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## **DRINKING AND REMAKING PLACE: A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL MOONSHINE IN EAST TENNESSEE**

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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Helen Rosko entitled "DRINKING AND REMAKING PLACE: A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL MOONSHINE IN EAST TENNESSEE." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Geography.

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We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

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**DRINKING AND REMAKING PLACE: A STUDY OF  
THE IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL MOONSHINE IN  
EAST TENNESSEE**

A Thesis Presented for the  
Master of Science  
Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Helen Rosko  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Moonshine has undergone resurgence in recent years with the passage of the 2009 liquor laws in Tennessee, allowing for 41 counties to open and operate commercial moonshine distilleries. The rise of legalized moonshine is connected to broader economic changes and has already had a significant impact on the cultural landscape and the selling and remaking of place, in both East Tennessee and Appalachia, two historically underserved regions of the United States. Specifically this thesis research asks: How is place being sold, represented, and re-made through the proliferation of moonshine in East Tennessee? I address this question through an analysis of tourism and place-making scholarship. This research specifically engages concepts of authenticity and commodification in the targeted literatures. I use broadly conceived qualitative methodologies and illustrate my results through a case study of three specific moonshine distilleries in East Tennessee: Tennessee Hills Distillery (Jonesborough, TN), Sugarlands Distilling Company and Doc Collier Moonshine (Gatlinburg, TN). The results from this research illustrate the emerging “place” of moonshine production and consumption in East Tennessee through three themes: a transforming of sense of place, changes to a tourist landscape and the “making” of an “authentic” place of moonshine. This research directly contributes to literatures in Appalachian studies, tourism and place-making geographies.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Well the sun don't shine  
On a moonshine still  
Copper line hiding in the side of a hill  
It'll get you there  
It'll get you there quicker  
Fruit jar full of that good corn liquor  
- The Steeldrivers (2010)

### Introduction

The making of place and space is critical to understanding contemporary human geography. There are several seminal works that geographers use to more thoroughly comprehend space and place, including; Henri Lefebvre's *Production of Space* (1991), Doreen Massey's *Space, Place and Gender* (1994) or David Harvey's *Space of Global Capitalism* (2006). While these works investigate different understandings of space, from its uneven production to its gendered dimension, the overarching argument that the making of place should be central to geographic study is crucial. Within this framework I examine a narrower set of concerns focusing on tourism and place-making. Through my investigation I am interested in concepts of authenticity and commodification within these two sub-disciplines of human geography. Specifically, I examine the impacts of commercial moonshine, in the making and remaking of place in East Tennessee and greater Appalachia. The production of moonshine has long played an important role in the economic and cultural development of Appalachia (Dabney, 2014; Durand, 1956; Peine & Schafft, 2012). This thesis research examines the shift in moonshine production from a commodity once situated in the illegal marketplace to now being legally sold for consumption in both state and national markets of the United States.

Contemporary transformations surrounding moonshine have emerged from changes to the liquor laws in the State of Tennessee. Beginning in 2009, forty-one counties were allowed to open and operate commercial moonshine distilleries (Repeal of

Prohibition, 2011). Prior to this transformation, production was only legal in Moore, Coffee and Lincoln counties where Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey, George Dickel Whiskey and Prichard's' Rum respectfully have been in operation (Yeldell, 2009). Also prior to this transformation, the illegal manufacture of moonshine was concentrated in Cocke County, Tennessee, making East Tennessee the center of illicit moonshining in Appalachia (e.g. Dabney, 2014; Durand, 1956; Peine and Schafft, 2012). An analysis of this research clearly highlights that, East Tennessee has reaffirmed its position as the center of commercial moonshine production (Appendix A). This makes East Tennessee ground zero as both the historical and contemporary producer of corn liquor.

Though moonshine is now seeing resurgence in popular culture, music, the internet and reality television through its recent transformation, imaginaries surrounding moonshine emerge from a deep-rooted history of the Southern Appalachia region (Peine & Schafft, 2012). Literatures in Appalachian studies indicate moonshine has played two distinct roles in East Tennessee: one embodied in nostalgia and tradition, the other a mountaineer way of life, signified with adventure and defiance (e.g. Bridges & Wise, 2009; Roberts, 2010). These dual roles revolve around an economic necessity for moonshiners to adapt to their poor agricultural and transport conditions, resulting in the production of liquid corn (e.g. Peine & Schafft, 2012; Hatch, 2004). With the onset of prohibition, moonshining became illegal, making the protection of the mountains critical for moonshine production and avoiding law enforcement (e.g. Durand, 1956; Stewart B. E., 2006). The connection between moonshine and place historically plays an important role in the material and symbolic construction of East Tennessee.

The term moonshine, historically defined as illicitly distilled corn liquor, calls into question how the commodity can remain "authentic" if it is sold in the legal marketplace. This research demonstrates that as distilleries engage in place-making through the production of commercial moonshine, the concept of authenticity is central for their promotional strategies. This idea has been thoroughly examined in debates of tourism and place-making literatures. Within these debates, authenticity is often challenged and contested due to its ambiguous nature of classification (Wang, 1999; DeLyser, 1999). Therefore, understanding the concept "as a social construction, the meaning of which varies with different people, at different times, and in different places," is crucial as this investigation unpacks how each individual distillery perceives their own authenticity in

commercial moonshine (DeLyser, 1999). Therefore, notions of authenticity serve as the overarching connection between moonshine, tourism and place-making.

Just as geographers debate the concept of authenticity, the role of commodities and their effects on culture, identity and economic development are also debated within literatures of tourism and place-making (e.g. Merish, 2000; Frow, 1997; Lash and Lury, 2007). This work, offers ways to conceptualize how commodities interact with space and place, ultimately negotiating different types of cultural landscapes (Crang, Dwyer, & Jackson, 2003; Jackson, 2000). Sub-disciplines in human geography address the relationship between space, place and commodities differently. For the purposes of this research I am most interested in economic, cultural and tourism debates of commodities and commodification that focus on notions of authenticity. For example, economic geographers have been especially interested in the production and consumption of “authentic” commodities and their role in place-making on a global scale and economic development (e.g. Buckely & Ghauri, 2004; Wu, 2000; Waetjen & Gibson, 2007). One way, cultural geographers contribute to this debate exploring the relationship of commodities and authenticity in the making of place and its affects on identity (e.g Keith & Pile, 2004; Paasi, 2003; Trudeau, 2006). Finally, within the sub-discipline of tourism, geographers have made claims about the connection between the commodification of place, marketing, and the promotion of such places (e.g. Hall, 1997; Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Hall & Page, 2014). Building off of these literatures, I am interested in the concepts of both authenticity and commodification using the legal production of moonshine as a vehicle to investigate how distilleries act as place-makers in the (re)making of East Tennessee.

Given both the historic and contemporary importance of moonshine as well as the consumer and market demands for it; the production and proliferation of moonshine offers an unique avenue for exploring how place is being sold, represented, and (re)made. I address this topic drawing from the Appalachian, tourism, and place-making scholarship concepts in the region and through a case study of three specific moonshine distilleries in East Tennessee: Tennessee Hills Distillery in Jonesborough, TN, and the Sugarlands Distilling Company and Doc Collier Moonshine distilleries of Gatlinburg, TN. The results of this study, which represent one of the first geographical analyses of the rapidly developing commercial moonshine industry, point to three major ways that legal moonshine is impacting East Tennessee: a transforming of sense of place, a changing

tourist landscape, and the “making” of an “authentic” place of moonshine. Situating my analysis in these three themes allows me to answer the overall thesis question of: *How is place being sold, represented and (re)made through the proliferation of commercial moonshine?*

## **Methods**

This research utilizes a case study approach focusing on three specific distilleries. This approach allows for varying comparisons, contrasts, and inferences surrounding moonshine’s place within the current landscapes of East Tennessee and greater Appalachia (e.g. Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2013; Hay, 2010). To complement and further develop the case study approach, I have employed semi-structured interviews with distillery staff, participant observation at all three distilleries, and I use discourse analysis of distillery websites and other promotional literature as a qualitative means of gathering important data. I recorded all semi-structured interviews on a voice recorder, transcribed all interviews and finally coded the interviews for emerging themes. All research was approved by the University of Tennessee – Knoxville’s Institutional Review Board (UTK IRB-15-02062-XP).

### **East Tennessee as a Case Study**

East Tennessee, within the state and greater region of Appalachia, is an economically distressed region (Figure 1) (ARC, 2015-2016). The region of East Tennessee, with an estimated population of 1,136, 629 is economically overshadowed by the Knoxville and Tri-Cities areas each boasting a more diversified demographic and labor force than other parts of the region (ETEDA, 2015). However, other cities in the region are using tourism as a tool to stimulate the economy and build capacity among its residents (ARC, 2015). Two examples of cities that highlight strong tourism economies in East Tennessee are Jonesborough and Gatlinburg (Figure 2). Commercial moonshine distilleries capitalize on tourism and are opening in areas of high tourist development (Coleman, 2015). This makes the case study of these three distilleries situated in

dominant tourism economies of East Tennessee essential to understanding the impacts of commercial moonshine in the (re)making of place in East Tennessee.

The development of East Tennessee and Appalachia as an economically depressed region within the United States manifests from a long contested history of Appalachia. Throughout Appalachian development, the region came to be stigmatized as impoverished and unable to compete with modern economic development (ARC 2015-2016; Ezzell, Lambert & Ogle, 2010; Latimer & Oberhauser, 2004). To address early Appalachian development, scholars have applied Edward Said's concept of "othering" as a way to explain the region's historical "backwardness" (e.g. Montrie, 2003; Banker, 2009; Oberhauser, 1995; Maggard, 1994). Broadly conceived, the term "othering" refers to the process in which two groups are formed: an internal "normal" group, typically embodying Western cultures and an outside "othered" group of different, Orient culture (Said, 1978). This process can continue to lead to the cultural, social, political and economic exclusion of the other from society. While "othering" has been applied to a number of geographical processes outside of the region, this research is concerned with the idea of othering in the context of Appalachian development (Hubbard, Fuller & Bartly, 2002). Specifically, the formation of an "othered" Appalachian identity, as different, unsuccessful and insufficient, compared to an overall glorified American identity.

The construction of Appalachia as "othered" and "backwards" dates to 1873, when the term was first mentioned in a published essay titled "A Strange Land and Peculiar People" by Wallace Harney in the Lippincott's Magazine of Popular Culture and Science (Montrie, 2003). Harney's publication focused on the people of Appalachia to "popularize [Appalachia] as a distinct region separate and isolated from the rest of the country" (Taylor-Caudill & Hays, 2014). The Appalachian "other" has been created in the American landscape by outsiders to the region and perpetuated over time (Drennen, 2004). For example, this has historically materialized through federal works programs aimed to reduce poverty such as: the Tennessee Valley Authority, Works Progress Administration, Civilian Conservation Corps, Resettlement Administration, and other such agencies of the Great Society's War on Poverty in the 1960s (Banker, 2009). Continuing to focus on a region that has long been labeled as "the other," this analysis explores the ways in which the commercial moonshine industry works to sell, represent and (re)make a different image of Appalachia on the American landscape.

In contemporary Appalachian studies, the region's economic stagnation and negative perceptions are often cited as a direct result of the lasting effects of extractive industries such as coal mining and more recently fracking (Smith, 2002; Banker, 2009; Montrie, 2003). While there are several debates within this discussion that offer alternatives for economic development beyond extractive industries, this research contributes to studies that specifically use sustainable tourism as an alternative to economic development in the region (e.g. McGehee & Meares, 1998; Long, 2010; Keefe, 2009). Therefore, analyzing the commercial moonshine industry and its connection to tourist spaces, this thesis reveals the way distilleries engage concepts of authentic place-making as tool for economic stimulation in Appalachia.

The rapidly expanding moonshine industry provides a marketplace opportunity not only for new distilleries to be involved in the production of moonshine but also for existing distilleries to engage in moonshine production (Crecca, 2014). For example, well established distilleries like Jack Daniels and Jim Beam now offer their own versions of moonshine (Mitenbuler, 2013). However, the three distilleries in this case study, Tennessee Hills, Sugarlands Distilling Company and Doc Collier Moonshine, were carefully selected based on their location in the tourism economies of East Tennessee (Figure 3). Additional criteria relevant to the selection include the varying sizes, capacities, production scales, marketing strategies and long-term vision goals. These differences will be further unpacked in this analysis. During the initial stages of this research, two other distilleries were also considered as case study sites: Ole Smoky Tennessee Moonshine in Gatlinburg (the first moonshine distillery in the state) and East Tennessee Hills Distillery in Piney Flats, TN (Tri-Cities area). However, due to lack of willingness to participate in the research (Ole Smoky) and internal conflicts over vision (East Tennessee Hills), they were abandoned. The following section of this chapter will briefly outline the rest of the thesis and conclude with a discussion of significance for this type of research.

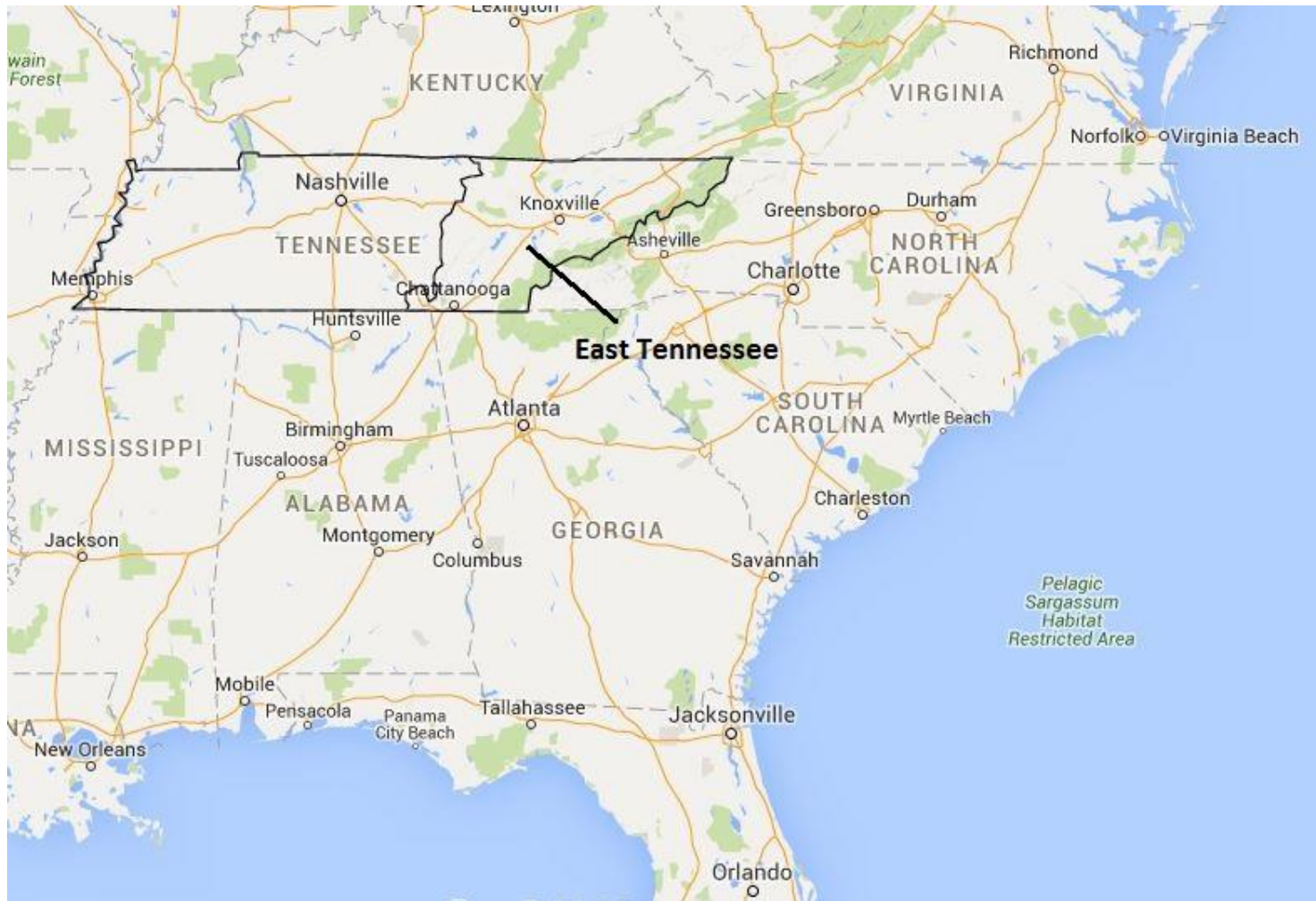


Figure 1 East Tennessee - Helen Rosko



Figure 2 Jonesborough and Gatlinburg, TN – Helen Rosko



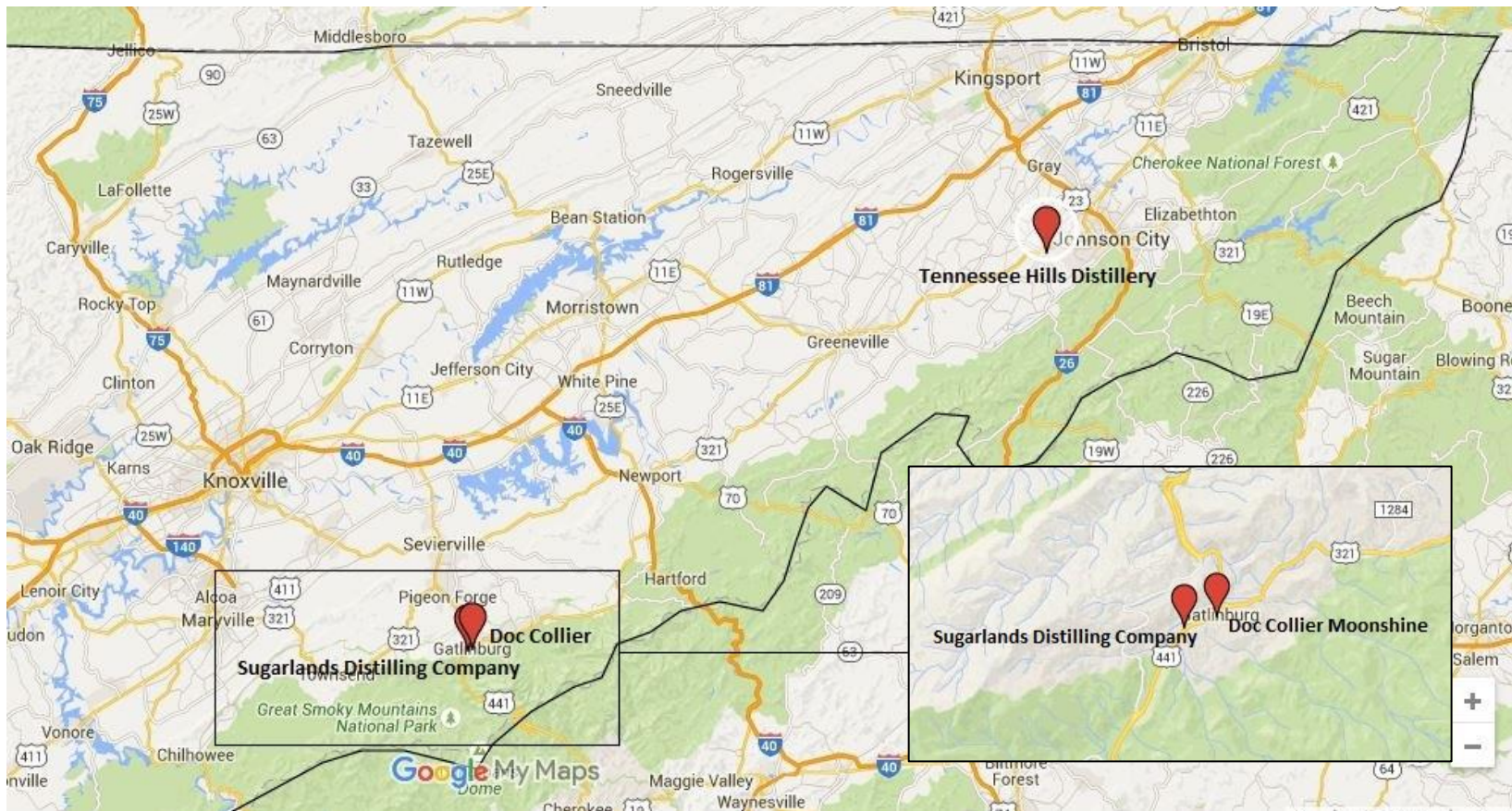


Figure 3 Case Study Distilleries – Helen Rosko

## Chapter Outlines

The second chapter of this thesis serves as a literature review covering three specific areas: Appalachian discourse, tourism geographies, and place-making and promotion. This chapter first covers the historic role of moonshine in the formation of Appalachian identity and stereotyping. Recent transformation of the moonshine commodity to legitimacy, call for exploring opportunities for expansion and notions of sustainability for the industry as a whole. The final two sections of the literature review cover important topics in both tourism and place-making geographies. Concepts of authenticity and commodification remain central themes of the research as these selected literatures are explored.

The third chapter discusses chosen methods and methodologies for this thesis research. This chapter touches on the following employed methods: discourse analysis, case study application, semi-structured interviews, and participant observation. In this chapter, I provide a detailed description of how all methods were chosen and employed during fieldwork. Finally, I discuss the ways in which the data was analyzed for emerging themes and connections to outline an argument of contemporary moonshine's role on the landscape of East Tennessee.

The fourth chapter covers the results and analysis of the research from the chosen methods. This chapter includes a discussion of how place is being sold, represented, and (re)made through commercial moonshine through the following three themes: a transforming of sense of place, a changing tourist landscape, and the "making" of an "authentic" place of moonshine. This discussion centers on how distilleries promote themselves, moonshine and their place for public consumption, to become active place-makers of East Tennessee.

The fifth and final chapter of this thesis covers a set of conclusions and future implications of moonshine in the region. An argument will be made that commercial distilleries are indeed engaged in the selling, representing and remaking of East Tennessee as a place. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of the intellectual merit and broader impacts of the research as well as offer suggestions for future work pertaining to the study of the commercial moonshine industry.

## Summary and Significance

While the primary focus of this study is to understand the impacts of commercial moonshine in the (re)making of East Tennessee, it is connected to larger social, cultural and economic issues. These issues are made known in the region through debates of the environment, existing stereotypes of Appalachian identity and the “hillbilly,” as well as, lack of economically diversified jobs (e.g. Biggers, 2007; Ezzell, Lambert, & Ogle, 2010; Roberts, 2010). The infamous case of renowned Tennessee moonshiner Popcorn Sutton provides a proxy in understanding how moonshine is connected to these larger issues. Committing suicide in 2009, days before he was “to serve an 18-month sentence for illegally brewing spirits and possessing a firearm as a felon,” Sutton brought national attention to the illegal manufacture of moonshine (Stanbaugh, 2009; Miller, 2009). Months later, legislature changed to allow the legal production of corn liquor in the State of Tennessee (Repeal of Prohibition, 2011). Sutton’s story and the proliferation of moonshine have raised questions of greater social implications working in the region. These include but are not limited to; access to new markets, control of image and place construction, and intrinsic opposition in internal and external representations of Appalachia. While these implications all have the potential to be explored through the lens of commercial moonshine, this research specifically reveals the ways individual distilleries see themselves as “authentic” place-makers in East Tennessee.

Numerous scholars have debated concepts of authenticity and commodification as applied to other tourism industries such as souvenirs, post-cards or cultural festivals (e.g. Waetjen & Gibson, 2007; Crockery & Bailey, 1994; Gotham, 2005). This research builds upon the framework of authenticity as a social construct, with particular attention to the intersections of commercial moonshine and tourism in making of place in East Tennessee (Huges, 1995; DeLyser, 1999). The commercial moonshine industry further serves as a guide for how we understand the role of commodities and the commodification of place. While this has utility for the way in which geographers understand place and space in East Tennessee, the example of moonshine provides broader application and significance outside of the region in two distinct ways. First, East Tennessee is not the only region to experience economic depression and an influx of emerging industry. Second, the region is not alone in capitalizing on the success of the

rising moonshine industry (Appendix A). Therefore, due to the lack of attention to the transformative and consequential proliferation of moonshine, this research is vital in exploring how place is consumed and produced through the commodity. A void exists in literatures of Appalachian studies, tourism and place-making scholarship concerning debates of commercial moonshine. With no current discussion on the role and impacts of the industry on social processes, this research directly contributes to this void and additionally aids in the construction of a new empirical moonshine discourse.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Corn won't grow at all on rocky top,  
Dirt's too rocky by far.  
That's why all the folks on rocky top  
Get their corn from a jar.

- Felice and Boudleaux Bryant (1967)

### **Introduction**

In grounding my overarching thesis question, I provide an overview of important and relevant literature in human geography. This thesis research explores literatures in three specific contexts:

1. Appalachian and Moonshine Discourse
2. Tourism in geography
3. Place-making and promotion

Previous scholarship has contributed to expanding the debates of these topics from within their respective disciplines as well as engaging interdisciplinary discussions (e.g. Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Glaeser & Gottlieb, 2008; Oberhauser, 1995). However; there has been little to no contributions linking these types of literatures to the contemporary moonshine industry. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to broadly conceive these literature contexts and interconnect them to one another through the application of contemporary moonshine. The first focus of this chapter aims to understand what moonshine and Appalachian discourse say about the region and its place in contemporary society. This is framed for the specific goal of elucidating how certain stereotyping and identity creation has been at work in the region. This section of the chapter is also concerned with moonshine's transformation to a legal commodity. The discussion explores the industry's opportunities for expansion and finally raises any questions or challenges to the sustainability of the industry. The contested background of East Tennessee situated within Appalachia calls for unpacking issues of stereotyping

and identity to understand how tourism, place-making and promotion are at work in the region through commercial moonshine. Next, the chapter will broadly discuss what literatures in tourism geographies have to say, with a primary interest in how moonshine, Appalachian identity and place-making are shaping tourism spaces in East Tennessee. The final focus concerns the ways in which place-making and promotion are being used as tools to further promote tourism and the moonshine industry. The overarching goal of this literature review is to connect our social understanding of Appalachian and moonshine discourse in the region as well as the impacts of commercial moonshine in place-making and tourism.

## **Moonshine and Appalachian Discourse**

Investigating the impacts of commercial moonshine on a place of East Tennessee through the frameworks of tourism and place-making/promotion first requires a thorough understanding of the region in question. A narrative of moonshine and the production of place in East Tennessee have been at work in the region for hundreds of years and do not emerge unexpectedly. This section of the literature review centers on the ways scholarship discusses Appalachian stereotyping and identity as well as contemporary Appalachian and moonshine discourse. Finally this section will cover the emergence of a new moonshine industry through the literatures available from news sources, industry and government reports. Examining Appalachian discourse can be daunting and overwhelming with the existing amount of literature. However, extracting these topics from the overall literatures will aid in understanding the role of the commodity contemporary economies.

### ***Appalachian Stereotyping and Identity***

It is impossible to discuss topics of Appalachia without recognizing controversial representations of the region. The traditional Appalachian dialogue is one that is characterized as rural, poverty-stricken, backwards, hillbilly, and inept among others (e.g. Latimer & Oberhauser; 2004, Biggers, 2007; Roberts, 2010; Banker, 2009; Durand, 1956; Smith B. E., 2002). While acknowledging negative perceptions of Appalachia, I call attention to two specific ideas in Appalachian development: creating an Appalachian

identity and the consequential “othering” or stereotyping of such identity. While earlier literature will certainly place Appalachia’s poor development as a result of its isolated mountain geography, it must be made clear that environmental determinism alone is not enough to explain all aspects of Appalachian development (Hsiung, 1992). In fact greater political, social and cultural processes are at work to perpetuate and maintain an Appalachian “other” (e.g. Banker, 2009; Biggers, 2007; Oberhauser, 1995). For example rich debates in coal mining connect political, social and cultural processes through examining the role of unions, labor in the industry and a lack of diversified economy (e.g. Oberhauser, 1995; Maggard, 1994; Biggers, 2007). However, this research serves to bridge a connection between moonshine, tourism and place-making in the region because it remains an unexplored topic in Appalachian “othering.”

Prominent scholar Edward Said coined the term “othering” in his pivotal theory book titled *Orientalism* (1978). For Said, “othering” referred to the process in which two groups are formed: an internal “normal” group, typically embodying Western cultures and an outside “othered” group of different, Orient culture (Said, 1978). (1978). The process of “othering” can continue to lead to the cultural, social, political and economic exclusion of the other from society. The term “other” originally tied to post-colonial theory can be applied to geographic processes of othering occurring over an array of space and place (Hubbard, Fuller, & Bartley, 2002). In Appalachia, the process of othering has created ideas of negative perceptions and stereotyping. The stereotyping that surrounds the region is usually asserted by outsiders and results in labeling the people and culture of Appalachia as rooted in the past and unable to keep up with modernity (Drennen, 2004). In early Appalachian development, often outsiders would come to the region with a plan to “save” the local population from itself. This idea is even extended to the federal government to save the “other” in America and reduce poverty with programs such as: Tennessee Valley Authority, Works Progress Administration, Civilian Conservation Corps, Resettlement Administration, and other such agencies of the Great Society’s War on Poverty in the 1960s (Banker, 2009; Couto, 1995; Batteau, 1990).

Outside intervention aimed to aid in the development of Appalachia was not solely focused on economic endeavors to reduce poverty, but extended to social and cultural improvements as well. For example, the famous Hindman Settlement School in

Knott County Kentucky was “a product of a nationwide movement for political and social reform known as Progressivism” and the first of its kind (Stoddart, 2002). The idea for settlement schools was to integrate social classes through education and work for overall improvements to the community (Williams, 2002). Other examples of these social and cultural improvements include the introduction of educational reforms in Appalachia such school consolidation and new programming at Berea College in Kentucky (Seal & Harmon, 1995; Broomfield, 2006). With awareness of the plight of Appalachia, the United States and the global world came to know Appalachia as a region rich in negative identities and stereotypes.

Two of the most prominent stereotypes that have been perpetuated from the region over time and currently still hold strong are the “Appalachian mountaineer” and the “profligate hillbilly,” or in other words, the mountaineer and the hillbilly (e.g. Harkins, 2004; Williams, 2002; Roberts, 2010; Stewart, 2006). The mountaineer a more respected stereotype is described as, “noble and stalwart, rugged and independent, master or mistress of the highlands environment” (Williams, 2002). While the hillbilly is defined as “amusing but often threatening, defined by defiance and aberration, a victim of cultural and economic deprivation attributable to mountain geography” (Williams, 2002). Although the mountaineer takes privilege over the hillbilly, both have equally remained consistent stereotypes of the region today. Often times these identities and stereotypes of Appalachia are made visible through the moonshine narrative. I will particularly focus on the stereotype of the hillbilly in current moonshine production. First associations of the term hillbilly are directly attached to a geography of Appalachia and perpetuated over time through “institutional constraints, the personal attitudes of the producers and creators [of the stereotype] and popular expectations” (Harkins, 2004). Cultural branding is one way stereotypes are embedded on the landscape and recreated over time (Holt, 2004). Currently, the use of cultural branding to commodify stereotypes is very visible on the Appalachian landscape. For example, some restaurants, car dealerships, shops and commodities other than moonshine have toted the brand of “hillbilly” for marketing and capitalist ventures (e.g. Fletchall, 2013; Roberts, 2010; Harkins, 2004). Some examples of this “hillbillification” are evident in old promotions of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park (GSMNP) as well as currently in restaurants



and shops in Pigeon Forge, TN; such as “Hill-Billy Village” (Roberts, 2010; Fletchall, 2013). Understanding how these stereotypes are being branded and commodified today is very important for exploring trends in moonshine production. The analysis of this thesis research will expand the ways commercial moonshine is commodifying a culture of the past as well as a place of East Tennessee.

### ***An Overview of Moonshine Discourse***

Paradigmatic imagery about moonshine emerges from a deep-rooted history of the Central Appalachia region (Peine and Schafft 2012). Peine and Schafft argue “the contested history of moonshining has contributed to the social construction of Appalachia as a backward, anti-modern region within the United States” (2012). It is in these mountains that these continued historical imaginaries find material reference and in some respects come to represent the region today. This thesis research on a whole aims to understand how commercial moonshine production is either contributing to existing narratives of moonshine or recasting these narratives in a new way through legal production.

As touched on previously, moonshine has provided scholars a lens through which they may look at points of contention in ideologies surrounding the region of Central Appalachia, such as: othering, political resistance, cultural reproduction, and livelihood strategies (e.g. Peine & Schafft 2012; Durand 1965; Hsiung 2014). However, recent and past literature surrounding moonshine still addresses the topic from a historical perspective (Hsiung 2014; Otto 1986; Stewart 2012; Durand 1965). These moonshine histories offer two ways of thinking about moonshine: on the one hand, moonshine has traditionally prompted feelings of nostalgia and reverence to an earlier, simpler way of life embodied by the moonshiner (Roberts, 2010). On the other hand, moonshine also has evoked feelings of a mountaineer life, one of adventure and defiance (Bridges & Wise, 2009). Thoughts shaping and producing stereotypes, identities, and livelihoods decision-making, can be critically examined through both schools of thought. Building from Peine and Schafft’s arguments; commercial moonshine allows these contrasting histories of moonshine to materialize not only in the region but

also on the American landscape (2012). Romanticizing notions of historical moonshine allows for both local populations and tourists to connect to a cultural tradition and pride of moonshine (Peine & Schafft, 2012). Conversely, perceptions of these histories also position locals and tourists in a unique position to distance themselves from negative associations of moonshining and the region (Peine & Schafft, 2012). This research explores how commercial distilleries are participating in a new narrative of moonshine, often situated somewhere in the middle of these two diverging perceptions. The three distilleries in this case study are choosing to promote more positive associations of moonshine such as: tradition, resourcefulness and adaptation. Distilleries are manufacturing a positive representation of the region and moonshine by taking pride in their history and culture, while at the same time, actively working to recast negative imagery of moonshine and the region, namely, the hillbilly.

Moonshine in East Tennessee and Appalachia is historically tied to a greater narrative of economic depression, exploitation and adaptation (Durand, 1956; Peine & Schafft, 2012). Farming in the region is difficult due to rocky soil, so farms were usually small and not able to support a large family (Durand, 1956; Hsiung, 1992). Even more, transporting crops to the nearest market for sale was nearly impossible in the mountainous terrain, and farmers often lost money on this venture (Stewart, 2004). Given the lack of alternative livelihood opportunities, lots of residents in East Tennessee and Appalachia sought moonshining as an exchangeable commodity for financial support (Peine & Schafft, 2012). Here a positive identity emerged surrounding moonshining, one that was seen as a “legitimate and meritorious occupation” (Hatch, 2004; Stewart, 2006).

When prohibition came into law in the 1920s, the previously legitimized identity of moonshining underwent a transition to being illicit. This moment shifted not only the perception of moonshining, but also created a space in which moonshiners had to renegotiate their livelihoods. Once a legal commodity, moonshine was deemed illegal, changing the market of moonshine from the formal to the informal economy. Therefore, an occupation once perceived as legitimate and hardworking, became contested and eventually negatively stereotyped throughout the region (Engelhardt, 2007). This latter stereotype characterized as backwoods, illiterate and hillbilly came to be known not only

throughout the region but the entire nation and continues to persist today (e.g. Hatch, 2004; Peine & Schafft, 2012; Engelhardt, 2007). Other literature has focused on examining moonshine's connection to bootlegger driving and NASCAR (Engelhardt, 2007). While moonshine production historically is tied to the mountains of Appalachia, so too are the identities and cultural reproduction that is embodied in the production of moonshine. The continually transforming identities of moonshine provide greater implications for understanding a larger culture and space of East Tennessee and Appalachia.

Previous moonshine discourse highlights the complexity of moonshine as a fragmented and contested history (e.g. Durand, 1956; Peine & Schafft, 2012; Stewart, 2006 Hatch, 2004). With recent transformations of the liquor laws in Tennessee, moonshine is now representing a new and different type of cultural identity and livelihood strategy. In 2009:

“Tennessee lawmakers passed a law allowing the legal production of whiskey and other distilled spirits in the 41 counties that already have approved retail package sales and liquor-by-the-drink sales (production was already legal in Moore, Coffee and Lincoln counties prior to the new law)” (Repeal of Prohibition, 2011)

Since the passage of this law, there have been an increased number of investors, job opportunities and new distilleries openings all across the state (Yeldell, 2009). Ole Smoky Tennessee Moonshine was the first legal distillery to open its door in 2010, since then 23 other distilleries have opened in the state (Sanburn, 2013; Appendix A). Representing over half of the distilleries in the state, there are 13 distilleries operating in East Tennessee alone, with opportunity in the market for more. Even Big Whiskey producers are releasing lines of their own “white whiskey” to respond to the increasing demands of moonshine (Sanburn, 2013). For both tourist and local populations, the advent of commercial moonshine production no longer provides a desire to just simply know about moonshine. The production of commercial moonshine furthers the desire for both locals and tourists to possess and consume the culture of the commodity. Peine & Schafft further assert “the point of owning a quart of moonshine is not necessarily its intoxicating properties, but rather, the possibility of participating in the

history, culture and identity of place” (2012). Therefore, through buying and consuming moonshine, customers are not just drinking a place-less, identity-less product. Rather, they are consuming the history and tradition of moonshining in the region as well as consuming a new remade place of moonshine through its commercial production.

### ***Contemporary Appalachian and Moonshine Discourse***

While current Appalachian discourse does continue to discuss classic stigmas of the region regarding identity and stereotyping, contemporary literature has expanded to include a host of new social issues in the region. The majority of contemporary Appalachian discourse focuses on re-development strategies of the region from an economic, environmental and feminist perspective, among a host of other topics (e.g. Bell & Braun, 2010; Keefe, 2009; Seitz, 1995; Ezzell, Lambert, & Ogle, 2010). Ezzell, Lambert and Ogle, on a report sanctioned and funded by the Appalachia Regional Commission (ARC), discuss current economic redevelopment strategies for distressed Appalachian counties. Coal mining and its effects on labor, health and the environment have also been debated extensively by the academic community (e.g. Montrie, 2003; Hendryx & Ahern, 2009; Maggard, 1994). Finally, the feminist perspective and the role of women in Appalachia has seen a rise of interest in academic literature (e.g. Naples, 2012; Engelhardt, 2003; Oberhauser, 1995).

While all of these topics bring Appalachian discourse into contemporary discussions, there are no published academic articles as of yet that discuss the transformation of moonshine to a legalized commodity, to create a contemporary moonshine discourse. Therefore, most of the discourse around this transformation comes in the form of distillery websites or promotional material. Current moonshine discourse can be revealed after reviewing websites language, marketing directives, partnerships and promotion opportunities. This occurs by asking questions like: What type of clientele are distilleries targeting? What types of businesses, causes or celebrities are distilleries teaming up with? How are companies branding their moonshine products? These questions and others can be addressed through an intense discourse analysis of distillery websites, expanded in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

In addition to distillery websites, contemporary moonshine discourse is available through local, state and national news. ABC news, The Knoxville News Sentinel, NPR, and the Johnson City Press to name a few have all contributed to the evolving contemporary moonshine discourse (e.g. Prisco, 2013; Guttman, 2013; Coleman, 2015). These articles cover topics of moonshine in all forms, such as moonshine in restaurants, impacts on economy and tourism, and the heritage and tradition of the moonshine trade. Lastly, there are a few industry reports that are available from companies such as American Distilling Institute (ADI), Beverage Industry and Technomics that publish statistics and cultural information of distilling moonshine (e.g. Jacobsen, 2014 and Crecca, 2014). Industry reports mainly focus on statistics behind the new and booming industry as well as future predictions and forecasts. These articles and reports, coupled with distillery websites aid in the creation of contemporary moonshine discourse. This thesis work aims to expand this moonshine discourse with more empirical research and interpretations. The final two sections of this topic center around a discussion of expansion opportunities for the industry, touch on possible challenges to the industry's sustainability and finally look at future directions of commercial moonshine.

### ***Opportunities for Expansion***

Whether you call it corn whiskey, corn liquor, mountain dew, white lightning or moonshine, the rise of commercial distilling is undeniable. This phenomenon is not limited to Tennessee or Appalachia but has seen national proliferation into the marketplace (Sanburn 2013; Rohrlach, 2012). With an interest in tax revenues and job creation many state legislators moved toward making moonshine production legal for business owners in 2009 (Repeal of Prohibition, 2011; Heyes, 2013). Opening the market allowed for a surge of new capitalism and innovation. The adult beverage industry as a whole is expanding with the rise of craft beer and whiskey seeing the highest volume growth rate in 2014 (Crecca, 2014). Specifically, of these whiskeys, moonshine is experiencing high consumption rates “[with] total corn whiskey volume [rising] 160% in 2012, then 107% in 2013 [and] continued growth...in 2014” (Crecca 2014; Technomic, 2012)(Figure 4). Therefore, we know that moonshine as an industry has grown rapidly since its 2009 inception and continues to expand at exponential rates.

Following this trend there have been a subsequent rise in the number of distilleries across the nation as well as demand for the product.

Moonshine is viewed as a niche commodity because of its uniqueness in the alcohol world; it is fairly inexpensive to produce, doesn't require long aging and can be consumed straight or mixed (Marcum, 2013; Rohrlich, 2012; Sanburn, 2013). Moonshine's niche market has often been compared to the micro-brew movement sweeping the nation as an "artisanal product distilled for sophisticated palates that crave tradition" (Rohrlich, 2012). Others have compared illegal moonshine to the production of illegal cannabis (e.g. Weisheit, Smith, & Johnson, 1991; Rosenberg, 2004). In contemporary capitalism, entry into niche markets offers investment opportunities to target specific clientele. For example, Ole Smoky Tennessee Moonshine sees their primary demographic as consumers ages 21-35, looking for authentic, hand-crafted spirits (Jacobsen, 2014). A deeper look at how place-making, promotion and marketing fits into this discussion of commercial moonshine production and its strategies will be reviewed later in this chapter.

Pilot research for this topic consisted of combining various sources to compile a distillery database (Appendix A). While, this effort is limited in places, the database does provide insight for the scope of the new moonshine movement. We know based on this information, the rise of moonshine is more or less concentrated in the Eastern United States. In 2014, Midnight Moon (Junior Johnson's Piedmont Distillers) in Madison, NC made up 54% of the market share, while Ole Smoky Tennessee Moonshine in Gatlinburg, TN held 31% of the markets share (Rohrlich, 2012). The opportunities for moonshine production and consumption seem infinite, as consumer demand rises and barriers to the market are reduced. More recently the State of Tennessee renewed support to the 2009 changes through an amendment filed on April 21, 2015, by Rep. Curry Todd. The amendment "requires that all moonshine marketed or sold as 'Tennessee Moonshine' is distilled in the Volunteer State" (Cheek III, 2015). It seems the production of commercial moonshine finds a permanent place on the landscape of East Tennessee through its expanding success and government policy support.

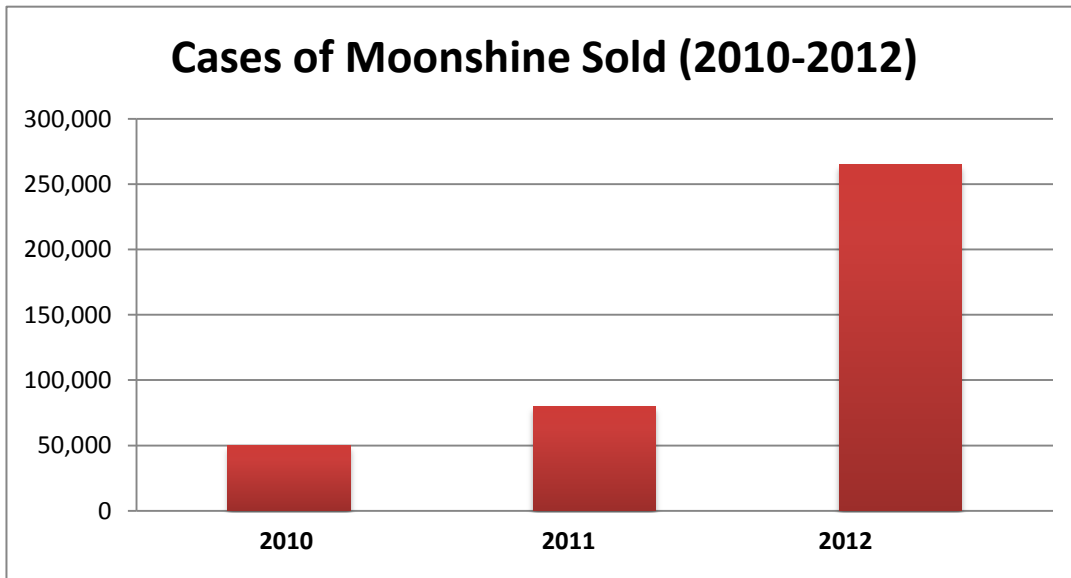


Figure 4. Cases of Moonshine Sold (2010-2012) - (Technomic, 2012; Sanburn, 2012)

### ***Challenges to Moonshine, Is it Sustainable?***

As the opportunities for moonshine production, consumption and ultimately tourism seem infinite, as with any emerging economy, several challenges also materialize. As noted, the industry is growing fast, considering new distillery openings, rising mass production and ultimately more consumer demand. However, total moonshine sales make up only a fraction of the overall whiskey sales in the United States. Even with increased sales in 2014, “the sub-segment still accounts for only 0.5 percent of the overall whiskey segment with recorded sales of approximately \$9 million...In comparison, whiskey sales were \$2 billion and overall spirit sales were \$7 billion in that time frame” (Jacobsen, 2014). Compared to the overall whiskey market; these increases are minor in comparison and offer no sense of clear, stable forecast for investors.

Opening the alcohol market to the legal production of moonshine, calls into question the inherent barriers to entry in starting a new distillery. Previously, illicit

moonshine offered an economic alternative by very nature of its inexpensive production and potential for high profit (e.g. Engelhardt, 2007; Durand, 1956; Peine & Schafft, 2012). For commercial moonshine, when necessary startup costs to open a distillery are accounted for, one without the proper means of production gets discouraged. Opening a new distillery, “requires at least a \$500,000 tax bond, and startup costs range from \$1.75 million to \$12 million, depending on the size of the distillery” (Yeldell, 2009). Additionally, the facility must be purchased prior and built with all proper equipment before the distillery license will be granted (Yeldell, 2009). For many with the means of production, opportunities are endless. On the other hand, moonshining has been a way of life because it has been too difficult and expensive to go legitimate, leaving questions as to whether this transformation truly frees moonshine or not. Finally, there are uncertainties around the boom and bust cycle of this industry. Will it sustain into the future, or is it a fleeting popular craze?

Economic challenges aside, moonshine still faces a very real cultural backlash in surrounding communities and nationwide. An illegal commodity that was once frowned upon continues to be dismissed by certain communities (Peine & Schafft, 2012). There are 25 counties that are dry, 65 counties that are moist, and five remaining that are mixed out of a total of 95 counties in Tennessee (Government of Tennessee, 2013). Resistance towards allowing liquor in counties is still prevalent in many parts of the state. Some cities are getting on board allowing the sale of liquor and consumption in their jurisdiction, but others are slow to jump on board (Yeldell, 2009). Increased competition is another challenge facing distilleries as more and more continue to open their doors. In 2014, before Sugarlands Distilling Company could open for business, they had to work with local legislators to change city laws to allow for more than one distillery to be in Gatlinburg (Vickers, 2015). Now there are four distilleries in Gatlinburg that produce moonshine products. Finally, the overarching question regarding the legalized production of moonshine is whether or not it is authentic? There have been many critics and scholars that acknowledge this contention surrounding authenticity (e.g. Robinson 2014; Bridges and Wise 2009; Heyes 2013). This idea is paramount for distilleries in the region as they promote their product as “authentic” Tennessee ‘shine. The end of this



chapter and the analysis will discuss in greater detail the role of authenticity and place-making in commercial moonshine.

Similar to other new emerging industries, commercial moonshine finds success with the support of many different actors involved with the industry, such actors include; government support, business minded entrepreneurs, and city planners supporting industries and more (Duchesneau & Gartner, 1990; Glaeser, 2011; Porter, 2008). Evidence in support of the industry is clear through its legal transformation, but also the success of many different distilleries and their partnering businesses. For example, the three distilleries in this case engage local business for as much of their production as possible. This includes working with local businesses for ingredients such as corn, water, sugar and fruit to graphic design and distribution (Sugarlands, 2015; Tennessee Hills, 2015; Doc Collier, 2015). Other support manifests through both government and legal actors; many of the lawyers involved with writing the legislation for the 2009 change to liquor laws were locally based in East Tennessee (Sanburn, 2013). Those same lawyers that worked for the bill's inception and implementation were in part ones who opened the first legalized distillery in the state, Ole Smoky Tennessee Moonshine (Ole Smoky, 2015). The sustained support of government legislation is essential for the perpetuating capitalist motivations (Harvey, 2010, Marx, 1867). As mentioned previously a recent bill passed for legislation in April, 2015, decrees anything labelled and sold as Tennessee Moonshine has to be distilled in the State of Tennessee, continuing this support of a legalized and local industry (Cheek III, 2015). Other motivations for the original 2009 legal transformation is overall economic stimulation for the region as a whole, not just for individual capitalists. Representative Joe Carr says of the 2009 bill, "It's not a distillery bill; it's a jobs bill. The fact that they distill spirits is really irrelevant in my mind" (Yeldell, 2009). Moonshine will have a tax just like any other commodity, "according to the state, more than \$32 million in tax revenue was collected from suppliers of distilled spirits in 2008, and additional taxes were paid by wholesalers" (Yeldell, 2009). Further, there is strong discourse from distillery operators and lawmakers that they would rather consumers buy legal moonshine than illegal moonshine (Prisco, 2013). In fact, authoritative voices in the moonshine industry like other similar industries such as big tobacco have gone to great lengths to market the

product as; for everyone, family-oriented and embracing culture and heritage (Rohrlich, 2012; Sanburn, 2013; Prisco, 2013).

As moonshine enters the legal marketplace, cultural branding and place-promotion is evident through marketing strategies, consumer sales and demands. Moonshine's resurgence and nationwide popularity is being perpetuated by reality TV series such as Discovery's "Moonshiners" and MTV's "Buckwild" (Jacobsen, 2014). In fact, Sugarlands Distilling Company has launched the Sugarlands Shine Legends series which features recipes from three Southern Appalachian moonshiners on the television show "Moonshiners" (Sugarlands, 2015). Dierks Bently, famous American country singer, recently endorsed Ole Smoky Moonshine as his 'shine of choice, perpetuating Ole Smoky Moonshine into popular culture (Ole Smoky, 2015). Moonshine products have been featured at NASCAR races, adult beverage festivals and music festivals among a host of many other marketing events (Smoky, 2015, Sugarlands, 2014, East Tennessee Distillery, 2014). The commercial moonshine industry is engaging in a variety of marketing and promotional strategies to introduce the legal commodity to the public landscape.

As this section has demonstrated moonshine's current popularity and presence in the local and national economy makes it a useful lens for how we understand Appalachian identity and stereotyping. Specifically, its contemporary transitions make it a worthy industry for investigating its changing impacts on East Tennessee as a place. The following sections of this review center on the fact that the moonshine industry is emerging in places of high tourism economies as well as being further perpetuated through its attachment to a place of moonshine in East Tennessee. Therefore, it is essential to unpack relevant studies in tourism geography and expand those discussions to include regional tourism in Appalachia and finally East Tennessee.

## Tourism Literature

### *Understanding Tourism in Geography*

In an increasingly globalized world, tourism studies have become more prevalent as tourism in general is recognized as a legitimate platform for theorizing a host of issues. Some of these issues include, but are not limited to: notions of sustainability in tourism, economic impacts of tourism and tourists motivations for engaging in travel (Edensor, 2009; Gibson, 2008; Hall & Page, 2009). Tourism studies in geography find its roots with seminal works such as John Urry's *The Tourist Gaze*, Dean MacCannell's, *The Tourist* or Daniel Boorstin's *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (1990; 1976; 1987). Much of these early works in tourism scholarship were devoted to challenging and taking a critical approach to how tourism was conceptualized in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. This thesis is particularly interested in critical engagements of authenticity and commodification within these debates. With increasing globalization as a staple in modern economic's, "tourism is widely recognized as the worlds largest industry" in this global economy (Hall & Page, 2014). As tourism gains legitimacy in acadmic debates, scholars remain focused on critically engaging ideas to contribute to the discussion that tourism is not limited, monolithic or inappropriate for addressing political, social or economic issues (Edensor, 2009).

For the purposes of this research, I am particularly interested in how commercial moonshine is engaging in tourism opportunities through the promotion of a place of moonshine in East Tennessee. Therefore, this work pays specific attention to tourism literatures surrounding topics of cultural and heritage tourism, authenticity, commodification and finally place-making and promotion in tourism. Cultural tourism is often used by communities, tour operators or entrepreneurs to boost economic development in places simply for the fact that "every place has a culture it can develop" (Richards, 2003). Within this field of cultural tourism lies heritage tourism which harps on feelings of tradition and nostalgia embodied in the tourist experience (Csapo, 2012; Richards, 2003). Csapo exands this notion by arguing, "heritage tourism is an important part of cultural tourism based on experiencing the places and activities that authentically

represent historical, cultural or natural resources of a given area” (2012). This is often seen in the symbolic and material representation of culture and/or the commodification of culture (Alderman, 2008; Greenwood & Smith, 1989; Gotham, 2007). In the case of the commercial moonshine industry, capitalizing on a history and place of moonshine engages both cultural and heritage tourism opportunities.

Within tourism literatures, specifically cultural and heritage tourism, authenticity is a heavily discussed topic that emerges in a number of different ways. Dean MacCannell is often credited as one of the first scholars to engage in discussions of authenticity in tourism (1973). MacCannell first discusses the concept by asserting that the tourist “is motivated by its desire for authentic experiences” (1973). Other scholars have picked up on the authenticity debate and discuss authenticity as being produced by various entrepreneurs, marketers, tour guides and other tourism creators (e.g. Hughes, 1995; Wang, 1999; Bruner, 1994; DeLyser, 1999). As tourism scholarship continues to expand, authenticity in the discipline remains heavily scrutinized due to its ambiguous nature of classification (Wang, 1999; DeLyser, 1999). While often a challenged and contested idea, this research works with the understanding of authenticity “as a social construction, the meaning of which varies with different people, at different times, and in different places” (DeLyser, 1999; Bruner, 1994; Hughes, 1995). For the purposes of this research, it is important to note that authenticity in tourism landscapes emerges from the co-construction of both tourists and producers (e.g. Wang, 1999; Hughes, 1995; DeLyser, 1999). For example, scholars have argued that as people engage in tourism they sometimes seek a break from reality through an “authentic” experience of another culture or place (MacCannell, 1973; Nelson, 2013; Edensor, 2009). Producers of tourism recognize both this motivation and importance of authenticity as they create their tourist spaces (Pearce & Moscardo, 1986). This analysis investigates individual distilleries as producers of authenticity in the production of commercial moonshine for customer and tourist consumption.

Another pertinent topic for this research is the idea of commodification in tourism landscapes. Scholars have extensively engaged notions of commodification (or commoditization) of different aspects of cultural and heritage tourism. For example, Gotham is interested in the impacts of the political economy in New Orleans through his

case study of the commodification of the cultural event Mardi Gras (2001). Others have looked at the commodification of place through post-cards in Boston or the commodification of the Viking culture in Europe (Crokery & Bailey, 1994; Halewood & Hannam, 2001). Often culture is easily commodified in tourism because almost every place has its own culture or mix of cultures (e.g. Cohen, 1988; Nelson, 2013; Cloke & Perkins, 2002; Cole, 2007). Indeed many places, cities and tourism spaces are actively engaged in the commodification of certain aspects of culture. The commercial moonshine industry directly commodifies a culture and history of moonshine not only through the very product of corn liquor but also through the place of East Tennessee. This commodification is made possible by the high consumer demand for moonshine, expanded upon in the previous section of this chapter.

The idea of commodification in tourism directly relates to the selling and promotion of different spaces within tourism landscapes (e.g. Gotham, 2005; Hall & Page, 2014; Bradley, Hall, & Harrison, 2002). Therefore, returning to the evolving debate of globalization and tourism, scholars have argued the need for place-promotion in tourism spaces as a means of boosting ones economic competitiveness (e.g. Berglund & Olsson, 2010; Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Hall & Page, 2014). As previously mentioned, the transition of moonshine in 2009, not only created jobs in the region, but it also served to put East Tennessee on the map as a place of legal moonshine. Distilleries are recognizing the close relationship between tourism, place-promotion and moonshine and are responding in nearly all of their marketing strategies. In fact, Ned Vickers CEO of Sugarlands Distilling Company has recently bought the rights to a “Tennessee Moonshine Trail” citing the importance of tourism to the place of moonshine (2015). Cultural tourism, commodification in tourism and the importance of place-making and promotion are all exemplified in the tourism opportunities currently being engaged in both Appalachia and East Tennessee. The remainder of this tourism section aims to highlight how tourism is working in Appalachia and place its importance in the East Tennessee economies surrounding moonshine.

## ***Tourism in Appalachia***

There has been extensive research and literature surrounding discussions of tourism in Appalachia. These topics cover a wide array of tourism opportunities, such as culinary tourism, ecotourism, film and agritourism (e.g. McGehee and Meares 1998; Long 2010; McGehee and Kyungmi 2004). Regardless of the type of tourism activity, most literature involves the discussion of sustainable tourism as an option for economic development in the region (e.g. Tooman 1995; Fritsch and Johannsen 2004; McGehee and Meares 1998). Consistently plagued as economically depressed and full of negative stereotypes, Appalachia is constantly looking for alternative sustainable economic development (Ezzell, Lambert, & Ogle, 2010). Increasingly, the region is turning to tourism as an option for improving their economic stance (Maggard, 1994; McGehee & Meares, 1998). However, as promising as tourism sounds to the region this research is also critical in evaluating the challenges of tourism as an economic engine (e.g. Van Horn 1998; LaLone 2005; Roach 2014).

Some of the challenges scholarship has risen regarding tourism in the region deals with the cultural sustainability of tourism and the problematic associations of place in the region. Erwin, TN highlights the challenge of place association to tourism development in East Tennessee and Appalachia. On the one hand community members are making extensive efforts to promote cultural heritage tourism by documenting and utilizing railroad history (Roach, 2014). However, on the other hand the town of Erwin faces enormous challenges attracting tourism due to its contested history as the location for the hanging the circus elephant “Mary” in 1916 (Leaf, 2014). Another example of contested cultural ideas of tourism in Appalachia involves the infamous Hatfield & McCoy feuds in West Virginia. The state of West Virginia itself has spurred ecotourism through sponsoring the *Hatfield & McCoy Trails*, “made up of over 700+ miles of trails and located in the rich mountains of southern West Virginia” (About the Trails, 2015). The trails do nothing to offer tourists any information regarding the culture and history surrounding the Hatfield & McCoy feud, which can be problematic for many critics of *cultural* sustainability. The Hatfield & McCoy phenomenon has even spread to Pigeon Forge, TN with a dinner show commodifying the historic event (Fletcher, 2013). I argue this is a problematic association of place in East Tennessee, which historically has

nothing to do with the infamous Hatfield & McCoy feud. Regardless of the contested understanding of the commodification of stereotypes, cultural branding is one way tourism has been able to find success in the region. East Tennessee, the contemporary moonshine capital and situated in greater Appalachia offers ways in which to further understand how tourism is working in the region through moonshine. The connection of moonshine to East Tennessee calls for careful examination of how the industry is impacting tourism spaces and any challenges that may arise on its behalf. Therefore, this research critically engages moonshine's role in tourism in East Tennessee.

### ***Regional Tourism (Jonesborough and Gatlinburg, TN)***

Economically, East Tennessee lags behind other parts of the state and the nation, however, tourism is increasingly becoming an avenue in which to stimulate the local economy and build capacity among its residents (Tourism Development, 2015). Similar to other forms of tourism found in Appalachia, East Tennessee offers a variety of tourism options, including, cultural, heritage, ecotourism, culinary, film and agritourism (e.g. Van Horn, 1998; Gatlinburg Tourism, 2015; Jonesborough, 2014). However, in the context of East Tennessee, cultural, heritage and ecotourism are the dominate forms of tourist activities in the region (e.g. Fritsch and Johannsen 2004; LaLone 2005). This work will further narrow its focus to two particular tourism economies in East Tennessee: Jonesborough and Gatlinburg (Pigeon Forge).

The city of Jonesborough, TN (in Washington Co.) is continually hailed as a paramount example of successful tourism development in an East Tennessee city. There is a wide variety of industry in Jonesborough, but as of 2014 the service sector accounts for 43.9% of total revenue in the city (Jonesborough, 2014). The service sector, which incorporates tourism as an overwhelmingly large portion of the total economy, plays a large role in the economic success and stability of Jonesborough. Being the first town in the State of Tennessee, residents and business developers have capitalized on cultural and heritage tourism for economic revenue in the small town of 5,254 (Van Horn, 1998; Jonesborough, 2014). The city engages with these types of tourism through events such as: storytelling, a farmers market, main street Jonesborough, and music events. Moonshine opens even more opportunity for

Jonesborough to engage in other types of tourism as well as contribute to existing cultural and heritage tourism through the tradition of moonshine.

Gatlinburg, TN situated in Sevier County in the southeastern part of the state levies its role as the entryway to the GSMNP, the most visited national park in the nation, as its tourism draw (Experience, 2015). Gatlinburg's economy capitalizes on the GSMNP for tourism revenues and is known for "its mountain heritage and the arts, crafts and shops that reflect that culture" (Gatlinburg Tourism, 2015). GSMNP brings in over 9.4 million visitors annually, which provides the perfect opportunity for tourism endeavors (Park Statistics, 2015). The park is also conveniently located with a day's drive of three quarters of the eastern seaboard (Park Statistics, 2015). Similar to Jonesborough, Gatlinburg's economy attributes 48.3% of its revenue to tourism and hospitality (Gatlinburg Tourism, 2015). With increasing demand for moonshine products, Gatlinburg now boasts four distilleries carrying moonshine products. Due to the already existing tourism market and demand for new types of tourism, moonshine is already seeing success in the city of Gatlinburg.

### ***Moonshine Tourism***

Regarding moonshine tourism, there is no research directly linking moonshine and its role in tourism. However, literature does contribute to the role of moonshine in identity and stereotype creation in the region (e.g. Starnes 2005; Peine and Schafft 2012). In this debate, Appalachian scholars are often interwoven in memorializing nostalgia for the region or perpetuating negatively associated stigmas. Specifically, previous literature on moonshine in both Tennessee and Appalachia is focused on historical accounts of moonshining pre-2000s (e.g. Durand 1956; Stewart 2011; Starnes 2012; Hsiung 1986). Conversely, current moonshine literature has centered on moonshiners response to prohibition and elucidating an image of moonshine as a reaction to political changes (Hatch, 2004). Recent moonshine literature has also emerged from local and national news articles discussing distillery openings and an emerging market (Marcum 2013; Sanburn 2013). For example, the Knoxville News Sentinel ran a week long feature covering moonshine in the region. Topics included East



Tennessee culture, history and its connection to moonshine as well as investigating the both the challenges and positive impacts of the industry to tourism (Coleman, 2015).

As there is little to no empirical research or literature linking moonshine and tourism, a unique opportunity for this type of scholarship exists to fill these voids. With the importance and recognition of both tourism and moonshine increasing, close attention to the role of moonshine in tourism development in East Tennessee is necessary. While, contemporary moonshine production is successful in the middle part of the state in Nashville, it did not originate there, but thrives because of an already established tourist market (Durand, 1956). On the other hand, Cocke County, in East Tennessee emerged as the historical “moonshine capital” and continues to place East Tennessee as an important place in contemporary moonshining (Peine & Schafft, 2012). This idea remains to be explored in greater depth with investigation into the commercialized moonshine industry and its impacts on a place of East Tennessee and ultimately Appalachia. This thesis contributes to building an emerging discussion on the role of moonshine in tourism debates. However, the relationship between moonshine, tourism and place calls for continued exploration as the industry and tourism evolves in the following years.

Tourism literatures alone do not provide enough contexts in making connections between moonshine and impacts on East Tennessee as a place. To further unpack this relationship, the concepts in place-making and promotion are necessary to engage in how moonshine as a commodity is contributing to spaces of tourism. The final section of this literature review will therefore broadly cover ideas of place-making and promotion, focusing on the role of commodities and place in this process.

## **Place-making and Place-promotion**

### ***Exploring Place-making***

Mentioned previously, literature often discusses the inherent connection between place and tourism (Dredge & Jenkins, 2003; Hall, 1998; Ashworth & Vogood, 1990). Tourism in the context of place-making is seen as an important tool for economic

development, used to increase competition, attractiveness and outside investment (Berglund & Olsson, 2010; Dredge & Jenkins, 2003; Hall & Page, 2014; McCann, 2002). Place-making's main "objective is to put places on the map" by "strengthening their attractiveness and competitiveness" (Berglund & Olsson, 2010; Kavaratzis, 2005). Within this debate, human geographers are interested in the role of place promotion for making places viable for economic competition (Berglund & Olsson, 2010). The role of place promotion within place-making has implications for the way we understand commercial moonshine acting on a place of East Tennessee. For example, this analysis unpacks the way distilleries inseparably promote moonshine attached to both a historic and contemporary place of East Tennessee. While a connection between place-making and tourism exists, the overarching connection between moonshine, tourism and place-making remains the notion of authenticity and commodification.

Just as authenticity is heavily discussed in tourism literatures, authenticity is similarly debated in scholarships of place-making. Different from tourism scholarship which engages the idea of authenticity from both the tourist and producer perspectives; most place-making literature focuses on the role of the producer as authentic makers of place or remakers of place (e.g. Marsden, 2011; Hall, 1997; Ashworth & Voogd, 1988). Following other scholarship in place-making, this research investigates the role of commercial distilleries as producers of authentic moonshine in the (re)making of East Tennessee. This research continues to build on the notion of authenticity "as a social construction, the meaning of which varies with different people, at different times, and in different places" (DeLyser, 1999). As DeLyser points out, landscapes of the past, like historic moonshine in East Tennessee are not exactly direct reflections of the past, but rather "how people in the present think about the past" (1999). This analysis seeks to understand how distilleries participate in contemporary place-making to embody the history and tradition of moonshine in East Tennessee. Understanding authenticity as a social construct and distilleries as producers of their own perceptions of authentic moonshine, it is essential to unpack each distilleries story to reveal their individual and different roles as place-makers in the region. This analysis further shows that as distilleries engage in place-making through commercial moonshine, the concept of authenticity remains central to their promotion efforts.

Scholarship in place-making literatures have also made claims that nearly anything can be commodified from language, music, and culture to of course the commodification of place (Leeman & Modan, 2009; Le Menestrel & Henry, 2010; Rose-Redwood & Alderman, 2011). Recent scholarship has engaged arguments for the positive impacts of commodification in place-making through concepts of sustainability or capacity building (Lepofsky & Fraser, 2003; Marsden, 2012). Marsden discusses rising food prices as an opportunity for more place-based local food production and the inherent economic stimulation to occur as a result (2012). Other scholarship engages a more critical discussion often focusing on the role of capitalism and neo-liberal spaces in the commodification of place (e.g. Gotham, 2007; Wu, 2000; Mair, 2009; Torres, 2002). This research is particularly interested in literatures surrounding the commodification of place and the role of commodities within place-making. This will help frame moonshine's role in place-making in the following two ways: first, this analysis examines the role of the moonshine commodity in remaking a different place of East Tennessee; second, it will understand how distilleries commodify East Tennessee for public consumption through the production and promotion of commercial moonshine.

### ***Exploring Place-promotion***

Modern times have seen intensified marketing promotions through popular media outlets such as television, the internet and print (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). As competition in emerging industries increases, places and cities have become products to be marketed (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990). Often synonymously called place-promotion, place-branding, or place-marketing, literature primarily in economic geography contributes to how different places utilize this concept for increased attractiveness (Kavaratzis, 2005). This can be done through a variety of ways, and either positively or negatively promotes certain characteristics of that place or city (Bradley, Hall, & Harrison, 2002). Often place-promotion is aided by "new" modes of governance on behalf of city/state/national governments typically through private capital (Hall & Hubbard, 1996). We see this idea in Tennessee through the actions of local legislators and entrepreneurs in the changes to liquor laws in 2009. Hall and Hubbard further assert, "Local economic development is essentially concerned with the prosperity of

local economies and their ability to attract investment and jobs.” This idea can be extends to economic geography debates as place-promotion is used as a tool for increasing competitive and comparative advantage among competing places (Berglund & Olsson, 2010; Papadopoulos, 2004). Understanding place-promotion as a tool within the place-making framework; this thesis investigates the use of place-promotion by commercial distilleries as a tool for place-making.

The role of the city, marketing, and urban economic development are heavily explored topics in scholarship of place-promotion (Young & Lever, 1997; Bradley, Hall, & Harrison, 2002; Hall M. C., 1997). Within these literatures, scholars lay important claims to the role of tourism in place-promotion (Hall & Page, 2014). Place-promotion seeks to explore how the promotion of place works to increase attractiveness and boost comparative advantage (Dredge & Jenkins, 2010; Berglund & Olsson, 2010). The mountains of Appalachia, as both a historical and contemporary producer of moonshine, provide an excellent avenue for looking at tools of place-promotion. Through the contexts of tourism geography, place-making and specifically place-promotion it is argued that distilleries are directly engaging a place of East Tennessee to promote their moonshine product. This research answers a call in place-promotion literature for field research investigating different types of place-promotion strategies. Commercial moonshine in East Tennessee works to illustrate how place-promotion is being used as a tool for marketing both moonshine and East Tennessee as a place.

## **Conclusion**

This literature review serves to situate the overall investigation of commercial moonshine into relevant literatures of human geography. Through broadly conceiving literatures of Appalachian and moonshine discourse, tourism geographies and place-making and promotion; this research utilizes commercial moonshine as a framework for examining the (re)making of East Tennessee. As noted, moonshine as a historic commodity has been examined by a number of scholars primarily interested in Appalachian studies (Durand, 1956; Hatch, 2004; Roberts, 2010; Piene & Schafft, 2012).

However, since its shift to legality there has been little to no academic attention to its role in place and space. This research addresses this lacuna and examines the impact of commercial moonshine to both tourism and place-making in East Tennessee. Further, this research addresses a prominent critique that Appalachian studies as a discipline is rooted in historical, ethnographic and folklore research. Investigating commercial moonshine, coupled with tourism and place-making contributes to Appalachian studies in a less conventional manner. Finally, the interdisciplinary nature of the literatures engaged and the topic of investigation, this research will further contribute not only to human geography scholarship, but also economic, marketing, tourism, sociology and anthropology scholarships as well.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

Them old mason jars that daddy made us wash  
And set them out to sun on our back porch  
'Til he got ready to take 'em up on the hill  
And when daddy got word of the revenue  
He made us kids help hide his brew  
Made us swear that we never knew  
About daddy's moonshine still  
- Dolly Parton (1971)

### Introduction

The field work for this thesis research occurred over an eight-month period (October 2014 – July 2015), excluding the month of December 2014. This time period includes a three-month pilot study and proposal preparation, as well as five months of IRB-approved research at three commercial moonshine distilleries in Gatlinburg and Jonesborough, Tennessee (UTK IRB-15-02062-XP). Due to the nature of this research, qualitative methods were chosen over quantitative methods because the impacts of commercial moonshine to place and space are not easily quantifiable. Qualitative research methods are, “concerned with elucidating human environments and human experiences within a variety of conceptual frameworks” (Winchester & Rofe, 2010). For this reason, I used qualitative approaches to explore the ways in which distilleries are acting to produce a place of “authentic” moonshine in East Tennessee.

Human geography employs a variety of qualitative research methods, including less conventional techniques such as, “discontinuous writing, photo-elicitation and go-along interviews” (Winchester & Rofe, 2010). However, this particular research incorporates “the three main types of qualitative research employed in human geography: the oral, the textual and the observational” (Winchester & Rofe, 2010). Specifically I used: discourse analysis, semi-structured interviews, and participant

observation. Utilizing this multi-method approach addresses gaps or weaknesses that may be present in one approach as well as covering a wide breadth of understanding “consistent with traditional academic ideals of scholarship” (McHendrick, 1999). For example, in conducting interviews with distillery staff, I only gain one set of knowledge into the underlying social structure of commercial moonshine. However, coupling this approach with discourse analysis and participant observation provides a richer and more balanced interpretation concerning the implications of commercial moonshine on place in East Tennessee.

In the following sections of this chapter, I will broadly discuss each of my selected qualitative research methods and apply them to the discipline of human geography. In this discussion I relate how each method fits into this particular research and how the research was implemented. The close of this chapter discusses how each of these methods works to complement each other and provide a discussion of how the results emerged from the data.

## **Methods**

### ***Discourse Analysis***

Human geographers have been drawing on discourse analysis for qualitative research for the last 25 years (Dittmer, 2010). Discourse analysis provides useful methodology for examining texts and the relationship with other elements of my research objectives (Fairclough, 2010). Specifically, these methods connect an understanding of how distilleries produce a narrative of moonshine through their promotional language and use that language to sell an “authentic” commodity. In human geography, “discourse refers to the phrasing and word choice that is associated with ‘language-in-use’” (Dittmer, 2010). Understanding discourse in this way, Waitt asserts, “discourse analysis offers insights into how particular knowledge becomes common sense and dominate, while simultaneously silencing different interpretations of the world” (2010). In this way, Schoenberger situates discourse as a power relationship asserting, “The relationship between discourse and material reality/action is mediated by the social

power of the discursive agent” (1998). Therefore, social agents that are creating discourse around a subject, exert their power in producing “material reality” through their choice of language (Foucault, 1982; Schoenberger, 1998; Kopytowska, 2012). For the purposes of my research, a narrative of moonshine in East Tennessee is produced by the social power of distilleries. For example, in my analysis, the social agents that are in power to produce this language include distillery owners, marketing, employees, public relations and communications representatives, or other staff members. In analyzing the power of distilleries ‘language-in-use,’ I gain a better understanding of how they perceive their place of commercial moonshine in East Tennessee and further use these perceptions in the selling and (re)making of the landscape (Dittmer, 2010).

I employ discourse analysis in two ways. First, I turn to texts from distillery websites for an understanding of current moonshine discourse. Current moonshine discourse can be revealed after reviewing a website’s language, marketing directives, partnerships and promotion opportunities. Using these texts, I am able to infer how culture, stereotypes or social issues are being commodified, through moonshine products. Second, I draw attention to a discourse of moonshine by looking at the ways distilleries engage ‘language-in-use’ outside of their websites. Drawing from Dittmer’s argument, “the fusion of material texts with other forms of communication, such as body language, interactions, symbolic acts, technologies, and the like,” is important for gathering a full discourse of moonshine through means outside of these distilleries texts (2010). This occurs by employing other research methods: semi-structured interviews, focus groups and participant observation. In discussions and observing exchanges between various agents involved in current moonshine production, I have a greater understanding of different contexts surrounding moonshine discourse. Close attention to these social interactions and settings engaged by distilleries and moonshine production can make a difference for how discourse is being perceived (Dittmer, 2010).

Using this methodology I sought to understand the scale and scope of the modern moonshine movement. Historically, literature has made a connection between moonshine and a place of Appalachia, specifically East Tennessee (e.g. Dabney, 2014; Durand, 1956; Engelhardt, 2007; Hatch, 2004; Peine & Schafft, 2012). Therefore, in order to argue the importance of contemporary moonshine and its impacts on East



Tennessee as a place, it is necessary to disclose if commercial production is continuing to occur in the region. Unfortunately, there is currently no moonshine business directory or index which houses information on current distilleries in the United States. However, through resources such as Technomic Inc.'s (US Foodservice Industry Forecast), local news articles, yellow page advertisements and simple web searching, I was able to compile a moonshine distillery index for the United States. The first key word I used in my search was "moonshin." By using this abbreviated alternative to the word moonshine, I was able to obtain search hits on all forms of the word, such as: "moonshine," "moonshining," and "moonshiner." I similarly did this with the word, "distill," to return hits that included: "distilling," "distillery," "distilleries," and "distillers." Other web searches included the following key words: "United States," "spirit," "movement," "growth," and "America" followed by searches for those key words in specific states such as, "Georgia," "North Carolina," or "New York." Although these methods are able to capture most of the moonshine distilleries in the country, there are limits to finding distilleries. Some searching through these previously mentioned methods may not capture all distilleries due to sources failing to update their information or even have information available to the public. Further, I may be missing distilleries with my chosen key words or I may have inadvertently glanced over some web hits. Therefore, while I have compiled a fairly accurate account of moonshine distilleries (Appendix A) in the United States, it is not without flaws and there are inherent challenges to web searching.

All of my research questions require a base-level understanding of current moonshine discourse. While mining websites provides one narrative of moonshine promotion, it is nonetheless important for revealing the social power of distilleries through their selected "language-in-use" (Dittmer, 2010). Therefore, while discourse analysis of distillery websites provides important information in understanding current moonshine discourse, this methodology also integrates understanding other contexts surrounding moonshine production. Discourse analysis was similarly employed while observing different types of literature at the distilleries. For this reason, I participated in tours, seeing facilities, meeting owners and employees, and observing overall interactions at distilleries in an effort to provide a full understanding of how commercial moonshine is being interpreted across the American landscape. The analysis of the

different distilleries themselves also comes in the form of narratives that are on the walls at different distilleries, t-shirts, promotional brochures, what partnership literature is available, and their pitching language. For example, Sugarlands Distilling Company has old photographs on the walls with captions about the history of the Sugarlands Park narrating for the customer the importance of moonshine as a livelihood necessity at the time (2015). Similar to analyzing distillery websites, looking at other types of in-house language provided by distilleries helps foster a more complete understanding of the narratives commercial moonshine distilleries provide for public consumption. Finally, discourse analysis will be revisited at the end of this chapter in discussing how I analyzed the data from my interviews and participant observation. While discourse analysis enriches our understanding of distillery perceptions, this approach is void of completeness without employing other qualitative methods for a richer understanding of the impacts of commercial moonshine.

### ***Case Study***

To understand the role of moonshine in the selling, representing and (re)making of place, I have conducted a comparative case study of three distilleries in East Tennessee. Iain Hay notes, “A case study is...most appropriately categorized as an approach to research design or methodology rather than as a method” (2010). Using the case study approach then allows for “the study of a single instance or small number of instances of a phenomenon in order to explore in-depth nuances of the phenomenon and the contextual influences on and explanations of the phenomenon” (Baxter, 2010). This approach allows for geographers to see what processes and evolutions are happening across different spaces and places, because of the very place itself (Baxter, 2010). Examining different distillery practices in East Tennessee with various production, scales and marketing capacities informs our understandings of the impacts of commercial moonshine on East Tennessee as a place.

This particular case study began with a pilot study running the course of October 2014 to January 2015 (excluding the month of December). In this time I conducted discourse analysis regarding the production of commercial moonshine to decide which distilleries would be most appropriate for the purposes of this research. Moonshine in

Appalachia is inherently geographic and often associated with imagery of mountains and a mountaineer lifestyle (Stewart, 2006). Therefore, while commercialized moonshine and distilleries are emerging and becoming popular in Nashville, TN, I choose to focus on the “traditional” mountain moonshining that has historically occurred in East Tennessee (Durand, 1956). By looking at these three particular distilleries in East Tennessee, I aim to understand the difference in distilling practices and marketing techniques. My goal was to make sure I selected distilleries with varying capacities, scale, production and distribution efforts. The purpose in selecting varying distilleries for the case study allows for a more holistic understanding of how commercial moonshine is being produced in the region. Having three distilleries all operating with the same scale and distribution, does “not allow for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood” (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This would prove problematic in making larger inferences about the production of moonshine as a whole, limiting the scope drastically. Due to the time constraints inevitable with the master’s thesis I decided a case study involving three distilleries would be most appropriate. Limiting to one or two distilleries again creates problems of “not [allowing] for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed,” making larger inferences more difficult to assert (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

The three distilleries chosen for this case study are: Sugarlands Distilling Company and Doc Collier Moonshine both in Gatlinburg, TN and Tennessee Hills Distillery in Jonesborough, TN. First, Sugarland Distilling Company opened in March 2014, was the second distillery in Gatlinburg and by far the largest in this case study. Sugarlands, with an aggressive distribution strategy, currently distributes to 15 states, and has a goal to reach all 50 states and international markets by the end of the year (Vickers, 2015). They currently have a high consumer demand and a large production capacity to meet those demands. The second distillery, Doc Collier Moonshine, opened in September, 2014 operates as a craft distillery and only distributes in Gatlinburg at their distillery. The company has a closed production facility with no intentions to increase the scale or distribution of their product. The final distillery, Tennessee Hills Distillery situates itself in the middle of the larger corporate Sugarlands and smaller craft distillery, Doc Collier. Slated to open fall of 2015, Tennessee Hills will first distribute locally, with a vision to reach national markets, as soon as possible. For example, the

distillery already has offers to distribute to Maryland, Massachusetts and Virginia, with a long-term focus on distributing to the West Coast of the United States (Callahan, 2015). The most prominent difference between both Sugarlands and Doc Collier compared to Tennessee Hills is the former only produce moonshine products. Tennessee Hills plans to offer a variety of distilled craft spirits, from sorghum rum, to apple brandy with only a few moonshine products (Callahan, 2015).

Initially, this case study involved Sugarlands Distilling Company and Ole Smoky Tennessee Moonshine both in Gatlinburg, TN as well as East Tennessee Distillery in Piney Flats, TN. However, as the research moved forward there were several barriers that were encountered with the selection of two of these distilleries. First, after confirming to move forward in working with Ole Smoky (the first distillery in the state) it became increasingly difficult to get in touch with members of their staff to set up interview and observation times. After making several attempts to call, email and even show up at the distillery their head distiller, Justin King informed me they were no longer interested in working with me. Second, East Tennessee Hills Distillery initially on board with my research objectives and goals proved difficult in collaboration as well. In my continuing conversations with point of contact, Byron Reece, Vice-President and Co-Founder of the distillery I was informed that the management of the distillery was having trouble agreeing on the mission and future of the distillery. One Co-founder, Neil "Tiny" Roberson envisioned the distillery staying small scale and distributing only within the region, while Reece was more interested in growing the distillery to its fullest potential in the budding moonshine industry. Both of these distilleries were removed from my case study selection. Reece put me in touch with Stephen Callahan, owner of Tennessee Hills Distillery as a potential collaborator in this research. With Ole Smoky not responding to any type of communication, I decided to select Doc Collier Moonshine as their replacement. While Doc Collier did not have the same scale and capacity of moonshine production that Ole Smoky does, choosing Doc Collier gave me a craft distillery perspective that was missing from the case study.

Examining basic production and marketing incentives behind all three chosen distilleries provides me with powerful insight on how place is being sold, represented and remade through commercial moonshine production in East Tennessee. While this

particular case study allows me to draw greater inferences on the production of commercial moonshine in East Tennessee and other parts of the nation, it is incomplete without implementing multiple qualitative methods for a richer interpretation of the data.

### ***Semi-structured Interviews***

Kitchin and Tate assert “researchers can produce qualitative data from primary sources in a number of different ways” but go on to classify qualitative techniques in two ways, “interviewing and observing” (2000). This research will involve both classifications of qualitative techniques; however, this section discusses the implementation of semi-structured interviews in the field. According to Kitchin and Tate, “interviewing is probably the most commonly used qualitative technique... [allowing] the researcher to produce a rich and varied data set in a less formal setting” (2000). Interviewing “can provide rich sources of data on people’s experiences, opinions, aspirations and feelings” to help inform our research direction and objectives (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). Scholars recognize there are a variety of different interviewing approaches, such as structured interviews, question-driven, content-focused and informant-focused to frame ones research objectives (e.g. Kitchin & Tate, 2000; Hay, 2010; Dunn, 2000). The interview technique used for this thesis research is semi-structured interviewing. Semi-structured interviews allow me to “explore the subjective world of the interviewee” so that we can have a conversation about chosen topics, letting the interviewee guide the dialogue (Wengraf, 2001). This style of interviewing is much more accessible to me due to the familiarity of past research experiences (Carr, Onzere, Kalala, Owusu-Daaku, & Rosko, 2015). Semi-structured interviews are different from structured and unstructured interviews in that the interviewer must be able to improvise up to 80% of their responses to interviewee’s questions (Wengraf, 2001). For this reason, semi-structured interviews allow the interviewee to feel more comfortable, providing them opportunities to produce their own narrative (Wengraf, 2001).

All of my interviews were conducted during the spring and summer months of 2015, with one pilot interview happening in September, 2014. Several trips conducting semi-structured interviews were made to the study areas (Gatlinburg and Jonesborough, TN) at selected distilleries and surrounding tourist areas. For all semi-structured

interviews I created a guide catered to the individuals I was interviewing based on their position at the distillery (Appendix B). During these interviews I also took detailed notes about key information and the overall attitude and atmosphere of the interview. The information from my note taking helped in analyzing my interviews after time had expired between the interviewing and the analysis. Interviews were conducted with distillery owners, and employees. All interviews were made optional and only occurred with proper consent (Appendix C & D). As the research progressed, it became clear that it was necessary to use identifying information when writing about the selected distilleries. It became increasingly difficult to discuss a place of moonshine and the individual stories of distilleries without this information. Therefore, I went back to IRB as well as my participants to obtain proper consent to use this type of information (Appendix D).

To begin my interview process, I sought out key informants that were identified in my pilot research. The key informants at each distillery were: Ned Vickers, CEO of Sugarlands Distilling Company; Buddy Keyes, General Manager at Doc Collier Moonshine; and Stephen Callahan, owner and operator of Tennessee Hills Distillery. Vickers became my point of contact at Sugarlands by way of a connection with my major advisor for this thesis research. I emailed and called staff at Doc Collier and Keyes was the first to respond and remained my point of contact throughout the research. Finally, Callahan was referred to me by a previous point of contact at East Tennessee Distillery. I first began interviews with my points of contacts, then with their permission and direction, moved on to interviewing support staff (general managers, marketing and PR representatives, employees). Because of the nature of semi-structured interviewing, I spent anywhere from 20 minutes to one hour interviewing one person. Interview numbers varied across distilleries for various reasons including, differing production scales, number employees and operation times. The remainder of this section will discuss in detail who was interviewed at each distillery and why they were interviewed for this research.

At Sugarlands, I gathered six interviews with employees, including one semi-structured focus group. These interviews included the CEO, Director of Marketing and Strategy, Events Manager and Booking Talent, Events Coordinator, Director of Communications and a focus group with the bottling line at Sugarlands. These persons

were selected to be interviewed in part due to the availability of employees, but also because of their strong influence in promotional efforts at the distillery, with the exception of the focus group. The focus group that was conducted was not planned and did not provide a sound audio recording. The information gleaned from the focus group comes from my notes during the interview and a reflection afterward, in which I added to my field notes. Due to the smaller size of Doc Collier I conducted three interviews. These interviews were with the General Manager, the Assistant Manager and one employee. During my initial pilot research, the Doc Collier team informed me they were interested and willing to work with me throughout my research, but that the owners and members of the Collier family would not be interviewed. This shaped the results of the Doc Collier story in some ways, but Buddy Keyes, general manager of the distillery was more than willing to provide as much information to me as possible. Finally at Tennessee Hills, I conducted three interviews over several different encounters. Tennessee Hills not open for the public currently only has three paid employees, Stephen Callahan, Jessica Callahan, and Dave Callahan. I interviewed Stephen on two separate occasions. I also interviewed Stephen and his wife Jessica twice and finally interviewed all three employees one time.

In carrying out all semi-structured interviews a digital audio recorder was used. Before each interview began, I introduced myself and asked each interviewee to sign a consent form that authorized me to use the information they gave me as well as record our conversation. After the interviews were complete, I uploaded the interviews from the audio-recorder to my personal, password-protected laptop. Once I transcribed all interviews they were deleted from both my personal computer and the audio recorder. Finally, all signed consent forms are secured at my home desk, in a locked drawer.

### ***Participant Observation***

A case study with semi-structured interviews and discourse analysis is not enough to gather all interested information. Participant observation is necessary to couple with semi-structured interviews and discourse analysis to obtain a broader perspective on the topic of interest (Jackson, 1983). While interviewing allows for direct knowledge exchange, experiencing a place as a traditional tourist or customer would,

allows for understanding the full tourist experience as any other person would. Participant observation is necessary to “gain intimate knowledge’s of subjects and their habits, which insiders to a realm of practice might not otherwise reveal” (Derek, Johnston, Pratt, Watts, & Whatmore, 2009). The goal behind participant observation is to gain a more complete picture of everyday interactions and exchanges happening through the production of commercial moonshine (Kearns, 2010).

Kitchin and Tate discuss there are two forms of participant observation, participant as observer and observation undertaken covertly (2010). This research combines both forms of observation at all three distilleries and other events associated with the distilleries. For example, in visiting the distilleries for interviews, afterwards I stayed for an hour or two to observe daily interactions in the distillery. Distillery staff and personnel knew why I was there and what my goals where during my observation. However, there were other instances where I visited either the distilleries or events hosted by the distilleries without their knowledge to observe how they were promoting their moonshine products. Scholars also discuss different approaches for how to conduct observations, for example a structured approach with “coding schemes” or a more “holistic account” (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). In conducting my observation, I opted for the latter of these two approaches using a “holistic account” to record my observations. This method entailed the use of highly detailed notes to “provide a richer and more detailed account” of behaviors and patterns (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). While most of this note recording happened either on the premise or during the course of selected events, I also supplemented these notes as I got back to my computer, within 24 hours to recall events fresh in my mind.

Participant observation took on many different forms throughout the course of this research. I participated in one tour of Sugarlands production facilities at their distillery with other customers. At both Doc Collier and Sugarlands I observed interactions between distillery staff and customers, how customers and tourists experience their visit as well as the interactions of passerby’s outside of the distilleries. Sugarlands sponsors a number of events in the region, and I was able to attend Rhythm and Blooms held in Knoxville in April 2015. Sugarlands was the only moonshine sponsor at the event, which is a local music and arts festival. The distillery also had staff on the



premises of each venue to field any questions about their product and their involvement in the music festival. Due to the timing of this research and Tennessee Hills not being open yet, I decided to attend two events at the distillery, in lieu of being able to observe customer and tourist interactions. The first event was a photo shoot for a local band held at the distillery. The second was a charity event called “Bikes for Brody,” located just outside of Jonesborough and gathered around 150 participants. In both cases I observed how people were talking about the distillery and what they thought about its products in the overall narrative of this region.

### ***Conducting Analysis***

After completing all of my interviews and field work, I analyzed all my data in an orderly manner. This consisted of first transcribing my interviews and typing my field notes. In transcribing my interviews I worked in a quiet place with head phones on. I used the software that came with my audio recorder in extracting the audio files from my recorder. This was somewhat problematic as the audio files were encrypted to only read from the given software. The software provided only allowed three options for speed, minimizing my ability to smoothly type. Therefore, there were several times that I had to stop, rewind and play the interview again. For this reason and by nature of transcription, the process was very time consuming and took on average about 3 hours to transcribe each interview (Dunn, 2010). It was important for me to transcribe my own interviews since I was present originally and am best suited to “reconstruct the interchange” (Dunn, 2010). Similar to the importance of transcribing my interviews, it was also necessary to organize my field notes. I recorded all my notes from both interviewing and participant observation in a legal pad. I then typed up my notes with appropriate dates and locations. The notes were kept with my interviews and other materials used in my research such as, journal articles, news articles, and promotional literature.

After all of my interviews were transcribed and field notes typed, I set out to analyze my data. This particular research utilizes a universal approach “which can be applied to all types of qualitative data” (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). Regardless of the approach taken, most qualitative analysis makes sense of data through “categorization and connection” (Kitchin & Tate, 2000). Accordingly, this data was analyzed to make

connections between my oral data and knowledge that emerged from previous discourse analysis. First, I printed out all of my field notes and interviews in order to hand code them and identify emerging themes. According to Cope, coding serves three main purposes: “data reduction, organization and the creation of searching aids, and analysis (2010). Reduction was used in this analysis to group together data from across all methods to facilitate similarities. Once the data were grouped together, I constructed a coding structure to identify relevant themes (Cope, 2010). Finally, I analyzed the data, teasing out my initial coding structure to finally settle on identifying themes. Initially, in my analysis seven themes emerged from the data, these themes included: locality, experience, authenticity, place-promotion, nature/natural, stereotypes and tradition/heritage/history. After reviewing background literatures of Appalachian/moonshine discourse, tourism and place-making, I revisited my themes to condense them into a more inclusive analysis. For example, in tourism literatures discussions of authenticity, heritage and locality are all very prevalent (DeLyser, 1999; Wang, 1999; MacCannell, 2002). Similarly of the original seven themes, I found several that fit into a discussion of tourism or overlapped in other ways. For example, locality and place-promotion go hand in hand as well as nature/natural and tradition/heritage/history. Therefore, I settled on the three themes of: a transforming sense of place, a changing tourist landscape, and the “making” of an “authentic” place of moonshine. The original seven themes all fit within at least one of the final three themes, and sometimes more than one.

### ***Closing Discussion***

This research incorporates a combination of all three most popular and widely used qualitative research methods: oral, textual and observation (Winchester & Rofe, 2010). The overall case study approach provides transferability in which “findings apply to other cases of the phenomenon in question” (Baxter, 2010). Oral methods in the form of semi-structured interviewing serves to, “fill a gap in knowledge that other methods...are unable to bridge efficaciously” (Dunn, 2010). This type of interviewing allows for deeper, more complex meanings and behaviors to emerge as well as empower the interviewee through their knowledge (Dunn, 2010). Discourse analysis

allows geographers to “identify the sets of ideas, or discourses, used to make sense of the world within particular social and temporal contexts” (Waitt, 2010). Finally, observation allows researchers to “[take] part in the world rather than reflecting it” (Crang, 1997). The combination of all three of these approaches works to compliment any misgivings that one approach alone may have. Because the commercial moonshine industry has not previously been researched, it is important to employ multi-methods in qualitative geography for a fuller understanding of its impacts on East Tennessee as a place. The following chapter will apply the methodology described in this chapter to analyze the data and discuss emerging themes.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DRINKING AND REMAKING PLACE: RESULTS FROM THE RESEARCH**

“There are too many people from this area playing into the hillbilly stuff, everyone around here portrays us as hillbillies and make it into their product. In all reality, I want to showcase what people have done to make a living and provide for their families for hundreds of years”

– Stephen Callahan (2015)

#### **Introduction**

Recent changes to liquor laws (2009) in the State of Tennessee resulted in opening the alcohol market to the production of commercial moonshine. In light of these changes, Stephen Callahan saw an opportunity to capitalize on the craft of making whisky in East Tennessee (Repeal of Prohibition, 2011; Callahan, 2015). As owner and operator at Tennessee Hills Distillery in Jonesborough, TN, Callahan cites his reasoning for wanting to open a distillery goes much deeper than cashing in on a new industry. In fact, he claims he has a calling “to build a foundation for something that is bigger than [himself]” (Callahan, 2015). Born and raised in Jonesborough, Callahan explains it is a combination of his deep cultural heritage, knowledge of the craft and notoriety as one of the best illegal moonshiner’s “in these parts” that sets him apart from his competitors (2015). The story of Tennessee Hills Distillery and other distilleries in the region serve as a guide for how we understand the role of commercial moonshine in the (re)making of East Tennessee. Utilizing commercial distilleries as a guide for this research situates distilleries as place-makers in the (re)making of East Tennessee in revealing the ways they promote their products around a narrative of the region. The application of various qualitative methodologies allows for clear trends to emerge surrounding moonshine’s role on the economic and cultural landscape of the region (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Hay,

2010; Yin, 2013). For example, economically the commodity has illustrated trends of adaptation in a historically depression region, while culturally moonshine has played a role in the production of the “hillbilly” stereotype and other parts of Appalachian identity (e.g. Biggers, 2007; Ezzell, Lambert, & Ogle, 2010; Roberts, 2010). Through a case study approach, this chapter addresses the results of my research to investigate the impacts of commercial moonshine and its role in the selling, representation and (re)making of place in East Tennessee.

Moonshine is historically referred to as illicitly distilled corn liquor (Durand, 1956; Engelhardt, 2007; Peine & Schafft, 2012). This fact calls into question how a product can be called moonshine if it is sold in the legal marketplace. The transformation of moonshine raises questions surrounding the authenticity of a “new” moonshine product. These include but are not limited to; access to new markets, control of image and place construction, and intrinsic opposition in internal and external representations of Appalachia. Since its introduction to the market place in 2009, “corn whisky volume has increased by more than 1,000%” (Crecca, 2014). Whether you call it corn whisky, corn liquor, mountain dew or white lightening, the rise of commercial distilling is undeniable, with 22 distilleries in the State of Tennessee alone. The increasing competition surrounding the production of commercial moonshine has resulted in the desire for individual distilleries to package and promote their own version of the “authentic” commodity. These distilleries are not only responding to market pressures, but are also trying to create a niche for their product in the mind of likely customers. As Callahan previously noted, authenticity is not only reflective of the greater heritage and history of the region, but is indicative of the way distillers and consumers come to understand the region. Thus, by saying, “there are too many people here, playing into the hillbilly stuff” Callahan views his local competition as capitalizing on an inauthentic narrative of the region (2015). This has implications for the way we understand place-making because individual distilleries have their own perceptions of authenticity. As this analysis discusses, these individual perceptions emerge in different ways as distilleries contribute to the remaking of East Tennessee through their promotions.

More specifically, my analysis demonstrates the role commercial distilleries play in place-making and answers the overarching question: *How is place being sold,*

*represented and (re)made through the proliferation of commercial moonshine?* In unpacking the marketing strategies distilleries utilize to differentiate themselves from their competition, I argue that distilleries become place-makers by packaging their idea of authenticity in their moonshine products through cultural understandings of East Tennessee. To address this question, this chapter discusses the results of a case study involving three distilleries in the region of East Tennessee: Tennessee Hills Distillery in Jonesborough, TN and the Sugarlands Distilling Company and Doc Collier Moonshine distilleries of Gatlinburg, TN. This chapter also situates all three distilleries within their respective tourism economies. To frame these economies and the industry as a whole I engage literatures on Appalachian/moonshine discourse, tourism and place-making/promotion within the broader focus of cultural geography. This allows me to investigate the relationship between a new, legal market of moonshine and its impacts on the concept of place in East Tennessee. The results of this study represent one of the first geographical analyses of the rapidly developing commercial moonshine industry.

The stories of how each distillery started mirror the transformation of moonshine from a once illicit to a now legal commodity. Exploring each of these stories informs our understanding of how individual distilleries perceive their role as place-makers in the region. Returning to Stephen Callahan, who at the age of 27 now has a vision to put East Tennessee on the map through Tennessee Hills Distillery. Before plans to open his distillery, Callahan produced and sold moonshine from a 25-gallon still in his dorm room at Emory and Henry College (2015). Using the capital and recognition from his illegal moonshining days, Callahan is producing his trademarked “Corn Liquor” and opening the first distillery in the oldest city in the state – Jonesborough. In spite of not being fully open to the public yet, Tennessee Hills is already sending moonshine to the governor of Tennessee and has offers to supply “Corn Liquor” at every MGM Grand in the United States (Callahan, 2015). The potential success for Tennessee Hills in this emerging market emulates the already established success of the other two distilleries in this case study, revealing how distilleries situate themselves in this market to promote their “authentic” products. This reality informs our understanding of how commercial moonshine is contributing to the remaking of East Tennessee. Notions of authenticity have been thoroughly explored by a number of other scholars across disciplines (Cohen,

1988; DeLyser, 1999; Hughes, 1995; Bruner, 1994; Trudeau, 2006; Wang, 1999). However, for the purposes of this research, I utilize the idea of authenticity “as a social construction, the meaning of which varies with different people, at different times, and in different places” (DeLyser, 1999; Bruner, 1994; Hughes, 1995). This understanding of authenticity is crucial for this research as distilleries engage with their own, specific ideas of authenticity through the promotion of their moonshine products.

### ***A Transforming Sense of Place***

Contemporary transformations of moonshine are a dramatic departure from the earlier days when it was an illegal product. Historically, literatures of Appalachian studies indicate moonshine has played two distinct roles in East Tennessee: one embodied in nostalgia and tradition, the other centered on a “mountaineer” way of life, signified with adventure and defiance (e.g. Bridges & Wise, 2009; Roberts, 2010). Both of these perspectives revolve around an economic necessity for moonshiners to adapt to their poor agricultural and transport conditions, producing liquid corn, also known as moonshine (Peine & Schafft, 2012, Hatch, 2004). What was once an economic necessity, moonshining became illegal during prohibition (1920-1933) and the act of making moonshine could only take place within the mountains to avoid law enforcement (Durand, 1956, Stewart, 2006). While literature does acknowledge small-scale moonshining done in bathtubs for household consumption, large-scale moonshine production generally took place in the Southern Appalachians (Durand, 1956; Peine & Schafft, 2012). Situating a historical place of moonshine rooted in the Appalachian mountains informs how we have come to understand moonshine today. This section of the analysis investigates how place is transformed through an exploration of the efforts of commercial distillery promotions. Like historical sites or other places of public memory, our contemporary understanding of the landscape of moonshine is informed by how we understand moonshine in the past (DeLyser, 1999; Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004; Bruner, 1994). For example, though moonshine production is now legal in the State of Tennessee, it is not produced or distributed in the same way it once was. Yet, notions of contemporary moonshine exist and evolve from previous knowledge of the illegal commodity. Therefore, though commercial moonshine is produced and consumed

differently, it is symbolic of the historical understandings of moonshine's past. As a sense of place is explored through the efforts of commercial distilleries we see a transformation of this sense deeply embedded in the historical past of moonshine.

All three distilleries acknowledge and promote the tradition of moonshine in their distilleries or through marketing efforts (Callahan, 2015; Keyes, 2015; Vickers, 2015). For each distillery the concept of authenticity is crucial for promoting their specific commercial moonshine products. Previous scholarship has discussed the role of authenticity in the selling of places, tourist landscapes or other commodities, like wine or postcards (e.g. Hall, 1997; Gapps, 2009; Croker & Bailey, 1994; Lunardo & Guerin, 2007). Within these debates, most scholarship argues that ideas of authenticity are a social construct that means different things for people at different times and places (Gapps, 2009; DeLyser, 1999). Building off of these literatures, this research contributes to the idea that authenticity in the production of moonshine is constructed by individual distilleries and catered to their perception of its meaning. For each of these distilleries, manufacturing an authentic place of moonshine is inseparable from the historical sense of moonshine in the region. For example, Sugarlands Distilling Company's motto "Be Authentic" is emblazoned throughout their distillery from the front entrance, to their "back porch," their t-shirts and moonshine jars (Figure 6). However, "[being] authentic" did not emerge naturally for Ned Vickers, CEO of the company, who unlike Stephen Callahan has little moonshine heritage. Vickers explains:

"We spent probably 18 months interviewing old moonshiners and talking to people. What we wound up with is something that we feel is admittedly a commercial version, for commercial grade, but a very authentic moonshine recipe" (Vickers, 2015)

For Vickers' the search of authenticity, involved lots of time researching his product in the informal economy, making sure he was staying true to a traditional recipe of East Tennessee. Engaging in the historical and illegal place of moonshine, Sugarlands is able to assert their product is authentic. This allows Sugarlands to defend the common question of: can moonshine be authentic if it is sold in the legal marketplace? With a recipe true to the ongoing informal economy of moonshine, Sugarlands is able to assert their moonshine is as authentic as any commercial moonshine can be. Brent Thompson,





Figure 5. Sugarlands motto, "Be Authentic" - For Sugarlands, authenticity embraces a rich heritage of moonshining for the resourceful residents of the Sugarlands region in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Director of Marketing and Strategy for Sugarlands elaborates and discusses their vision of authenticity through the *mountain way* as distinguishing their story from other companies that have emerged:

“One of the things we felt that was pretty important to pass along was a central concept that the Sugarlanders shared, and that is basically, the *mountain way*. The *mountain way* is -- I'll share what I've got, I'll freely give -- and so that concept is not a new one, but when you live the way these folks did, you had to lean on each other in a big, big way. For us the authentic experience is the *mountain way*, moonshine and sharing with others...so I think there is an extreme authenticity of moonshine in this area” (Thompson, 2015)

Thompson is directly relating the Sugarlands idea of authenticity to a historical place of moonshine located in the Sugarlands part of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park (GSMNP). Understanding illegal moonshine as an adaptation strategy and livelihood alternative, Sugarlanders and other moonshiners in East Tennesseans shared their resources with one another out of economic necessity and survival (Kephart, 1922; Durand, 1956; Peine & Schafft, 2012). In continuing this tradition of sharing with their community Sugarlands, is able to exercise their *mountain way* in providing authentic moonshine products to their consumers.

Similar to Sugarlands, authenticity for Tennessee Hills Distillery relates back to a historical place of moonshine. However, for Tennessee Hills their assertion also engages ideas of personal heritage to the region of East Tennessee. Ashworth and Larkham claim that “heritage is one of the main determinants of the individual character of places...and one of the principal components of a real differentiation” (2013). Similarly, other scholars have argued that while heritage is important for characterizing different places, heritage is also important to personal identity (Howard, 2003; Saper, 2007; Wang, 1999). For Callahan and his connection to East Tennessee and illegal moonshining, his vision of authenticity incorporates not only the region, but a history of heritage, his personal identity and tradition. Callahan chose the motto “Embracing Heritage” for this reason. This motto allows the distillery to direct their marketing attention towards the rich history and heritage that surrounds the craft of making whiskey while at the same time showcasing the landscape of East Tennessee (Callahan, 2015).

Callahan and his small team of two others, his wife and brother, have invested and renovated a 175-year-old historic salt house downtown Jonesborough (Figure 6). Embodying the motto “embracing heritage” Callahan has designed and fabricated every single piece of distilling equipment and salvaged an old family barn for his tasting bar (2015). Callahan elaborates on creating his perception of authenticity through his design of both a 300-gallon and 150-gallon copper still:

“We built those in the Salt House pretty much right where they are sitting. I think that speaks a lot for our craftsmanship. We want equipment that is a work of art rather than just serving its purpose to make liquor. We are really passionate about what we do. We want to get people a product made with passion and very high quality too.” (McCoy & Callahan, 2014)

Therefore, while the region of East Tennessee is paramount for Callahan, as indicated by his distillery name, his heritage and roots in the region define his authenticity. He is able to produce this authenticity in the form of his craftsmanship and attention to the art of making whisky.

Doc Collier the only registered craft distillery in the area announced during their opening ceremony on September 18, 2014 that they “hope to introduce the local business community to the art of distilling moonshine the way William ‘Doc’ Collier did more than 100 years ago” (William , 2014). Without toting a slogan or motto, Doc Collier is focused on staying true to the tradition of moonshine. General Manager, Buddy Keyes explains:

“We see ourselves as the local, good ole boys. We don’t want reality TV, we just want to do what we do, have fun and help people understand what we are and what we do. The stigma of moonshine is that you get it out of the mountains, we want to keep that. But, we also want to say hey, it is not what you think it is, there is actually a lot of science involved and hard work” (Keyes, 2015)

The focus for Doc Collier’s authenticity also revolves around a personal heritage and a connection to the Appalachian mountains. The Collier family has been in East Tennessee for hundreds of years. William Collier received the nickname ‘Doc’ because his corn whisky that was used as the medicine for lots of people in the area (Stokes,



Figure 6. The old salt house where Tennessee Hills Distillery produces and sells commercial moonshine. The 175 year-old building is reflective of the distillery motto, "Embracing Heritage."

2015). Before anesthetics and disinfectants were created, moonshine and other spirits were used as medicine to treat common illnesses such as colds, fevers or colic (Smiley, 1999; Leggett, 2012). By naming their distillery after William 'Doc' Collier, the company is making an authentic moonshine product embedded in place and heritage, but with a different narrative than surrounding competitors. Each distillery uses their specific history and attachment to East Tennessee in nearly all steps of productions; from their initial inception, to their distillery design and products as well as their slogan branding. A resonance of craft, authenticity, and heritage are being promoted through the efforts of these commercial distilleries to perpetuate a traditional sense of place in East Tennessee. As the analysis continues we see that this connection to craft, authenticity, and heritage remains a very important part of the greater commercial moonshine story.

While distilleries are perpetuating a historical and traditional sense of place around moonshine and East Tennessee in their products, distilleries are also engaging in transforming this sense of place around a different narrative. Negative perceptions and stereotypes of moonshine are prevalent in the region including; hillbilly, backwards and uneducated among others (e.g. Roberts, 2010; Otto, 2002; Harkins, 2003). Distilleries see their production of authenticity directly connected to promoting a positive narrative of moonshine. In this way, a sense of place is achieved for these distilleries through the notion of "educating" their customers. The idea of educating customers about the rich history of moonshining in this region as resourceful and adaptive is crucial to building an authentic moonshine product. Often distilleries exercise the idea of transparency in their production process to promote this positive narrative. Scholars have connected the idea of transparency and authenticity in a number of ways such as, media, advertising, education and leadership (e.g. Freeman & Chapman, 2007; Anderberg & Morris, 2006; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Petraglia, 1998). In the case of commercial moonshine, providing authenticity to their customer is directly connected to providing transparency of their product, their story, and their vision. For example, Keyes informs me that the number one priority as a staff at Doc Collier is to talk with every customer that comes through the door about the history of the Collier family and explain the process behind each of their products (2015). Keyes explains:

“We try to educate every person who comes in here about moonshine, rather than just pour them up and let them get drunk and leave. Because the stereotype is that we’re a bunch of hillbillies that don’t have any teeth and all we do is make moonshine. Moonshine is actually a science and there is a lot more to it. We like to educate on every product and how we do it. That is what makes us a lot different.” (Keyes, 2015)

The connection of hillbilly and moonshine promotes a problematic narrative for moonshine at Doc Collier. Doc Collier, like the other distilleries in the case study, is working hard to produce their version of authentic moonshine. In order to end with a smooth spirit a lot of skill and knowledge are required in production of commercial moonshine. Keyes and Doc Collier are instilling science and craft in their product, a far cry from the unsophisticated hillbilly stereotype of moonshine.

This idea of education and transparency is also important for Sugarland’s in promoting their product. Their handpicked recipes are available to anyone, their distillery offers free tours for customers and you can even see their means of production from the streets in Gatlinburg (Figure 7). Jessica Hale, events manager and booking talent at the company plainly states, “We are not trying to be something we are not, we want to stick close to our roots” (2015). An authentic place of moonshine for Sugarlands is achieved through their transparent production process and connection to this region. While Tennessee Hills Distillery is not quite open, Callahan draws again on his heritage and knowledge of the craft as illustrated in the opening quote. The idea of education for him comes from creating a high quality product. With a high quality product, the distillery more or less lets authenticity sell itself. Callahan says:

“We use authentic original family recipes with no sugar added, that’s a shortcut we do not want to take. The old way is the right way when it comes to distilling.” (2015)

Tennessee Hills, also like Sugarlands has an open production process that customers can see. Their corn mash is fermenting in the tasting room and customers are able to smell the mash setting. Callahan and his brother have renovated an elevator in the salt house to take the alcohol up to the bottling line, the elevator is one of the oldest in the



Figure 7. Transparency is a priority for Sugarlands as they actively disclose information about their products and overall process of production. Here is a look at Sugarlands production equipment. This still is in plain view for customers inside the distillery as well as for tourists walking the main strip of Gatlinburg. Sugarlands further promotes this idea of transparency by offering free tours.

country (Callahan, 2015; McCoy, 2014). Callahan is excited to talk about his product and walk customers through his process, transparency is key for his authentic corn liquor.

Embodying a tradition of historical moonshine and exposing customers to a more positive narrative of the commodity allows distilleries to engage in this transformation of place. One final way distilleries are able to contribute to this transformation is by connecting to a locality of East Tennessee. Continuing to understand authenticity as a social construction that means different things to different people in different times, it is critical that distilleries are actually producing their moonshine products in the region. All three distilleries use local ingredients for their products; promote sustained partnership with local businesses and employ as many local native residents as possible. It is in this connection to locality that authenticity remains a heavy theme for these distilleries. Teasing out how their product is made and why it is made that way, allows for us to understand how distilleries are acting as “authentic” place-makers through the moonshine commodity. Each distillery perceives a narrative of authenticity differently as discussed above, similarly, distilleries engage a locality of East Tennessee differently in their production process. For example, all of the mash used for Tennessee Hills’ “Corn Liquor” comes from the corn on Callahan’s family farm, is ground in “an antique 1940s model stone mill” and then stored at Shell Mill, a local company in Jonesborough (Figure 8) (Callahan, 2015; McCoy, 2015). Not only is Tennessee Hills using local ingredients, they are also expanding business opportunities for companies like Shell Mill in the Jonesborough area, Callahan adds:

“That is pretty special, we gave him (Mark Shell) a whole new business aspect. We are going to be using a lot of corn...Its all going to be pretty personal and full circle. Everything is pretty much in Jonesborough and that’s how I like to keep it” (McCoy & Callahan, 2014)

Similarly, Sugarlands the largest distillery in this case study is able to promote locality in nearly all steps of their production process. Though the distillery built a brand new building on the parkway in Gatlinburg, the exterior and interior walls have been built from four East Tennessee barns and houses that were salvaged (Vickers, 2015). Also, all of their ingredients stay as local as possible, including white corn from East Tennessee. Thompson expands:





Figure 8. Silo for storing Tennessee Hills Distillery's corn. Tennessee Hills Distillery is bringing a new type of business to a local silo as their demand for corn and corn storage increases in the coming years.

“From an ingredient perspective, we choose to use Tennessee White Corn, which is a little hard to get, it’s a little more expensive, but we believe it makes a smoother, more superior drink. And it is local, we have a saying that white corn is for whisky and yellow corn is for critters. When it comes right down to it, that is a big difference, we grind all of the corn here on site. We do it all here, same with our rye, starting with good grain makes a difference” (Thompson, 2015)

Each and every jar of shine that the company produces is hand labelled and bottled by the many employees native to East Tennessee or Western North Carolina. The company also actively promotes the GSMNP and East Tennessee interchangeably with their moonshine product (Vickers, 2015; Thompson, 2015). Finally, Doc Collier Moonshine capitalizes on a place of East Tennessee by nature of being a craft distillery where you can only purchase and taste Doc Collier moonshine at their location. For the team at Doc Collier, knowing they only participate in local marketing it is important for them to differentiate themselves within the moonshine industry to create a niche product. The idea of locality and authenticity for Doc Collier is having a local product, that can only be bought at their distillery. Not only do all of their products have to be bought in the store, the company is also currently producing one of the only moonshine blueberry brandies, Keyes elaborates:

“If our research is correct, we are the only distillery in the world that makes a true moonshine blueberry brandy. People make blueberry brandy, but not moonshine ones. I am sure that is going to change in the near future, but it is very different. The mash comes from the fruit rather than the grain. It is by far our most popular product.” (Keyes, 2015)

For each of these distilleries a transforming sense of place through commercial moonshine first perpetuates and promotes a traditional and historical sense of place in East Tennessee and moonshine. Distilleries then work to transform a sense of place through the idea of transparency and education about their process and products. Finally, this transformation is achieved by connecting to a locality and place of East Tennessee. Notions of transparency, education and locality are some examples of the ways distilleries actively promote their products in a quest for true “authenticity.” While all distilleries exercise similar place-making strategies, they individually assert their

“authentic” place of moonshine through specific heritage and knowledge relevant to their moonshine production and backgrounds.

### ***A Changing Tourist Landscape***

The tourists that come to the area are important for the production of commercial moonshine, by creating demand for the product. Not only are they customers, but they each come with a different understanding of what East Tennessee means. For this reason, distilleries have to be cognizant of the type of tourist they are selling to as well as the place of moonshine they are attaching to their products. Since the opening of commercial distilleries in East Tennessee, high tourism economies such as Gatlinburg and Jonesborough are seeing a change in the demographics of tourists. Previously, the demographics of both Gatlinburg and Jonesborough have consisted of young families and/or older retirees (Gatlinburg Tourism, 2015; Jonesborough, 2014). While still early, the shift in demographics has seen an increase in middle age tourists, single persons, and young couples without children (Keyes, 2015; Vickers, 2015; Callahan, 2015). One of the reasons this change is happening can be attributed the accessibility of the moonshine product through its different flavors and variety. All three distilleries offer not only classic moonshine, but flavored types which tend to appeal more to customers that are not accustomed to drinking liquid corn. Assistant manager at Doc Collier, Josh Stokes speaks to this changing demographic:

“In the last four years I can say from experience, I have seen a different caliber of people. This is not necessarily a bad thing; it’s just funny how it is. Now we have a lot more younger families come in. We had couples before, but it was mainly middle aged families with kids in their early teens. Now we have younger families in their middle 20s with young babies, it’s a completely different crowd. You can ask any business on the strip. I have a feeling it has a lot to do with moonshine, it didn’t happen until about four years ago and that is when Ole Smoky came in.”  
(Stokes, 2015)

Whether the tourist demographic in East Tennessee is changing as a direct response to the opening of moonshine distilleries or because of other factors is too early to tell. Regardless of the reason for this change, as the tourist landscape transforms, not only

do distilleries have to react to this change, so do tourists. Again, authenticity comes to the forefront of not only distilleries desire through production, but also the tourist desire in consuming authentic moonshine. Tourism literature has discussed in great length the tourist desire and quest for authenticity or even inauthenticity (e.g. MacCannell, 1976; Hughes, 1995; Cohen, 1988). Situated within this debate, literature discusses the idea that those in control of the tourist landscape are often producers of this authenticity (DeLyser, 1999; Gapps, 2009; Wang, 1999). Distilleries recognizing this role of production, center their promotion of authenticity through a place of East Tennessee. After promoting a story of authenticity that works for individual distilleries, it is then the customers search for their own authenticity that ultimately chooses a moonshine product of their liking. Vickers expands:

“We are getting people in Gatlinburg now that would have never thought to come here before the moonshine. We’ve had people from New York City come down here who never would have dreamed of coming to Gatlinburg, so we feel like we have the best product out there. You’re in the wrong business if you don’t. But we feel confident that if they come taste everyone’s moonshine they will come and buy from us. Having a critical mass of distilleries I think draws a group of tourists who might not be here a lot.” (Vickers, 2015)

In the above quote Vickers touches on a lot of ideas connecting moonshine to tourism. First, he acknowledges like other distilleries, the notion of a changing and expanding demographic of tourist to the area. Second, he asserts that by believing his product is authentic that tourists and customers will recognize this and ultimately buy a product of Sugarlands. Finally, he recognizes the importance of a high tourist area in the production of commercial moonshine. Like Sugarlands, Doc Collier recognizes the importance of promoting authenticity for the tourist and also letting the tourist make their own decision of authentic moonshine. Josh Stoke says:

“We tell everybody to go everywhere, I boast Sugarlands Apple Pie, sometimes they boast our blackberry, but then you are an informed consumer, and they can make the decision. Real recognizes real and that’s all we are trying to do.” (2015)

Tennessee Hills recognizing this change in tourism and is seeking to capitalize on this shift. Though Tennessee Hills offers only a few moonshine products, they are able to

engage different markets and clientele through the production of other craft spirits. For this reason, Callahan sees his role in both tourism and industry markets differently than the other distilleries in this study. Capitalizing on the success of moonshine, Tennessee Hills Distillery also wants to expand beyond markets of moonshine to incorporate other craft spirits, drawing an even more diverse demographic. Callahan says:

“That was totally the plan to do moonshine from day one. Then when I got into this thing, I thought well how am I going to leave my mark? This moonshine business will decline eventually. What can I do that is really special and put my foot down and say we are going to do it and do it right. We are in the moonshine categories, but at the same time corn liquor is an authentic product to this area. I didn’t want to get into flavors, the only reason I am is because I have a huge demand for it. It is just good business. Eventually we will find those one or two products and that is all we do. It’s like Jack Daniels, how many products do they have? Not many.” (Callahan, 2015)

Being the highest selling whisky in the world, Jack Daniels only has five core whiskies’ they produce on a regular basis (Hopkins, 2015; Jack Daniels, 20015). Though the company produces a number of different specialty or reserve whiskies offered for limited times, their Old No. 7, famous “Tennessee Sippin’ Whiskey” is by far their most recognized brand (Jack Daniels, 20015). Jack Daniels has successfully created a niche in the whisky world and that is precisely Callahans intentions not only with his Corn Liquor but with other products as well. Specifically, Callahan’s vision for the future is to be recognized as one of the best apple brandies on the market (2015). But it is clear for the business minded Callahan that flavors do make moonshine more accessible and increase drinkability for the product. However, though flavors increase moonshine’s marketability, Callahan is determined to produce an authentic moonshine that differs from competition. When asked specifically about flavored moonshine, Callahan responded:

“We've always planned to do a few flavored corn whiskies. The big thing that I will not do is saturate our shelves with 30 flavors year round. I want to do more seasonal flavors using all natural flavorings. I don't want to use grain neutral spirits that are at distilleries elsewhere and they add artificial flavorings and food

colorings, which is what all the distilleries in Gatlinburg are doing. That would make us more of a bottling company instead of a distillery. Yes, there is a huge market demand for flavors which is pretty much the only reason that I'm going to do a few. At the end of the day we definitely need cash flow to help support us until we start releasing some of our finer products such as our brandy and other aged products. Plus I wanted to enhance our tasting bar experience here at the distillery” (2015)

It is evident through the changes in demographics of these economies that moonshine is also challenging the current tourist landscapes and narratives. In Jonesborough, Tennessee Hills success has not been fully embraced by the entire community. Callahan laments, “The thing about Jonesborough is they are so stuck in their ways” wanting only to capitalize on storytelling and heritage tourism. However, even with push back from the community, Callahan is certain that Jonesborough is ready for a distillery, attributing a changing direction of tourism to forward-thinking mayor, Kelly Wolfe (2015). Changing demographics and narratives of tourism are just one impact from moonshine, coupled with this shift; distilleries are able to market new and unique tourism opportunities. Sugarland’s has teamed with Smoky Mountain Guides to offer outdoor expedition opportunities for moonshine customers. Thompson explains:

“We have a partnership with Smoky Mountain Guides, which is an outdoor expedition service. So, we get to take people from the distillery, head into the mountains and have a day hike, a backcountry trek and dine or just ride through the mountains and talk about the history of moonshining. We have different angles into our company because really at the end of the day it’s all about once you get here. The shine is just a vehicle for experiences, and you don’t have to have it to have these experiences... but I think the bottom line is that we have a high concentration of sharing in what it is we do” (Thompson, 2015)

For Sugarlands, they view their moonshine product as an opening for more tourism opportunities. Thompson in the above quote is establishing that the “authentic” place of moonshine goes far beyond the individual distilleries, but again harps on this idea of the Sugarlands, and GSMNP for a more “experiential” moonshine (Figure 9). Another angle Sugarlands capitalizes on is music. With no other dedicated music venue in Gatlinburg,



Figure 9. Teaming with Smoky Mountain guides, Sugarlands Distilling Company engages in local tourism to the GSMNP. At a kiosk in the back of the distillery, customers can choose from a number of outdoor adventures to participate in.

music fans are drawn to Sugarlands for live music. In fact, Sugarlands goal is to collaborate with as many different promotional opportunities as possible. These opportunities range from black tie events, to Symphony in the Park in Knoxville to Floyd Fest, an arts and music festival in Floyd, VA (Fluitt, 2015). Important to note, Sugarlands is consistently drawing on the idea of locality and tradition in their tourism ventures to ensure they are manufacturing an “authentic” place of moonshine in East Tennessee. DeLyser asserts that perceptions of authenticity are “informed and influenced by landscape elements” (1999). With this understanding it is critical for Sugarlands to combine this tradition and locality in not only their production process, but their distribution and marketing strategies as well. Daniel Fluitt, events coordinator at the distillery adds:

“A lot of the immigrants from Ireland and Scotland, where folk music kind of began, settled in this area, and have been making moonshine in this area just as long as people have been making music...we also work with WDVX radio in Knoxville, we are an underwriter with them and [collaborate] often. Everything is as local as possible... all the way from where we get our corn to sugar to t-shirts, that is one of the main things for us is to keep everything as local as possible.”  
(Fluitt, 2015)

As events coordinator Fluitt clearly sees a connection between authenticity, a historical place of moonshine, and engaging a contemporary place of East Tennessee through who they choose to work with. Tennessee Hills expands on this idea of engaging local businesses in the production of an “authentic” place of moonshine for him. The goal for the distillery is to continue economic development in Jonesborough, involve the community and to introduce the “Tennessee Hills” (2015). For Callahan, this is most accessible through tourism collaborations and he has created three events to take advantage of this market strategy: “Wheels in the Hills,” charitable “Brody’s Run” and a blind cornhole tournament at the Jonesborough International Storytelling Center (2015). By sponsoring “Wheels in the Hills,” a free event showcasing motorcycles and vintage cars, Tennessee Hills brought in around 4,000 tourists for the weekend. The community interaction and collaboration is a win for all parties involved, Callahan adds, “Jonesborough is home to me and I feel like it deserves to have a good business that



could offer a lot to Jonesborough, and have a lot to offer to us, too,” he said (McCoy, 2014). The Doc Collier Moonshine distillery does not actively participate in tourism collaborations. Due to Doc Collier’s size and capacity as a craft distillery this makes sense, however Doc Collier’s location at the beginning of the commercial strip coming into Gatlinburg places it in a less foot trafficked area for tourists which may prove problematic for long-term sustainability of the distillery.

The final aspect of a changing tourist landscape is sustainable development improvements to the service sector economies of Jonesborough and Gatlinburg. With each distillery opening, annual tourism and employment opportunities increase for a region that struggles in a seasonal tourist economy. Sugarland’s currently employs 55 permanent people, with paid vacation and benefits. While Doc Collier and Tennessee Hills operate in a much smaller capacity, they too are employing permanent jobs. Mayor of Jonesborough, Kelly Wolfe reflects on the prospect of Tennessee Hills adding, “For a town dependent upon the tourist trade, this represents an excellent opportunity to add yet another attraction to draw folks to town” (McCoy, 2014). The collaboration of tourism events coupled with the creation of new events around distilleries, opens the opportunity for long-term and year-long tourism draws. With the introduction of events like “Wheels in the Hills,” and Sugarlands hosting live music, more business is coming to the region via moonshine. The Collier family has been at the forefront of tourism expansions in Gatlinburg, promoting the “Rocky Top Wine Trail” and owning all five wineries featured on the trail. Investment by the Collier family in a moonshine distillery in the region is testament to the fact they are dedicated to keeping their business in East Tennessee and employing local residents at the same time.

This importance of locality and local business engagement is essential for distilleries as they become “authentic” place-makers of commercial moonshine. By the very nature of the moonshine business, they connect to several supporting industries as they engage in the processes of production as well. Literatures in economic geography discuss in great detail the benefits of supporting and clustered industries for overall economic improvement to an area (Porter, 2008; Glaeser, 2011; Duchesneau & Gartner, 1990). For example, some places are catapulted into success via the introduction of other industry to an area; moonshine is able to do this in the economies of

Jonesborough and Gatlinburg. As previously mentioned, Shell Silo in Jonesborough is receiving a new type of business in storing corn for Callahan's mash. This is not the only type of industry moonshine engages, its production also includes industries of: water, fruit, juices, sugar, corn, distributors, liquor stores, bars and graphic designers among others. Keyes explains through Doc Collier's support of a local water company, the importance of supporting the community for development:

"We get all of the water for our moonshine in Dandridge, TN – English Mountain Spring Water. We started talking to them because we wanted good water; pH is everything for us and our product. Their water is on the higher end of acidity, it doesn't have all the stuff they put in tap water, so it helps to have a crisper flavor to us. It is a really great relationship we have with them, they have the same kind of mindset we do – they are local, community building" (Keyes, 2015)

The tourism events and opportunities that promote sustainable development for the region are all focused on the locality and place of East Tennessee. These three distilleries engage local ingredients for their products and promote sustained partnerships with local businesses. The goal for these distilleries is not just sell moonshine products, but also to promote a sustainable tourist experience to draw and repeat tourists to the region. A common thread for all of these distilleries is the importance of tourism for their business. Drawing from the literature, the making of place is deeply connected to tourist landscapes (Hall & Page, 2014; Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Glaeser & Gottlieb, 2008). Ned Vickers understands this importance for his business at Sugarlands and comments:

"Do you know how many people participated in the Kentucky Bourbon Trail last year? 550,000, do you know how many people visited us last year? 750,000. We have bought the domain name [www.mountainmoonshinetrail.com](http://www.mountainmoonshinetrail.com) and that is something we intend to do. Frankly, we have been so busy trying to manage our business we haven't had time, but it is something we would love to do." (2015)

In the above quote, Vickers, the lawyer turned moonshine entrepreneur is directly interested in connecting his place of moonshine, to a place of tourism. Modeling his idea for a moonshine trail after the success Kentucky Bourbon trail, Vickers is seizing an opportunity to expand moonshine even further. With the high number of people that visit

the GSMNP every year, and a connection of moonshine to this region, the opportunities for a moonshine trail seem endless. The business team at Sugarlands understands that while they are situated in an area with high tourism, they return to the idea of authenticity through the historical place of moonshine being in this region, Thompson adds:

“I can’t imagine this being anywhere else. Having the foot traffic that we’ve got is really central to our ability to have an aggressive expansion strategy, it allows us to take it to market. If we were to just open up any ole place and we saw few people walk through the door everyday, I don’t think we would have the resources to go out and introduce our product for more people...its pretty important for us to be here, and it fits, it makes sense, its our story.” (2015)

Doc Collier also recognizes this importance of tourism to a place of moonshine. Josh Stokes comments:

“We are in the customer service buisness and if it wasn’t for all these people coming from all over the world to my backyard, I wouldn’t be able to pay my bills. We are about six hours from three quarters of the eastern seaboard and [GSMNP] is the only free national park in the nation. There were sixteen million people that came through here last year, if we didn’t have tourism, this would be nothing.” (2015).

Gatlinburg a city that receives more tourists annually than Jonesborough, provides an invaluable partnership with both Doc Collier and Sugarlands (Gatlinburg Tourism, 2015). While their moonshine may be perceived as authentic because of the locality embodied in their products, its success relies heavily on this tourist landscape. Tennessee Hills still receiving a fair number of tourists does not get the same mass amount that distilleries in Gatlinburg do. In order for Callahan to succeed and beat out competition, he look beyond markets in East Tennessee as well as holding on to his heritage in making the best product possible:

“Obviously you want to be a tourist attraction. The thing about this business is distribtution. You can’t solely count on foot traffic. If you want brand recognition and leave a legacy you need distribution. They can have what they have down there [in Gatlinburg], it makes me nervous because if I was doing the bullshit

sugar shine I could have stacks of bottles in here, but we want to make it our way.” (2015).

This section has discussed clear impacts of moonshine to a tourist space of East Tennessee. Within this space, distilleries are engaging in an understanding that tourists are seeking authentic experiences and products (MacCannell, 2002; Hughes, 1995; Cohen, 1988). In order to produce this authentic experience, distilleries are promoting a place of moonshine that is inherently attached to the landscape of East Tennessee. Building off of the notion that authenticity is a social construction and distilleries are producers of this authenticity, this final analysis will demonstrate how each distillery situates themselves within this engagement of authentic place-making.

### ***The “Making” of an “authentic” Place of Moonshine: place-promotion***

As shown in both the transforming sense of place, and a changing tourist landscape, a clear connection remains: the location and place of East Tennessee is crucial for commercial moonshine production. Elucidated in the first section of this analysis, the transformed sense of place that distilleries engage in serves as the foundation for nearly all marketing and promotional strategies. Similarly, this final section of the analysis explores the various ways commercial moonshine is manufacturing an “authentic” place of moonshine in the selling, representing and (re)making of East Tennessee. This section contributes to scholarship that discusses the role of commodifying place in other areas of tourism (e.g. Crokery & Bailey, 1994; Hall, 1997; Cloke & Perkins, 2002; Alderman, Benjamin, & Schneider, 2012). In the commodification of place through moonshine, tourists become active consumers of an “authentic” place of moonshine as they visit distilleries (Cloke & Perkins, 2002). As Sugarlands engages in this concept, their marketing and promotion focus relies entirely on commodifying both East Tennessee and the GSMNP. Daniel Fluit says:

“We are not just trying to reach the whole tourist crowd here in Gatlinburg; we are actually promoting the reason why Gatlinburg exists here. We are trying to promote the history of moonshine and the park. Get people to actually experience and not just sit here and walk up and down the streets and go

shopping. We want to expand people's minds...with learning how moonshine came to this area, the reason why we are here" (2015).

Illustrated in the above quote, it is clear that the heritage and tradition of moonshine is very important for Sugarlands, producing a customer "experience" that goes beyond just moonshine. Without this totaling moonshine experience, Sugarlands is not able to sell their product in an authentic way. Returning to ideas in previous sections, educating the customer about their story and how it fits in a greater narrative of moonshine is central in establishing an authentic place of moonshine for their company. For the entrepreneur minded Collier family, the idea of keeping their business and promotions central to Tennessee is essential to their vision. By nature of being a craft distillery, Doc Collier capitalizes on not only a location of East Tennessee, but more specifically a location of Gatlinburg. Josh Stokes explains why location is so central to their production of authentic moonshine:

"The reason why [locality] is so important to us, is more of a family thing, rather than an international brand. When people come to Tennessee and the Appalachian mountains in particular, it is one of the oldest chains of mountains in the world, they want something authentic and this family is from the area and they want to keep it right here." (2015)

For the team at Doc Collier, moonshine isn't authentic if it doesn't come from these specific mountains. The success of their distillery depends on their ability to manufacture an "authentic" place of moonshine for their customers.

Tennessee Hills Distillery uses the place-promotion tool of place-naming as a means to promote the region. Scholars have explored this concept in other places through investigating the relationship between naming a place, making a place and the memories attached to those places (Alderman D. H., 2008; Alderman & Inwood, 2013; Till, 2005). Alderman and others have also made connections to the use of place-naming or toponym's in differentiating places in their landscapes (Alderman D. H., 2008; Rose-Redwood & Alderman, 2011; Berg & Voulteenaho, 2009). East Tennessee commonly referred to as the "Tennessee Hills" by locals, serves as the source for the name for Callahan's distillery. Originally slated to be named "Callahan Distilling Company," Callahan decided that he wanted the name to encompass not just him and his family, but

the heritage of his community, ancestors and the region (2015). Callahan remarks that in naming his distillery after the region of East Tennessee he becomes accountable to the standards of his region and “people will expect the best product coming from these hills” (2015). The name of Tennessee Hills also works to differentiate his company from other companies as he begins to enter national markets. Finally, Callahan exercising place-naming by making the conscious decision to trademark the term ‘corn liquor’ for his moonshine product (Figure 10). Callahan intentionally wants to separate himself from his competition, all calling their products moonshine. By calling his product corn liquor, Callahan draws from an age old term in Appalachian lexicon to produce a place of ‘corn liquor’ that is inherently tied to East Tennessee and greater Appalachia. Returning to Callahan’s previous comments about comparing his vision to that of Jack Daniels and finding a niche within the spirits market, his ‘corn liquor’ labels resemble similar coloring, text and language to that of Jack Daniels products. Whether this is a conscious decision or not, Callahan is connecting his product from the East Tennessee hills to a larger narrative of the history of whisky in Tennessee. More specifically, Jack Daniels labels say, “Whisky made as our fathers made it for 7 generations” and “made in Tennessee.” Callahan uses similar language on his labels with a brief story and his motto “Embracing Heritage” right above the distillery name. Sugarlands also recognizes the reputation of Jack Daniels to a larger narrative of Tennessee whisky production. Brent Thompson is also interested in comparing his product to the high standards of Jack Daniels:

“At the end of the day we can put [Sugarlands] on the shelf right next to Jack Daniels, and really there’s a slight difference in the way we make it and the way we go about what we are doing” (2015)

Similarly, Sugarlands Distilling Company acquires its name from the Sugarlands part of the GSMNP. Not only is Sugarlands also participating in place naming, but they further promote the Sugarlands and East Tennessee as commodified places. Customers are able to learn the narrative of Sugarlands, which is displayed on every jar the company produces:



Figure 10. Tennessee Hills Distillery has trademarked “Corn Liqueur” for branding their moonshine product. The notion of place-naming is one way Tennessee Hills is engaging in the remaking of place in East Tennessee through their moonshine product – photo from Tennessee Hills Distillery

““In the Great Smoky Mountains the Sugarlands was, ‘A country of ill fame, hidden deep in remote gorges, difficult of access, tenanted by a sparse population who preferred to be a law unto themselves. For many a year it had been known on our side as Blockaders’ Glory, which is the same as saying Moonshiners’ Paradise, and we all believed it to be fitly named.” (Kephart, 1913)

Like other distilleries in the case study which go to great lengths to educate and promote a positive narrative of moonshine, Sugarlands is able to initiate that process through the labels on their bottles. Regardless of flavor or type of moonshine, each jar bears the same story of the Sugarlanders and its story in the history of moonshine. Understanding the importance of these rich narratives in the commodification of a place in East Tennessee, distilleries rely on their unique story and history to differentiate themselves from competition.

Beyond what distilleries are doing at their location to promote a place of Tennessee, upon entering national markets, they continue to sell place attached to moonshine. Economic and marketing literatures discuss the importance of branding and individual narratives in the marketing of products in national markets (e.g. Shipley & Howard, 1993; Arthur Rooney, 1995; Mudambi, 2002). For distilleries it is essential for them to continue promoting an “authentic” place of moonshine as they enter national markets. This allows them to separate their product from other moonshine products on the market that may come from other places. East Tennessee and Southern Appalachia are not the only regions participating in the rising moonshine industry (Appendix A). Therefore, it is paramount for distilleries in this region to distinguish themselves in an expanding industry. Sugarlands being the largest scale distillery continues to focus promotional material that involves the history of East Tennessee and the GSMNP. For Sugarlands the narrative of East Tennessee as a place is central to their marketing campaign and distribution goals (Thompson, 2015). Thompson returning to this crucial idea of education elaborates on the importance of sticking to their authentic story of moonshine:

“One of the best parts about my job is I do a lot of travelling. When we introduce our product to a new state, at that point we have partnered up with a distributor; they’ve got sales representatives [going] out to their own markets to sell to liquor



stores or bars and restaurants on our product. And so they are the first line of education. We do a big presentation of our brand...I actually take you through a series of photographs that are from the 1920s that you see around the distillery, by a guy named Jim Thompson...some of his photos were even used to compel the White House to make this a national park. But, we get to talk about Tennessee and East Tennessee specifically and the Smoky Mountains in everything we do because it is so central to our company.” (2015)

Sugarlands has also created a separate, philanthropic division of the company called “MoonShare” (DeLaura, 2015). The mission of Moonshare is “to provide monetary donations to twelve elected non-profits during the year, one each month” (Sugarlands, 2015). Working with non-profits from across the country, MoonShare enables Sugarlands to move beyond being just a distillery to actively engaging the landscapes around them. Tennessee Hills has been collaborating with a number of other distilleries in the region and the country to promote their products as well. For example, Callahan has worked with local distilleries like Jack Daniels (Lynchburg, TN) and Thunder Road Distillery (Kodak, TN) as well as out of state distilleries like Copper Moon Distillery (Indian Orchard, MA). The exception to this promotional campaign of East Tennessee is Doc Collier. While they do not advertise or seek to reach outlying markets, in visiting their distillery a narrative of East Tennessee is visible in almost all aspects of their operation. A customer is greeted by an East Tennessean local, briefed on the history of moonshine, Gatlinburg and greater Appalachia, then escorted through the tasting and merchandise rooms that all focus on a place of East Tennessee. With only the name of their company and a sign reading “moonshine xxx” outside of their distillery, Doc Collier relies on the foot traffic of tourism in Gatlinburg and word of mouth to receive customers (Figure 11).

Finally, distilleries are making efforts to challenge the current stereotypes surrounding the place of East Tennessee and moonshine. All three distilleries are cognizant of these negative stereotypes which revolve around rough, poor, backwoods and hillbilly sentiments (Peine & Schafft, 2012; Roberts, 2010; Hatch, 2004). Cultural branding is often used as a tool for commodifying certain stereotypes and identities of different cultures (Holt, 2004). As Fletchall explains in her article detailing postmodern



Figure 11. Doc Collier Moonshine distillery being a craft distillery participates less in promotional and marketing strategies than other distilleries. This is the only signage for Doc Collier, located at their distillery.

tourism in neighboring Pidgeon Forge, stereotypes are often commodified for an overall kitsch experience. The hillbilly stereotype in particular, is continually being recreated and represented in different ways over time (Roberts, 2010). As commercial moonshine emerges in the market, some distilleries such as Hatfield & McCoy Moonshine in Gilbert, West Virginia utilizes a hillbilly narrative for promotion of their product (2015). However, for the distilleries of this case study, they all return to promoting a cultural connection of tradition and resourcefulness over the hillbilly stereotype. Again, coming back to this notion of education, distilleries acknowledge the importance of informing their customers not only about moonshine but about the region they are in. Buddy Keyes, general manager of Doc Collier, has his staff educate each customer that comes to the distillery about legalized moonshine, its tradition and history in East Tennessee. Josh Stokes discusses how important this type of education is not only for the promotion of their product but in differentiating them from surrounding competition:

“We are the odd birds, we are away from everybody. We see a lot less traffic, but it enables us to do things a little different. I am going to go back to – we educate everyone on the product. They [Collier’s] are keeping it small, they want to focus more on making premium spirits and quality products. A lot of folks come in here thinking that moonshine is made from a hillbilly, but we work to change that understanding and I can see it click and the transformation happen as we are talking” (2015)

For Doc Collier moonshine, a promotion of the hillbilly stereotype that has historically surrounded moonshine produces an inauthentic narrative. These distilleries feel passionate about promoting East Tennessee through a moonshine narrative that harkens to a more positive stereotype of adaptation, resourcefulness and tradition. Sugarlands follows suite with its customers, but highlighting a narrative of the history of the Sugarlands and promoting tourism opportunities in the park. When I asked Brent Thompson how he feels about these negative stereotypes he responded:

“That is actually one of the first things I got pretty passionate about when I first came on to the project, was to really change the stereotype, because I am an East Tennessean. Really what I do is research, and when you take the time to research and understand the people of the region, while they might have a

different – historically – lower level of education, and in not all cases was this true, it did not necessarily mean that they were dumb. They had a different type of education that you and I didn't get. I mean could you go kill a bear in the woods? Right, neither could I. So I often think about this way in which our own, call it educated and popular society, places labels as what is normal and what is backwoods or back hills...So I feel the Sugarlands story is more about [resourcefulness and history] and less about the hillbilly, outlaw illegality side of history, certainly that is a part of moonshine history, but before that it was really distilling these spirits." (2015)

In the above quote, Thompson is drawing on his own personal connection as an East Tennessean to make a case as to why the Sugarlands story and product connects to a more "authentic" historical place of moonshine. However, not all distilleries in the area are following suite, and prefer to draw on the historical narrative of the hillbilly and NASCAR, like Ole Smoky Tennessee Moonshine. Tennessee Hills, like Sugarlands and Doc Collier, notes that it is a valid promotional campaign, but argues that it is negatively promoting the region and casting embedded ideas of what a place of East Tennessee is (Callahan, 2015). Callahan explains:

"A lot of people try to put us in the same category as Ole Smoky and Sugarlands. The thing about us is we are going to have to grow in an organic manner and everything we do is with our own hands. I think once we get to that level, people will really realize that we are legit and know what we are doing. My whole idea is the art of making whiskey is being lost, and if I am able to pass that down and showcase the art of making whisky, that is more important. Not a lot of people are doing that anymore, especially my age." (2015)

Callahan further adds:

"I used to make moonshine, now I make whiskey. It's the same recipe, the only difference is the tax stamp, but I don't want to play into the hillbilly gimmick to sell my liquor. I want people to buy it because it's a sophisticated whiskey they enjoy drinking." (Baker, 2014; Callahan, 2014)

For Callahan, moonshining heritage runs deep in his family and that serves as the foundation of his distillery and the heart of "embracing heritage." Tennessee Hills

produces “authenticity” by continuing a tradition that has found its roots and success in the hills of Tennessee. It is this narrative that allows all three distilleries to find their individual niche in place-making an “authentic” place of commercial moonshine. Regardless of how distilleries are working to change or perpetuate stereotypes of the region, all three distilleries in this case study go to great lengths to participate in that debate.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter utilized a case study approach to demonstrate the impacts that commercial moonshine is having in the selling, representing and (re)making of East Tennessee. It has shown that within the production of legal moonshine, distilleries have clear impacts on the place of East Tennessee. The overarching connection between all three themes is the concept of authenticity and commodification. Understanding authenticity “as a social construction, the meaning of which varies with different people, at different times, and in different places” is critical as distilleries individually create their own perceptions of authenticity (DeLyser, 1999; Bruner, 1994; Hughes, 1995). Previously a place of moonshine involved negative narratives surrounding the illegal manufacture of the commodity. More recently these narratives are highlighted through the story of infamous moonshiner Popcorn Sutton in Cocke County, TN who committed suicide days before he was to be sentenced for his illegal liquor activities. With the transformation of moonshine to legitimate, commercial distilleries are promoting a place of moonshine attached to a rich history and heritage of the region. For example, Sugarlands manufactures their authentic place of moonshine by drawing on the GSMNP, outdoor expeditions, American music and the history of the Sugarlander’s. Doc Collier is producing their perceptions of authenticity through the tradition and heritage of the Collier family, offering a positive narrative of moonshine tied to medicine. Finally, Tennessee Hills connects to a personal heritage and knowledge of illegal moonshining. Under this framework of authenticity, distilleries are actively transforming a place of moonshine by first embodying traditional and historical understandings of moonshine.

Distilleries then work to educate and provide transparency for their customers and finally, draw on a locality of East Tennessee in their actual production processes.

Ideas of authenticity and commodification remain central in the investigation of the impacts of commercial distilleries on tourist landscapes in East Tennessee. Similar to this research, tourism literatures have examined a number of different tourist industries, contributed to debates of authenticity and looked at both the producer and consumer side of these debates (e.g. MacCannell, 1976; Hughes, 1995; Cohen, 1988; Cloke & Perkins, 2002; Alderman, Benjamin, & Schneider, 2012). This research is unique in that it explores tourism from an unexplored industry, commercial moonshine. While this is a new angle in tourism scholarship, this research contributes to furthering ideas of authenticity in tourism discussions. In producing authentic moonshine, distilleries connect their individual narratives and products to the mountains of East Tennessee. Situating commercial moonshine in a narrative of the past allows distilleries to maintain authenticity through the legal commodity. In this analysis we have seen the ways in which distilleries promote authenticity to directly impact the tourist landscape in East Tennessee. The impacts to tourist spaces of moonshine include: a changing demographic, increased exposure of the region through new events, and sustainable development with local business. The overall connection of tourism for the success of the moonshine industry in both Jonesborough and Gatlinburg is of utmost importance for each distillery. In this connection between tourism and commercial moonshine, distilleries produce their individual authentic products with transparency and confidence for customers to decide which products they like best.

Finally, as distilleries are “making” an “authentic” place of moonshine in East Tennessee, authenticity again remains central to these productions. In manufacturing these authenticities distilleries are using strategies of place-promotion discussed in the literature. As competition in emerging industries increases, places and cities have become products to be marketed (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990). By very nature of moonshine being historically produced in East Tennessee, distilleries are now promoting the region by producing commercial moonshine. This promotion first involves the historical, traditional place of moonshine as discussed previously. Entering into national markets of moonshine distilleries capitalize on this same historical narrative to

differentiate themselves from producers outside of the region. Distilleries that are not engaging a connection to a historical place of moonshine are therefore not producing an “authentic” product, but merely a commercial one. In promotion of this historical and traditional place of moonshine, it is important for distilleries in this case study to focus on a positive image of the region. For them to promote other stereotypes such as the hillbilly would be to manufacture inauthenticity. As this chapter has demonstrated the making and remaking of place incorporates several processes that will remain dynamic as the moonshine industry continues to evolve. With the success of the moonshine industry likely to sustain in the future, gaining a deeper understanding of how commodities act and interact on their cultural landscapes is crucial. This is especially true considering the relatively young age of the moonshine market and industry.

Given the success of a new moonshine market and industry, this research has raised questions about the ways in which moonshine is acting on East Tennessee as a place. The region once situated as the center of illegal production is emerging once again on the American landscape. The transformation of liquor laws in the state that opened commercial distilling has put East Tennessee on the map as an area of high commercial production. Continued research into the moonshine industry could look to: understanding who in East Tennessee the commodity serves, inclusion and exclusion to new markets, and control of image and place-construction among others. What is clear from this research is that the moonshine industry’s success is likely to remain, making it an integral part of not only East Tennessee’s cultural landscape but also a national one. Moonshine’s impact on the selling, representation and (re)making of East Tennessee as a place will remain a process in which to address various social, cultural and economic topics in the future.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

He had those East Tennessee moonshiner's blues

He had those Cocke County jail house blues

His name was Popcorn Sutton...

A true moonshiner from day one

His name was Popcorn Sutton

And he made moonshine 'til he's gone

-Hank Williams III (2010)

The popularity to emerge from the story surrounding infamous illegal moonshiner Popcorn Sutton is reflective of greater cultural, economic and political turns surrounding the transformation of moonshine for legal production in 2009. Opening up the liquor market to commercial moonshine production is one way various actors sought to promote economic development in a historically depressed region (Cheek III, 2015; Yeldell, 2009). Tourism is also another avenue within place-making literatures that acts as an active tool for stimulating economic development (e.g. Berglund & Olsson, 2010; Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Hall & Page, 2014). Therefore, the commercial moonshine industry's connection to tourism in East Tennessee is paramount for sustaining both aspects of the new economy; moonshine and tourism in the region. Through a case study of three distilleries, this thesis work investigated the impacts of commercial moonshine in the selling, representing and (re)making of East Tennessee as a place. The overarching discussion focused on understanding the effects of the emerging industry on its surrounding spatial landscapes through concepts of authenticity and commodification. Through the application of a multiple method approach in qualitative research, the impacts of commercial moonshine were elucidated through the following three themes: a transforming sense of place, changes to a tourist landscape and the "making" of an "authentic" place of moonshine. While this research specifically looked at the relationship between commercial moonshine and place in East Tennessee, the themes addressed have a broader application and significance when placed in a larger Appalachian and U.S. context. East Tennessee is not the only region to experience



economic depression and the influx of an emerging industry. Further, moonshine as an industry is not solely acting on the cultural landscape of East Tennessee, but has also made its way to the American public in other locations and in other capacities. Finally, the study of commercial moonshine and place offers a unique framework for contributing to debates of Appalachian studies, tourism and place-making in geography.

Unlike other emerging industries such as legal cannabis or craft beer, the production of commercial moonshine is a relatively new and unengaged topic in academic scholarship. This research has shown that investigating the impacts of commercial moonshine intersect at poignant human concepts in geography. These include but are not limited to; access to new markets, control of image and place construction, and intrinsic opposition in internal and external representations of Appalachia. This research specifically engaged in cultural geographies through literatures such as, Appalachian and moonshine discourse, tourism and place-making and promotion. Directly related to interests in Appalachian studies, this research further serves to address a prominent critique in the discipline, that research is rooted in topics of the past, folklore, and ethnographies (Berry, Scott, & Obermiller, 2015). Due to the lack of attention to the transformative and consequential proliferation of moonshine, this research is vital in exploring how place is consumed and produced through the commodity.

The following sections of this concluding chapter first covers the intellectual merits this research provided by revisiting the three themes described throughout this research. The driving focus of this section is to further demonstrate how the three themes contribute to larger geographic literatures, including: place-making, place-promotion, place-marketing, tourism, cultural landscapes, toponymical studies, sense of place, livelihoods, Appalachian and moonshine discourse. For a visual table of the results of the research, with contributions to theory and empirical evidence, please see Appendix E. The next section addresses the broader impacts that this research offers. Lastly, this chapter concludes with a brief discussion on future research related to the topics associated with this thesis work.

### ***Intellectual Merit: Three Themes Revisited***

Chapter four provides a substantive chapter that addressed all three themes of the research. The first of these themes is: ***a transforming sense of place***. This first theme draws in the overarching connections of authenticity and commodification to commercial moonshine. This research argued that a transforming sense of place was elucidated in the following three ways: a traditional sense of place is being perpetuated through commercial moonshine, distilleries are making a push to educate their customers on the history and process of moonshine production, and finally there is a clear connection between commercial moonshine to the place and locality of East Tennessee. In order to address this first theme a thorough discourse analysis of what the literature has said about moonshine previously was necessary. This allowed me to first establish a historic sense of place surrounding moonshines role in East Tennessee. It further established the contemporary place of commercial moonshine centered in Tennessee and more specifically, East Tennessee (Appendix A). The historic narrative of moonshine also centers its importance in the region of East Tennessee and discusses two roles of moonshine. These dual roles: one embodied in nostalgia and tradition, the other a mountaineer way of life, signified with adventure and defiance – revolve around an economic necessity for moonshiners to adapt to their poor agricultural and transport conditions, resulting in the production of liquid corn (e.g. Bridges & Wise, 2009; Roberts, 2010). I further utilized discourse analysis to examine what the current narrative surrounding commercial moonshine was saying. This was achieved by analyzing distillery websites, promotional literature and government and industry reports, as well as utilizing participant observation and semi-structured interviews.

Once a historic and contemporary sense of place was established, combining my other qualitative methods allowed for me to see how sense of place was transforming through moonshine. Utilizing the concept that commercial moonshine distilleries are acting as places of public memory, it is important to understand how contemporary moonshine is being informed by a narrative of moonshine in the past (DeLyser, 1999; Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004; Bruner, 1994). Therefore, all three distilleries in this case study are aware of the historical place of moonshine and its connection to East Tennessee, and that is evident in the way they manufacture an authentic product for

consumers. For these distilleries, authenticity is achieved by providing a richer narrative of moonshine that encompasses positive imagery of the region such as; resourcefulness, adaptation and tradition. This research demonstrated one of the ways distilleries are able to promote this narrative is through educating and providing transparency to their customer about their own individual histories and production process. Another way distilleries manufacture authenticity is by connecting to a locality of East Tennessee; this is accomplished by outsourcing parts of their production to local businesses. Drawing from literatures that argue heritage and identity are “principal components of a real differentiation” distilleries capitalize on their own individual stories to produce an authentic moonshine commodity (Ashworth & Larkham, 2013). Analysis of this theme demonstrates that at the center of this overall transforming sense of place in East Tennessee remains an embedded connection to a place of East Tennessee. This connection works to r(e)make the region through both a narrative of historical moonshine as well as contemporary commodification of the region and an authentic commercial moonshine.

The next theme this research discussed was: ***a changing tourist landscape***. Here the analysis drew from important literatures surrounding concepts in tourism geographies. Particularly important for commercial moonshine is its connection to tourism. All three distilleries in the case study cited the strong tourism economies of Jonesborough and Gatlinburg as necessary for their distillery’s success. Therefore, due to the nature of commercial distilleries emerging in tourism economies a look at its impacts to tourist landscapes was necessary. Literatures in tourism geographies examine a variety of industries and economies such as, film, music, and slums to name a few (e.g. Alderman, Benjamin & Schneider 2012; Lashua, Spracklen & Long, 2014; Frenzel & Koesn, 2012). This research is unique in that it explores tourism in East Tennessee through the vehicle of commercial moonshine. Without having ever investigated tourism in the region through commercial moonshine there are very clear impacts of the industry to tourism in this region, they include: a changing demographic and clientele of tourists; increased exposure through distillery promotions and events; and sustainable development impacts through commercial moonshine.

Contextualizing changes to tourism in the region demonstrates that underlying themes of authenticity and commodification remain central to the production of commercial moonshine. Particularly drawing from literatures of heritage and cultural tourism, this research identifies the ways in distilleries are able to manufacture authenticity for tourists. Recognizing their role in the production of tourism, distilleries work to promote their version of individual authenticity that then allows the consumer to make an informed decision about choosing which product they like. This idea connects to concepts that authenticity in tourism landscapes emerge from the co-construction of both tourists and producers (e.g. Wang, 1999; Hughes, 1995; DeLyser, 1999). Similarly, distilleries are producing authentic moonshine for tourists through the commodification of East Tennessee as a place of commercial moonshine. The commodification of place directly connects to literatures that speak to the selling and promotion of different spaces within tourism landscapes (e.g. Gotham, 2005; Hall & Page, 2014; Bradley, Hall & Harrison, 2002). Both authenticity and commodification are evident through increasing exposure as well as providing an avenue of sustainable development impacts to the region. While some impacts to the tourism industry may be assumed to occur inherently through the addition of commercial moonshine; this research very clearly argued that tourism is in fact changing in East Tennessee and moonshine's role in this change. All three impacts of tourism explored in the analysis continue to center around a place of East Tennessee, its historical connection to moonshine and its continued importance in the region as contemporary producers of the now legal commodity.

The third and final theme this research addressed was: **the “making” of an “authentic” place of moonshine: place-promotion.** The impacts of commercial moonshine on place-promotion efforts in the region are broadly connected to larger literatures of place-making and place-promotion within human geography. Academic scholarship also draws connections between the role of place-making and place-promotion in the context of tourism spaces (e.g. Alderman, Benjamin & Schneider 2012; Hall & Page, 2014; Dredge & Jenkins, 2010). Therefore, these results bring together notions of place-making, place-promotion and tourism in one place through the examination of commercial moonshine. Contributing to the idea that place-making works to “put places on the map” and stimulate economic development, commercial moonshine

works to commodify authenticity as well as place through their products (Berglund & Olsson, 2010; Kavatzis, 2005).

The results to emerge from the research clearly demonstrated the industries role in the “making” of an “authentic” place of moonshine in the following ways: distilleries are promoting East Tennessee in house as a narrative of historical moonshine; distilleries are continuing to sell a place of East Tennessee attached to moonshine in national markets; and finally distilleries are making efforts to challenge current stereotypes surrounding the place of East Tennessee and moonshine. The role of distilleries to challenge current stereotypes in the region through the production of commercial moonshine is particularly interesting given the political, cultural and economic place of moonshine in the past. Previously these connections of moonshine to greater social processes were often viewed in a negative way through the production of the hillbilly stereotype. This research has shown that commercial moonshine is consciously working to sell, represent and remake East Tennessee in positive ways through attachment to locality and a positive narrative of moonshine. By drawing on already established connections in scholarship surrounding the role of tourism to place-making and promotion, this research contributes to these debates through an examination of the production of commercial moonshine (Hall & Page, 2014).

### ***Broader Impacts***

#### *Benefits to Society*

This research develops our understanding of the impacts of commercial moonshine production on the selling, representing and (re)making of place in East Tennessee. East Tennessee provides a compelling setting for this research due to the long and contested history of illegal moonshining that has occurred in the region over time. Unlike other geographic research that has addressed topics of place-making and promotion or tourism in other parts of the country or the world, this research is at the forefront of contributing to a new moonshine discourse in Appalachia as well as one of the first to examine the new and emerging industry of commercial moonshine. Geographers have not fully explored the role of this new industry in any capacity let alone place-making and tourism. Considering the increasing importance of tourism as a

dominate part of modern economies coupled with the success and popularity of commercial moonshine it is imperative we understand how these two concepts intersect on a place of East Tennessee. This knowledge can be used to not only understand a different aspect of tourism but also inform current research on the presence of place-making and promotion in an underserved region of academic scholarship.

Similarly, this research also provides benefits to populations outside the discipline of geography or academia as a whole. This research has worked to broaden previously stigmatized perceptions about moonshine, East Tennessee and Appalachia as a whole. As the results of this research have shown, commercial moonshine is working not only to provide new industry to the region, but also countering classic negative stereotypes and imagery. Even more, by providing empirical research about the new commercial moonshine industry, this research provides partnership and collaboration between private industry and academia. For example, all three distilleries are receiving publicity in popular media outlets such as; local and national news articles, press releases and television. However, this research provided empirical evidence of the impacts of commercial moonshine which allows individual distilleries to demonstrate how they are impacting a cultural and economic space of moonshine, East Tennessee and Appalachia. These empirical understandings of the industry presented in this research also benefits entrepreneurs or policy makers on future legislation regarding the moonshine industry. Just as recent legislature in April mandated “Tennessee moonshine” must be manufactured in the state; other private and public opportunities for both local and national support of the industry and the region is increasingly likely with continued empirical research of the topic.

### Broad Dissemination of the Results

This research has been disseminated in several places thus far, with plans for further dissemination in the future. I presented beginning stages of my research in February 2015 at the University of Kentucky’s Sharing Works in Appalachia Progress (SWAP) lecture series. This was supported by the University of Kentucky’s Appalachia Center and is aimed at interdisciplinary collaboration in special topics of Appalachia. Further stages of the research was presented at the 2015 Appalachian Studies

Association conference held at East Tennessee State University in Johnson, City, TN. At both venues I received several productive comments and contributions to be evaluated in continued research. I also plan to present my final findings at the South Eastern Division of the Association of American Geographers (SEDAAG) meeting in November 2015. Finally, after completion of my master's program I plan to work on producing a publication to come out of this research. This research engages a wide variety of topics in geographic and inter-disciplinary research (i.e. Appalachian studies, place-making, place-promotion, tourism etc.). Therefore, my research can be published in many different geographic and interdisciplinary journals, reaching a wider audience than just one specific sub-discipline. Selected journals of interest include: *Southeastern Geographer*, *Journal of Appalachian Studies*, *Appalachian Journal*, *Southern Cultures or Southern Spaces*.

### ***Suggestions for Future Research***

The research in this thesis is only one small part in a much larger story of the relationship between commercial moonshine and a place of East Tennessee. Given that the proliferation of moonshine to the space of East Tennessee is relatively new it provides scholars numerous opportunities for continued engagement in the debate of commercial moonshine and its impacts on place, tourism and place-making. Therefore, it is vital for geographers to contribute to the academic research that is on-going in East Tennessee and Appalachia on these topics. While the suggestions that I will offer below are tied to East Tennessee specifically, it is important to remember that they have much broader implications and can be applied to other regions in the United States or even the world.

The first suggestion I have is for a more thorough examination of the topic, looking beyond just the commercial/distillery side of the production of moonshine. There are several ways this can be achieved; one such starting point would be to investigate the customer perspective at distilleries. Due to the limited time that I had to conduct fieldwork and carry out this thesis research, I was only able to account for one side to the story, the production side. However, it would be interesting to examine how

commercial moonshine is being consumed and if customers and tourists are similarly attaching a place of East Tennessee to the consumption of moonshine. This could further be achieved by looking at distilleries in other parts of the state, or neighboring regions to see if East Tennessee, other places or no place is being promoted and consumed through commercial moonshine. For example, due to the already established tourism market in Nashville and also where a concentration of commercial distilleries are operating, it would be interesting to see if “place” is a factor in the success of moonshine.

My second suggestion, building off of the first suggestion is for a more comprehensive case study conducted across other places of moonshine in the country. Data from this research has shown that the production of commercial moonshine is largely occurring in the Southeastern parts of the United States. Specifically in the context of North Carolina, with the second highest number of commercial distilleries operating behind Tennessee, it would be interesting to see if North Carolina distilleries continue to sell a historical place of moonshine in Appalachia or is it a different narrative. For example, are Western North Carolina distilleries promoting a place of the mountains with their ‘shine or perhaps NASCAR or even the infamous “hillbilly” stereotype? It may even be beneficial to expand this notion to distilleries outside of the Southeastern United States. There are several distilleries in the Midwest and Western region of the United States - are they bringing in a narrative of history and tradition that is embedded in East Tennessee or are they merely capitalizing on an emerging industry? Therefore, this suggestion leaves me with the overarching question: are the distilleries engaged in this study acting as the norm in commercial moonshine, promoting a positive narrative of the region and moonshine, or are they anomalies in an industry that is recasting negatively embedded imagery of East Tennessee, Appalachia and ultimately moonshine?

My third and final suggestion is to carry out a comparative case study with other like industries such as craft beer and medicinal cannabis. There have been numerous contributions from geographers in investigating trends in both the cannabis and craft beer industries (e.g. Jansen, 1990; Graves, 2011; Patterson & Hoalst-Pullen, 2014; Baginski & Bell, 2011). However, there is little to no comparative work connecting these industries in geographic research. It could be extremely valuable to see if the way



commercial moonshine is produced and consumed has any similarities or differences with these other niche industries. This would allow researchers to draw larger inferences to make clear arguments about the role of these industries in tourism and place-making. A comparative study of these industries would work to further broaden the topic not only across geographic research, but other interdisciplinary areas of research as well.

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## APPENDIX

## Appendix A: Table of Known Commercial Moonshine Distilleries in the United States

State	Distillery Name	Location
Alabama	Stills Crossroads Alabama Shine	Union Springs, AL
California	Fog's End Distillery	Gonzales, CA
California	Ugly California Moonshine	San Diego, CA
California	Tahoe Moonshine Distillery	South Lake Tahoe, CA
Colorado	Lee Spirits Co.	Colorado Springs, CO
Colorado	Axe and the Oak	Colorado Springs, CO
Colorado	MountainShine	Colorado Springs, CO
Colorado	3 Hundred Days Distilling	Colorado Springs, CO
Connecticut	Onyx Moonshine	East Hartford, CT
Connecticut	Hickory Ledges Farm & Distillery	Canton, CT
Florida	Peaden Brothers Distillery	Crestview, FL
Georgia	Georgia Distilling Company	Midgeville, GA
Georgia	Dawsonville Moonshine Distillery	Dawsonville, GA
Georgia	Moonrise Distillery	Clayton, GA
Georgia	Thirteenth Colony Distilleries	Americus, GA
Georgia	Ivy Mountain Distillery LLC	Mt Airy, GA
Illinois	Grand River Spirits	Carbondale, IL
Illinois	Copper Ridge Distillery	Danville, IL
Illinois	Blaum Bros Distilling Co.	Galena, IL
Illinois	J.K. Williams Distilling, LLC	East Peoria, Illinois
Indiana	Bear Wallow Distillery	Gnaw Bone, IN
Iowa	Artisan Grain Distillery	Davenport, IA
Iowa	Iowa Distilling Company	Cumming, IA
Kentucky	Buffalo Trace White Dog Mash	Frankfort, KY
Kentucky	MB Roland Distillery	Pembroke, KY
Kentucky	Limestone Branch Distilling Co.	Lebanon, KY
Kentucky	Barrel House Distilling Co.	Lexington, KY
Kentucky	Silver Trail Distillery	Hardin, KY
Kentucky	Kentucky Mist Moonshine	Whitesburg, KY
Kentucky	Derby City Shine	Louisville, KY
Massachusetts	Copper Moon Distillery	Indian Orchard, MA
Missouri	Platte Valley Corn Whiskey	Weston, MO
Missouri	Copper Run Distillery	Walnut Shade, MO
Montana	Willies Distillery	Ennist, MT

Nevada	Las Vegas Distillery	Henderson, NV
New York	Hudson New York Corn Whisky	Hudson, NY
New York	Kings County Distillery	Brooklyn, NY
New York	Clayton Distillery	Clayton, NY
New York	Dutch's Spirits (Harvest Homestead Farm)	Pine Plains, NY
North Carolina	Junior Johnson's Midnight Moonshine	Madison, NC
North Carolina	Troy & Sons Platinum	Asheville, NC
North Carolina	Howling Moon Distillery	Asheville, NC
North Carolina	Southern Grace Distilleries	Concord, NC
North Carolina	Foothills Distillery	Conover, NC
North Carolina	Top of the Hill Distillery	Chapel Hill, NC
North Carolina	Broadslab Distillery	Benson, NC
Ohio	S & G Artisan Distillery	Yellow Spring, OH
Ohio	Flat Rock Spirits	Fairborn, OH
Ohio	Mill St. Distillery	Utica, OH
Ohio	Straitsville Special Distillery	Straitsville, OH
Pennsylvania	Blackbird Distillery	Brookville, PA
Pennsylvania	Old Republic Distillery	York, PA
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia Distilling	Philadelphia, PA
South Carolina	Firefly Moonshine	Wadmalaw Island, SC
South Carolina	Palmetto Moonshine	Anderson, SC
South Carolina	Dark Corner Distillery	Greenville, SC
South Carolina	Carolina Moon Distillery	Edgefield, SC
South Carolina	Stripped Pig Distillery	Charleston, SC
South Carolina	Rock Bottom Distillers	Columbia, SC
South Carolina	Copperhead Mountain Distillery	Travelers Rest, SC
South Carolina	Dark Water Distillery	Camden, SC
Tennessee	Tennessee Stillhouse	Chattanooga, TN
Tennessee	Short Mountain Distillery	Manchester, TN
Tennessee	Ole Smoky Tennessee Moonshine	Gatlinburg, TN
Tennessee	Popcorn Sutton	Nashville, TN
Tennessee	Corsair Distillery	Nashville, TN
Tennessee	Green Brier	Nashville, TN
Tennessee	Tenn South Distillery	Lynnville, TN
Tennessee	Full Throttle S'loonshine	Trimble, TN
Tennessee	American Born Moonshine	Nashville, TN
Tennessee	East Tennessee Distillery	Piney Flats, TN
Tennessee	Capital Distilling Company	Nashville, TN
Tennessee	Beechtree Distillery LLC	Nashville, TN
Tennessee	Sugarlands Distilling Company	Gatlinburg, TN
Tennessee	Prichard's Distillery	Kelso, TN

Tennessee	Cocke County Cooper Liquor Moonshine Distillery	Newport, TN
Tennessee	Popcorn Sutton Distilling	Newport, TN
Tennessee	Gatlinburg Barrelhouse	Gatlinburg, TN
Tennessee	Doc Collier Moonshine	Gatlinburg, TN
Tennessee	Duck River Distillery	Lewisburg, TN
Tennessee	Old Forge Distillery	Pigeon Forge, TN
Tennessee	Southern Pride Distillery	Fayetteville, TN
Tennessee	Thunder Road Distillery	Kodak, TN
Tennessee	Tennessee Hills Distillery	Jonesborough, TN
Tennessee	Jakes Creek Distillery	Sevierville, TN
Tennessee	Bootleggers Distillery	Hartford, TN
Virginia	Virginia Lightening, Belmont Farm	Culpeper, VA
Virginia	Tim Smith Moonshine	Chatham, VA
Virginia	Appalachian Mountain Spirits	Marion, VA
Virginia	Five Mile Mountain Distillery	Floyd, VA
Virginia	Belle Island Premium Moonshine	Richmond, VA
Washington	Cowlitz River Distillery	Toledo, WA
Washington	Deception Distillery	Anacortes, WA
West Virginia	Appalachian Distillery	Ripley, WV
West Virginia	Bloomery Plantation Distillery	Charles Town, WV
West Virginia	Hatfield and McCoy Moonshine	Gilbert, WV
West Virginia	West Virginia Distilling Company	Morgantown, WV
West Virginia	Black Draft Distillery	Martinsburg, VA
West Virginia	Forks of Cheat Winery & Distillery	Morgantown, WV

## Appendix B – Semi-Structured Interview Guide

\*This is merely a guide that will be used to serve as directing a conversation that should naturally occur. If some of these questions are not answered throughout the conversation, these points could be directed.

### Interviews for Upper-level positions Distilleries (Ceo, Co-Ceo/Co Founder, President, Co-President, Vice-President etc.)

- Ned Vickers and Stephen Callahan

- Demographics
  - Name
  - Age/Gender Get to know who the person is, their place in East
  - current occupation Tennessee \*\*keep in mind research question:
  - Where they live how do they represent their product in the region? reinforcing or destabilizing images?
  - Where they are originally from
  - Previous occupations
- What made you want to start a large-scale moonshine distillery?
- Could you briefly walk me through the process of how you went about starting your distillery?
- How do you envision the future of your company?
  - Where would you like to go/expand?
  - End goals?
- What do you want customers to get out of your product?
- If you could say brief synopsis (one-liner) about your product what would that be?
- Why is your production process so visible for customers/passers-by?
- What is authentic moonshine to you?
- How does your product embody authenticity?
- What is your distilleries particular role in commercialized moonshine production?
  - Its role in East Tennessee moonshine?
- How do you set prices for your product?
- What regulations are imposed for proofing moonshine?
  - If any?
- How do you work with promotional partners?
- History:
  - What is your involvement in the local community?
  - What is your place in East Tennessee - Appalachia?
    - Why this place for your distillery?
  - What made you want to start a large-scale moonshine distillery?
    - What about the moonshine industry - caught your interest?
  - Could you briefly walk me through the process of how you went about starting your distillery?
- Appalachia:

- What is it like to get into an industry that has historically been contested?
  - Was the idea of a contested product a part of your decision making process?
- The Appalachia region has a rich history of identity and culture for the United States...
  - You are now involved in bringing this culture to light for other parts of the States and arguably the world... how does your company see its role in this process?
  - You are aware of stereotypes surrounding Appalachia (and especially moonshine), what do you think about these?
    - how do you enforce or counter these narratives?
- Future:
  - How do you envision the future of your company?
    - Where would you like to go/expand?
      - End goals?
- Moonshine product:
  - What do you want customers to get out of your product?
    - experientially and tangibly
  - If you could say brief synopsis (one-liner) about your product what would that be?
- Marketing:
  - Why is your production process so visible for customers/passers-by?
  - What is your distilleries particular role in commercialized moonshine production? (how is it contributing to the market)
    - Its role in East Tennessee moonshine?
  - How do you work with promotional partners?
  - Are you a part of the marketing decision-making process?
    - If so: what type of advertisements do you use? (online, billboards, tv...)
    - What is your target demographic?
      - What is the medium of how you target your demographic? (Social media, hiring research companies...)
  - How do you set prices for your product?
  - Where does the motto, *Be Authentic* come from?
  - How often do you host live music?
    - What types of music do you host?
    - how do you think this reaches the customer
  - What types of events do you host?
  - What are the dynamics like being so close to Ole Smoky
    - Competition?
    - Customer base?
    - Friendly... not so much?
      - Other?

## Upper Level Management

Marketing, Communications, Managers etc.

- Demographics

- Name
- Age/Gender
- current occupation
- Where they live
- Where they are originally from
- Previous occupations
- History:
  - What made you want to be a part of the Sugarlands team?
    - How did you get here?
    - Are you satisfied with your work?
  - What is it about East Tennessee - Appalachia that makes you interested in being here?
    - What about the moonshine industry?
- Appalachia:
  - What is it like to get into an industry that has historically been contested?
    - Was the idea of a contested product a part of your decision making process?
  - The Appalachia region has a rich history of identity and culture for the United States...
    - You are now involved in bringing this culture to light for other parts of the States and arguably the world... how does your company see its role in this process?
    - You are aware of stereotypes surrounding Appalachia (and especially moonshine), what do you think about these?
      - How do you enforce or counter these narratives?
- Future:
  - How do you envision the future of your career at Sugarlands and possibly beyond?
    - Where would you like to go/expand?
      - End goals?
- Moonshine product:
  - What do you want customers to get out of your product?
    - experientially and tangibly
  - If you could say brief synopsis (one-liner) about your product what would that be?
- Marketing:
  - Why is your production process so visible for customers/passers-by?
  - What is your distilleries particular role in commercialized moonshine production? (how is it contributing to the market)
    - Its role in East Tennessee moonshine?
  - How do you work with promotional partners?
  - Are you a part of the marketing decision-making process?
    - If so: what type of advertisements do you use? (Online, billboards, tv...)
    - What is your target demographic?



- What is the medium of how you target you're demographic? (Social media, hiring research companies...)
- How do you set prices for your product?
- If you have a motto, where does the motto come from?
- How often do you host live music?
  - What types of music do you host?
  - how do you think this reaches the customer
- What types of events do you host?
- What are the dynamics like being so close to Ole Smoky
  - Competition?
  - Customer base?
  - Friendly... not so much?
    - Other?

### **Interviews for employees**

- Demographics
  - Name
  - Age/Gender
  - Where they live
  - Where they are originally from
  - Other occupations?
- What is your favorite part about working for \_\_\_\_\_?
- What would you change about your work environment?
- What is the most common question asked by customers?
- What are customers not asking about, but what should they be asking?
- What type of training do you go through?
- Do you enjoy the product you sell?
- Are there incentives offered for selling moonshine products from your employer?
- What is your favorite part of your job?
  - Least favorite?
- Is this a job you want to stay at?
  - Is this a company you want to move up with/ or change positions?
- What things does your company do differently than other distilleries in the area?
- Do you think your company's product is *authentic*?

## **Appendix C – Consent Form**

### **DRINKING AND REMAKING PLACE: A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL MOONSHINE IN EAST TENNESSEE**

You are being asked to take part in a research study of how legalized moonshine is being represented in East Tennessee. We are asking you to take part of this study because you have: affiliation with a legalized moonshine distillery, have visited a moonshine distillery in East Tennessee, or are participating in tourist activities in East Tennessee. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

**What the study is about:** The purpose of this study is to understand how current moonshine trends are promoting or producing a place of Appalachia in East Tennessee. I will be looking at how current moonshine tourism is actively participating in place-based promotion.

**What will be asked of you:** If you agree to be in this study, I will conduct an interview with you, and/or a survey. The interview will include questions about your occupation, where you are from, why are you interested in moonshine, what are your general feelings and perceptions towards moonshine, what brought you to this area, what are your intentions with purchasing/producing moonshine, and how important is moonshine in your life? The interview will take about 30 minutes to an hour to complete. The survey will take between 5-15 minutes. Finally, I will conduct participant observation with the distilleries permission and this will occur through the duration of my visits, interviewing and survey time. With your permission, I would also like to audio-record the interview.

**Risks and benefits:** I do not anticipate any risks to you participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life.

There are no benefits to you.

**Compensation:** There is no compensation for participating in this study. Participation is voluntary.

**Confidentiality:** Research records will be kept in a locked file; only myself and supervising faculty will have access to the records. If the interview is audio-taped, I will destroy the recording after it has been transcribed, which I anticipate will be within two months of its taping. Anyone who does not wish to be identified has that choice. For those who do not want to be identified, their information will only be used if they consent to use a pseudonym.

**Employee Confidentiality:** I am asking for participant information (names and demographic information) in order to be able to follow up with any questions in the future and well as publish my findings. You are not required to participate in this study and it is not a requirement for your continued employment. Nothing that you discuss with me will be discussed with any other employee's at your workplace or any other workplace. By

participating in this study you will not be subject to undue coercion or influence by the researchers or those aiding in this research.

**Taking part is voluntary:** Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time. Further, after completion of interview or survey if you wish for your information to be withheld, this is also possible.

**If you have questions:** The researchers conducting this study are Helen Rosko and Prof. Joshua Inwood. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Helen Rosko at hrosko@vols.utk.edu or at (919) 455-7944. You can reach Prof. Inwood at jinwood@utk.edu or (865) 974-6170. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (865) 974-7697 or access their website at <http://irb.utk.edu/>.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

**Statement of Consent:** I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having the interview audio-recorded.

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person obtaining consent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of person obtaining consent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study.*

## Appendix D – Revisions to Consent Form

October, 12, 2015

Helen M Rosko  
UTK – Geography  
107 Burchfiel Geography Building  
Campus - 0925

**Re: UTK IRB-15-02062-XP**

**Study Title:** The New Mountain Dew: An Examination of Moonshine Production in Tennessee

Dear Ms. Rosko:

The Administrative Section of the UTK Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed your application for revision of your previously approved project, referenced above.

The IRB determined that your application is eligible for expedited review under 45 CFR 46.110(b)(2). The attached revisions were approved as complying with proper consideration of the rights and welfare of human subjects and the regulatory requirements for the protection of human subjects. This approval is to use the names and other identifiers of the individuals which follow and their distilleries, in the research reports: *Anna Smith; Buddy Keyes; Josh Stokes; Brent Thompson; Courtney DeLaura; Daniel Fluit; Jess Hale; Ned Vickers; Jessica Callahan; Stephen Callahan*. Approval does not alter the expiration date of this project, which is 05/03/2016.

In the event that subjects are to be recruited using solicitation materials, such as brochures, posters, web-based advertisements, etc., these materials must receive prior approval of the IRB. Any revisions in the approved application must also be submitted to and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. In addition, you are responsible for reporting any unanticipated serious adverse events or other problems involving risks to subjects or others in the manner required by the local IRB policy.

Finally, re-approval of your project is required by the IRB in accord with the conditions specified above. You may not continue the research study beyond the time or other limits specified unless you obtain prior written approval of the IRB.

Sincerely,



**Colleen P. Gilrane, PhD**  
Chair

## Appendix E – “Distilling” Results of the Research

	<b>Doc Collier Moonshine</b>	<b>Sugarlands Distilling Company</b>	<b>Tennessee Hills Distillery</b>
<b>A Transforming Sense of Place</b>  Contributions to theory	Connection to Place (East Tennessee): Paasi, 2003; Smith, 2002 Places of public memory: DeLyser, 1999; Hoelscher & Alderman, 2004; Bruner, 1994 Appalachian topics (adaptation, livelihoods): Bridges & Wise, 2009; Roberts, 2010; Keefe 2009, Starnes, 2012 New moonshine discourse: Berry, Scott & Obermiller 2015; Dabney, 2014		
Empirical evidence	Educating a narrative of moonshine centered on science and tradition Challenging the hillbilly stereotype	Educating a narrative of moonshine centered on resourcefulness and adaptation Informal economy interviewing for authentic recipe Open production process	Connection to illegal moonshine Born and raised in Jonesborough, TN Craft whisky beyond just moonshine production
<b>A Changing Tourist Landscape</b>  Contributions to theory	Cultural and heritage tourism: Csapo, 2012; Hall & Page 2009; Pellegrini, 2011; Richards, 2003 Authenticity: Wang, 1999; Hughes, 1999, DeLyser, 1999; Commodification (culture): Hall, 1997; Cloke & Perkins, 2002; Crang, Dwyer & Jackson 2003; Crokery & Bailey, 1994; Gotham, 2005; Jackson, 1999		
Empirical evidence	Heritage and tradition Craft distillery	Moonshine coupled with ecotourism in GSMNP Open and free tours	Heritage and tradition Advent of new tourism events such as “Wheels in the Hills” Diversifying tourism
<b>The “Making” of an “Authentic” place of moonshine</b>  Contributions to theory	Commodification (Place): Dredge & Jenkins, 2010 (Commodities): Ashworth & Larkham, 2013 Place-naming: Alderman, 2008; Alderman & Inwood, 2013; Rosewood, Alderman & Azaryahu 2009 Place-making: McCann, 2002; Martin, 2003; Alderman, Benjamin & Schneider 2012; Friedman, 2007; Glaser & Gottlieb, 2008; Hoelscher, 2003; Keith & Pile, 2004; Myers, 2002; Trudeau, 2006; Wu, 2002 Place-marketing: Berglund & Olsson, 2010 and Hall, 2007 Place promotion (selling, branding): Bradley, Hall & Harrison 2002; Hall, 2007; Hall & Hubbard, 1996; Papadopoulos,		

	2004; Young & Lever, 1997		
Empirical evidence	Marketing a family narrative Place-naming – “Doc” Engaging local business for ingredients	Marketing GSMNP Place-naming after the Sugarlands part of the GSMNP Engaging locality in all parts of production	Marketing the “Tennessee Hills” Place-naming through distillery and trademarked “Corn Liquor” Engaging locality in all parts of production

## VITA

Helen Rosko was born in Raleigh, NC to the parents of Jack and Beth Rosko. She has one older brother Carey and a sister-in-law, Laura. She was raised in Apex, NC and graduated from Apex High School in 2006. Following graduation, Helen attended the College of Charleston in Charleston, South Carolina. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a minor in geography in May, 2010.

Upon graduating from the College of Charleston, Helen served with the Peace Corps in Mali, West Africa (July 2010 – April, 2012). After an unexpected coup d'état in the country, the Peace Corps program was evacuated and Helen returned to the United States in May, 2012. Ms. Rosko worked for one year in Jonesville, Virginia with the Appalachia Service Project (ASP), a non-profit dedicated to eradicating sub-standard housing in Central Appalachia. In this time, Helen was accepted to the Master's program in the Department of Geography at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. However, before starting her program, Ms. Rosko worked full-time for seven months in the Geographic Information Science and Technology (GIST) group at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL).

Helen began her Master's program in January, 2014 and continued to work part-time at ORNL. She completed the requirements for her master's degree in December, 2015 and conferred her degree in May, 2016. Ms. Rosko is continuing work with ORNL and plans to pursue a PhD degree in Geography or International Development Community and Environment (IDCE) at Clark University in Worcester, MA.