KIWIBURN – A 'BIOPHILIC FESTIVAL':
CONSIDERING MIND-BODY-ENVIRONMENT CONNECTIONS TO NATURE IN BLENDED FESTIVALSCAPES

Jacqueline Watt[1]

ABSTRACT

This essay considers biophilic blended festivalscapes through an examination of relevant academic literature and secondary sources, whilst examining Kiwiburn: New Zealand's regional Burning Man event as a case study. A 'biophilic festival' can be understood as a festival that uses nature to construct or influence the embodied experiences of participants through their emotional responses, in a way that enhances positive mind-body-environment connections and promotion of biophilia. Examining Kiwiburn through the limitations of a literature review is an attempt to initiate a conversation about biophilia in connection to contemporary festivals. Kiwiburn provides a useful example of how biophilic festivals can be structured to foster sustainability, through mind-body-environment relationships. This essay will be considering what principles and design features built into Kiwiburn are intended to drive positive ecological perceptions and practices within its participants; and, whether these biophilic elements have the potential for extension into the everyday lives of festival participants in broader society.

Keywords: biophilic festivals; blended festivalscapes; Kiwiburn; Burning Man; mind-body-environment relationships

INTRODUCTION

Human-nature relationships within Academia are becoming highly developed, however, in both the multidisciplinary fields of leisure and festival studies, nature is rarely recognised as being present in urbanised settings, and is often perceived as 'inanimate, an uncontested spatial backdrop against which the human experience unfolds' (Rose and Carr 2018, 266). Leisure studies recognise humanity's need for connections with nature, but rarely affords non-human

ecologies their own agency (Chen, Tu, and Ho 2013). Additionally, Gration *et al.* noted that biophilia and sustainability in connection to both urban and non-urban festivals are extremely underdeveloped and that 'none provided a holistic overview of a blended festivalscape with multiple dimensions', meaning none considered how human and nature environments blend together at festivals, nor the impact these blended festivalscapes have on festival participants (2011, 348). Thus, perceptions of nature within leisure and festival studies are noted as being reductive and thus need challenging. Biophilia is defined as the inherent human inclination to affiliate with, and love, nature (Blagg 2011, 2012; Chen, Tu, and Ho 2013). Biophilic design is typically used in urban planning, to improve human connections to the environment by using nature, both indirect and direct, to foster mind-body-environment interrelationships (Blagg 2011, 2012). An emerging trend in connection with biophilia is the running of biophilic festivals, where festival participants are invited to engage in mind-body-environment experiences (Gration *et al.* 2011). *Kiwiburn: New Zealand's regional Burning Man* participatory community event is a festival that will be used as an example for how Burning Man principles and design features built into Kiwiburn are intended to drive positive ecological habitus within 'Burner' participants; and, how these biophilic elements have the potential for extension into the everyday life of festival participants, which may impact environmental sustainability values and practices in broader society.

METHOD

There is no existing academic literature focused on *Kiwiburn: New Zealand's regional Burning Man* participatory festival and community. In order to consider Kiwiburn as an example of a biophilic festival, this essay will hermeneutically review secondary data, in the form of peer-reviewed academic literature on Burning Man, to explore the concept of biophilic festivals, as well as identify and interpret the principles and designs within the community event that foster biophilia. Peer-reviewed academic literature that considers mind-body-environment connections through emotions in relation to place and space, as well as biophilia and biophilic festivals, will also be reviewed. Secondary literature, such as Burning Man regional websites (including the Kiwiburn website) will likewise be considered, involving the global community's 'ten principles' of Burning Man as thematic reference points to the interpretation of community perceptions and practices. The Burning Man website has its own collection of peer-reviewed academic articles displayed under the heading 'Burning Academics'. These articles are written by academics who conduct fieldwork at the American event and later publish. This website also offers hundreds of media articles and ethnographic details on the event and its

participants. Ultimately, the secondary literature utilised will be highlighting what makes this event a biophilic festival- although the community do not label themselves as such, instead identifying as regional leave-no-trace community events (which will be discussed further on in this article).

I have attended ten Kiwiburn festivals myself and have been intensively researching the community in connection to my master's thesis. In January 2020 I attended Kiwiburn to gain insider experience as a Kiwiburner, as well as through my eyes as a newly graduated anthropology undergraduate to consider autoethnographic experiences. I aim to hopefully return to the community event in January 2021 to conduct participant observation. I have used this personal experience to navigate both the Burning Man and Kiwiburn websites, as well as their other community online pages, to provide examples for my case study. I have likewise used secondary literature to cite personal knowledge of the community's ethos and past community festivals. As a member of ASAA/NZ, I wanted my approach to be as ethical as possible and, as such, gained gate-keeper permission from the Kiwiburn Executive Committee (ExCom) to write this essay (ASAA/NZ 2016).

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This essay has been written using personal knowledge to support secondary literature that navigates Kiwiburn in connection to its biophilic design; as well as how this biophilic approach engages participants to embrace sustainable beliefs and practices. Consequently, the essay lacks primary data apart from my own autoethnographic perceptions. My own experiences make me aware of my own subjectivity about the community, and so, this essay has aimed to support statements and examples with multiple peer-reviewed sources from multiple disciplines to substantiate its claims. The limitations of this study also highlight a call for more primary data collection on the regional biophilic aspects of festivals in New Zealand, as well as how sustainable practices are being implemented in blended festivalscapes that foster transference of sustainable practices into everyday society.

DEFINING NATURE

Humans have an inherent need to connect with nature, which is just as much a need to appreciate aesthetics and beauty as it is to have access to needed resources (Doherty 2012). It is even argued that both these needs for nature are fundamental to humanity's survival (Doherty 2012). We need to consider our perceptions and practices with non-human aspects of our environments,

in all facets of human activity, including art and leisure. In understanding how biophilic festivals foster sustainable practices through their infrastructure and participants, we can gain insight into how festival policy and design can be developed and implemented to reflect healthy environmental practices through art and leisure. Kiwiburn is a regional community and event that belongs to a much larger global social movement called 'Burning Man'. The New Zealand community subscribe to the global movement's principles and ethos, yet have glocalized these values and practices to reflect Aotearoa's geography and socio-cultural contexts. This essay uses the term 'glocalization' at its most fundamental level, as defined by Omohundro (2008), to mean a group reshaping and reinterpreting a globalised phenomenon through localised practices and manifestations. As such, the value of these principles, and the structure of Burner events, is in that they are transferrable across cultures and geographic locations.

In order to understand biophilic relationships at Kiwiburn, it is important to first define what this essay means when it discusses 'nature'. Through a focus on geography and environmental studies, Marshman eloquently stated, in *Communing with Bees: A whole-of-community approach to address crisis in the Anthropocene*, 'we must critically examine our relationship with nature in an increasingly urbanising world' (Marshman 2019, 2). Nature is not a separate entity that exists outside of humanity or cities (Rademacher 2015). Further, nature is not just a habitat for humanity. Anthropologist Rademacher noted that nature should not be considered as a separate entity, but:

> as a category that can signal relationships and processes that extend… beyond natural resources… Nature often captures histories, identities, and collective aspirations tightly bound up with claims to power, economic benefit, and moral grounding. (Rademacher 2015, 141)

Although nature once referred to anything non-human, Marshman (2019) added that considering nearly every aspect of the biophysical world has changed through humanity's growing existence, any definition of nature must now include human ecologies. Furthermore, Marshman remarked that everything built by humans is fundamentally sourced from nature, so, from this perspective, the boundaries between humans and nature are unclear. Sustainable practices, such as biophilic festivals, have arisen primarily as a response to social anxieties that generate from political and ecological conflicts (Gration *et al.* 2011; Little and Reinhardt 2007). Marshman (2019) expanded on this saying that observed consequences of humanity's interactions with non-human ecologies are being noted on a global and localised scale. This

has raised concerns around humanity and Earth's continued existence and future sustainability. Thus, our perceptions of nature, and humanity's place in nature, need to be challenged and expanded. An evolving field, where nature and sustainable practices needs to be closely addressed, is the contemporary festivalscape.

BIOPHILIC FESTIVALS

The developing concept of biophilic festivals takes aesthetics and beauty into consideration through their sustainable leisure-based practices and infrastructure. Through a multidisciplinary focus on tourism and business, within 'the blended festivalscape and its sustainability at nonurban festivals', Gration *et al.* (2011) examine existing literature on how environmental stimuli impacts consumers, recognising that social interactions are influenced by the physical contexts in which they take place. Further, their essay discusses how 'aesthetic preference' impacts on how the surrounding physical environment is experienced, which in turn influences how people will behave (Gration *et al.* 2011, 345). In a natural setting, this results in either biophilic or biophobic reactions- positive or negative responses to nature (Gration *et al.* 2011). In other words, festivals that encompass nature have a significant influence on how participants experience the event and connect to their physical environment. Gration *et al.* (2011) also noted, however, that event organisers are frequently changing festival locations and plan their festivals around these sites with an aim of influencing festival experiences, but that such organisations rarely understood the full implications of their designs and practices on festival participants' personal experiences. However, this is not the case with Burning Man events, which tend to stay in the same place, using sustainable practices to keep such sites reusable, year after year (Kiwiburn 2020; Morrison 2019).

The social sciences and humanities generally consider leisure to be a basic part, if not essential need, of human existence (Chen, Tu, and Ho 2013; Rose and Carr 2018). Furthermore, leisure in nature settings is often praised for offering 'intimate and meaningful relationships between people and' nature (Rose and Carr 2018, 266). In *Political ecologies of leisure: A critical approach to nature-society relations in leisure studies,* Rose and Carr (2018) stress that there is no such thing as apolitical leisure and that there are consequences to ignoring this established fact. The authors explained that leisure has also been intrinsically connected to other material and non-material aspects of humanity, such as work, self-care, economics, politics, as well as social and cultural capital. They go on to observe that discourses around human-nature relationships in leisure studies, especially in connection to urban living, are

underdeveloped. Further, Rose and Carr (2018) outlined that recent leisure studies in connection to nature had been fragmented, failing to holistically connect academic considerations linked to leisure and non-human ecologies with urban environments. This is similar to a criticism made by Gration *et al.* (2011) toward festival studies and its lack of holism in considering blended festivalscapes.

In *Anthropology and Festivals: Festival Ecologies*, Frost (2016, 569) describes festivals as a concept ranging from 'high culture, to large-scale popular music extravaganzas, to religious commemorations or thanksgivings, to neighbourhood celebrations of a migrant presence, and to statements of alternative sexuality or national pride'. Frost recognises that festivals are places for social cohesion, regeneration, and diversity while evaluations of the economic impact of festivals have also been identified by Frost (2016) to be substantial. It is, therefore, no surprise that festivals have turned into a subfield in leisure studies, as well as in numerous other disciplines including anthropology. Frost also acknowledges anthropology's long-standing relationship with festivals, especially as a place for ethnographic data collection. Within anthropology, festivals are considered a site for public ritual, political and cultural discourse, and/or the strengthening of kinship ties. In general, anthropologists have characterised festivals as being a space for social and political development and experimentation, as well as protest and subversion. It is this paradox that fosters social cohesion, integration, as well as a sense of place and belonging (Frost 2016). It is also this paradoxical quality to festivals that eliminates opposition and promotes harmony between community and commodity; leisure and politics; spontaneity and staging; work and play; individuality and a communal body. Additionally, this means that festivals call for heavy academic consideration and investigation of its many aspects and impacts to stimulate broader academic discourse on this growing phenomenon (Frost 2016). However, both Frost (2016) and Gration *et al.* (2011) have criticised anthropology for being too academic in its language and approach, producing research that ends up being of little use to festival policymakers and organisers. By anthropology engaging in the study of festivals, Frost (2016) and Gration *et al.* (2011) both recommend anthropology comes from an approach that is applicable to developing and implementing policy, organisational practice, and infrastructure, as well as considering environmental and economic practices. It is from within this spirit that I approach this essay.

As there is a call for holism in the examination of festivals, which are perceived as being experienced on an individual level (with sensory experiences being excessively stimulated, causing a generalised description of anyone festival

that tend to lack any in-depth accounts due to lack of any language that can fully express such complex emotional embodied experiences), ethnography is well-placed to consider mind-body-environment experiences of individuals through their participation and link this to experiences of a communal body (Frost 2016). Festivals are obviously multi-faceted and have clear political, cultural, social and economic significance. Frost (2016) argues that because of this, whether anthropological inquiry is focused on a single case study as an example or explores a wider comparative approach, both tactics offer deeply descriptive windows into a complex phenomenon. As festival studies are considered from multiple positions and multiple fields, it is an area that needs to be holistically considered across all disciplines, listening to what all fields are saying and merging those voices together. As anthropology's ethnographic approach is multi-level, multi-actor, multi-sited, and multidisciplinary, whilst considering multiple ecologies, it is able to conduct an in-depth, empirical, critical, 'systematic analysis' of blended festivalscapes that encompasses multiple disciplinary approaches (Frost 2016, 571; Little and Reinhardt 2007).

In citing Li and Petrick's (2006) article, *A review of festival and event motivation studies,* Gration *et al.* (2011) highlight that within the leisure industry, festivals are one of the 'fastest-growing sectors' (343). Gration *et al.* consider how non-urban festivals offer a structure for 'sustainable site management [for] event organizers' that considers mind-body-environment connections (*ibid.*). It is within this article that the foundation for the conceptualisation of biophilic festivals is identified. Gration *et al.* define 'blended festivalscapes [as a concept that] incorporate[s an] atmosphere… derived from a blend of built, natural, and staged components that together create a sense of communitas for participants' (2011, 344). Like Marshman's (2019) definition of nature, Gration *et al.* (2011) acknowledge that in these festival settings, nature may 'include man-made settings and staged authenticity' (344). A 'festivalscape' is outlined by both Frost (2016) and Gration *et al.* (2011) to be an environment that is experienced by participants through their emotions. Not only does this nurture positive self-identity, but emotional responses are also transferred into an experience that is attributed to the perceived quality of the event, as well as 'satisfaction and loyalty responses' (Frost 2016; Gration *et al.* 2011, 344).

Gration *et al.*, were earlier noted as discussing these responses as being either biophilic or biophobic. It is through this definition that we understand the importance of individual embodied experiences as a way of constructing festivals and implementing successful policy. Expanding on the premise of Gration *et al.*'s (2011) definition, a 'biophilic blended festivalscape' or 'biophilic festival' can be understood as festivals that use nature to construct or influence

the embodied experiences of participants through their emotional responses, in a way that enhances positive mind-body-environment connections and promotion of biophilia (love of nature). The conceptualisation of biophilic festivalscapes has the capacity to start filling in the gaps within festival and leisure studies, regarding how mind-body-environment connections promote sustainable practices through embodied experiences, stimulated by participants emotions. More than that, biophilic festivals offer an opportunity for participants to re-establish human-nature connections that promote sustainable practices that can be transferred beyond the festival environment into urban living.

KIWIBURN: A BURNING MAN EVENT

There is a global counterculture that has generated from the Burning Man participatory festival in America (St John 2018). Regional Burning Man participatory festivals now take place across the world (BurningWiki 2020). In New Zealand , the regional Burning Man festival is called 'Kiwiburn: New Zealand's regional Burning Man event' or Kiwiburn (Combust in Unity 2017; Fyrefly NZ 2015; Kiwiburn 2020). Glocalization in connection to the biophilic aspects of NZ culture particularly appears significant to the human-nature relationships within this community and their regional participatory festivals. New Zealand's geographical environment transforms the Burning Man regional event from a temporary desert city in America, consisting of approximately 80,000 people, to a temporary green paddock town, next to a river in NZ, comprising of over 2000 people (Betts 2019; Kiwiburn 2020). Gration *et al.* (2011) noted that when the self-image of citizens, such as New Zealanders, is 'grounded in landscape-related imagery, [this usually] reflects the attitudes and political environment of the day' (344). The authors additionally highlighted that these attitudes also have the capacity to influence beliefs and practices connected to this imagery, especially in relation to sustainability. Academics and urban planners already travel to Black Rock City (the BM temporary city in America) to study it as an example of urban planning (Rohrmeier and Bassett 2015). However, it is not only this temporary city and town planning that support biophilic harmony and aesthetics at BM festivals. Participation in the event, as well as the art pieces installed each year, also strengthen this biophilia. Festival activities and art installations at these participatory events are usually interactive and always reflect the ten principles, which enhance mind-body-environment relationships (Chen 2011; Fyrefly NZ 2015; Kiwiburn 2020; Rohrmeier and Bassett 2015). Examining how these temporarily built spaces are conceptualised and structured has the potential to be useful in the development and implementation of sustainable festival policy and practice.

The Ten Principles of burning man

There is a political aspect to the 'ten principles', which are upheld quite strongly in the global Burner community (Kozinets 2002; St John 2018). The community itself is quite politically minded and many Burners maintain that the principles are a form of being ecologically-, politically-, and socially-minded in a world where capitalism does not care about the environment or people (Chen 2011; Kozinets 2002; St John 2018). The event encourages Burners to live by these principles where possible in the 'default world' (broader society) and, consequently, many Burners in the community are civic-minded practising an ecological, political and social, conscious, self-awareness in their default lives (Betts 2019; Betty and Kora 2014; Burning Man Project 2019; Chen 2011; Combust in Unity 2017; Kozinets 2002). As the New Zealand regional event, Kiwiburn reflects these principles (Kiwiburn 2020) which are radical inclusion, gifting, decommodification, radical self-reliance, radical self-expression, communal effort, civic responsibility, leave-no-trace, participation and immediacy.

KIWIBURN THROUGH THE TEN PRINCIPLES

Gifting and decommodification

The ten principles are all interconnected in some way. For example, the gifting principle is connected to the decommodification principle through the desire to remove money exchange from each temporary regional Burning Man city/town (Chen 2011; Kiwiburn 2020; Kozinets 2002). So, not only is not a single person paid from the Kiwiburn organisers outwards to the Kiwiburn on-site team (apart from the landowner, medical, security, and fire services), but this also means no vendors, no selling of goods or services, no hired acts or main stages, and no display of brands or sponsorship are allowed either (Kiwiburn 2020). The community recognises that it is impossible to remove all signs of commodification and branding, however, the value of this decommodified position is in the distancing from the commercial market (Kozinets 2002). Burning Man's decommodification principle extends beyond rejecting the commodification of human resources, to that of non-human resources as well. In turn, this begins the fostering of biophilic mind-body-environment connections at Burner events, through the discarding of popular social discourses, perceptions, and practices that have become typical in the 'default world'.

Radical inclusion, radical self-expression, and gifting

Burner events aim to be egalitarian. This is best understood through not only their radically inclusive stance on community membership, but, also, and maybe more so, in their gifting economy (Kozinets 2002). The gifting principle encourages all gifts to be appreciated equally, with the concept of gifting extending beyond materialist contributions to allow inclusion through self-expression- performance and art, skills and interests, participation and social connections are valued highly within the community. As Kozinets (2002) explained in *Can consumers escape the market? Emancipatory illuminations from Burning Man*, there is a rejection of superfluous and reductive materialism in these practices which interconnects not only to inclusion and self-expression, but also with the principle of leaving no physical trace. For this reason, leave-no-trace, decommodification and the gifting economy have also come to symbolise authenticity at Burner events, fostering creative sustainable collaboration through a communal ethos focused on the ten principles (Chen 2011; Kozinets 2002).

Communal effort, civic responsibility, leave-no-trace, and participation

Collaboration and co-operation are highly supported at Burner events. On their website, and printed in their event guides, Kiwiburn continually acknowledge that they 'strive to produce, promote and protect social networks, public spaces, works of art, and methods of communication that support such interaction' (Kiwiburn 2020). The Kiwiburn/Burning Man principle of civic responsibility also highlights the community 'value civil society. Community members who organise events [are expected to] assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavour to communicate civic responsibilities to participants' (Kiwiburn 2020). As all the principles have been acknowledged as intrinsically connected, it is important to consider the above-mentioned principles in connection with the eighth principle (leave-no-trace). The

> community respects the environment. [They] are committed to leaving no physical trace of [their] activities wherever [they] gather. [They] clean up after [themselves] and endeavour, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better condition than when [they] found them. (Kiwiburn 2020)

The principles outline that this cannot happen without the community's full co-operation, especially through the principal of participation. The Burner 'community is committed to a radically participatory ethic. [They] believe that

transformative change, whether in the individual or in society, can occur only through the medium of deeply personal participation in experience' (Kiwiburn 2020).

Leave-no-trace and radical self-reliance

Leave-no-trace is further encouraged through other practices at Kiwiburn. For example, washing in the river with any cleaning products is prohibited, disposal of greywater is condoned with strict guidelines, all cigarette butts must be collected by the smoker and removed from the site, and, even ash from burnt artwork is expected to be bagged and removed by the artist (Kiwiburn 2020). In other words, you must be self-reliant in dealing with your own waste. The community identify this type of rubbish and waste as being 'matter-out-of-place' or MOOP for short (Kiwiburn 2020). Glitter, feathers, Styrofoam, Chinese lanterns, single-use glow sticks, and 'anything [else] that will break up and blow away in the wind' is prohibited because of the MOOP they create, which lies in direct conflict with the principle of leave-no-trace (Kiwiburn 2020). One could argue that it is through the principles and these practices that the Kiwiburn community afford non-human ecologies their own agency, recognising that human practices impact on the environment which exists year-round, beyond the temporary constructions of the festival and that such practices should be as minimally invasive to the pre-existing ecologies as possible.

Immediacy

The entire Kiwiburn community consider themselves to be collectively responsible for maintaining the principles, including the leave-no-trace ethos, as well as the future sustainability of the community and their events – reflecting principles of civic responsibility, participation, and communal effort, further highlighting the interconnectedness of the principles in communal practices (Kiwiburn 2020). All of these principles are intertwined with the principle of immediacy. Burners 'seek to overcome barriers that stand between [them] and… appreciation of the reality of those around [them], participation in society, and contact with a natural world exceeding human powers. No idea can substitute for this experience' [underlined for emphasis by the author, J. Watt] (Kiwiburn 2020). To that end, the Burning Man Project has a ten-year environmental plan to make their regional events carbon-negative and provide an example of an aesthetically pleasing, sustainable, biophilic, festival design through their regional events (Burning Man Project 2019). The principles are a way that the biophilic relationship within the participatory events are fostered, practised, and then later transferred into participants lives, beliefs,

and actions outside the event (Burning Man Project 2019; Chen 2011; Kozinets 2002; McCaffrey 2012; Morrison 2019; St John 2018).

The Ten Principles make a creative community

In *Lessons for creative cities from Burning Man: How organizations can sustain and disseminate a creative context*, Sociologist, Chen (2011), highlights that the Ten Principles have created a communal environment in which one can build connections, share information, skills, and resources, embrace a pattern of play and recreation, co-ordinate collective actions, and cultivate a sense of belonging. These principles facilitate wider input from Burners in how the community grows and develops, ultimately preventing the community from adopting practices which would otherwise undercut or diminish the principles and Burner participation. Chen (2011) notes that 'community' is typically based on the idea of social cohesion, civic engagement, and a sense of belonging, producing a communal ideal of caring, trust and sharing. Chen further outlined that the commodified environments of broader society tend to be different, with formal structures that result in social distancing. This is because interactions in commodified environments are typically centred on transactions that seek to gain an advantage or seek a profit (Kozinets 2002). Burning Man's ten principles seek to undermine the self-interested positions taken in such commodified environments, so that community values and practices can prosper (Chen 2011; Kozinets 2002).

The Ten Principles and sustainability

Burning Man events have been successfully running since 1986; likewise, Kiwiburn has been successfully maintaining a presence in New Zealand since 2004 and is the longest running regional Burning Man event outside of America (Kiwiburn 2020; Morrison 2019). Part of Burning Man's long-standing success has been due to the unique perceptions the organisation holds in structuring events and perceiving festival participants as a community. This change in perception then becomes reflected in their policy and practices, thanks to a clear outline of the organisation's ethos and principles on community over commodification (Kozinets 2002; St John 2018). This has also resulted in their practices being more sustainable by offering clear guidelines on the expectation of the community to participate in sustainability and how this should be done. Sustainability is defined by the UN, via their World Commission on Environment and Development, to be fulfilling the needs that are required to be filled now without compromising the ability of others in the future to fulfil their own needs (Gration *et al.* 2011). Ultimately, the social structure of the

Burning Man community fosters sustainable practices by its very nature and central ethos (Burning Man Project 2019; Kozinets 2002; St John 2018).

Through these types of principles and expected practices, festival participants become an engaged component of the event's design and policy (Gration *et al.* 2011). Further, these principles outline the commitment Kiwiburn has to sustainable, environmentally friendly practices, as well as environmental improvements (Burning Man Project 2019; Gration *et al.* 2011; Kiwiburn 2020). Similar to the examples provided in the study completed by Gration *et al.*, Burning Man and its international regional organisations 'actively communicate their strategies for meeting the environmental challenges on the festival site by minimizing negative impacts of activities such as rubbish disposal and the proactive affirmation of the environment through initiatives,' that actively demonstrate the organisations 'commitment to the environment that goes beyond the regulatory necessities, [and, therefore,] enhances the brand reputation of this festival and [participant's] loyalty' (Gration *et al.* 2011, 354). Consequently, 'investment in infrastructure that is sympathetic to the natural environment… has ensured sustainability over an extended period [when] many other festivals have failed' (*ibid.*). Burning Man is considered to be the largest leave no trace event in the world, and it is through their principles and social structure that this has become possible (Burning Man Project 2019; Chen 2011; Rohrmeier and Bassett 2015).

The Ten Principles and authenticity

Gration *et al.* (2011) discuss authenticity in connection to festivals as a concept that should be considered through the perceptions of participants. Specifically, the authors highlight that perceptions are fluid, changing over time. It is the participants 'who [have] the power to accept or reject the legitimacy of the components of the [festival environment] within its natural setting' (Gration *et al.* 2011, 351). Within natural environments, festival participants seek to build on positive aspects of their 'self-image' through 'authentic experience[s]' (*ibid.*). The key for festival design is, therefore, to find a balance between the built and natural aspects of the festival which promotes the authenticity of the blended environment. Part of this balance requires sustainable management (Gration *et al.* 2011). Burning Man and its international regional events foster 'loyalty responses' (as Gration *et al.* (2011) articulated it) to the principles and the organisation through the sense of belonging derived from the focus placed on community and inclusion (Chen 2011). The emotional attachment to the group and its event is cultivated through the practices first experienced within the festival and then by the further connection held throughout the year after the

festival has ended. In this way, the community ethos is maintained year-round, along with the sense of community and continued participation (Chen 2011). Ultimately, Burning Man participants do not see themselves as consumers, neither do the festival organisers. They see themselves as a community, which takes the focus off consumption and places it onto the participants and their experiences (Kozinets 2002; Morrison 2019; St John 2018). This is where and how sustainable perceptions and practices begin to transfer from Burner settings into the default world.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Festivals are one of the fastest-growing sectors of the leisure industry. Concerns about the future sustainability and survival of humanity are also increasing. It is, therefore, likely that there will be a growing interest in regional festivals that offer nature settings and biophilic connections through expected sustainable practices and policies. The lack of holistic consideration in both the multidisciplinary fields of leisure and festival studies, toward perceptions of nature, have also been noted. This essay has attempted to acknowledge the importance of biophilic festival design in policy and practice, which incorporates a balanced approach to natural and built aspects of the festival environments. Clearly, place and space are important aspects for a myriad of reasons. Aesthetics and place, where cultural and social connections to green spaces can be encouraged, are key themes to biophilic festival design. As biophilic festivals also include staged and built spaces, investing in sustainable infrastructure becomes a 'no-brainer' in terms of long-term sustainability. Aesthetics should also be considered, and ultimately, infrastructure should not compromise the natural settings which provide an important aspect of biophilic festival authenticity.

Sustainable practices can be connected to festival policy and principles. Additionally, loyal festival participants can be seen and treated as a community, who engage in festival development and design through their welcomed and encouraged participation and communal effort. Festivals create an environment where communal cohesion can occur through shared experiences and perceptions. Burning Man is person-centred as an organisation, as an event, and as a community. Yet, the focus goes beyond this to a concentration on the environment and sustainability as well. This essay has outlined that sustainable practices are interconnected, having a clear stance from the organisation about its position on environmental sustainability. Further, environmental policy works best when it is designed in a way that allows event participants to engage in its development and implementation.

The Burning Man principles go beyond guiding policy for Burner events to building creative collaboration amongst its participants that facilitate community participation, loyalty, and positive mind-body-environment experiences. Mind-body-environment experiences are best influenced and constructed through the consideration of how participants experience these events through their emotions and, thus, through their bodies. Emotions are best considered in connection to the aesthetics of the festival environment. Festivalscapes that offer a blended environment that encompasses staged, built, and natural settings provide the best opportunity for fostering biophilic connections through aesthetics. Biophilic connections, in turn, improve the experiences of participants as well as the reputation of the festival, which further fosters loyalty and sustainable practices, which have the potential to be transferrable into broader society.

NOTES

1   Jacqueline Yvonne Watt is an extramural Master of Arts student, in social anthropology, at Massey University.
       Email: jax_in_a_box@hotmail.com

REFERENCES

ASAA/NZ. 2016. 'Code of Ethics: Principles of Professional Responsibility and Ethical Conduct.' https://www.asaanz.org/code-of-ethics.

Betts, Nick. 2019. 'Burning Man through the eyes of an Army Sniper.' https://coffeeordie.com/burning-man-army-sniper/.

Betty and Kora. 2014. 'Burning Man through the senses.' https://bettyandkora.com/2014/09/11/burning-man-through-the-senses/.

Blagg, Linda. 2011. 'Tim Beatley talks biophilia' (video file). https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=BaFM9nHZt4w.

———. 2012. 'Singapore: Biophilic city' (video file). https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=403&v=XMWOu9xIM_k.

Burning Man Project. 2019. 'Burning Man Project: 2030 Environmental Sustainability Roadmap.' Medium. Accessed 17 July 2020 from https://medium.com/@burningman/burning-man-project-2030-environmental-sustainability-roadmap-c79657e18146.

BurningWiki. 2020. 'Burns and Burners Worldwide.' BurningWiki. Accessed 17 July 2020 from https://burningwiki.com/wiki/Burns_%26_Burners_Worldwide.

Chen, Hui-Mei, Hung-Ming Tu, and Chaang-Iuan Ho. 2013. 'Understanding Biophilia Leisure as Facilitating Well-Being and the Environment: An Examination of Participants' Attitudes Toward Horticultural Activity.' *Leisure Sciences* 35(4): 301–319. https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2013.797323.

Chen, Katherine K. 2011. 'Lessons for creative cities from Burning Man: How organizations can sustain and disseminate a creative context.' *City, Culture and Society* 2(2): 93–100. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ccs.2011.05.003.

Combust in Unity. 2017. 'Combust in Unity' (video file). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21fslxiXEQQ&t=5s.

Doherty, Gareth Gerard. 2012. 'Sensing and anticipating ecological vulnerabilities in urban environments.' *Paranoá: Cadernos de Arquitetura e Urbanismo* (7). https://doi.org/10.18830/issn.1679–0944.n7.2012.12310.

Frost, Nicola. 2016. 'Anthropology and Festivals: Festival Ecologies.' *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 81(4): 569–583. https://doi.org/10.1080/00141844.2014.989875.

Fyrefly NZ. 2015. 'Kiwiburn: Wyrd' (video file). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2l_vlvX3HA&list=PL629B39DD0EF9F6AA&index=3

Gration, David, Charles Arcodia, Maria Raciti, and Robyn Stokes. 2011. 'The blended festivalscape and its sustainability at nonurban festivals.' *Event Management* 15(4): 343–359. https://doi.org/10.3727/152599511X13175676722564.

Kiwiburn. 2020. Kiwiburn New Zealand's regional Burning Man event Accessed 17 July 2020 from https://kiwiburn.com

Kozinets, Robert. V. 2002. 'Can Consumers Escape the Market? Emancipatory Illuminations from Burning Man.' *Journal of Consumer Research* 29(1): 20–38. https://doi.org/10.1086/339919.

Little, Paul Elliot, and Bruno Mafra Ney Reinhardt. 2007. 'Political ecology as ethnography: a theoretical and methodological guide.' *Horizontes Antropológicos* 3(se). https://doaj.org/article/d97816c5524e4933b6bbe3c91a34e729.

Marshman, Jennifer. 2019. 'Communing with Bees: A Whole-of-Community Approach to Address Crisis in the Anthropocene.' *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* 9(A): 87–110. https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2019.091.029.

McCaffrey, Jessica. 2012. 'Burning Man: Transforming Community through Countercultural Ritual Process.' MA diss., Concordia University. https://spectrum.library.concordia.ca/977249/

Morrison, Daniel. 2019. 'An anthropological history of Burning Man.' June 20. https://medium.com/@daniel.ed.morrison/an-anthropological-history-of-burning-man-c3b163fb4c0e.

Omohundro, John T. 2008. *Thinking like an anthropologist : a practical introduction to cultural anthropology*. McGraw Hill.

Li, Xiang and James Petrick. 2006. 'A Review of Festival and Event Motivation Studies.' *Event Management* 9: 239–245.

Rademacher, Anne. 2015. 'Urban political ecology.' *Annual Review of Anthropology* 44: 137–152. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-102214-014208.

Rohrmeier, Kerry, and Scott Bassett. 2015. 'Planning Burning Man: The Black Rock City mirage.' *The California Geographer* 54(1): 23–46. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/48500142.pdf.

Rose, Jeff, and Anna Carr. 2018. 'Political ecologies of leisure: a critical approach to nature-society relations in leisure studies.' *Annals of Leisure Research* 21(3): 265–283. https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2018.1428110.

St John, Graham. 2018. 'Civilised Tribalism: Burning Man, Event-Tribes and Maker Culture.' 12(1): 3–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/1749975517733162.