200 attendees on Parade night and an online survey of more than 400 Mardi Gras Partygoers, the key findings include:

- over 21,000 interstate or overseas visitors came specifically for this event;
- overseas visitors stayed an average of 10.5 nights in Sydney and NSW;
- interstate visitors stayed an average of 3.9 nights in Sydney and NSW;
- the SGLMG attraction generated almost $30 million;
- media monitoring that found 448 press articles published in interstate and key NSW Tourism markets accounting for a cumulative circulation of over 40 million; and
television and radio items broadcast in interstate markets captured a cumulative audience of almost 17 million (Events NSW, 2009).

This report highlights the economic and socio-cultural significance of such tourist attraction in GAL Tourism.

In the Australian context, Markwell (2002) informs us that the support of both State level Tourism New South Wales and Federal level Tourism Australia in Mardi Gras tourism promotion, has led to significant changes in public perceptions, resulting in the Sydney Mardi Gras becoming an Australian ‘tourism icon’, despite prevailing opposition from the ultra conservatives. The SGLMG celebration is a month long celebration of gender diversity, tolerance and acceptance, culminating with a spectacular street parade of its GLBTI community from Hyde Park through Oxford Street to Moore Park (Waitt & Markwell, 2006), shown in figure 2.2.

Gay and lesbian tourism

A scoping review of existing GAL Tourism literature was undertaken to establish some of the issues concerned with GAL tourism (Clift & Carter, 2000; Clift & Forrest, 1999; Clift et al., 2002; Community Marketing, 2001, 2008; Guaracino, 2007; Hughes, 2006; L. Johnston, 2005; Kantsa, 2002; Kuar Puar, 2002; Markwell, 2002; Mason, 2009; Pritchard, Morgan, Sedgley, Khan, & Jenkins, 2000; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007; Waitt & Markwell, 2006).

The key issues arising were:

- ‘GAL-friendliness’ of tourist destinations (L. Johnston, 2005);
- host community reactions to GAL tourists (Kantsa, 2002; Kuar Puar, 2002);
- motivation of GAL tourists (Clift & Carter, 2000; Clift & Forrest, 1999; Hughes, 2006; Pritchard et al., 2000; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007);
- tourism mainstream business sensitivity towards GAL tourists (Clift et al., 2002; Waitt & Markwell, 2006);
- marketing issues with GAL tourism businesses (Community Marketing, 2001, 2008; Guaracino, 2007); and
- support from governmental tourism agency (Markwell, 2002).
A map of Australia is shown on the next page in figure 2.1. The position of Sydney is illustrated in relation to Perth. Notice the concentration of cities in the Eastern part of the Continent. Figure 2.2. shows a map of Sydney’s inner city suburbs. Oxford Street in the suburb of Darlinghurst and Paddington is arguably the main GAL tourist areas, although there are other more specific lesbian concentrated suburbs in Newtown and Leichardt.

![Figure 2.1. Map of Australia](http://maps.nationalgeographic.com accessed on October 02, 2009)

**Scope of review**

The scope of review include authors who have looked at spatial needs of lesbian tourists (L. Johnston, 2005); lesbian pilgrimage travel to Lesbos (Kantsa, 2002); studies on Gay and Lesbian Pride Parades (Kuar Puar, 2002; Markwell, 2002); marketing GAL tourism (Community Marketing, 2001; Guaracino, 2007; Hughes, 2006; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007).

This study will not examine gay identity (Alexander, 2003; Clarke, 2000; Goldstein, 2003; Halperin, 1995; Heng, 2004; Kantor, 2005; Marcus, 2007; Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2005; Willett, 2000); lesbian identity (Card, 1995; Hoagland, 1988; Horncastle, 2002, 2008; Kitzinger, 1987; Kitzinger & Perkins, 1993; Morland, 2005; Rothblum, 1997),
gay tourist victimisation (Brunt, 2006), or some historical background information in Western Australia’s GAL socio-political movements (Plunkett, 2005; Summers, 2006; Tan, 2002), since these have been widely covered and are not the focus of this thesis.

Furthermore, studies have shown that gay male tourists are subjected to gay victimisation (Brophy, 2004; Brunt, 2006), whereas lesbians tourists appear to be less obtrusive and perhaps more ‘invisible’ (Kantsa, 2002; Kuar Puar, 2002; Thomson, 2007). Consequently, this makes lesbian tourists more challenging in terms of being identified for study. It is this very challenge that drives this current study.

2.3. Issues of tourist perception

In order to understand tourist needs some discussion on tourist perception is required. The term perception according to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 7th Edition means,

“1. the way you notice things, especially with the senses; 2. the ability to understand the true nature of something and an idea, and 3. a belief or an image you have as a result of how you see or understand something” (Hornby, 2005,p.1122).

Additionally, The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thoughts defines perception as, “selections of reality, accounts, descriptions” (Trombley, Lawrie, & Bullock, 1999,p.637). Experiences may or may not match perceptions, for according to sense perception in sense-data Theory of Perceptions espoused by Pitcher (1971,p.8), “belief about” and “see” can produce discrepancies in reality.

In the tourist context, this study argues that tourist perception takes on Hornsby’s third definition, whereby a tourist might have a ‘belief in’, thereby conceiving ‘an idea or an image’ of what is made available before the tourist experiences reality, as in when the tourist ‘sees’ that destination. In the process, Trombley et al.’s definition of perception, whereby a tourist ‘selects reality’ seen through Pitcher’s sense perception theory may confirm truths (satisfaction) or produce discrepancies (dissatisfaction). Perhaps Pizam and Mansfeld (1999) best sum up tourist perception as,
the process by which an individual selects, organises and interprets information to create a meaningful picture of the world (p.29).

Furthermore, in terms of GAL tourists, Hughes (2006) posits that,

> gays and lesbians will seek destinations that are at least as ‘gay-friendly’ as is the home environment, if not more so” (p.69).

Therefore, the perceptions of GAL tourists form their ‘belief in’ and accordingly, their ‘need’ to ‘see’ and experience such destination. Following Hughes, this current study aims to understand how ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth is. In order to further understand GLBTI tourists, some brief discussions on perceptions of hetero and homosexuality is dealt with next, drawing out some of the tensions associated with such notions, in particular that between heterosexuals and homosexuals.

**Perceptions of heterosexuality vs. homosexuality**

Social perceptions of what constitutes ‘sexual normalcy’ requires some discourse. In much of the Anglo-Saxon Western World, such as in Western Europe, United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the ‘white male’ patriarchy seems to be the dominant ruling class (Awkward, 1995; Beauvoir, 1953; Card, 1995; Elson-Roessler, 1998; Gowing, 2006; Hoagland, 1988; Jensen, 2006; Sanday & Goodenough, 1990). Along with such patriarchal hegemony is the essentialist notion that assumes heterosexuality as the sexual norm in society (Brod, 1994; Chapman, 1987; Jackson, 1999; Katz, 2007; Kuypers, 1999; Offord, 2003; Seidler, 1991). As such, it appears ‘normal’ in society to assume heterosexuality is the only sexual currency operating.

the heterosexual was the standard against which all other sexualities were evaluated, and that society was structured to favour heterosexuals and heterosexual families (Clause 1.27 cited in Offord, 2003, p.206).

Therefore, it is not unreasonable to suggest that some tensions may exist between ‘normative’ heterosexual and homosexual society (Jackson, 1999). The implications of such binary affect how heterosexual society is anathema towards homosexuals. Anathema is the idea that one hates something because it opposes one’s belief (refer to the works of Summers, 2006, 2007). Consequently, social perception by the hetero-normative society may view homosexuals, according to Said’s (1985) notion of the ‘Other’, as having no place in society (Bull, 1991). As discussed earlier, this notion is implicated by the ultra conservative fraction of Perth wanting to exclude GLBTI community in Perth (Bennett, 2008). This thesis’s aim is therefore to challenge and argue for social justice and to hopefully affect social change. This change would hopefully embrace social inclusion that understands and gives voice to Perth lesbian residents’ perception of Perth as an attractive lesbian tourist destination.

Furthermore, a plethora of authors have written on the notion of:

- heterosexuality, defined as sexual attraction for the opposite gender (Brown, 1999; Chapman, 1987; Jackson, 1999; Morse, 2008; D. Richardson, 1996; Rosenthal, Reichler, & Australia. Dept. of Human Services and Health., 1994);
- homosexuality, defined as sexual attraction for the same gender (Griffiths, 2001; Kendall & Martino, 2006; Kitzinger, 1987; Morland, 2005; Rothblum, 1997; Warner, 1993; Wekker, 1997); and
- bisexuality, defined as sexual attraction for both genders (Bode, 1976; Garber, 1995; Zolla, 1981)

This study however will focus only on female homosexuality, which will be further discussed below.

Lesbianism

Misconception of lesbianism requires some discourse. Lesbianism refers to female homosexuality (Hoagland, 1988; Rich, 1981). Earlier definitions of lesbianism evolved around the sexual nature of females (Card, 1995; Hoagland, 1988; Rothblum, 1997), but second wave (1960-1980) feminists, began to view lesbianism in terms of
relationships and close bonding between women (Brooks, 1997; J. L. Evans, 1995; Weedon, 1999). Radical feminists view lesbianism as being women who are totally independent from the opposite gender (Rapone, Levine, & Koedt, 1973; Simons, 1995; Whittier, 1995). Thus, the presence of radical lesbians may pose serious threats and challenges, particularly to the patriarchal world.

However, this study adopts the definition given by American feminist Audre Lorde, who contends that,

> a lesbian is a woman who identifies fundamentally with women and her first field of strength, of vulnerability, of comfort lies in a network of women” (cited in Wekker, 1997, p.19).

Lesbian tourists, one would argue then would most probably look for their cohorts, just as gay tourists do. To be in the comfort and safety of a network of women for lesbians appears to be a natural tendency. Lorde’s definition is further supported by Kitzinger (1987, p.115) in that,

> the important thing about being a lesbian is not the sexual act itself. It’s the self-definition in that way as a woman-identified woman, and the commitment to women.

Therefore, being a ‘woman-identified woman’ with a commitment to its own network, fuels the flame for travel, to seek out similar minded people for common interests. For those who lack such an understanding, and those who might be threatened by being misinformed of the perceptions of lesbianism, homophobia is discussed next, as a pathology of sexuality ignorance.

**Homophobia**

Homophobia, one would argue, is a defensive mechanism used to camouflage one’s ignorance about sexuality. Psychologists Kitzinger & Perkins (1993, p.62) suggest that the term ‘phobia’,

> is a psychological diagnosis; that is, someone suffering from homophobia is considered to have something wrong with her or him psychologically, some kind of personality disorder or immaturity, and to be in need of psychological or psychiatric help.

Consequently, someone with homophobia views homosexuals with bias. Bias is something socially constructed (Kitzinger, 1987). With the social construction of lesbianism, it appears that society is generally intolerant towards lesbians.
Furthermore, Read (2009, p.363) claims that, “a lesbian identity is a socially stigmatised identity”. Being socially stigmatised, lesbians enjoy less social equity. This current study evaluates such implications through the perceptions of Perth lesbian residents and lesbian tourists to Perth, in particular, how inclusive or anathema Perth society is, in welcoming lesbian tourists. A brief discussion of the nature of queers will follow next.

**Queer theory and queer tourism**

Queer theory represents an idea of sexual being from within the GLBTI community (Horncastle, 2008; Jagose, 1996; Kirsch, 2000; Morland, 2005). This idea focuses on the blurring of sexual boundaries within gay and lesbian traditions, and the rejection to conform to GAL sexual and social norms. Being queer is a “process of formation….within] a zone of possibilities” (Jagose, 1998, p.2-3 cited in Kirsch, 2000, p.34). The queer Being assumes a ‘self-becoming’ identity on a transformative journey of the sexual self (Horncastle, 2008). It claims interstices or spaces, deviant from heterosexuality and homosexuality, where “queer bodies may be understood as mismatches of sex, gender and desire” (Jagose, 1996, p.3 cited in Johnston, 2005, p.11). In the context of tourism, Puar (2002) contends that, “queer tourism is still one of the least researched or discussed topics in scholarly venues” (p.1). Puar’s contention fuels this study’s objectives mentioned earlier in section 1.6.

Johnston (2005) writes about the struggles of the GLB sector community, in claiming identity, space, and presence in society. Johnston discusses queer theorising through the notions of “abjection, performativity and camp wishing to dislodge heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity in tourism studies” (p.11). Johnston’s study is based on the 1996 Auckland HERO Parade; the 1996 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade (SGLMGP); the 2000 World Pride Roma, and the 2001 Edinburgh Pride Parade. The methods used were focus group, individual in-depth interview, participant observation, and in Edinburgh, ethnography through direct participation in a drumming and marching group. Johnston purports the idea that such GAL Pride Parades provide platforms for queer GLBIs to be free and open, blurring the lines of masculinity and feminism. Johnston’s key emphasis is about how
sexualized bodies are displayed for the ‘tourist gaze’ (see Urry, 2002), thereby claiming ‘queer GLBTI identity, space and presence’, even though it is only temporary and only for these special events. Consequently, tourists are attracted by such displays of ‘gender blurrness’. Such gender confusion evokes a ‘tourists’ gaze’.

Furthermore, Mason and Lo (2009) found that heterosexuals enjoyed the public performance of homosexuality, despite their own ambivalence toward the GLBTI community. This public space afforded heterosexual spectators to actively seek in “the excitement of flirtation and confrontation with sexual strangeness” (p.109). In a way, tourists activate their ‘voyeur’ self, or the interest in other people’s life. Mason et al., used a purposive sampling to locate 103 respondents for the survey (53% females and 43% males). The majority of respondents said that it was ‘homosexuality’ that brought them to the SGLMGP. The safety of being amongst their heterosexual family and friends provided a sense of security, thereby not exposing themselves and not feeling threatened whilst engaging in ‘voyeurism’. In this sense, GLBTI parades are a spectacle, a source of tourist attraction for all sexualities.

However, Tomsen and Markwell (2007) poignantly reveal that there exist “undercurrent of tension and hostility from other crowd members” (p.38), which has lead to abuse and unreported violent attacks on GLBTI participants following the parade. Following Johnston’s (2005), Tomsen et al.’s, (2007), and Mason et al.,’s (2009) work, this current study undertook participant observations of the 2009 SGLMGP, as a precursor to understanding GAL tourists’ perceptions. In particular, observations of tourist interests (voyeurism) and attention during the SGLMGP. For example, it was observed that there were several groups of people, who happily clapped and cheered, as the parade passed by, with occasional attempts by some to take pictures with the queer parade participants. The necessity to briefly mention queer theory and how this relates to tourism here, is to add to the understanding that tourists find queerness as a form of attraction or voyeurism, as mentioned above. Next, some the issues of lesbian tourism is explored.
Lesbian tourism

There appears to be limited research done on lesbian tourism. Possibly, Kantsa’s (2002) study is the only research that focuses exclusively on lesbian tourism. Using ethnography, which is a method “that focuses on detailed and accurate description rather than explanation” (Babbie, 2005, p.302), Kantsa discusses the consumption of lesbian tourists spaces in Eresos, on the island of Lesbos, Greece. Eresos is believed to be the birthplace of Soppho, who is thought to be the ‘mother’ of lesbianism (Rothblum, 1997). Arguably, a visit to Eresos resembles a pilgrimage for the lesbian community, for according to Kantsa (2002),

it is a place where sexualities are lived out in a way that is not possible back in their hometowns, where they can feel more confident about their sexuality, meet other women (p.50).

Such freedom is seen as a tourist attraction. To be free and express one’s sexuality and be welcomed can be a tourist motivation. There is however, some resistance from the host community. Some local women are offended by lesbian tourists’ display of their sexualities, whilst others profit from these tourists. The issue of feeling ‘welcomed’ is thus in question. It is this very idea of being ‘welcomed’ that is the focus of this present study, leading to the inquiry of how ‘lesbian-friendly’ and ‘welcoming’ Perth is.

Another major issue facing lesbian tourists is the manner in which they are treated upon check in at a hotel. To illustrate, often lesbian couples’ request for a double bed are not met. The assumption is that two ladies should be sharing a twin bedded room. Furthermore, insensitive remarks or looks made by hotel staff can make such travel experience less memorable. Tourism service providers therefore need to be more friendly and accommodating towards lesbian tourists in order to win their business. One way is to have signifiers such as the rainbow flag that will attract GALs, which will be further discussed next.
The Rainbow Flag

The rainbow flag shown in figure 2.2 is a significant symbolic representation of gay and lesbian community pride (Waitt & Markwell, 2006). This iconic flag is commonly used in GLBTI marketing and displays to express ‘gay-friendliness’. The flag, designed by Gilbert Baker in 1978, comprises of six colour stripes: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet, signifying the diversity within the GLBTI community (Guaracino, 2007). The rainbow flag is thus recognised and identified synonymous with ‘gay/lesbian-friendliness’ as it signifies a ‘welcome’ sign especially for those tourists who have a GLBTI sexual orientation. Most well known GAL destinations such as Berlin, Amsterdam, Paris, London, New York, Miami, San Francisco and Sydney proudly display this flag. In the case of Perth, the author observed that there is an apparent lack of such displays. Such a lack of display poses an issue for lesbian tourists, since it would be difficult to visibly locate venues that are ‘welcoming’ to their needs. This study seeks to understand the importance of this flag in making lesbian tourists feel welcomed.

Figure 2.2. Rainbow flag
(Source: http://www.uucec.org/pics/Rainbow%20Flag accessed October 9, 2009)

Readers are reminded here that the main focus of this thesis is on tourism issues and less attention is given on gender issues. The next section deals with tourist motivation.

2.4. Tourist Motivation

The term motivation is defined as, “the reason why someone does something or behaves in a particular way” (Hornsby, 2005, p. 995). Human motivation theory suggests that there are intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Beck, 1990; DeCatanzaro, 1999; Deci, 1975). Intrinsic motivation refers to behaviours that occur without external stimuli such as rewards, recognition, higher remuneration (Deci, 1975; Efklides, Kuhl, & Sorrentino, 2001; Franken, 2002). Extrinsic motivation refers to
behaviours influenced by external contingencies, such as attracting rewards, incentives or punishments (Reeve, 1997).

Tourist motivation relates to what drives tourists to visit certain destinations and this could be both intrinsic and extrinsic (Hall, 2003; Holloway, 2002). For instance, a tourist may be drawn to a destination’s attractive urban appeal, landscape beauty, natural attractions, good weather and beaches, or vineyards, in short, the ‘pull factor’ that influences holiday decision making (Decrop, 2006).

Additionally, Swarbrooke & Horner (2007) suggest that tourism motivating factors shown in figure 2.3 can be grouped into:

- those which motivate a person to take a holiday; and
- those which motivate a person to take a particular holiday to a specific destination at a specific time.

However, potential motivators could evolve from either one or both of these factors. For example, a person might be visiting family and friends (personal) in a foreign destination, and in the process, engage in cultural sightseeing (cultural) of the local community. Swarbrooke et al.’s model provides the framework inquiry in that this study seeks to locate lesbian tourists’ motivation to visit Perth.
Figure 2.3. A typology of motivators in tourism
(source: Swarbrooke & Horner (2007,p.54))

The outcomes however are contingent upon factors such as safety, price, available amenities in tourist attractions, transport infrastructure, and hospitality of a destination. This outcome may result in satisfaction or disappointment (Gnoth, 1997). Tourists motivated to experience their perceptions of a destination may have a positive or negative experience (Clift & Forrest, 1999).

Beard and Ragheb (1983) developed the Leisure Motivation Scale (LMS), used in tourism studies (Mohsin, 2007). The LMS model suggests four motivator types based on Maslow’s (1968) hierarchy of needs. The four motivator components shown in figure 2.4 are:

- Intellectual
- Social
- Competency
- Escape
**Table 2.1. Leisure motivation scale of Beard & Ragheb (1983)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intellectual:</th>
<th>Social:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mental challenges</td>
<td>need for friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning, discovery</td>
<td>inter-personal relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exploration</td>
<td>recognition from others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imagination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency:</th>
<th>Escape:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>physical challenges</td>
<td>avoid social contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-achievements</td>
<td>seek solitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-competition</td>
<td>relaxation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mastery of physical skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2.4. Leisure motivation scale of Beard & Ragheb (1983)**

This current study attempts to apply the LMS model to locate motivation factors that may resonate this model, in particular, if the social or escape component may identify with some of the lesbian tourists’ traits. Next, a discussion of gay and lesbian tourist motivation follows.

**Gay tourist motivation**

A study by Clift and Forrest (1999) focuses on gay men’s destinations and holiday motivations. A sample of 562 gay residents of Southern England was obtained by participants recruited in bars/clubs in Brighton, and a self-completing postal survey advertised in a local GAL magazine. The results found three motivation themes:

- gay social life and sex;
- culture and sights; and
- comfort and relaxation.

Another study on GAL tourist holiday motivation by Pritchard, Morgan, Sedgley, Khan and Jenkins (2000), used qualitative methodology with 4 focus groups and 12 interviews involving 134 GAL participants. The study showed the motivations for GAL travel were:

- the need for safety;
- to feel comfortable with like-minded people; and
- to escape from heterosexism (often to specifically gay spaces) (p.267).
The Community Marketing Incorporation’s (CMI) (2008) 12th Annual Gay & Lesbian Tourism Study of a sample size of 50,000 GAL Americans, states that the top three criteria GALs use when choosing holiday destination were:

- recommendation by friends,
- unique attraction offerings, and
- a reputation for gay friendliness.

By understanding GAL tourist motivations, tourism service providers aiming for a share of this niche market, would do well to create such environments that can capture and sustain this lucrative market. We will next focus on lesbian tourist motivation.

**Lesbian tourist motivation**

Studies have shown that lesbian sex is not a priority for lesbians on holidays (Hughes, 2006; L. Johnston, 2005). Lesbian tourist motivations tend to focus more on adventure, travel and investigation of places rather than the glamourised, sexualised tourism commonly associated with gay men (Clift & Forrest, 1999; Clift et al., 2002; Guaracino, 2007; Waitt & Markwell, 2006). The features of lesbian tourism in the UK Mintel (2000) survey of GAL tourists suggests that 55% of lesbians (including female bisexuals) on holiday did not look for gay venues, compared to 64% gay men that did. However, lesbian tourists in Mintel’s survey were more likely than gay men or wider tourists:

- to want to stay in a ‘gay-friendly’ accommodation;
- to look for more diverse gay holiday products; and
- are less likely to visit countries that have anti-homosexual legislation.

The works of Clift et al. (1999), Pritchard et al.(2000), Mintel (2000) and CMI (2008) on GAL tourism inform this current study’s first and second objectives, which is to determine if Perth is ‘lesbian-friendly’ and to determine the motivators for lesbian tourists visiting Perth. An intrinsic tourist motivation may be to fulfil a personal need, for example to visit friends and family, attend a wedding, adventure, education or a conference. An example in the context of this study is to experience lesbian social
life. Similarly, an extrinsic lesbian tourist motivation may be an incentive to represent a group or march in the SGLMGP.

Expanding on Clift & Forrest’s (1999) study, two more motivational themes are added to this current study. The fourth theme, with a slight modification on the first theme separates social life and sex into two different variables: ‘social life’ and ‘lesbian relationship’. Following Guaracino (2007), the fifth theme is to understand if lesbian tourists are motivated to visit ‘venues displaying the rainbow flag’. The five themes are listed below:

1. lesbian social life;
2. lesbian relationship;
3. culture and sights;
4. comfort and relaxation; and
5. venues displaying the rainbow flag.

The above discussions on tourist motivation is seen as important as it will provide meaning as to why tourists choose the destination they visit. Understanding such traits and motivation components may lead to successful tourism provisions and marketing. However, an important essential element for tourism survival, apart from motivation is tourist satisfaction, which will be discussed in the next section.

2.5. Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is a fundamental feature for sustainability to occur. Satisfied tourists will tell others about their enjoyable holiday experiences and may look forward to returning to that destination. George and George (2004) suggests that a relationship exist between a tourist and his/her consumption of that holiday destination. The authors posit that satisfied tourists may develop a place attachment such as “sense of place” and “feeling of connection” that may result in repeat visits (p.53). For example, should tourists with GLBTI nature be made to feel ‘welcomed’ at a destination such as: upon checking in at a hotel, a request for a double bed for a same-sex couple is provided without any question or hassles; where same-sex tourists are treated with respect; where GLBTI contents and information are provided by tourism authorities; where a rainbow flag is prominently displayed at tourism service venues such as cafes, restaurants, retail shops; where there are friendly staff with
advertisements that display ‘GAL-friendliness’ establishments are a norm, would ensure tourist satisfaction that may lead to repeat visits. This could also lead to further recommendations amongst cohorts, providing some positive feedbacks and outcomes for the tourism providers. Following George et al., this current study seeks to understand how satisfied respondents are with lesbian attractions Perth has to offer.

In terms of GAL tourism, Hughes’s (2006) work focuses primarily on marketing issues in the episteme of GAL tourist profiles. Hughes addresses the notion of destination choice as ‘risk avoidance’, in that,

gay-friendliness, gay space or at least the absence of homophobia are important issues for many gays and lesbians when on holiday (p.71).

In this context, it may be implied that GAL tourists primarily look for ‘safe’, ‘comfortable’, ‘risk free’ destinations that are ‘welcoming’ and ‘embracing’ towards their nature when seeking a holiday destination. The view of risk avoidance is not endemic to only GAL tourists. In fact, it seems rather universal as tourists of all types, arguably practice risk avoidance. For example, in the aftermath of terrorist attacks on tourist venues such as that of the New York Twin Tower incident in 2001, the Bali incident in 2002, and the London incident in 2005, a measurable decline in tourist numbers is inevitable, at least for a period of time. As for the GAL tourist, any slight indication of ‘homophobia’ or a disrespect for anyone with GLBTI nature, would render a destination as intolerable and hence, to be avoided. There may be a fear of being mistreated and being made uncomfortable, should any measure of confrontation occur as a result of a tourist’s sexuality. Tourist satisfaction is therefore to be regarded as an essential element for tourism sustainability. Furthermore, Lukenbill (1999) suggests that the GAL community cannot be bought, rather,

it can be engaged through sound business and marketing practices that result in social change (p.118, cited in Hughes, 2006, p. 163).

By understanding and treating GAL tourists with equality and respect, the benefits of such engagement could only be fruitful for both sides of the coin. On the one side, GAL tourists are satisfied and might revisit or tell others about their pleasant experiences, on the other side, tourism operators’ business is sustained. In the event of tourist dissatisfaction, proper management practices should be put into place to address such shortcomings. In the course of this current study’s inquiry, it is hoped
that any data reflecting lesbian tourist dissatisfaction, may lead to outcomes that will affect some social change. Hughes’s and Lukenbill’s work informs this current study in evaluating the satisfaction of lesbian tourists to Perth, in particular if they are satisfied enough to revisit Perth and recommend Perth to others. As mentioned, an outcome of tourist satisfaction results in sustainable tourism, which follows in the next section.

2.6. Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable Tourism (ST) is a highly contested notion. ST has its roots in sustainable development (SD). According to the Bruntland Report (1987) ‘Our Common Future’, SD means,

\[
\text{development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland & World Commission on Environment and Development., 1987,p.43).}
\]

The arguments of SD are anchored in three main tenants: economic, environmental and social, or commonly known as the triple bottom line (Rogers, Jalal, & Boyd, 2008,p.42). Arguably, SD is almost always about our relationship with the natural world (Baker, 2006). However, SD is not only about sustaining the physical environment, but also about sustaining socio-cultural and economic environment (Baker, 2006; Desai & Potter, 2008; Elliott, 2006). The ‘Agenda 21’ that evolved in 1996, is to provide a strategy for the Travel & Tourism Industry focused on environmentally SD practices (Weaver, 2006).

In 2005, the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) defines ST as

\[
\text{an enterprise that achieves an effective balance between the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development in order to guarantee long-term benefits to recipient communities (WTO, 2005, cited in Herremans, 2006, p.3)}
\]

Hence, long term benefits to local communities is the key to tourism business survival. Additionally, ST is defined by Weaver (2006) as,

\[
\text{tourism development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs (p.10).}
\]

Weaver’s view resonates with the Brundtland Report with the focus on how not to deplete resources for future generations. Therefore, how sustainable a tourist
destination is, may rely to a certain extend on the social relationship between that tourist and the experience of that destination (Harris, Griffin, & Williams, 2002). Sweeney & Wanhill (1996) suggest that customer care is important, and that

    tourism and hospitality businesses should not lose sight of the fat that they are dependent on people. Virtually all tourist surveys show that friendliness of the local people rates high on the list of positive features about a destination (p.159)

In this context, when a tourist encounters friendliness and has a satisfying experience, the strong possibility of a revisit is higher compared to a dissatisfied tourist. In the light of Sweeney et al.’s view, the survival of a tourist destination then depends strongly on the tourists. **Friendliness** to tourists is then the key contribution towards tourist satisfaction. In the context of this study, we will be examining how ‘lesbian-friendliness’, defined in section 1.2, contributes to the how sustainable Perth is as a lesbian tourist destination. The thread of argument in this current study is woven from the outcomes of tourist satisfaction (refer to Ryan, 1995). Will satisfied lesbian tourists tell others about Perth’s lesbian tourist attractions? Will they recommend Perth? Can this lead to sustainable tourism? Having discussed briefly the elements of ST, we now turn towards the overarching tourism scholarship framework in this study that will be discussed in the next section.

### 2.7. Tourism scholarship framework

Informing readers of the framework of this study is important as essentially, it serves to provide a contextual reading platform.

**Jafari’s & Macbeth’s Tourism scholarship platforms**

The evolution of tourism scholarship has been primarily defined by Jafari’s (1990) four platforms namely:

1. **advocacy**, which encourages growth and development (in the 1960’s);
2. **cautionary**, with emphasis on the socio-cultural critiques on tourism development (in the 1970’s);
3. **adaptancy**, which provides an balanced alternative with pragmatic solutions to tourism developments (in the 1980’s); and
4. knowledge-based, which incorporates a multi-disciplinary holistic approach with an objective scientific balanced view (in the 1990’s).

Extending Jafari’s four platforms, Macbeth (2005) enriches the scholarship debate, proposing:
5. a value-based platform; with
6. a corresponding ethics platform

to correct the imbalance suggested by Jafari. Macbeth argues that Jafari’s ‘scientific objectivity’, is myopic to the ethical values inherent in research, as the debate on sustainable tourism development centres on politically and ethically contested notions (p.965).

Taking Macbeth’s lead, this study privileges the subjective voices of lesbian tourists. This study also projects the findings through a male feminist perspective, rendering yet another subjective worldview. In doing so, the combination of a ‘value-based’ and ‘ethical’ research scholarship, will hopefully be reflexive of this sub-cultural group. Consequently, this study is ‘subjective and inclusive’ in the sustainable tourism debate. Lesbian tourism in this sense, is positioned as a social representation of the perception, motivation, and satisfaction of lesbian tourists, since tourism is seen to be a basic human right (refer to section 1.4). Having discussed the main tourism scholarship framework of this study, the next section deals with the current state of research, leading to the gap identified in the literature reviewed.

2.8. Current state of research

Site of study – Perth W.A.

Perth, shown in figure 2.6, is the capital of Western Australia (W.A.), with a population of 1.5 million (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007). Perth serves as the centre of commerce and transportation for W.A. In terms of tourism, Perth is the gateway to five tourism regions of W.A. depicted in figure 2.5 (Tourism W.A. 2009):
1. Experience Perth,
2. Australia’s Coral Coast,
3. Australia’s Golden Outback,
4. Australia’s North West, and
5. Australia’s South West.

![Map of Western Australia showing tourism regions](http://www.tourism.wa.gov.au)

**Figure 2.5. Tourism regions of Western Australia**

Tourism W.A. (2009) reports that W.A. is the only Australian State that experienced continued growth in international visitors (684,400) for the past 12 months, with a 2.1% growth ending June 2009. However, both intra-state (4,541,000) and inter-state (973,000) visitor numbers dropped to -7.5% and -17.3% respectively. The international visitors growth is dominated by visiting friends and family (VFR), education and employment segments. The 2006/07 economic contribution of tourism to W.A.’s economy was significant, with a direct tourism Gross Value Added (GVA) of $2.97 billion or 2.3% of total GVA generated by all industries in W.A., generating 45,660 jobs (Tourism W.A. Research Team., 2009).

In terms of GAL tourism, Perth has its own annual Pride Parade that attracts “crowds of between 80,000 to 100,000 in Northbridge” (Homles, 2008). This Parade runs through a short section of Northbridge, namely, beginning from Brisbane Street, through William Street, ending at Russell Square on James Street. The main GAL area is located in Northbridge, Highgate and Mt. Lawley illustrated in figure 2.6. As referred to earlier, it was observed that there is a lack of the rainbow flag. There are
only four locations that display the rainbow flag prominently in this precinct: Courth Hotel, Connections Nightclub, a sex products retail shop, and an AIDS help centre. According to the 2009 co-president of Pride W.A. (GAL society) Charles Denham suggests that,

we need to embrace everybody, it doesn't matter whether they are gay, straight, or whatever they happen to be sexually, there are a lot of minority groups that need to be accepted (cited in Holmes, 2008).

Despite this, tourist attraction according to Marketing Director, Tourism W.A., Perth’s GAL tourism profile has not been identified (S.Buckland, personal communication, March 25, 2009). Furthermore, in terms of W.A., no research in this area has been done by Tourism W.A. (K.Gibbs, personal communications, March 13, 2009).

The following figures 2.6 and 2.7 show maps of Perth as described above. The yellow coloured areas in figure 2.6 show areas of dense population in and surrounding Perth. Following on is discussion on the gap in the literature.
Figure 2.6. Map of Perth
(Source: http://www.street-directory.com.au accessed on October 02, 2009)

Figure 2.7. Map of Perth suburbs
(Source: http://www.whereis.com/wa/perth accessed on October 02, 2009)
**Gap in literature**

There appears to be more research done on gay male tourists (Clift & Forrest, 1999; Clift et al., 2002; Daye, 2008; Hughes, 2006; Padilla, 2007; Rogerson, 2007; Waitt & Markwell, 2006) compared to lesbian tourists (L. Johnston, 2005; Kuar Puar, 2002; Pritchard et al., 2000; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). Hughes (2006) suggests that the GAL market is not homogenous and concludes that they are “two very distinct markets, male and female” (p.60). Hughes further argues that there is evidence to suggest that studies are more focused on gay men than lesbians, as

> there is little published material available that would provide a basis for a detailed discussion of holidays taken by lesbians” (p.59).

The need for further research on lesbian tourism has been signalled by Kuar (2002) in that

> the focus on men’s travel, to the exclusion of women’s, is both a historically entrenched problem and a failure to incorporate gendered analyses into conceptualisations of tourism and travel (p.4)

This gap in GAL literature suggests that it is simplistic to accept that lesbian tourism is homogenous with gay male tourism (Community Marketing, 2001; Guaracino, 2007). This thesis is based on the notion that lesbian tourism has its own features, which this current study hopes to explore. Following Kuar & Hughes, this study is original in that the focus is on Perth lesbian residents’ and lesbian tourists’ perceptions, motivations and satisfaction. Now that the gap in literature is identified, the next section outlines the research aims and objectives, followed by a summary of this chapter.

**2.9. Research aims and objectives**

The broad aim of this current study is to give ‘voice’ to Perth lesbian residents and lesbian tourists. These specific aims are to:

- determine how ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth is;
- evaluate the motivations and satisfaction of Perth lesbian tourists; and
- determine the attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian ‘rainbow-tourist’ destination.
2.10. Summary

In summary, the main points covered in this chapter included:

1. a discussion of the Australian GAL tourist market;
2. an identification of broader GAL tourism issues;
3. lesbian tourism issues, in particular, theories of lesbian tourist perception, motivation and satisfaction;
4. a discussion of society’s perception of heterosexuality versus homosexuality provided the fundamental precursor in which to contextualise the aims of this study;
5. the concepts of queer theory and lesbianism, which anathema society views with homophobia;
6. a discussion of sustainable tourism in the context of lesbian tourism;
7. an outline of Jafari’s (1990) and Macbeth’s (2005) tourism scholarship platforms for contextual reading;
8. the current state of research with a description of study site; and
9. finally, a literature gap was identified leading to the aims and objectives.

The results and findings of this study will have implications for Perth as a sustainable lesbian tourism destination. Stakeholders such as tourism operators, destination managers, governmental tourism agencies and the wider public could benefit from this epistemology of lesbian tourists by paying attention to the opportunities and limitations of an emerging sub-cultural group. The next chapter deals with methodology.
Chapter 3  Research design

“If we knew what it was that we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?”
Albert Einstein (1879 – 1955)

This chapter describes the research design and instrument used for evaluating the aims of this study.

3.1. Interpretive paradigm

This study uses two interpretive paradigms:

1. Social Constructivism (Gergen, 1985)
2. Male Feminism (Boone & Cadden, 1990; Digby, 1998)

Social constructivism

The data collected is interpreted through a ‘social constructivist lens’, which in the context of this study, reflects the social realities, worldviews or ‘truths’ of lesbian respondents (Gergen, 1985; Grodin & Lindlof, 1996; Kitzinger, 1987). Crotty (1998,p.58) contends that,

Constructivism points out the unique experience of each of us. It suggests that each one’s way of making sense of the world is as valid and worthy of respect as any other (cited in Patton & Patton, 2002,p.97)

Additionally, Lather (1991) locates social reality as the space, “where the ways we talk and write are situated within social practices” (p.154). This discourse is therefore to listen to social reality through social practices about lesbian tourists in Perth. For example, how are lesbian tourists treated by tourism service providers? Are their needs being fulfilled? Are there sufficient lesbian tourist attractions to warrant a sustainable market? Is there sufficient publicity to attract lesbian tourists? As such, by asking these questions and understanding social reality through the construction of social practices, one receives a clearer picture of the true situation. The analysis of social reality is in the very words of participants, with the assumption that participants express how the feel and tell us the true picture. Therefore, following Crotty and
Lather, this study uses social constructivism to understand the ‘social realities’ in the motivations and the satisfactions of Perth lesbian residents and lesbian tourists.

**Male feminism**

Using a fresh approach, the author uses a ‘male feminist’ perspective to interpret the data. *Male feminism* is a term taken to suggest the rejection of the world of patriarchy, focusing instead on the promotion of female gender justice (Awkward, 1995; Boone & Cadden, 1990; Digby, 1998; Reddy, 1996; Symonds, 1999; Tarrant, 2009; Wilson, 2005). As mentioned earlier, there exist a gap in the literature in same sex tourists, suggesting an imbalance in the discourse between genders. The personal view of the author is an attempt to restore some equilibrium, through the promotion of female gender justice. Fundamentally, for justice to prevail, there must be equity amongst the two main gender groups. Furthermore, male feminism according to Kimmel (1998) posits that,

> Feminism provides both women and men with an extraordinarily powerful analytic prism through which to understand their lives, and a political and moral imperative to transform the unequal conditions of those relationships (p.61).

From this innovative inquiry into feminism, in the tourism context, male feminism is used as a tool to understand, analyse, interpret and present some of the issues pertinent to lesbian tourism from an outsider or an ‘Other’ view (Said, 1985). For instance, a method used is participant observation lesbian tourists at the 2009 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade, which will be further discussed below. As mentioned in section 1.4, the positionality of the researcher, being a male, might pose challenges dealing with the ‘Other’ gender. The status of an ‘outsider’ may solicit positive and negative responses. Some respondents may find it easier to trust an outsider, for objectivity can prevail, whilst others may tend to be more suspecting. Such are the risks involved. Evidently, this was not the case as reflected in the methodology applied and data obtained, which will be further discussed in section 3.2 and in chapter four. Moreover, a male feminist view could arguably be positioned as ‘subjective’ in such a discourse. Hence, this study does not attempt to be objective, as the analysis and interpretation of the data collected will be subjected to the author’s positionality.
Consequently, such a subjective approach is in line with this study’s third objective, which is to represent and give voice (social constructivism) to the perceptions of Perth lesbian residents and lesbian tourists, in determining the attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian tourist destination.

3.2. Methodology

Based on the aims and objectives outlined in section 1.6, a research method was designed that suits the purpose of this study (Jennings, 2001). Three methods following were used to obtain empirical data:

1. Participant observation of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras event on 7th March 2009 (it is not within the time frame of this Honours study use participant observation at Perth’s Pride Parade which is scheduled on the 31st October 2009)
2. A semi-structured focus group interview of lesbian residents of Perth (see appendix four)
3. On-line questionnaire (see appendix two: www.perth-lesbianfriendlysurvey.com)

Participant observation

The researcher attended the 30th Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade (SGLMGP) held on 07th March 2009, to participate and observe the reactions of tourists on this day. Participant observation, according to Walter (2006), refers to data collection involving the researcher “observing first-hand in the research setting” (p.378). The purpose is to enable the researcher to gather some sense of the process and to gauge the atmosphere by “taking a part and being there” (Pole & Morrison, 2003,p.20) at the SGLMGP. For example, from a male feminist’s perspective, the researcher noticed that a sense of safety and assurance or ‘welcome’ enticed both female and male tourists to places where the rainbow flag is displayed. One poignant observation indicated the relative freedom by which lesbian tourists express their presence such as holding hands, hugging their partners, kissing in public and outward expressions of their sexuality through wearing the rainbow colours. Another aspect is the level of curiosity exhibited by the public in seeing the array of GLBTI displays, such as floats displaying queer participants, ‘Dykes ob Bikes’ (a motor-cycle parade of bare-breasted lesbian parade participants), as well as gay men’s display of their
almost naked torsos. Such observations have led to lines of inquiry for the main purpose of designing the survey questionnaire. A brief description of the SGLMGP will be given next.

Plate 3.1. Rainbow flag display, Oxford St. Sydney, NSW
(Source: Simon Teoh, 07th March 2009)

The city of Sydney was dressed for the occasion, with significant displays of the rainbow flag, as shown in figure 3.1, serving as a signifier to the public that the GLBTI community is very much welcomed and celebrated. The researcher observed that there was a sense of being ‘safe’ amidst a tolerant community, in particular for the female tourists. These observations assisted in developing the questionnaire to be applied in the 3rd stage of data collection, in particular, questions about the visible display of rainbow flag as a signifier, and what respondents might look for in Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination.

The route of the SGLMGP, which is approximately three kilometres long, stretches from the start of Hyde Park, along Elizabeth Street, turning left onto Liverpool Street, and then joining Oxford Street (which is the main visible centre of Sydney’s GLBTI scene), before turning right onto Darlinghurst Road, and finishing up at Moore Park along Anzac Parade (refer to figure 2.2.). It was reported that along this route, there
was an estimated crowd of 300,000 revellers and over 9,500 parade participants were present (GayWired, 2009). In this parade, the researcher observed significant heightened levels of excitement amongst the GLBTI community (many of whom dressed up fancifully for the occasion) as well as the non-GLBTI community. It was however, not possible to distinguish between tourists and residents at this event. The researcher also visited Newtown, which is another significant GLBTI suburb of Sydney. There were less visible displays of the signifier rainbow flag in Newtown compared to Oxford Street. It is also noted that GAL venues are located within the same precinct on Oxford Street in Paddington and in the suburb of Newtown.

![Figure 3.1. Map of Sydney](http://maps.google.com/maps accessed on October 02, 2009)

**Focus group interview**

A focus group consisting of four volunteer ‘self-identified’ lesbian residents of Perth convened on 17th August. The participants represented a cross section of the age demographics ranging from 25-54 years old. The purpose of a focus group, according to Patton & Patton (2002,p.385-6), is an interview

To get a variety of perspectives and increase confidence in whatever patterns emerge. […] The object is to get high-quality data in a social context.
As the focus of this study is to understand the perceptions of lesbian residents of Perth, following Patton et al.,’s view, this focus group interview is important, as it adds to the key findings of this study. This interview took place at the main library of Murdoch University, using a semi-structured process that lasted just over an hour. A digital recorder was used to capture the interview proceedings. At the same time, the researcher noted down key discussion themes. These notes assisted in the transcription proceedings. Refreshments were provided.

Patton et al., (2002) further suggest that the benefits of a focused group include the feeling of a having a ‘safe’ and ‘common’ environment, where participants can draw strength from each other in addressing some of the issues debated. On the other hand, this ‘collective’ approach may appear intimidating for others. Madriz (2000) suggests that focus group provide an important element in the advancement of an agenda of social justice for women, because they can serve to expose and validate women’s everyday experiences of subjugation (cited in Patton & Patton, 2002,p.389), which in this context, is that of Perth’s lesbian residents.

The advantage for the researcher is the cost effectiveness in data collection, and the engagement with the participants, which may enhance data quality (Krueger, 1994, cited in Patton et al., 2002, p.386). On the contrary, disadvantages include domination within a focus group; a more restrictive number of questions applied due to various responses to the same question, as well as group dynamics (Walter, 2006). Because of the small size of this focus group and the engaging topic, the respondents provided lively discussion with a positively engaging group dynamics.

Survey

The method used in this study is free media, that is, the use of internet space for participants to engage in and complete an on-line questionnaire (Sue & Ritter, 2007). For this purpose, a web site: www.perth-lesbianfriendlysurvey.com was created. A third party data collection system, Murdoch on-line survey system (MOSS) was used. MOSS was selected due to the competency it has to administer and deliver quality on-line surveys.
During loading of the questionnaire onto MOSS, a coding system was designed in order to capture the data. The online survey was opened for approximately eight weeks, from 07th July till 31st August. The MOSS administrator collected the raw data into an Excel sheet. This data was examined for outliers (see section 3.7.2) before being transferred into SPSS 17 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for analysis.

**Questionnaire design**

The questionnaire was designed to answer the three objectives of this study mentioned in section 1.6. The questionnaire was divided into three sections, consisting of both closed and open-ended questions (see appendix 4). Oppenheim (1966) tells us that a closed question is, “one in which respondents is offered a choice of alternative replies” (p.40), and that open questions allow respondents the freedom to “express spontaneously, and this spontaneity is often extremely worthwhile as a basis for new hypotheses” (p.41).

The questions in section 1 (Q1-Q12) sought to conceptualise the perceptions of respondents’ notion of a ‘lesbian-friendly’ tourist destination. In particular, what respondents look for when they are on vacation. A five-point Likert-scale was utilised to provide a measurement of levels of intensity such as “strongly disagree, “disagree”, “neither disagree or agree”, “agree”, and “strongly agree” (De Vaus, 2002). This scale is most commonly used in research, as it provides a balanced scale that “determines the relative intensity of different items” (Babbie, 2005,p.174). A sixth category ‘don’t know’ was also included.

A filter question was designed (Q9) to locate respondents who are Perth residents. The Perth residents proceed directly onto Section 2 (a). For respondents who were not Perth residents, a second filter question was asked (Q10) to determine if they were tourists or not. For Perth tourists, they proceed with the survey. For non-tourists of Perth, these respondents were directed onto the demographic questions in section 3. The purpose of these two filter questions (Q9 & Q10) according to Oppenheim (1992,p.39), are “to exclude respondent from a particular question sequence if those questions are irrelevant to him [sic]”.

Section 2 had two sections: 2 (a) & 2 (b).
The questions in section 2 (a) (Q13-Q21), measure how satisfied respondents were with the attractions and venues Perth offer the lesbian tourist.

Section 2 (b) questions (Q22-Q29), evaluate respondents’ motivations to visit Perth in an attempt to determine if Perth is an attractive lesbian rainbow tourist destination.

Section 3 comprised demographic questions (Q30-Q33), such as age, status of relationship, number of vacations taken away from home, and respondent’s city of residence in order to determine characteristics of respondents.

### 3.3. Rationale for on-line survey questionnaire

Van Eeden-Moorefield, Proulx and Pasley’s (2008) study of the relationship of gay men suggested that, the use of the internet enhances sample recruitment with trustworthy data compared to using traditional face-to-face (FTF) method. These respondents felt safe and at ease relating their intimate experiences. Although Van Eeden-Moorefield et al.’s study focuses on gay men’s relationship, similar reactions may be applied of same-sex female gender. In terms of this current study, the researcher acknowledges that a male point of contact may cause female participants to feel uncomfortable when using the FTF method. It was therefore felt that the internet provided for a ‘safer’ and more ‘responsive’ environment.

A key ethical aspect of conducting research is to ensure respondent anonymity and confidentiality (De Vaus, 2002). The strength in the use of the internet provides such a safe environment for sample recruitment (Pease, Rowe, & Cooper, 2007). In the study of technological communications in the tourism industry, in particular sex tourism, researchers Pease, Rowe and Cooper contend that, “the internet has allowed members of sexual subcultures to contact each other” (p.276). The implications of this more objective approach suggests that sexual subcultures in this environment would feel safer to express themselves, and feel more comfortable to communicate with their cohorts.
Swindell and Pryce (2003) warn however, that self-disclosure stress amongst lesbian women as part of research, can be a traumatic experience. Another strength in using the internet is to provide the needed space and distance that is less confrontational than the FTF method. In the context of lesbians as a sexual subculture, this current study rationalises the use of the internet in providing a safe, relaxed and less confrontational environment in engaging respondents. This method not only ensures anonymity and confidentiality, but also concurs with the researcher’s position, that is, from the perspective of a male feminist in respecting women’s right for their space through the provision of a safe environment. There are however, some disadvantages of using the internet for surveys, such as a high non response rate (Sue & Ritter, 2007), lack of engagement, and the impersonal nature of the research (Dillman & Dillman, 2000). Reminders and lobby for support amongst lesbian acquaintances and their cohorts helped elicit respondents for this current study.

### 3.4. Pilot testing

The aim of pilot testing is to obtain feedback relating to the coverage and comprehension of the questionnaire (Wadsworth, 1984). Pilot testing allows an opportunity to revise and re-design the questionnaire where there is a lack of clarity, problems with sequencing of questions, difficulty in wording of questions and timing required to answer the questionnaire (Oppenheim, 1966). Pilot testing for this study was carried out on two ‘self-identified’ lesbian volunteers. Feedback included input made into the final version of the survey questionnaire. This included:

1. the need to further explain that one of the aims of this study is to allow statistical evaluation of a defined group; and
2. clarification of the terms ‘attraction’ and ‘venue’.

Pilot testing of the on-line survey was carried out a day before it was opened to the public, using a ‘test’ mode to indicated testing. There were no issues reported.
3.5. Ethical consideration

This research proposal underwent a stringent Ethics Committee review. It is important to inform and make clear to prospective respondents the aims and objectives of this study (see appendix 2 for letter of information to survey respondents).

Both focus group and on-line survey respondents were provided information on confidentiality and consent. A disclaimer was provided. The focus group respondents were required to sign a consent form (see appendix 6). On-line respondents were required to tick a consent button in order to proceed further in answering the questionnaire. At the end of the survey, a reminder was given to respondents to choose if they agreed to submit the completed questionnaire. Respondents could either choose to proceed or discontinue without any consequences. A further prompt was given to ask if respondents would like to recommend this survey (snowball sampling), by way of sending the on-line survey link by e-mail to their cohorts.

Risk management advice was given to respondents. This included stating that this is a low risk interview not intended to evoke any discomfort. In the event of any possible discomfort or otherwise, respondents were at liberty to withdraw at any time at their own free will, without any obligations or penalty. Respondents were provided with the supervisor’s and Ethics Committee’s contact should they have any further queries. Respondents were informed that the results and findings will be published on the website from December 2009 till February 2010.

3.6. Respondent sample

The focus of this study is on lesbian residents and lesbian tourists of Perth. A ‘purposive’ and ‘snowball’ sampling was used in reaching the targeted participants on a volunteer basis. The term ‘purposive sampling’, according to Sarantakos (2005), implies that participants are chosen based on their knowledge, experience and relevance to the study. This method is also known as ‘judgemental sampling’, where the researcher makes his or her judgement, as to which respondent will be most representative of the study group. In this study, only ‘self-identified lesbians’ were
chosen. The suitability of such respondents centres on their ‘lived-experiences’ in response to the questionnaire.

The term ‘snowball sampling’ according to Babbie (2005), “refers to the process of accumulation as each located subject suggests other subjects” (p.190). This process asks respondents to suggest cohorts, who may have the same knowledge, experience and relevance to the study, but may have different perspectives. Different perspectives add to the richness of understanding some of the issues associated with lesbian tourism in Perth.

**Respondent recruitment**

Focus group respondents were recruited through personal contacts. On-line respondents were recruited through both personal contacts and electronic advertisements on targeted websites. Table 3.1 highlights specific contact points for sourcing respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.1. Respondent sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Researcher’s personal ‘self-identified’ lesbian acquaintances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Murdoch Ally Group, (students and staff at Murdoch University identifying as lesbian, gay, trans, bisexual, or intersex)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Women’s Guild at Murdoch University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. SGLink – Singaporean student association at Murdoch University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Pride W.A. – Perth’s gay and lesbian society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. OutinPerth - Monthly Gay and Lesbian Newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. GAYinWA – Cocktails &amp; Girls Evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Gay and Lesbian Community Services W.A. (GLSC) – in WAWOW online Women’s forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Pink Sofa – Lesbian community online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Sydney Star Observer - Sydney’s leading Gay and Lesbian Newsletter (female gender section only)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7. Data analysis

Data analysis began after deciding which data were inadmissible (refer to section 4.2). The data was then transferred onto SPSS 17. Data from open-ended questions were analysed for content analysis manually where common themes were identified. Codes were assigned to the sample as follows:

- **SLR** - Survey Perth lesbian resident;
- **SLT** - Survey lesbian tourist; and
- **SLNT** - Survey lesbian non-tourist.

**SPSS 17**

The SPSS statistical analysis included:

- Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, cross tabulation between variables and mean responses; and
- Bivariate statistics such as independent t-test, non-parametric test (chi-square).

**Mean and standard deviation**

Central tendency denotes the average value of a variable and includes mean, mode, and median (Sarantakos, 2005). The more commonly used mean (x) in statistical terms according to Babbie (2005, p.422) is, “one way to measure the central tendency or “typical” values”, of that sample. Accordingly, the mean is a model created to summarise the sample (Field, 2005). Standard deviation (σ), is essentially a measure of dispersion around the mean, the smaller the standard deviation, the more tightly the values are clustered around the mean; if the standard deviation is high, the values are widely spread out (Babbie, 2005, p.424). The key thing to look for in standard deviation (a small value measure) is how well the mean represents the sample.

3.8. Summary

This chapter introduced the two interpretive paradigms used in this study. They are social constructivist and male feminism. This was followed with three methods of data collection:
participant observation at the SGLMGP; a focus group interview; and an on-line survey questionnaire to obtain empirical data. A justification of the use of an administrative machinery MOSS to capture data to ensure anonymity and confidentiality followed. These data were then transferred onto SPSS17 program for statistical analysis. A rationalisation of the use of the internet for the on-line survey in creating space and providing a safe environment was discussed, as well as its strengths and weaknesses. This then followed with some ethical considerations for respondents. The results of the findings will be presented in the next chapter.
Chapter 4  Results

“*The highest result of education is tolerance*”
_Helen Keller (1880 – 1968), ‘Optimism’, 1903_*

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the research design, methodological approach and analysis technique. The purpose of this chapter is to present findings of the results from the focus group interview (FG) and on-line survey (S). As mentioned in section 3.1, this study uses a social constructivist interpretive paradigm to understand perceptions or the social realities of respondents. Primarily, qualitative data from the focus group and survey data will be used. This is further supported with quantitative survey findings. Firstly, a brief overview of the sample response rates, non-response and outliers will be discussed along with some characteristics of respondents. Second, a brief statistical description of survey respondents is provided. Third, the three aims of this study (see section 2.9) will be addressed. Finally, a summary of the findings will be given.

4.2. Characteristics of respondents

The on-line survey closed with a total of 120 respondents. The criteria for a valid response was to answer 50% of questions asked. Elimination of 8 respondents were made due to the following reasons:

1. 3 incompleted respondents due to blank responses given.
2. 1 incompleted respondent due to answering only two questions in section one only.
3. 4 invalid respondents due to the use of gibberish or nonsensical language (e.g. asdf, fad, fasdf, dfasd).

After the application of the criteria and elimination of respondents, the sample size provided 112 respondents. A brief description of some of the overall characteristics of respondents is given below.
Perth residents

Of the valid 112 respondents in this study, 71% live in Perth with 29% not living in Perth. This forms the two core variables of measure for this study.

1. Residents - (n= 80)
2. Non-residents - (n=32), however, 22 of these respondents have visited Perth and are considered tourists for the purpose of this study.

Sources of information

Sources of information used for locating lesbian tourist attractions in Perth were as follows. Of these 112 respondents:

- friend’s recommendation – 62%
- lesbian websites – 29%
- lesbian magazines – 29%
- Tourism W.A. – 2%
- others (e.g. Pride W.A., OutinPerth, and GAYinWA) – 22%

Age

Completion of the age category occurred in 79 cases. The largest age group for respondents was the 40-49 years old at 35%, with the second largest age groups at 24% each, in the 20-29 and the 30-39 age group respectively.

Relationship

There were 79 respondents who indicated their lesbian relationship category, 40% were living in a same gender de facto/partner relationship, with 35% being single and 25% having a same-gender relationship but not living together.

Vacation

From the 79 respondents who completed the vacation category, a majority of 32% took 3 vacations away from home last year, compared to 19% that took one vacation, and 23% that have taken 4 or more vacations the previous year.
4.3. Aim 1 – Perceptions of Perth lesbian residents

‘To determine how ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth is’.

Description

The first aim of the study relates to perceptions of Perth as an attractive lesbian tourist destination by Perth lesbian residents. With this aim in mind, respondents were asked three statements:

- I believe that Perth is ‘lesbian-friendly’.
- I am satisfied with lesbian attractions Perth W.A. has to offer.
- I find that there are sufficient lesbian venues in Perth.

‘Lesbian-friendly’ Perth

In order to understand the social realities of respondents, this significant inquiry is to establish if Perth is ‘lesbian-friendly’. This sets the premise of the core argument, which in this context aims to determine what ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth as a ‘lesbian tourist destination’ means to the respondents.

Results from the FG in terms of a definition of ‘lesbian-friendly’ revealed the following (refer Appendix 5):

Safety… to be safe and walk down the street in your partner’s hands and not be discriminated against or anything like that… that to me is a safe and friendly travel destination (FG3)

acceptance, somewhere to go where you can be yourself (FG4)

freedom of expression…able to kiss your partner and not to have a look like everyone else does (FG2)

basically means that you can go or do something without actually having to second guess yourself at anytime […] a ‘lesbian-friendly’ area is somewhere where people who are not going to blink or feel uncomfortable with somebody’s else sexuality (FG1).
General view

A poignant view of a ‘lesbian-friendly’ tourist destination as an attraction in its own rights was expressed by one FG respondent,

if you came from a country where it’s not easy to be out and gay […] places where you can outwardly show same sex attractions, would be tourism highlights for people from countries that aren’t able to display that outwardly in social situations in public places (FG2).

Whereas, one survey respondent suggested that,

We choose cities or holiday destination on their attractions, ‘lesbian-friendly’ is a bonus not something we think about in our planning (SLR18).

The top three most ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination listed in table 4.1 suggested by respondents were:

1. Sydney,
2. Melbourne, and
3. San Francisco,

with Perth being in the 5th position after London. Figure 4.1 shows a pie chart of respondents’ top eight most ‘lesbian-friendly’ destinations. Apart from the top 3 cities having substantial lesbian population and being ‘lesbian-friendly’, other reasons cited include:

- acceptance/openness/tolerance;
- visibility;
- lesbian venues;
- women only events; and
- publicity

as shown in figure 4.2.

Perth view

In the case of Perth, one respondent says,
I think it’s contextual in Perth, I think that there are places that are ‘lesbian-friendly’ and I really think that there are places that definitely aren’t. For example, I have been yelled out several times ‘lesbos’ in Mt. Lawley (FG2).

To obtain a sense of how other Perth lesbian residents felt about this issue (n=77), 44% disagreed with the notion that Perth is a ‘lesbian-friendly destination’, 30% were undecided, and 26% agreed to this notion (x = 2.74; σ = .98). This highlights that only a quarter of Perth lesbian residents felt that Perth is ‘lesbian-friendly’.

Table 4.1. shows Perth in the most ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination chosen by respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most lesbian-friendly destination (n=100)</th>
<th>Respondent frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perth</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>4%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fremantle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice Springs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augusta/Margaret River</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bali</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barcelona</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton, UK</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Code, USA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copenhagen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark, W.A.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island of Lesbos</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munich</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vienna</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure/None</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.1. Top eight ‘lesbian-friendly’ destinations

Figure 4.2. Reasons for top 3 ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination

First choice destination

Respondents were asked to rate Perth as their first choice for a lesbian tourist destination. Of the 100 who responded to this question, 69% disagreed, 25% were unsure and 6% agreed ($x = 2.02; \sigma = .99$). This suggests that Perth is not regarded as a lesbian tourist destination.
Satisfaction with Perth

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with lesbian attractions in Perth. The term ‘lesbian attractions’ refers to any event or activity that attracted lesbians to Perth, for example, Pride Parade. This inquiry can provide some indication of the level of respondents’ satisfaction with lesbian attractions in Perth.

The survey respondents provided some lesbian attractions in Perth:

- Women’s Sundowners at the Grapeskin;
- Girls event by Lick Events;
- SW Hoedown festival in Busselton;
- Loton Tennis;
- Fair Day (opening celebration Pride month);
- Pride Parade; and
- GlammFest (GAL movie festival).

Furthermore, FG respondents added that in the context of Perth,

in Perth the attractions are not sexual specific (FG2)
just because you are a lesbian doesn’t mean that you solely have to hang out in a lesbian venue (FG3)
I don’t travel to a place because it’s lesbian-friendly […] I travel because I want to go there to meet the people and to see what it’s all about (FG4)
it’s a lifestyle destination rather than an attraction or an event based location (FG1).

Lesbian friendly Perth

In the case of Perth, one respondent says,

I think it’s contextual in Perth, I think that there are places that are ‘lesbian-friendly’ and I really think that there are places that definitely aren’t. For example, I have been yelled out several times ‘lesbos’ in Mt. Lawley (FG2).

Of the 79 resident respondents to this core inquiry, a majority of 59% responded that they were dissatisfied; 28% were undecided and only 13% were satisfied ($x = 2.44; \sigma = .93$). This
indicates that more than half the Perth lesbian residents were dissatisfied with lesbian attractions in Perth.

**Lesbian venues in Perth**

The researcher observed that there were specific lesbian venues in the Sydney suburb of Leichardt and Newtown. Respondents were asked if they agreed that there were sufficient lesbian venues in Perth. The term ‘lesbian venue’, is taken to mean any lesbian place one would visit, for example, restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and shops. This inquiry seeks to discover if Perth caters enough to the lesbian tourist.

The FG respondents provided some ‘must visit’ lesbian venues in Perth:

- The Court Hotel, Moon and Flying Scotsman bar (FG3);
- 8th Avenue in Maylands (FG4);
- Milk café (FG2);
- Coode St., and Beaufort St., ‘Freo’ and South beach in Fremantle (FG1).

Other lesbian venues listed by survey respondents included:

- The Court Hotel;
- Connections nightclub;
- Luxe Bar; and
- Vultures restaurant.

Three respondents interestingly pointed to the fact that there is a

distance between locations (SLNR95);
diversity of location (SLR68);
the lesbian venues are so far apart from one another (SLR25),

in the various venues that might be an issue. This same sentiment was also expressed in the focus group. To overcome this issue, one respondent from the FG suggested that,
having a street in the city that’s dedicated to non-heterosexuals, with venues and bookshops, and video stores, or just having half a street or a lane way that is actually an attraction […] a one stop shop …like a [gay and lesbian] tourist centre in Northbridge (FG2).

More importantly however, two FG respondents alluded to the size of Perth’s lesbian community, and how this does affect the sustainability of these lesbian venues:

we don’t really have the population mass […] we do not have those numbers (FG4)
given the small population of Perth…there isn’t enough base patronage (FG1).

Of the 78 resident respondents to this inquiry, an overwhelming 89% responded that they disagreed with this notion, 6% were undecided and only 5% agreed (x = 1.83; σ = .76). This result suggests very strongly that there are insufficient lesbian venues in Perth

**Lesbian attractions in Perth**

Lesbian attractions are essential if Perth is to entice lesbian tourists to visit Perth. Respondents were therefore asked if they would like to see more lesbian attractions in Perth to determine if they were satisfied with the status quo.

The data shown in figure 4.3 showed that of the 101 survey respondents, 5% disagreed, 10% were undecided, and an overwhelming 85% agreed that they would like to see more lesbian attractions in Perth (x= 4.18; σ = .84). This result strongly reflects a lack of lesbian attractions in Perth.
Further statistical analysis is shown in Table 4.2 & 4.3. with a breakdown between Perth lesbian residents and lesbian non-residents.

Table 4.2. Statistical analysis of perceptions of Perth lesbian-residents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe that Perth is ‘Lesbian-friendly’ (n=77)</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with Lesbian attractions Perth W.A. has to offer (n=78)</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that there are sufficient Lesbian venues in Perth (n=78)</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer a visible display of the Rainbow flag at Lesbian-friendly venues (n=78)</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth is my first choice for a ‘Lesbian-friendly’ destination (n=77)</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that there are sufficient attractions for a Lesbian visitor in Perth (n=78)</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that there is sufficient publicity targeted at the Lesbian ‘Rainbow Tourist’ (n=78)</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to see more Lesbian attractions in Perth (n=78)</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.729</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree or disagree, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree

Table 4.3. Statistical analysis of perceptions of lesbian non-residents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe that Perth is ‘Lesbian-friendly’ (n=23)</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with Lesbian attractions Perth W.A. has to offer (n=23)</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that there are sufficient Lesbian venues in Perth (n=23)</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer a visible display of the Rainbow flag at Lesbian-friendly venues (n=22)</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth is my first choice for a ‘Lesbian-friendly’ destination (n=23)</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that there are sufficient attractions for a Lesbian visitor in Perth (n=23)</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that there is sufficient publicity targeted at the Lesbian ‘Rainbow Tourist’ (n=23)</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to see more Lesbian attractions in Perth (n=23)</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree or disagree, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree
4.4. Aim 2 – **Motivations and satisfaction of Perth lesbian tourists**

‘To evaluate the motivations and satisfaction of Perth lesbian tourists’.

**Description**

The second aim 2 of this study sought to evaluate the motivations and satisfaction of lesbian tourists to Perth.

Firstly, the holiday motivations for all respondents will be presented.

Second, respondents’ motivations to visit Perth will be provided.

Third, results relating to the following 3 statements and one question will be shown:

- The reason for visiting Perth
- I would like to see more lesbian attractions in Perth
- The three things you look for in Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination
- How can Perth position itself as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ city?

**Motivations of lesbians on holidays**

All respondents (N=112) were asked what motivated them to go on a holiday shown in figure 4.4, based on Clift and Forrest’s (1999) study (see section 2.4.). The findings showed the following preferences:

- culture and sights (N=108) - 94%
- comfort and relaxation (N=108) - 91%
- lesbian social life (N=111) - 64%
- venues displaying the rainbow flag (N=111) - 64%
- lesbian relationship (N=109) - 8%

The above results strongly show that lesbian relationship takes a low priority in respondents’ motivation for a holiday.
Tables 4.4 & 4.5. display further motivational statistical analysis including a breakdown between Perth lesbian residents and lesbian non-residents.

**Table 4.4. Statistical analysis of holiday motivations of Perth lesbian-residents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions of lesbian residents (n=80)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian social life (n=78)</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian relationship (n=79)</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and sights (n=80)</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort and relaxation (n=80)</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venues displaying the rainbow flag (n=79)</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree or disagree, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree

**Table 4.5. Statistical analysis of holiday motivations of lesbian non-residents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions of lesbian non-residents (n=32)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian social life (n=30)</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian relationship (n=29)</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and sights (n=31)</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort and relaxation (n=31)</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venues displaying the rainbow flag (n=30)</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.324</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale: 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree or disagree, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree
Further analysis

Further analysis between the two groups showed that there is a significant difference in choosing culture and sights as a motivation to go on holiday (t =0.37, d.f.=109, p<0.5.). The other motivators listed showed no significant differences.

Position Perth

Respondents were asked how Perth could position itself as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ city. Table 4.5. provides respondent motivators needed to position Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination.

Table 4.5. Top motivators to position Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Perth</th>
<th>Residents (n=51)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Tourist (n=14)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attraction/Event</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venues</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate community/business</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display rainbow flag</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental support</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same-sex marriage</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance/acknowledgment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian-friendly business</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly accommodation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA GLBTI Tourism guide</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbians</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to respondents, the three most highly ranked motivators are:

- lesbian attraction/event;
- lesbian venue; and
- publicity.

Motivation to visit Perth

Lesbian tourists (n=32) were asked the motivation for visiting Perth, with 21 or 65% respondents providing reasons to visit Perth. Using content analysis, the following reasons are listed in table 4.6. The top three motivations were:

- visit friends and family (VFR);
- business; and
- social reasons.
### Table 4.6. Motivations to visit Perth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Number of frequency (n=21)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visit friends and family(VFR)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/Work related – conference, courses</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social reasons – attending concerts, movies, shopping</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday – adventure travel, beaches</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride events – fair day, pride parade</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A positive motivation to visit Perth according to one survey respondent is that she “loves the beaches” (SLT105). These motivational sentiments expressed by the lesbian tourists (table 4.6.) resonate with the focus group respondents whose views were:

- lifestyle and beaches (FG4)
- friends and family […] experience space in W.A. that is rare globally […] slower pace compared to the busier sort of globalised western cities at the other end (FG2).
- experience a bit of quiet and serenity(FG3).

However, a poignant opposing view from one survey respondent stated,

- lived in Perth for a while but returned to East coast. Would visit Perth again to catch up with friends but not for the ‘lesbian friendly’ environment of Perth as a whole, as I don’t think that it is (SLT86).

Such a response seems to suggest the lack of ‘lesbian-friendly’ atmosphere in Perth for the lesbian ‘rainbow-tourist’. This is further supported by 30% of lesbian tourists agreeing to the notion that Perth is ‘lesbian-friendly’ (refer to Figure 4.3).
4.5. Aim 3 – Attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian ‘rainbow tourist’ destination

‘To determine the attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian ‘rainbow tourist’ destination’.

Description

To determine the attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian ‘rainbow tourist’ destination, respondents were asked for their level of agreement and to respond to three statements and two questions:

- I find that there are sufficient attractions for a lesbian visitor in Perth
- I would prefer a visible display of the rainbow flag at lesbian-friendly venues
- I find that there is sufficient publicity targeted at the lesbian rainbow-tourist
- Would you tell your friends about what Perth has to offer to the lesbian community?
- Would you recommend Perth?

Sufficient Lesbian attractions in Perth

A significant indicator as to how attractive a destination is would be to measure if there are sufficient attractions at that destination. From the 101 survey participants who responded to this notion, a majority of 68% disagreed with this notion, 24% were undecided, and 8% agreed (x = 2.20; σ = 0.88).

Of the Perth lesbian resident respondents who provided 115 comments, 57 comments or approximately half used negative terms to describe insufficient lesbian tourist attractions in Perth, using words such as:

lack of; not enough, isn’t much, few, limited, restricted, nowhere, don’t know of any.
For the non-residents of Perth, 34 comments were provided, of which 16 or almost half were negative comments. This response concurs with that of Perth lesbian residents, in that Perth is limited in terms of lesbian tourist attractions.

**Rainbow flag as signifier**

A mentioned earlier, a key attraction for a lesbian tourist to a lesbian venue is the display of the rainbow flag as a signifier (Guaracino, 2007). This signifier was evident during the field trip at the 2009 SGLMG by the researcher. In support of this notion, respondents from the focus group shared the view that the rainbow flag should be visible, making venues more attractive for the lesbian tourist:

- “you see quite a lot of them [the rainbow flag] in Melbourne (FG3)”
- “it [the rainbow flag] would be a signifier in Perth, for the lesbian community to feel more comfortable (FG2)”
- “I do notice the rainbow flag and would tend to eat at cafes if I was out in the city, if I saw the rainbow flag, I would be more likely to go there (FG4).”

A contrasting view however, given by two respondents is that,

- “it does alienate a group of people who are older or who have not come out and they don’t want to be identified (FG1)”
- “there are no or few rainbow flags on shops and venues (SLR72).”

Responses to the survey question asking whether the visibility of the rainbow flag was a signifier at ‘lesbian-friendly’ venues, out of the 100 survey respondents, 74% agreed, 19% were undecided and 7% disagreed (x = 3.89; σ = 0.93). This suggests that the rainbow flag is an important signifier.

**Publicity**

Having sufficient publicity of a tourist destination is seen as one of the key elements in attracting ‘rainbow tourists’ to that destination. As earlier mentioned, the term ‘rainbow tourist’ is taken to mean gay and lesbian tourists. The researcher noted generous media
publicity of the 2009 SGLMG during the field trip. On the notion of publicity, there were some strong perspectives from survey respondents:

Tourism does not actively promote gay-friendly places (SLR25)

no publicity for tourism to W.A. over here on the East coast. Not that I have seen (SLNR/99)

not well publicised in mainstream media (SLR34)

Perth is pretty backwards with the acceptance of the lesbian community. Even though we have a few leaders that support it, the big community still dismiss our visibility (SLR41)

W.A. Government Tourism to develop a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and intersexual (LGBTI) tourism guide including accommodation guide and website and encourage LGBTI run businesses to show rainbow flag and other LGBTI “friendly” businesses to have a “LGBTI-friendly” sticker showing (SLT3).

On a more positive tone, there appears to be support coming from:

support from City of Perth Council (SLR75)

the mayor supporting the lesbian community (SLR41).

In response to the statement that there is sufficient publicity targeted at the Lesbian ‘Rainbow Tourist’ (N=101), a majority of 75% disagreed, 20% were undecided and 5% agreed (x = 2.01; \sigma = .87). This strongly suggests that more publicity is needed.

**Recommend Perth**

Respondents were asked if they would tell their friends about Perth, and recommend Perth as highlighted in table 4.7. This inquiry may imply that when respondents are satisfied with Perth as a lesbian tourist destination, they will recommend Perth. Some comments from respondents who would recommend Perth included:

although we do not have a wide range of clubs, pubs and venues we make do with what we have and welcome visitors and new faces with open arms (SLR8)

I would recommend Perth as a place to visit rather than just being ‘lesbian-friendly’. We have so many great places to visit and pretty much always feel safe everywhere we go (SLR5)

Perth is a laid back society so there is less harassment compared to other cities, but there is still a long way to go before I would consider Perth to be ‘lesbian-friendly’ (SLR20).

However, there were others who would not recommend Perth:
Perth is not gay friendly. We are limited due to our population and Perth culture (SLR32) because of the overall conservative feeling this city has and the lack of gay tourism in general (SLR34) lack of lesbian social opportunities (SLR38).

**Tell friends**
Out of 56 Perth lesbian residents respondents, 59% will tell their friends about Perth, with 67% from the non-residents who have visited Perth (n=15).

**Recommend Perth**
From the 55 Perth lesbian resident respondents, 42% will recommend Perth, with 60% from the non-residents (n=15).

A further analysis using chi-squared test, shown in table 4.8, was conducted to detect if there was any significant difference between Perth lesbian residents and lesbian non-residents in telling their friends about Perth, and recommending Perth as a lesbian-friendly tourist destination. There was no significant difference found ($X^2 = 0.29$, d.f.=1, p>0.5).

**Table 4.7 Likelihood to tell friends and recommend Perth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total (%) of 112</th>
<th>Perth lesbian resident (n=56)</th>
<th>Lesbian non-resident (n=15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell friends about Perth</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommend Perth</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.8. Chi-square test**

<table>
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<th>Variable</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell friends about Perth</td>
<td>.297a*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.586</td>
<td>.768</td>
<td>- .407</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommend Perth</td>
<td>1.570a**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.210</td>
<td>.251</td>
<td>-.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a*. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected is 5.92
*a**. 0 cells (0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.86
4.6. Summary

This chapter has compared the results between two groups of respondents, the Perth lesbian residents and lesbian non-residents. Addressing the three aims of this study, the survey data was used to support the focus group data. The data indicated that:

- Sydney is the most ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination;
- ‘culture & sights’ is the first choice when seeking a holiday;
- VFR is the greatest motivation for lesbians visiting Perth;
- there is a lack of lesbian attractions and venues in Perth for the lesbian ‘rainbow-tourist’;
- in Perth there are issues with distances between lesbian venues;
- the small Perth lesbian population is an issue for sustainable tourism;
- overall, there is a trend to disagree that Perth is an attractive lesbian tourist destination; and
- there is no significant association between Perth lesbian residents and lesbian non-residents who would recommend Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ tourist destination.

The next chapter will discuss the significance and implications of these results.
Chapter 5 Discussion

“Lesbians enjoy tourism”
(respondent SLR25)

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the implications of this study. The aim of this study is to determine the notion of the attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian tourist destination. The results provide an empirical perspective in the epistemology of Perth lesbian residents and non-residents. The discussions will be done according to the three aims of this discourse, as mentioned in section 1.6. The findings in the last chapter reflected six main themes:

- the lack of lesbian attractions and venues;
- there is insufficient publicity for promotion;
- the distance between lesbian venues;
- the limited lesbian population;
- the conservative attitudes of Perth mainstream society; and
- the top lesbian tourist motivator to visit Perth is VFR.

The following discussions reflect the above mentioned themes.

5.2. Aim 1 - Perceptions of Perth lesbian residents

‘Lesbian-friendly’ Perth

The focus group findings suggest safety, acceptance, and freedom of expression as some of the themes connected with the notion of ‘lesbian-friendliness’. Additionally, the survey shows that a less than a third (27%) of survey respondents found Perth to be ‘lesbian-friendly’. These findings clearly suggest the notion that Perth is not ‘lesbian-friendly’ and that Perth would benefit from uplifting its ‘lesbian-friendly’ profile, if Perth wants to attract this sub-cultural group. The implication following Hughes’ (2006) and CMI’s (2008) suggestion that being ‘gay-friendly’ is important, may lead to lesbians seeking other destinations that are more ‘friendly’ towards their nature. This would result in Perth losing some tourism potentials. Furthermore, according to Mintel’s (2000) study, lesbians look for
‘gay-friendly’ accommodation. An absence of ‘gay-friendly’ hospitality may result in missed tourism opportunities for Perth. This is further indicated by the top three most ‘lesbian-friendly’ destinations selected by respondents, which are: Sydney, Melbourne and San Francisco. This would mean that Perth is not featured as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination. Consequently, it is plausible that lesbian residents leave Perth to visit other more ‘lesbian-friendly’ destinations. Such a situation is unhealthy for Tourism W.A.. Immediate attention by Tourism W.A. is required to arrest and contain potential Perth lesbian tourists to take their holidays domestically. In so doing, other interstate and international lesbian tourists will more likely be influenced by domestic lesbian tourists and more likely to find Perth as an attractive lesbian tourist destination.

Pizam and Manfeld’s (1999) notion of tourist perception plays a significant role in terms of how ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth is, for as Pizam et al., suggest, a tourist selects, organises and interprets information to help make sense of the world. In this context, should Perth be unwelcoming and unfriendly towards lesbian people, this would accordingly infringe upon fundamental injustice and discrimination, as being a tourist is seen as a basic human rights under Article 24 of The UDHR, 1948. Hence, this study argues that it is essential not to allow any ‘gap’ in lesbian tourist experiences, following Pitcher’s (1971) sense-data theory of perception, in that, ‘belief about’ and ‘see’ should produce no differences. Furthermore, the limited size of the lesbian population in Perth, seen as a minority group, should not be viewed as a threat to society.

**Source of information**

The results show that more almost two thirds of respondents (62%) relied on friend’s recommendations in finding lesbian tourist attractions in Perth. A significantly smaller number (2%) used Tourism W.A. as a source. This finding has some parallels with CMI (2008)’s report, since a reputation for ‘GAL-friendliness’ will attract visitors of the same nature. It would do well for Tourism W.A. to take heed, as lesbian tourists would like to be amongst like-minded cohorts. By ignoring such needs, tourism authorities may miss ready this ready niche market. This appears to be important as it reflects Pritchard et al’s (2000) GALs tourist holiday choices looking for safety, comfort with cohorts, and an escape from heterosexism. Additionally, this finding reflects Beard and Ragheb’s (1983) LMS model
referred to in figure 2.4, in that there is a social need for friendship amongst cohorts. This may imply that the reputation of ‘lesbian-friendly’ attractions will be favourable amongst lesbian cohorts. As such, this study suggests that supportive sources of information by tourism authorities, in attracting lesbian tourists is seen as vital, in order to further enhance lesbian tourist numbers.

**Publicity**

The evidence that only 2% of respondents used Tourism W.A. as an information source, suggests that there is a lack of support from Tourism W.A. in promoting Perth as an attractive lesbian tourist destination. This is reinforced by Tourism W.A.’s lack of recognition in identifying lesbian tourists as a potential tourist market segment as referred to in section 2.8. This study would argue that Mayor Scaffidi’s vision for a ‘gay-friendly’ Perth alone is insufficient to attract GLBTI tourists to Perth. Following Markwell’s (2002) study that calls for more governmental support for GAL tourism, this discourse suggests that there is an essential need for State level Tourism support that can lead to significant changes in public perceptions of lesbian tourism in Perth and W.A. One way is by including lesbian tourism into mainstream tourism activities and promotions, since a major finding from this study is the apparent lack of publicity. For example, in light of Mason et al.’s (2009) study that shows heterosexuals enjoying the public performance of homosexuality in the SGLMG parade, mainstream publicity of the Perth Pride Parade can help to dispel public fears and invite the wider public to participate as audience. In turn, this can provide a platform for educating others on tolerance and about sexual diversity, thereby making lesbian tourism more inclusive.

**Rainbow flag**

The rainbow flag is an important feature for GALs. Guaracino’s (2007) notion of the rainbow flag as a signifier for the GAL community, has some cognisance with this study, in that, almost three quarters supported this notion (74%). One respondent says, “if I saw the rainbow flag, I would be more likely to go there” (FG4), however another offers a view that the rainbow flag may “alienate a group of people who are older or who have not come out and they don’t want to be identified” (FG1). Referring back to the observation of the researcher at the 2009 SGLMG, the rainbow flag is symbolic and synonymous to being ‘welcoming and
friendly’ for GLBTI visitors. Perth would uplift its ‘lesbian-friendliness’ profile by more venues displaying the rainbow flag that signifies a ‘welcome’ to lesbians. In doing so, tourism service providers, although may be seen as taking some risks, would appear to be more equitable and seen in the light of fairness for all. Recalling that this niche group that has a stronger propensity to spend than the average mainstream tourist, retail businesses can only gain in welcoming GALs.

5.3. Aim 2 – Motivations and satisfaction of Perth lesbian tourist

**Holiday motivators**
The result shows that the top motivators of lesbians on holidays were: culture and sights (94%); followed closely by comfort and relaxation (91%), and lesbian social life (64%). This resonates with Swarbrooke et al.’s (2007) mainstream typology of motivators in tourism, in particular, the cultural aspects of sightseeing and experiencing new cultures referred to in figure 2.3, and Clift & Forrest’s (1999) study of gay men on holidays in the second and third motivation themes, which were culture and sights and comfort and relaxation respectively. The evidence suggests that lesbian tourist motivators are quite similar to those of the mainstream tourists. That being the case, tourism service providers and authorities should be more inclusive towards lesbian tourists. Providing culture and sights, comfort and relaxation for lesbian tourists is therefore not any different from that of the mainstream tourists. Only in the case of lesbian social life, perhaps, providing this aspect would involve tourism service providers to be more open in their outlook towards tourists with a different sexual orientation than the societal norm. In the context of this study however, lesbian relationship as a holiday motivator attracted 8% of the respondents. This reaffirms a respondent’s comment that lesbian tourist attractions “are not sexual specific” (FG2). Perth, accordingly, is a “lifestyle destination rather than an attraction or event based location” (FG1). Consequently, promoting ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth might feature lifestyle opportunities such as:

- “beaches” (FG4, SLT105),
- “friends and family, experience space [and] slower pace” (FG2), and
- “quiet and serenity” (FG3).
As such, lesbian tourists should not pose a threat to mainstream society, since they seem to share similar wants.

**Visit friends and family (VFR)**

The study indicates that VFR primarily motivated lesbian tourists in visiting Perth. It is important to note that VFR is in line with Tourism W.A.’s mainstream visitors profile mentioned in section 2.8. The evidence further suggests that lesbian tourists have similarities with those of the personal aspects of mainstream visitor motivations discussed by Swarbrooke et al., (2007). Additionally, VFR is seen as an intrinsic tourist motivator following Holloway, (2002) and Hall (2003). VFR as a ‘pull factor’ when making a holiday decision (Decrop, 2006), suggests that tourist attractions are less important than the purpose of the holiday, which is to fulfil an intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1975). This being the case, the intrinsic motivation of lesbian tourists (VFR), then appear to ‘blend-in’ with mainstream tourists. As VFR activities are reflected in culture & sights (e.g. visit to Kings Park, Fremantle), comfort & relaxation (e.g. visit to Margaret River in the S.W.), it almost seems that there is no significant difference between mainstream tourist motivators and that of lesbian tourists. Again, by being inclusive with advertising targeted toward the lesbian market, tourism opportunities could probably expand. Another feature of VFR is the invisibility of lesbian tourist as this means that lesbian tourist would most probably be travelling with members of their family and friends. From the outside, it may appear that it is a normal family travelling together with children or adults. Lesbian couples may also travel with their children, making it rather difficult to single them out. Consequently, this study would argue for the travel industry to promote more female same-sex travel that focuses on VFR activities.

**Hostility**

Kantsa’s (2002) study suggests that there were some resistance from local women towards lesbian tourists on the island of Lesbos. This resonance of hostility exists in this current study, when in some suburbs there were some resistance against lesbians. As one FG respondent indicated that, “I have been yelled out several times ‘lesbos’ in Mt. Lawley” (FG2). This is further supported by survey respondents who indicated that Perth is “conservative” (SLR34, SLR50), but more importantly, that “the big community still dismiss
our visibility” (SLR51). Such dismissal by the larger community seems to indicate some fear or prejudice. Such homophobia following Kitzinger et al’s (1993) notion, appears to be immature and socially constructed, perhaps arguably supported by ignorance. Instead of celebrating diversity and being open-minded, Perth mainstream society prefers to remain conservative, dwelling on a biased ‘kind of personality disorder’. This phenomenon invites further research. Such conservatism may cause damage to the image of Perth as a tolerant tourist destination. These disorders would be better dealt with through public education by way of the media, Perth city Council and Tourism W.A.’s effort to dispel the notion that Perth is not a progressive and modern society. Learning to live in harmony between all sexualities is essential, if Perth wants to position itself as a progressive and attractive lesbian tourist destination.

**Distance**

One of the themes highlighted in this study is the issue of distance between lesbian venues discussed in section 4.3. Unlike in Sydney where GAL venues are located within the same precinct for example, along Oxford Street in Paddington and in the suburb of Newtown, in Perth, the GAL venues are rather spread out between the suburbs of Northbridge, Highgate and Mt Lawley. The CMI (2008) report suggests that GALs pay particular attention to locations of GAL attractions when choosing accommodation. Therefore, GALs prefer to stay in close proximity to GAL attractions. For this reason, it would be in Perth’s interest then, to locate GAL venues and attractions within a small precinct, as suggested by respondent FG2, “by having a street in the city that’s dedicated to non-heterosexuals”. Additionally, such a precinct can help to secure a ‘sense of place’ and ‘feeling of connection’ espoused by George & George (2004). In doing so, a certain ‘feminist space’ is created which will ensure safety. Furthermore, satisfied lesbian tourist will inform others and encourage others to visit Perth. This in turn will help promote sustainable tourism. The Perth City local councils should look at promoting feminist spaces and provide better security for safety. Vigilance and police patrolling would also be made easier when GAL venues and attractions are located in the same precinct.

**Risk avoidance**
Hughes (2006) maintains the notion that GAL tourist practice ‘risk avoidance’ when choosing holiday destination. In the context of this study, where only 27% of total respondent found Perth to be ‘lesbian-friendly’, with 85% disagreeing that there are sufficient lesbian venues (refer to figure 4.3), it would be prudent therefore to educate the public on the benefits of lesbian tourism. The results reflect a tendency to marginalise lesbian tourists by Perth’s conservative society. Furthermore, Lukenbill (1999) suggests that the GAL community cannot be bought, but rather by engaging with the GAL community. Accordingly, engagement with the GAL community, would provide impetus for social change that can result in more tolerance and acceptance, resulting in better outcomes and generating more tourism business opportunities. Referring back to the RMMI report (2008) in section 2.2, the Australian GAL business is estimated to be worth approximately $2.1 billion yield per year. This is a substantial return for GAL tourism investment. Recalling Clift, Luongo and Callister’s (2002) claim that GLBTI consumers are ‘recession resistant’, such opportunities should be further developed in light of the recent global recession. In turn, this would encourage more satisfied lesbian tourist to revisit and recommend Perth, thereby striking a ‘win-win’ situation for all concerned.

5.4. Aim 3 - Attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian ‘rainbow tourist’ destination

The results showed that 85% of respondents would like to see more lesbian attractions, and that 5% agreed that there were sufficient lesbian venues in Perth. Evidently, there is a cry for Perth to expand its lesbian attractions and venues. This study identifies three top factors needed to position Perth as an attractive ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination, which are to:

- increase lesbian attractions/events;
- develop more lesbian venues; and
- improve the need for more media publicity.

These identified factors are social realities and would be of interest to the tourism industry, as it provides opportunities to develop what is lacking for a ready market segment. How this could be achieved requires dialogue between Perth City officials, Tourism W.A., tourism businesses and the GAL community.
Sustainable lesbian tourism

As mentioned in the section 1.1, the rejuvenation stage of Butler’s (1980) destination life cycle model is vital for Sustainable Tourism (ST). In the context of this study, Perth’s position as a tourist destination may require some diversification that should embrace the lesbian tourist segment as possible new potential market, and whose disposable income provides a ‘recession resistant consumer’ according to Clift et al. (2002). Another aspect of ST, as discussed earlier in section 2.5, Harris et al. (2002) suggest that the outcome of the social relationship between that tourist and the experience of that destination leads to sustainable tourism. In the context of this study, satisfied lesbian tourists will more likely tell others about their memorable experiences, and in turn more likely to recommend Perth. Relating Harris et al.’s view, the result indicated that more than half (59%) of Perth lesbian residents will tell their friends about Perth, but that less than half (42%) will recommend Perth as a lesbian tourist destination. This in turn will help sustain lesbian tourism in Perth. However, such a position supports the notion that there is a lack of lesbian attractions and venues in Perth, and that Perth has a conservative society. There is however, a reverse trend offered by the lesbian non-residents, in that, two thirds (67%) will tell friends about Perth, with similar numbers (60%) that will recommend Perth. As there is no significant difference between these two groups mentioned in section 4.5, this phenomenon is perhaps worth further investigation.

The positive comments from Perth lesbian residents suggest to “recommend Perth as a place to visit rather than just being lesbian-friendly” (SLR5), and that “Perth is a laid back society” (SLR20), who will “welcome visitors and new faces with open arms” (SLR8). This clearly indicates that Perth is not an attractive lesbian destination per se, but that essentially Perth is an attractive tourist destination without the homo-hetero binary. More importantly, Perth’s position is best summed up as being “limited due to our population and Perth culture” (SLR32). Such sentiments appears to limit the sustainability of lesbian tourism in Perth.

Interpretative approach

Finally, it is important to reiterate that this discussion is drawn from a male feminist perspective, as according to Kimmel (1998), there is a need to view things from a feminist perspective, in order to achieve gender justice. For example, from the findings and
discussions, there appears to be a need for ‘feminist spaces’ in Perth. To achieve gender justice, it would therefore be correct to argue for and support this call from a male’s perspective. Rejecting patriarchy, or that men should be the only dominant player in society, from a male feminist’s viewpoint, gender equity is essential, and that more weight should be given to the female gender, in order to correct this imbalance. In doing so, and in the context of this study, the use of a social constructivist approach through listening to the voices of a marginalised gendered sub-cultural group (that of Perth’s lesbian residents and lesbian visitors), can provide insights that might help navigate some much needed social changes, that will help position Perth to be a more attractive lesbian tourist destination. At the same time, there is cause to argue for social justice and tolerance towards this sub-cultural group. The author’s subjective view suggests that any inaction would invariably invite further discontent and discrimination.

Hence, the onus is on tourism businesses and governmental tourism authorities to take up this challenge. As highlighted in section 1.2, this thesis argues for social justice and social inclusion for the rights and protection to all tourists, irrespective of gender, since tourism is a human right as proclaimed under Article 24. of The UDHR, 1948. In particular, that Perth’s ultra-conservative society should not ignore the needs of its GAL community, specifically that of the lesbian residents and tourists. Any further inertia or procrastination would arguably render an abuse of lesbian tourists’ human rights.

**Macbeth’s scholarship platform**

This current debate is conducted through Macbeth’s (2005) *value-based* and *ethics* tourism scholarship platform, since this study is ‘subjective and inclusive’ in nature. This discourse is also reflexive of the author’s male feminist view. As such, arguably, this thesis is a social representation of Perth’s lesbian residents and tourists. The values represented by the perceptions of respondents are reflexive of the social realities or ‘truths’. Accordingly, differing values of the respondents were presented and interpreted. Ethical tourism in this sense, is to acknowledge the gap in lesbian tourism literature mentioned in section 2.8, as purported by Kuar (2002) and Hughes (2006). This thesis therefore sets out to correct such an imbalance, and in the process include lesbian tourism issues, making a small contribution towards the wider scholarship in the epistemology of lesbian tourism.
5.5. Conclusion

The above discussion suggests that Perth is not ‘lesbian-friendly’ and that Perth is not an attractive lesbian tourist destination. However, the results pertain only to the context of Perth and therefore cannot be generalised. Perth has a unique position as a tourist destination as it offers a wide range of tourist attractions. In the context of lesbian tourism, there is insufficient venues and attractions for lesbian residents and tourists, with safety being an issue. Consequently, the argument remains to either remain in inertia or to be bold and move into a new direction. This new direction, with a ready and ‘recession resistant’ market segment, will essentially require a fundamental shift in mainstream society’s notion of lesbian tourism. This shift in mind-set can be further achieved with the support of Tourism W.A., by including lesbian tourism into mainstream tourism promotional activities, that is, to be inclusive rather than to remain anathema. In doing so, this discourse of lesbian residents and lesbian tourists, and indeed the wider GLBTI community, will view Perth as an attractive tourist destination.
Chapter 6 Conclusion

“If anything creates problems for you, it simply means that either you do not know much of it or you do not want to accept the truth about it. I guess both the reasons can be seen in any homophobic society”


6.1. Overview of findings

Lesbian Tourism appears to be an emerging niche market for Perth W.A. In major cities such as Amsterdam, Berlin, London, New York, San Francisco, Sydney, Zurich, lesbian tourism plays a significant role in their tourism industry (Waitt & Markwell, 2006, Hughes, 2006, Guaracino, 2007, CMI 2008). The premise of this study was a result of the cry against Mayor Scaffidi’s call for Perth to be more ‘gay-friendly’, by some ultra-conservative section of Perth’s society. This discourse advocates social inclusion of a marginalised sub-cultural group, in particular, lesbian residents and tourists. The core objective was set to determine the notion of the attractiveness of Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination. An outcome of this research was to position Perth as an emerging attractive lesbian tourist destination.

To reiterate, the three aims of this study were to:

- determine how ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth is;
- evaluate the motivations and satisfaction of Perth lesbian tourists,
- determine the attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian tourist destination.

Clearly, this study has revealed the unnecessary fears of lesbian tourists, for they have similar tourist motivations as the mainstream tourists mentioned in section 5.3. To conclude, the data has signalled that there were some concurrence amongst the respondents that Perth is not ‘lesbian-friendly’, however, most would recommend or tell friends (refer to table 4.7). Whether or not participants of this study contribute toward sustaining Perth’s position as an attractive lesbian tourist destination depends largely on Perth’s mainstream society’s reaction towards this sub-cultural group. To embrace this marginalised group would further lead to only more positive outcomes, such as acceptance and tolerance towards GLBTI people on the
whole thereby, repositioning Perth as a more modern and ‘welcoming’ destination. Not to do so, can lead to stagnation in terms of tourism developments, as well inevitably drive away great tourism potentials, that contributes overall economically to the State.

Fundamentally, this sustained argument further concludes strongly that Perth lacks lesbian attractions and venues as an attractive lesbian tourist destination. Furthermore, the mainstream public’s lack of understanding and anathema towards lesbian tourism hinders possible advancement. As discussed earlier, evidently, Mayor Scaffidi’s tolerant vision alone is insufficient to drive necessary changes required to position Perth as a ‘gay-friendly’ tourist destination. Essentially, this vision would seriously require a fundamental thawing of ‘homophobia’, coupled with a view toward an amalgamation of State level political will, social justice and fairness in human rights, and respect for the GLBTI community, in order that such a vision can be realised. More importantly, the mainstream media should be more inclusive towards the GLBTI community. This study provides some opportunities for the tourism industry and government tourism agencies to further develop a ready market segment, in order to position Perth as an emerging attractive lesbian tourist destination. Next, some recommendations are identified from this research.

6.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations could be acted upon to increase lesbian tourist satisfaction and to create more awareness of the socio-cultural needs of lesbian residents. Such actions undertaken will help position Perth as a more equitable society towards marginalised lesbians:

- develop more lesbian attractions;
- develop more lesbian owned and run venues;
- create a gay and lesbian precinct – being in close proximity will create a ‘feeling of connection’ with community spirit and a ‘sense of place’, (feeling protected and safe within this precinct);
- increase further support from governmental agencies such as Perth City Council, Police W.A.;
• seek support from Tourism W.A. in promoting Perth as a ‘gay and lesbian-friendly’ destination;
• educate businesses about being ‘lesbian-friendly’, in particular in respecting women’s rights;
• the need for more mainstream publicity – inform and educate public in order to dissipate conservative attitudes towards lesbians; and
• develop ‘feminist spaces’ and ‘lesbian spaces’ so that mainstream society as a whole will be more open, tolerant and less conservative.

Some of these recommendations may or may not be realised, depending on the agendas of various concerned groups. Having provided some recommendations, the next section will deal with limitations of the study.

6.3. Limitations of the study

This research aimed to undertake an empirical study of the perceptions of Perth lesbian residents and lesbian non-residents on the attractiveness of Perth as a lesbian tourist destination. However, resource limitations and arising issues need to be discussed.

Although the total sample size was 112, the actual lesbian tourist size is relatively small at 22. Consequently, there appears to be more weighting on Perth lesbian residents’ data compared to the rather limited size of the lesbian tourist dataset. The reasons for this restriction include:

• the difficulty in accessing lesbian tourists due to researcher’s limited personal contact and male identity (difficulty in networking);
• the uncertainty of response rate through use of on-line survey;
• the lack of support from lesbians (risk of ‘snowball’ technique);
• the limited time for sampling; and
• the researcher not being able to obtain survey respondents at the Perth Pride Parade due to time resources, as this would have provided an opportunity to engage with lesbian tourists attending this event.

Perhaps, the most compelling limitation points to the researcher’s gender, as this appears to be the first obstacle in dealing with the potential participants. Establishing trust across gender
boundaries is therefore essential. This was made easier through interaction in the focus group participants. However, there were more challenges in the survey group. One way would have been to announce the positionality of the author in the letter of information. It should be made clear that one of the fundamental idea of a male feminist is to promote female gender justice. In doing so, this might have induced more survey respondents. The following will be some suggestions for further research opportunities.

6.4. Further research

This study provides some data on the perspectives of Perth lesbian residents and lesbian non-residents, concerning Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ tourist destination, and sets the stage for more research. Further research could be enhanced by some issues identified in this study, such as to:

- compare Perth to other destinations in Australia;
- determine the financial contributions of lesbians to the tourism industry;
- examine the cause for hostility towards lesbians;
- explore the need for ‘feminine spaces’ in Perth;
- evaluate the issue of public engagement with lesbian tourism; and to
- promote advocacy for acceptance and acknowledgement of lesbian tourism.

The results of such studies could further assist the tourism industry and governmental agencies to develop and sustain this emerging niche market. More importantly, mainstream society should be made more aware of lesbian tourism by being more inclusive, welcoming and ‘lesbian-friendly’.


Events NSW. (2009). Mardi Gras brings in the Pink Dollars: Events NSW.


New York: Pinter Publishers ;
Distributed exclusively in the USA and Canada by St. Martin's Press.


Tan, J. (2002). *Western, urban, queer: sexual histories and the coding of space*. Murdoch University, Perth, W.A.


## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Useful Websites

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>World’s #1 Gay &amp; Lesbian market research Company</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.pinksofa.com">www.pinksofa.com</a></td>
<td>Worldwide Lesbian Portal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.samesame.com.au">www.samesame.com.au</a></td>
<td>Australia’s #1 Gay &amp; Lesbian lifestyle website</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.pinkboard.com.au">www.pinkboard.com.au</a></td>
<td>Australia’s original personal site for GLBT community</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.glcs.org.au">www.glcs.org.au</a></td>
<td>Gay &amp; Lesbian Community Services in Australia</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.qbed.com">www.qbed.com</a></td>
<td>Accommodation and Travel Directory for Gay &amp; Lesbian Friendly Travellers Australia</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.outinperth.com">www.outinperth.com</a></td>
<td>Perth W.A.’s GLBTIQQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer and questioning newspaper ) Community Newspaper</td>
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<td>People like us – Singaporean Gay &amp; Lesbian website</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.fridae.com">www.fridae.com</a></td>
<td>Empowering Gay Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.trevy.com">www.trevy.com</a></td>
<td>Gay &amp; Lesbian in Singapore Portal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.lesbiansingapore.com">www.lesbiansingapore.com</a></td>
<td>Lesbians in Singapore Portal</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.sgbutterfly.org">www.sgbutterfly.org</a></td>
<td>Singapore Transgender Community Portal</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.equityaccess.murdoch.edu.au">www.equityaccess.murdoch.edu.au</a></td>
<td>Murdoch Ally Program Portal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2 Information Letter for Prospective Participants

Information Letter for Prospective Participants

Dear Participant,

Ref: Lesbian Tourism: ‘The Relationship between the Lesbian ‘Rainbow Tourist’ and Perth, W.A.’

Background
In September, 2008, the Lord Mayor of Perth, Ms Lisa Scaffidi wanted to position Perth as a ‘gay-friendly’ or ‘homosexual-friendly’ city. Some opposition existed against this notion whilst social exclusion of resident gay males and lesbians are targeted, the focus of this research is on lesbian residents and lesbian tourists, since there is an identified lack of research done on this topic.

This study is an Honours Project study in Tourism at Murdoch University, under the supervision of Dr. Diane Lee, Tourism Program Chair.

Aim of the study
The focus of this study is to find out how ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth is, as an attractive tourist destination. In particular, how accessible and welcoming it is for an international or domestic lesbian ‘rainbow tourist’ visiting Perth.

It aims to address the following objectives, through the perspectives of self-identified lesbian residents, as well as both domestic and international visitors.

- To understand lesbian residents’ perceptions of Perth as an attractive lesbian tourist destination.
- To evaluate the motivations and satisfaction of lesbian tourists to Perth.
- To determine if there is a sustainable relationship between the lesbian ‘rainbow-tourist’ and Perth W.A.

This study seeks to highlight measures necessary to sustain lesbian tourism by making it more inclusive, welcoming and ‘lesbian-friendly’.

What does your participation involve?
Completion of this survey is on a voluntary basis for those who are above 18 years old, self-identified lesbian females. This survey is anticipated to take approximately 10 minutes. The survey can be completed on-line through the website www.lesbian-friendlyperthsurvey.murdoch.edu.au. Your informed consent is assumed through answering and submitting the on-line survey. Consent given implies your permission given for data to be used for this thesis and further research publication.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal from the Study
Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without discrimination or prejudice. All information is treated as confidential and no names or other details that might identify you will be used in any publication arising from the research. If you withdraw, all information you have provided will be destroyed.

If you consent to take part in this research study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study and the procedures you will be asked to undergo. Please make sure that you ask any questions you may have, and that all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction before you agree to participate.

Possible Benefits
It is possible that there may be no direct benefit to you from participation in this study. While there is no guarantee that you will personally benefit, the knowledge gained from your participation may help others in the future, such as the need to sustain lesbian tourism in Perth.
**Possible Risks**
It is not anticipated that there may be possible risks such as physical or psychological discomforts by participating in this interview. Should you experience any upset or distress as a result of this research process and need support, then the following are available: Gay and Lesbian Community Services W.A. Telephone Counselling at tel. 08 9420 7201, Life Line at tel. 131114 or Murdoch Psychology Clinic at tel. 08 9360 2570.

**Questions**
If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact my supervisor using the details given below.

This study has been approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2009/128). If you have any reservation or complaint about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact Murdoch University’s Research Ethics Office (Tel. 08 9360 6677 (for overseas Tel. +61 8 9360 6677) or e-mail ethics@murdoch.edu.au). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.


We would like to thank you in advance for your assistance with this research project.

Yours faithfully,

Simon Teoh  
B.Tourism, Honours in Tourism Student

Research Supervisor:  
Dr. Diane Lee  
Senior Lecturer in Tourism  
Social Science Bldg. Room 2.023  
Tel: 61-8-9360 2616  
Email: d.lee@murdoch.edu.au
## Appendix 3 Questionnaire Rationale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1. Which city have you visited that you would consider the most ‘Lesbian-friendly’?</td>
<td>This question might give an indication of the position of Perth as a choice destination and the reasons for it. It also seeks to locate other lesbian-friendly destinations and its supporting reasons. It is envisaged that these findings may point to some significance in revealing what and why the perceived ‘lesbian-friendly’ destinations are, in the hope that such comparative knowledge may be used positively in developing Perth as a preferred lesbian tourist destination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2. Why do you consider this city to be the most ‘Lesbian-friendly’?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3. lesbian social life</td>
<td>This question is based on a study by authors Clift &amp; Forrest (1999), focusing on gay men and their destination motivations. In this study, three themes were revealed which is: gay social life and sex, culture and sights, and comfort and relaxation. The study also revealed that depending on whether gay males were single or living in partnership, their motivation for seeking a gay tourist destination varied according to their relationships. This study has adapted the findings of these authors, substituting the focus on lesbians instead with a slight modification that separated social life and sex as two different variables. Studies have shown that lesbian sex is not a priority (Hughes, 2006; L. Johnston, 2005). The significance of this question is to locate the motivations of lesbian tourists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4. lesbian relationship</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Q5. culture and sights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6. comfort and relaxation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7. venues displaying the Rainbow flag</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8. others reasons, please state:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9. Do you live in Perth?</td>
<td>This query is to determine the two groups: Perth lesbian residents; and lesbian non-residents for the purpose of this study. By doing so, specific measures of the two groups can be analysed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10. Have you visited Perth?</td>
<td>This question seeks to place the position of participants into context, i.e. if participant has had the Perth experience or not. As this study looks for purposive sampling, a negative answer to this question would preclude the participant to the Perth specific questions. Hence, this question serves to validate targeted participant sample.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11. How many times in numbers?</td>
<td>To gauge the frequency of visit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12. What are the reasons/s for visiting Perth?</td>
<td>To understand what attractions Perth offers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13. I believe that Perth is ‘Lesbian-friendly’</td>
<td>This query is important to establish if Perth is ‘lesbian-friendly’ or not (Meezan, 2003). This forms the core argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14. I am satisfied with Lesbian attractions Perth W.A. has to offer</td>
<td>This inquiry seeks to measure participants’ level of satisfaction with lesbian attractions in Perth (Ryan, 1995). This is used to discover if there might be a correlation between satisfaction and return visits (Q17 &amp; Q18), under a sustainable tourism paradigm (Faulkner, 1997; Harris et al., 2002; Weaver, 2006).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15. I find that there are sufficient Lesbian venues in Perth</td>
<td>This question seeks to discover if Perth caters enough to lesbian tourist. The implications would be to develop more lesbian venues in order to attract lesbian tourists (Hughes, 2006).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q16. I would prefer a visible display of the Rainbow flag at Lesbian-friendly venues</td>
<td>This inquiry seeks to shed light on causality, in terms of the visibility of the Rainbow flag as a signifier for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Response</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q17. Perth is my first choice for a ‘Lesbian-friendly’ destination</td>
<td>This question seeks to situate Perth’s position as the first choice for a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination (Kantsa, 2002; Kuar Puar, 2002). The antithesis is in Q1, where an opportunity exists to name the participant’s first choice of a ‘lesbian-friendly’ destination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18. I find that there are sufficient attractions for a Lesbian visitor in Perth</td>
<td>This inquiry seeks to validate if Perth is sufficiently attractive as a lesbian destination (Guaracino, 2007).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19. I find that there is sufficient publicity targeted at the Lesbian ‘Rainbow Tourist’*</td>
<td>This question seeks to gauge if there is sufficient publicity to invite and welcome lesbian tourists. Q13 further develops the sources of information sought, thereby, providing potential leads to redress marketing gaps (Roy Morgan Research., 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20. I would like to see more Lesbian attractions in Perth</td>
<td>This inquiry seeks to measure how favourable or otherwise, lesbian tourists would be motivated to visit when there is an increase in the number of ‘lesbian-friendly’ tourist attractions (Gnoth, 1997).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q21. From which sources of information did you find Lesbian tourists attractions to visit in Perth?</td>
<td>This query seeks to locate the source of tourist information on lesbian visitor attractions. The results may lead to vital marketing information, such as to understand lesbian tourists information trends. Such data may help position marketing activities for tourism authority (Pease et al., 2007; Swarbrooke &amp; Horner, 2007).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q22. What are 3 key aspects of Lesbian tourist culture in Perth that you like?  Q23. What are 3 key aspects of Lesbian tourist culture in Perth that you dislike?</td>
<td>This open question seeks to understand the lesbian tourist culture of Perth (L. Johnston, 2005; L. Johnston &amp; Longhurst, 2008). The findings may indicate if such a culture would satisfy, motivate and attract them to re-visit Perth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24. In your opinion, how can Perth position itself as a ‘Lesbian-friendly’ city?</td>
<td>This open inquiry invites participants to suggest ways to position Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q25. What are the three things you look for in Perth as a ‘Lesbian-friendly’ city?</td>
<td>This open-ended qualitative inquiry allows participant engagement. This question is to understand what motivates lesbian tourists to visit Perth, in terms of their expectations of Perth as a lesbian-friendly city. This is based on the Leisure Motivation Scale of Beard and Ragheb (1983) cited in (Mohsin, 2007). It seeks to elicit suggestions on how to position Perth as a ‘lesbian-friendly’ city which relates to Q15. The significance of this findings is that it will provide opportunities for tourism agencies to take proper action, if Perth’s sustainable lesbian tourists attractions is to be management and maintained (Gunn &amp; Var, 2002).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q26. Would you tell your friends about what Perth has to offer to the Lesbian community?</td>
<td>This questions based on a study by George &amp; George (2004), where customer loyalty, and customer choice and a place attachment will produce future purchase intentions and/or suggest to others to visit the destination. This has implications in the importance of ensuring tourist satisfaction in order to sustain the tourist destination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q27. Would you recommend Perth?</td>
<td>This inquiry seeks to understand how sustainable lesbian tourism is in Perth (Lukenbill,1999).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28. Please discuss why you think ‘yes’ or ‘no’</td>
<td>The reasons might help to promote Perth as a lesbian tourist destination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q29. Any other further comments?</td>
<td>This open-ended question is to provide space and to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
facilitate any comments which might add more in-depth knowledge into this questionnaire. It is also an opportunity for participants to raise any issues pertaining to objectives 1-3, that might deem important to them. This might lead to more other research opportunities (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004).

| Q30. Your age category in years | This question seeks to know which age category the participants belong to. This may lead to some causality with Q2. |
| Q31. What is your lesbian relationship status? | This question seeks to understand if there might be a correlation between in Q2. |
| Q32. How many times did you take a vacation away from home last year? | This question seeks to understand if there might be a correlation between in Q21. |
| Q33. Which city do you live in? | This question seeks to place the origins of participants. This inquiry may lead to further analysis of different holiday motivators. |
Appendix 4 Survey Questionnaire

Survey Questionnaire

Title: Lesbian Tourism: ‘The Relationship between the Lesbian ‘Rainbow Tourist’ and Perth W.A.’

Section 1 General questions

Please note this survey uses jump questions. This means those questions you are not required to answer will disappear. It is normal if questions or sections are not in sequential order.

Q1. Which city have you visited that you would consider the most ‘Lesbian-friendly’ Destination?

Q2. Why do you consider this city to be the most ‘Lesbian-friendly’

Using the following scale, please rate whether you disagree (1=Strongly disagree) or agree (5=Strongly agree) with the following statements:

When I am on vacation, I look for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate questions on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) by putting an ‘X’ in the appropriate box.</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree or disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) lesbian social life</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) lesbian relationship</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(7) venues displaying the Rainbow flag</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8) Any Others, please specify</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q9. Do you live in Perth?  
(a) ☐ Yes , go to question 13    (b) ☐ No, go to question 10

Q10. Have you visited Perth?  
(a) ☐ Yes , go to question 11    (b) ☐ No, go to question 30

Q11. How many times in numbers? e.g. 1, or 2, or 3, or 4…

Q13. What are the reason/s for visiting Perth?  

Section 2A: Perth as a lesbian tourist destination
This section is specifically about Perth W.A. These questions seek to determine if you are satisfied with Perth W.A. as a lesbian tourist destination.

Using the following scale, please rate whether you disagree (1=Strongly disagree) or agree (5=Strongly agree) with the following statements:

Please remember, those questions you are not required to answer will disappear, It is normal if questions or sections are not in sequential order.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Rate questions on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) by putting an ‘X’ in the appropriate box.</th>
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<th>Disagree</th>
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<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Scale</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>* ‘Rainbow Tourist’ = Gay and Lesbian Tourist</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20. I would like to see more Lesbian attractions in Perth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q21. From which sources of information did you find Lesbian tourists attractions to visit in Perth?
(a) □ Friend’s recommendation
(b) □ Lesbian websites
(c) □ Lesbian magazines
(d) □ Tourism W.A.
(e) □ others, please specify………………

Section 2B: Lesbian-friendly Perth

This section is about what motivates you to visit Perth W.A. The following questions ask whether you think there is a sustainable relationship between you and Perth W.A.
Please remember, those questions you are not required to answer will disappear, it is normal if questions or sections are not in sequential order.

Q22. What are 3 key aspects of Lesbian tourist culture in Perth that you **like**?

Q23. What are 3 key aspects of Lesbian tourist culture in Perth that you **dislike**?

Q24. In your opinion, how can Perth position itself as a ‘Lesbian-friendly’ city?

Q25. What are the three things you look for in Perth as a ‘Lesbian-friendly’ city?

Q26. Would you tell your friends about what Perth has to offer to the Lesbian community?
   (a) ☐ Yes      (b) ☐ No

Q27. Would you recommend Perth?
   (a) ☐ Yes      (b) ☐ No

Q28. Please discuss why you think ‘yes’ or ‘no’

Q29. Any other further comments?

*****************

Section 3: Demographic questions

Below are some demographic questions. Please answer the following questions below, by ticking the appropriate response given.

Please remember, those questions you are not required to answer will disappear, it is normal if questions or sections are not in sequential order.

Q30. Your age category in years:
   (a) 18-19 ☐,   (b) 20-24 ☐,   (c) 25-29 ☐,   (d) 30-34 ☐,   (e) 35-39 ☐,   (f) 40-44,  
   (g) 45-49 ☐,   (h) 50-54 ☐,   (i) 55-59 ☐,   (i) 65 and above ☐

Q31. What is your lesbian relationship status?
   (a) ☐ Single, not in any same gender relationship  
   (b) ☐ Living in a same-gender de-facto/partner relationship  
   (c) ☐ Having a same-gender relationship but not living together
Q32. How many times did you take a vacation away from home last year?
(a) □ 1   (b) □ 2   (c) □ 3   (d) □ 4   (e) □ more than 4 times

Q33. Which city do you live in?
(a) □ Perth, W.A.       (b) □ Sydney, N.S.W.  (c) □ Singapore
(d) □ Others, please state...........

The results and findings will be published on the webpage:

A hard copy will be available at Murdoch University Main Library.

Thank you for your participation.

Simon Teoh
B.Tourism  Post Grad. Cert. in Business Administration
Honours Student in Tourism, Murdoch University
Appendix 5 Invitation Letter for Prospective Focus Group Interview Participant

Invitation Letter for Prospective Focus Group Interview Participant

Dear Participant,

Ref: Lesbian Tourism: ‘The Relationship between the Lesbian ‘Rainbow Tourist’ and Perth, W.A.’

Background
In September, 2008, the Lord Mayor of Perth, Ms Lisa Scaffidi wanted to position Perth as a ‘gay-friendly’ or ‘homosexual-friendly’ city. Some opposition exists against this notion. Whilst social exclusion of resident gay males and lesbians are targeted, the focus of this research is on lesbian residents and lesbian tourists, since there is an identified lack of research done on this topic.

This study is an Honours Project study in Tourism at Murdoch University, under the supervision of Dr. Diane Lee, Tourism Program Chair.

Aim of the study
The focus of this study is to find out how ‘lesbian-friendly’ Perth is, as an attractive tourist destination. In particular, how accessible and welcoming it is for an international or domestic lesbian ‘rainbow tourist’ visiting Perth.

It aims to address the following objectives, through the perspectives of self-identified lesbian residents, as well as both domestic and international visitors.

- To understand lesbian residents’ perceptions of Perth as an attractive lesbian tourist destination.
- To evaluate the motivations and satisfaction of lesbian tourists to Perth.
- To determine if there is a sustainable relationship between the lesbian ‘rainbow-tourist’ and Perth W.A.

This study seeks to highlight measures necessary to sustain lesbian tourism by making it more inclusive, welcoming and ‘lesbian-friendly’.

What does your participation involve?
This focus group interview is on a voluntary basis for participants above 18 years old and self-identified lesbian. This interview will take place on Monday, 17th August held at Murdoch University Library, South Street, Learning Common Tutorial Room 2.005D, at 6p.m. It is anticipated to take approximately 1 hour. Refreshments will be provided. This interview focuses on the first objective outlined above, which is to understand lesbian residents’ perceptions of Perth as an attractive lesbian tourist destination.

A consent form is provided. Your signature of approval is required before interview commences. All information provided is treated as confidential by the researchers and will not be released to a third party unless required to do so by law. Consent given implies your permission given for data to be used for this thesis and further research publication.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal from the Study
Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without discrimination or prejudice. All information is treated as confidential and no names or other details that might identify you will be used in any publication arising from the research. If you withdraw, all information you have provided will be destroyed.

If you consent to take part in this research study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study and the procedures you will be asked to undergo. Please make sure that you ask any questions you may have, and that all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction before you agree to participate.
Possible Benefits
It is possible that there may be no direct benefit to you from participation in this study. While there is no guarantee that you will personally benefit, the knowledge gained from your participation may help others in the future, such as the need to sustain lesbian tourism in Perth.

Possible Risks
It is not anticipated that there may be possible risks such as physical or psychological discomforts by participating in this interview. Should you experience any upset or distress as a result of this research process and need support, then the following are available:
- Gay and Lesbian Community Services W.A. Telephone Counselling at tel. 08 9420 7201
- Life Line at tel. 131114
- Murdoch Psychology Clinic at tel. 08 9360 2570.

Questions
If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact my supervisor using the details given below.

Interview data
Group interview data will be transcribed within 1 week of the focus group interview and a copy sent to you by e-mail. You are requested to indicate if this is a correct record of the focus group proceedings. Please provide comments if the transcript does not reflect your memory of discussions. Your quick response will be most appreciated. Due to the research time frame, the transcript will be assumed correct if I receive no comment 10 days after the initial e-mail.


This study has been approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2009/128). If you have any reservation or complaint about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact Murdoch University’s Research Ethics Office (Tel. 08 9360 6677 or e-mail ethics@murdoch.edu.au). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

We would like to thank you in advance for your assistance with this research project. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully,

Simon Teoh
B.Tourism, Honours in Tourism Student

Research Supervisor:
Dr. Diane Lee
Senior Lecturer in Tourism
Social Science Bldg. Room 2.022
Tel: 61-8-9360 2616
Email: d.lee@murdoch.edu.au
Appendix 6 Focus Group Consent Form

Focus Group Consent Form

Informed consent for participating in focus group interview

I give my informed consent to take part in the study of ‘Lesbian Tourism: The Relationship between the Lesbian ‘Rainbow Tourist’ and Perth W.A.’ I consent to having my responses used in any publication of the study’s results with the understanding that my responses will remain anonymous, disguised, and not linked to me individually. I also understand that my name will not be linked to my responses in any of the research records, and that a confidential code will identify the information given by me.

1. I have been informed that my participation in this study will involve a focus group discussion about the perceptions of lesbian resident in Perth W.A.

2. I have been informed that the discussion will take about 1 hour.

3. I have been informed that the possible risks associated with this study is low, that it is unlikely that I will feel physical psychological discomfort by engaging in a discussion with others. In the event of any possible discomfort or otherwise, I am at liberty to withdraw at any time from the discussion at my own free will, without any obligations or penalty. Should I feel any upset or distress as a result of this research process and need support, then the following services are made available to me:
   - Gay and Lesbian Community Services W.A. Telephone Counselling at tel. 08 9420 7201
   - Life Line at tel. 131114
   - Murdoch Psychology Clinic at tel. 08 9360 2570

4. If I have any questions or concerns with this study, I can contact Dr. Diane Lee, supervisor of this study project at 9360 2120 or refer to Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee at 9360 6677 with reference to Ethics approval: 2009/128

I attest that I have read and understood the contents of this consent form and have received a signed copy of it.

Participant signature: ……………………………………….  Date: ………………………

Researcher signature: ……………………………………….  Date: ………………………

Source: Adapted from Dunn, Dana S., (2009, p.70)
Appendix 7 Part of Focus group interview transcript

What does ‘lesbian-friendly’ (LF) mean to you?

“Safety”

“Acceptance, somewhere to go where you can be yourself”

“Freedom of expression, where you are able to……. God forbid, kiss your partner.. not to drive home…. (laughter)…….to have the option to do that on a bus, not to have a look like everyone else does”

“What does LF mean? it just basically means that you can go or do something without actually having to second guess yourself at anytime. So, if I walk down through Fremantle, sometimes if you were holding your partners hands, it can be sometimes be…. you can feel uncomfortable to do that, I would feel uncomfortable doing that in Northbridge, I would feel uncomfortable doing that in Rockingham….. certainly I wouldn’t do it in Rocko, so, I suppose LF just means that it’s somewhere you don’t actually feel like you need to check your behaviour…em… and that nobody is….. I suppose that nobody is going to…… feel uncomfortable by you. Because it is not about necessarily about the lesbian/s feeling uncomfortable because we can go somewhere and we can take it over and be like…… right to hell to you all, but, that is not really what assimilation into society is all about it is about ……..the anti-freak nature of most people are trying to achieve, it’s about not making other people feel uncomfortable, so a LF area is somewhere where people who are not going to blink or feel uncomfortable with somebody’s else sexuality”

In your opinion, what are some of the lesbian tourist motivations to visit Perth?

“I think we alluded to that, the earlier one when we talked about the lifestyle, the beaches”

“Friends and family, people come to visit”

“It’s not difficult to get away in Perth, In Perth you drive 45 mins away form the city, great bauxite, kangaroos are popping all over the place, you are almost in the bush, whereas it is not that easy to do that in places like MEL & SYD, certainly it is in Hobart, Alice Springs, I am not familiar with Queensland, here,… you can do that and do that quite cheaply, I suppose the tourist operators have not gotten into that that whole rip you off to the point where you bleed, so…. you can travel around W.A. cheaply, hire a car cheaply, you can get away see a large area, in a fairly short space of time on your own without the need for a guide…that type of thing, so, Perth is one of those well signed, easy to get around, except you are driving in the middle of the city, it is very open, there are no weird road rules”

“I agree that an attraction for Perth and WA… is the link for Perth too is the space, you get experience space in WA that is rare globally, that’s rare to find, so few people and so much space to sort of explore, that is an attraction I think”

“If you walk out and drive down on the freeway, at 2 or 3am you can be the only car for 40 kms, it is almost like every all the shutters go down at 6pm, like it is it is very, (laughter from others)”

“It does, it offers that pace, and people often say about Perth, that it is the pace that people really like, because it is the slower pace compared to the busier sort of globalised western cities at the other end, there’s a bit more about holiday pace”

“And if you were coming from Sydney where it is all hustle bustle, coming to Perth, it could be quite nice… …I mean coming from Perth …..Oh God, I just want to get to the hustle bustle, but when you are born and bred, but it would be nice coming to experience a bit of quiet and serenity”

“Yes, that is interesting, the Pride month is in October, I take it, and then what happens then for the rest of the 11 months of the year? (laughter from others)”
“Small individual companies organise events”

“Through summer that’s heaps to do, if you want to”

“There’s the movie, the GlamFest, there’s the women’s Sundowners on Wednesdays at Vultures”

“That’s an event to get out to”

“It is funny, it is very fickle, like you suddenly…’Cocktail and Girls’ is the first event held at the Luxe Bar, it was on a school night..it was packed, I did not know that were so many lesbian or lesbian friendly women in Perth over the age of 18 really……. it was pretty amazing, but you just don’t know, because it’s so diverse in other times, perhaps to get tourists, you need to make those events quite special”

“People become more desensitized to them…em……”

“In what way?”

“For example, the girls from Lick would hold one event every three months and each of those events was being packed absolutely. Then, I think what happens is that. …..because it is run by the people who have full time jobs elsewhere, …..they are things that can make that much money. Women in Perth are notoriously stingy…. (laughter from others) when it comes to how much they have paid to get in somewhere, how much value for money they are getting……. I am not sure if that is an issue……. the fact that they have got access to so much other stuff….em…..so as you say, it is not necessary about going to a lesbian something or rather …..but the attitude in Perth is very much “what do I get”, em……and I don’t know if that is different else where, but for example if you go to a cover charge somewhere, people complain about cover charge here as though it is should be a free ride to walk into somewhere for free when someone provides an infrastructure for you for example, so,…..it is a value that is held here, that things shouldn’t cost very much”
Appendix 8 Additional comments from questionnaire

Would you recommend Perth? Discuss why you think ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

“I believe there are things which makes Perth an attractive place to visit but not necessarily because of any attributes accorded to gender preferences”

“I find that the gay community is Perth very small and can be very tight knot at times, but although we do not have a wide range of clubs, pubs and venues we make do with what we do have and welcome visitors and new faces with open arms”

“Perth is a stepping stone to the rest of our beautiful State, but not a location that stands alone”

“Yes, but I would tell them to expect a small city and a small scene”

“No, at the moment Perth is not gay friendly. We are limited due to our population and Perth culture”

“No, because of the overall conservative feeling this city has and the lack of gay tourism in general”

“I do no think that Perth is lesbian or gay friendly”

“Perth has little to offer, dining wise or entertainment attractions”

“I wouldn’t recommend tourists to visit unless they had a family here as they would run out of activities”

“I would not recommend Perth as the scene in Perth is terrible. It does not matter that you are in a gay venue, you still get hit on even when with your girlfriend, you get verbal abuse on entering/exciting club from straight males, abuse inside. Once watched a gay man spat on whilst inside the Court”

“There is a lot of homophobia in W.A.”

“The gay community as a whole is very segregated”

“Perth does not have a lesbian culture or a visible lesbian identity”

“Perth is becoming less safe for women generally”

“Perth is not a place to be gay. It is too conservative”

“It is the most unfriendly lesbian city”

“Perth is pretty backwards with the acceptance of the lesbian community. Even though we have a few leaders that support it, the big community still dismiss our visibility”

Further comments

“I feel that Fremantle has more to offer the gay tourist at this time, as it is easy to locate accommodation and restaurants which are gay friendly on a websearch!”

“There is not enough in the city for visiting lesbians to do”

“There are better places to go to than Perth, such as Europe”

“We don’t have the volume of population nor the enlightened attitude of say, a Greenwich Village or the Castro to warrant any large-scale tourism campaigns targeting homosexuals”
“I think Perth has a lesbian community that is closed off and is not inclusive”

“If there was a lesbian friendly wine bar with style, that would be grand”

“For me, “feminist-friendly” space is just as important as lesbian-friendly space”

“I have recently left Perth for Melbourne in search of a more tolerant mainstream community”

“Perth and Australia is generally very tolerant”