“A PLACE TO CALL HOME”:
THE RHETORIC OF FILIPINX-AMERICAN PLACE-MAKING

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ABSTRACT

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In this dissertation, I analyze the place-making efforts of the Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan, a space for Detroit's Filipinx community. By looking at the place-making *process* from the center's earliest conception to later development, this study aims to determine the negotiations and factors that influence the production and sustainment of space based on the group's cultural ideology. To gather and analyze data, I coded the center's planning minutes from 1980 to 2001, followed by interviews with members of the original planning committee and center's leaders. All findings are validated by the community through the Filipinx indigenous interviewing method of *pagtatanung-tanung.* Through analysis of the documents and interviews, I conclude the distinct rhetoric of this center's Filipinx-American place-making is a result of negotiated Filipinx values to prioritize beliefs in unity and reciprocity, creating a materially and symbolically malleable cultural center to accommodate different forms of members' "giving back". Results of the study may inform cultural rhetoricians' methodology and fuller treatment of place-making as a rhetorical *process*, and community organizers of the importance of accounting for distinct cultural ideologies which influence place-making efforts.

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Chapter 1
If These Walls Could Talk: Cultural Place-Making as Rhetoric

1.1 Introduction

As a new PhD student, I arrived in Michigan from the West Coast in the summer of 2015. Perhaps it was because Las Vegas's county was the third most Filipinx-American populated county in the states, or that my childhood home in southern California was the second most populated, but for the majority of my life I was hardly left wanting for the Filipinx part of my culture, and didn't have to go far for people, places, or objects that could mirror back and nourish that part of my identity. But Michigan was eye-opening. I *searched* for these stimuli, hoping a Filipinx business or restaurant would point me to an ethnic enclave or at least pockets of community. Several months went by, and I was still short-handed. Eventually, I found myself in a Detroit parking lot outside an arts building that housed the "Manila Bay Café." The day's outing was a result of broken website links, outdated news articles, limited Filipinx restaurant reviews on Yelp, until eventually one of my last resorts was to follow signs on the city landscape hinting to traces of Filipinx presence. Unfortunately, the Manila Bay Café revealed itself to be an open mic event with no affiliation to the Philippines except a rumor that the founder was married to a Filipino. As I walked disappointedly back to my car, I was struck by a defaced mural of Vincent Chin alongside other ethnic figures. Noting I was just a few blocks from the newly gentrified Midtown area where Chinatown used to be, I came to the realization the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities were here, but the symbolic and material rhetoric of their inhabitance seemed to tell a story of a struggling communal presence in public spaces.

By 2017, I became a part of Michigan's Filipinx cultural center and observed first-hand the work of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in carving out and sustaining a space that could mirror back their values, beliefs, and practices. I began writing grants for the center by the

summer and attended several board meetings to discuss the possibility of applying for grants that would either help secure a new center or help the current one stay financially afloat by funding some of its programs. The members and I had talked about the importance of creating a cultural place, whether in board meetings or wishfully and whimsically in the hallways and during event intermissions. I particularly remember a moment of transparency at a July meeting. After gathering our grant notes, the room suddenly lit up with elders cheering, clapping, and taking pictures as a birthday cake was brought in for our elder and center's president, Tita Becky. She sat thoughtfully staring at the candles before the playful Tito Toni leaned over and blew out the candles for her. Everyone erupted in laughter, shaking Toni playfully, and laughing into the faces of community members who had stood beside them when they ushered in the center two decades before. Then, suddenly silent, the room turned to Tita Becky, asking joyfully what she had wished for. She exhaled, "I was thinking, *ano*…I wish for a new center." That was the first time I had seen with emotional transparency behind what the potential loss of such a cultural space would mean. The center was expanding, fielding growing cultural need across the Southeast Michigan region, but after nearly two decades of planning, and then two decades of operation, the center's continuous struggles caused the challenge for "a place to call home" to be an ever-present reality.

Though I was trained in rhetoric studies, it took some time for me to recognize rhetoric's role in the struggle for space. Though there are variations to the definition of rhetoric, I had come to define it as any act of communication that uses verbal, discursive, or material form as an agency of mediation. The purpose of such mediation is driven, coded, and decoded by culturally-dictated ideologies. Given this definition, it took some time to recognize how the study of rhetoric might help build understanding of the communicative, transformative, and competing

nature of cultural sites' material, visual, and discursive characteristics. The shaping of every place/space is a rhetorical process—albeit one less traditionally represented in rhetoric and composition's (often printed or literary) text-focused field. Nonetheless, place/space is a form of "text." As any text, place/space responds to some form of societally dictated genres or behaviors, and can be read and written through interlocutors' cultural frameworks (systems of beliefs dictated by a person's dominant culture) which ascribe meaning and make sense of the site. My own position as a Filipina, lesbian, and woman, has made me quite intimate with the rhetoric of place/space; I've learned to "read" every environment for cues of welcome in order to assess how much I'm able to safely perform certain parts of my identity. If text is "any object, collection of objects, or contexts [that] can be 'read' by tracing and retracing the slipping, contradictory network of connections, disconnections, presences, absences, and assemblages" (Johnson-Eilola, 2010, p. 33), then place/space, by our postmodern understanding, is a living, full-bodied account of a text.

The rhetoric of place/space is still fairly new for our field, and so multi-faceted that looking at rhetoric outside of the traditional text-based form becomes a challenging task. The traditional discursive orientation isn't something to abandon when looking at place/space rhetorics, however, nor an invitation to start anew in terms of how we think of rhetoric. Compositionists may find comparison of place/space rhetorics with academic texts (perhaps our field's corpus on student essays) to be a helpful point of reference. Like student essays, places/spaces: (1) are written by an agent for a particular purpose, ranging from promoting a set of values, beliefs, or behaviors to curating a set of ideas in which to dwell, and (2) are read by passersby who ascribe their own meaning from the encounter, and in the act of reading, can even make their own "marks" on place/space by remixing, inserting themselves in the margins,

crossing out features, adding more, or moving an object as easily as one would earmark a page. I find the comparison of writing as we've traditionally known it and the rhetoric of place/space to be a helpful frame of reference, and many of the concepts from the composition field transferrable, such as the processual investigation of writing over the written product which I will discuss later.

Finally, just as with texts, there is a way we engage with places/spaces that constitute a form of literacy. DeCerteau's (1988) famous walker performs their literacy through "a series of turns (tours) and detours that can be compared to 'turns of phrase' or 'stylistic figures'" (p. 100). And even *before* entering sites, there is a rhetoric of place/space that precedes the experience, that then helps us build expectation, subscribe to or reject specific behaviors, or solidify some connection to a site—just as there is some knowledge or engagement with a topic before the student sits down to write an essay. Though engaging with these disparate social constructions of place/space has been referred to as social geographies or imaginaries in place, more postmodern explanations has tied these associative ideas of a place/space to the networked identity of sites. Rice's (2012) *Digital Detroit*, for instance, draws out the movement of these networked associations to space, in that as we traverse spaces, we also move within information, such as a site reminding us of a song reference or story, for instance: "That involvement can dramatically change a space's meaning by the juxtaposition of something as innocuous as a Bob Dylan reference and a personal anecdote" (p. 10). Whether by socially transforming the narratives we tell of a place or physically transforming the sites we inhabit, there is a rhetoric to place-making.

In this dissertation, I argue first that place/space is a text we "read" and "write" through cultural frameworks, and secondly, by focusing particularly on the "writing" of place/space, that place-making is a dialogical process that involves the negotiation of cultural logics. In order for

communication to be generated, interpretation must rely on referents to culturally inherited systems of meaning. These frameworks provide lenses through which one creates and makes sense of utterances. In refuting the idea of an ideological *center* for rhetoric, there is a plurality of ideologies that exist in communicative acts. Though hegemonic and colonial groups have sought to maintain a dominant ideology under which subjects must comply to participate and vie for resources, messages are always ideologically pluralistic, both representing ideology and working against or augmenting others through its difference. Further, acknowledging its plurality opens ways of seeing rhetoric as a rich exercise in crossing ideological boundaries, or what I refer to as a negotiation of cultural logics.

I demonstrate this interfacing of cultural and place/space rhetorics through a case study that analyzes Filipinx American place-making efforts behind the Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan. I strive to provide insight into the distinct cultural rhetoric of Filipinx-American place-making, and convey that the rhetoric of a cultural place/space is an ongoing dialogic process, a negotiation between distinct cultural perceptions of place/space and the environment in which it is embedded.

In the following sections, I lay out my beliefs on cultural place/space, first defining the key terms I'll be using as I discuss spatial dynamics, and then moving into three propositions about cultural space. These propositions are supported by interdisciplinary literature around spatial theory, cultural studies, and the rhetoric and composition field's treatment of place/space rhetorics.

1.2 Defining Key Terms: Cultural Place-Making, Place/Space, and Culture

The concept of *place-making* began in the 1960s as a way to design cities for the communities that inhabited them. Rhetoric has often viewed place-making in terms of place-

making acts, made by individuals and/or cultures, which transform space in ways that influence and reflect their own identities (Clark & Powell, 2008; Kinloch, 2009), as well as connect them to their communities (Basso, 1996; Rios, 2015). Viewed in this way, place-making becomes the bridge, the verb joining community with its location; its form encompasses material changes to the landscape as well as social or symbolic constructions of place. For example, Basso (1996) describes the reciprocal and dynamic relationship of place and self to be greatly (1) experiential, and (2) encompassing whole networks of associations to other people, places, and time. Through an ethnographic description of his time with the Apache in the 1980s, he explores how cultural wisdom is embedded in the community's engagement with places, and members of the community achieve this wisdom through observance of place, learning its Apache names, and reflecting on the stories of the places which underscore virtues of wisdom--and its other side, cautionary tales of foolishness.

Some members of the Detroit Asian American community that I've spoken to have had strong reactions against the term "place-making," preferring instead to use the term "place-keeping" to denote (or perhaps emphasize) the need to sustain the socio-cultural memories and acts of the local community. Since place-making has sometimes meant support for gentrification, racism, or questionable monopolies on real estate under the banner of revitalization, place-keeping implied a stronger loyalty to the local culture.

Under the lens of rhetoric, however, I'm using the term *place-making* to connote the transformative nature of the act as well as to avoid the possibly problematic connotations of place-keeping which may suggest a conservative sense of place or proposed authenticity of place (see Massey, 2005). Along with its dynamic and transformative potential, place-making also concedes to the ongoing, shifting dynamics of place as enacted by a multiplicity of stakeholders.

To explore how cultural ideology factors into place-making, it's equally important I draw out the lenses under which I'm approaching Filipinx place-making. The literature on place/space has taken many approaches to reading place's rhetoric, and like most disciplines, these approaches have differed depending on the field's values, their arenas for analysis, and theoretical lineages. This is a common occurrence, as the larger umbrella of place/space studies has undergone several trends: Starting from the 80s, spatial theorists across disciplines investigated place in terms of embedded social processes (Cresswell, 2004; Massey, 1984), and then in terms of territoriality and political power (Sack, 1986; Karrholm, 2007); in the 90's, as processes of scale, until its most recent postmodernist take on place through networks and rhizomatic interconnectivity (Jessop, Brenner, & Jones, 2008; Rice, 2016). Just as even older theories of space and place such as those conceived from the Greeks or phenomenologists[1] have retained their presence in pockets of separate spatial/theoretical lineages, so too have current scholars privileged certain elements and lenses over others – signaling for us an obviously less unified approach or consensus to the investigation of space, and the concession that "thick" description and multiple considerations are inherent in a topic that is also considered the 'receptacle' of all things.

If we look specifically at the fields of Rhetoric and Composition, researchers who have dealt with the rhetorics of place/space have largely emphasized the connection between space and social processes, the benefits of which have resulted in insights within the gendering of space (Enoch, 2008; Mountford, 2001), ecocomposition and environmental rhetoric (Dobrin & Weisser, 2002), memorials and the fashioning of public memory (Blair & Michel, 2000;

[1] Strong proponents of phenomenology such as Edward Casey and Gaston Bachelard—and even those with parallel methods such as Tuan—have been cited as canonical texts on place/space, though sometimes without mention of its school of thought.

Dickinson, Ott, & Aoki, 2006), public space (Endres & Senda-Cook, 2011; Fleming, 2009; Jack, 2009), pedagogical space (Dobrin, 2011; Grego & Thompson, 2008), and cultural space (Basso, 1996; Monberg, 2009; Powell, 2012). To say I'm coming from a cultural rhetorics position is to also say I'm a product of an education in both rhetoric and composition, as well as of the burgeoning subfield of cultural rhetorics that has emerged as a formal area of inquiry around the 2010s (Cobos et al., 2018). This tri-disciplinary background's multiple approaches to place/space rhetorics requires some sorting through and clarification as to which theories of place/space I'm enlisting and have found necessary for reading culture in place.

To begin, the concepts of *place, space*, and *culture* are separate categories that interface frequently. Definitions of place and space have evolved and differed across history and discipline. Place and space are closely interrelated, and though both terms have been articulated in different ways, the concepts have remained somewhat consistent to each other as a matter of specific to general. *Place* refers to specific locations, ones with semi-distinguishable boundaries so that its name generates a shared geographical reference. Place is endowed and identified with material and symbolic attributes, what De Certeau (1984) refers to as a "system of signs" (p. 117). *Space*, on the other hand, refers to a broader and more abstract notion of a societally regulated field of mobile elements. As a large field, it contains networks of places and symbolic and material configurations and reconfigurations. As a result, since space is formed by social movements and practices, it becomes an ideological struggle, a social product capable of being continuously restructured and influencing its embedded places (De Certeau, 1984; Lefebvre, 1991, Massey, 2005). For instance, a green space may influence what sorts of establishments or sites exist in a field socially practiced as environmentally friendly. As such, "space is a practiced

place" (De Certeau, 1984), a concept tying place/space to social processes that many rhetoricians have since reiterated across pedagogical, public, digital, and decolonial spaces.

If place is a "system of signs" constructed by social practice, these signs become socially coded. *Culture* becomes a screen through which we interpret or decode these signs. Similar to Geertz's (1973) claim of culture as semiotic, a system of "historically transmitted pattern[s] of meanings embodied in symbols" (p. 89) that perpetuate particular orientations and attitudes toward life, our inherited conceptions of material and symbolic signs are subject to these cultural filters. For instance, a coffee shop in America may be interpreted by most as a social or work space to conduct business or meet informally with friends. Though perhaps someone who grew up within Ethiopian culture would have a nostalgic orientation to the imported coffee, or someone who grew up in a culture that saw sitting down to tea as a cultural tradition would have a more ritualistic orientation to the space and its practices. Culture and place/space are thus interdependent categories that interface quite frequently. Whether we're reading a home and know instinctually (or not) to remove one's shoes, or enter a mosque and know exactly (or not) how one's culture dictated the behavior in that space, we read places/spaces largely from our own cultural orientations and practices. Cultural practice and beliefs are contingent upon the social and material configurations of place/space, and the formation of place/space is contingent upon cultural practice and beliefs. Rhetorician Mountford (2001) similarly described culture's role in rhetorical space: "The cultural is the grid across which we measure and interpret space, but also the nexus from which creative minds manipulate material space" (42). Culture as a grid and system of meaning encodes and decodes the driving rhetorical dimensions of place/space.

In the following sections, I discuss the theoretical underpinnings and methodological framework of the study, and more specifically how the interfacing of culture and place/space is

inherent in processes of place-making. I start with three driving propositions about cultural space, and finish with how the study's methodology helps to understand Filipinx place-making based on such propositions.

1.3 Place-Making from the Field of Rhetoric and Composition: Three Propositions about Cultural Space

After reviewing place/space literature from the fields of rhetoric, composition, and cultural rhetoric, I've compiled three main propositions about cultural space/place that this research study stands upon. I begin with how place/space is culturally constructed (*act*), how acts of cultural construction interact with other cultural constructions of place (*negotiation*), and the result of these spatial interactions (*interrelations*). In other words, I organize this as a linear development of a place-making act: we begin with an act, the act's interaction in an environment, and the environmental result.

(1) The rhetoric of place is socially constructed by cultural acts, and these acts often reflect place's function, identity, and delineation. How does place communicate, convey meaning, or otherwise *perform*? Rhetoricians have treated place as similar to a text in that it communicates a message, retained for inhabitants and passersby to witness, just as the writing on text engages readers. When rhetoricians began to theorize place/space, however, it wasn't immediately an agent of communication, but a sort of passive "container" that contained a "thing." Place as a container had a privileged lineage, beginning from Aristotle (300 BCE) whose *Physics* defines place as "the innermost motionless boundary of what contains," "a kind of surface" (such as a vessel or container), and "coincident with the thing, for boundaries are coincident with the bounded." As a bounded container, place took on the powerful (and epistemological) role of holding bodies and ascribing them being by giving them a space in

which to be. Burke's (1945) pentad in *A Grammar of Motives* carries over Aristotle's container in his description of the "scene." In his first chapter "The Scene-Act ratio," he describes scene as a setting or background which contains an act or agent. However, here, the container takes on a strategic rhetorical dimension as Burke connects the symbolic use of place to dramatic motive. Covering several literary examples, Burke demonstrates that the scene is often the symbolism to the real act; "scene is to act as implicit is to explicit" (p. 7). After Burke, the symbolic use of place would similarly be used for rhetorically aligned purposes[2]. For example, consider the rhetorical strategy of choosing a historically revolutionary square as a stage for revolutionary acts. Not only could it be used to rhetorically bolster acts, place would also come to take on a transformative potential, reciprocally influenced by the "acts" of the scene (Marback, 2004; Poirot & Watson, 2015). Inhabitants gradually conform place's material dimensions to dominant or repetitive usage. It is this ability for acts to mold place that allows it to be later used for symbolic use. Revolutionary protestors could fill a "revolutionary" place, which could inspire, for instance, a revolutionary statue, and further circulate the place's revolutionary narrative and prompt future protests (such is the case for Egypt's Tahrir Square). Thus, people write and are written by place through place-based acts.

Noting the reciprocal influence between human and place interaction, as well as the material and symbolic effects of such interaction, rhetoricians have strived to understand the connection between various place-making acts and the rhetorical residue, the meaningful imprint these acts leave on sites—and more particularly how that rhetoric is read. Through its reading, place-based messages communicate what is done, what is possible, and what is encouraged

[2] See, for instance, Endres and Senda-Cooks (2011) "Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest" wherein cited examples of place as rhetorical strategy include MLK's speech at the Lincoln memorial, or counter-protests from marginalized groups in front of government buildings.

within a social space. To return to the example of the revolutionary square, the material and symbolic readings of the square (its revolutionary statue, reputation, signs, etc.), may communicate to a newcomer that this is a site for protest; protest is not only possible but encouraged in this space. In this way, place/space's role is part of discourse; place/space meaning relates socio-cultural beliefs, as well as mediates certain behaviors. Regardless of its form, the rhetoric of place/space does so by communicating place's (1) function, (2) associated affect or identity/ies, and/or (3) boundaries.

Place Function. Part of place's meaning is informed by its perceived function. Function is often distinguished by how others occupy that space, and what actions the space may seem to endorse. Whenever someone enters a space, they use or *consume* that space in particular ways. The consumption of space is cultural, as DeCerteau (1980) early distinguished that culture is in large part constructed by its products and systems, and also by the distinct *use and appropriation* of those products and systems. If we typically view speech acts as the appropriation or use of language to forward a purpose, DeCerteau (1980) argued the appropriation of place through everyday practices also communicates. Through his famous example of the city walker, he argues people re-write spaces by exercising different possible routes and trajectories, and though these steps may disappear or go unrecorded, the "trace left behind is substituted for the practice" (p. 97). As a result, space is a cultural product inhabitants use or *consume* in various ways, and its use, in turn, socially constructs the meaning of place. The function of different rooms within a home, for instance, are socially constructed by human use. Much of the symbolic or connotative meanings behind the bedroom, living room, kitchen, etc. stem from how we use them. Bachelard (1958) famously tied rooms of the home to certain affective states or essences based on our use, but even its material dimensions follow meanings of labor, such as the 19th century's

architectural movement to divide private activities in the home from the more public activities (such as in living rooms or "common" areas). The creations of rooms in the home mimicked the sort of private/public dimensions of the city based on labor experiences (Sennett, 1990).

Because any occupation of space can inform place's function and meaning, scholars have noted that acts as *productions of space* are always political (Lefebvre, 1991; Dobrin, 2011). To occupy, to consume, to use a place a certain way is to socially construct a large part of its meaning through what activities a cultural group values. Filipinx households, for instance, often create an open space with chairs outside the front/back doors or in the kitchen for *tsismis* (gossip), as it's a valued communal activity. For phenomenologists, another way of viewing this occupation was viewing it as a sort of *orientation* to places. Sarah Ahmed's (2010) work theorizes how people turn toward objects of value, are affectively oriented toward them, and as a result, shape them. For instance, I'm drawn to the dining table in my home because it's where I do my writing. I place a specific value on this table for its ability to assist me comfortably in this task (for whatever my reasons), and as a result, it's no longer a dining but a writing table through repetitive use, and the gradual accumulation of writing objects I place as part of its assemblage. My orientation to this table is infused with a particular cultural experience, even; perhaps it shares moments of elation for completed writing pieces and long stretches of frustration and impatience which so often come with my writing. People use and transform places just as they do objects; places become a part of our affective sphere because we're repeatedly oriented toward them for their value and use in our lives. Places become "sticky" in this way, just as objects do (Ahmed, 2010). They carry sensations from their use, and are transformed by this particular use.

Cultural rhetoricians have viewed place/space through its role and function within cultural acts, and have shared similar conclusions regarding the use of place and its influence on the inhabitants and the site. If places are made through acts of its use, these acts become a form of literacy for communicating knowledge between place and community. In "Cultivating land-based literacies and rhetorics," Gabby Rios (2015) extends literacy from orality and text to land-relations, movement, and embodiedness—all elements in place-making and construction. By looking at farm working activism among Latin@ and Mexican@ farmworkers in Orlando, Florida, she's able to demonstrate how land produces social relations through place-based literacies. These organizations show the material in the common metaphor of rhetorical ecologies by demonstrating how tending to farm land is an act that one does for and as a means to navigate within a community. Thus, material and discursive relationships with land and people create ecologies that promote coalition work and perform acts of relationality. In one major example, the communicative act of *teatro* involves farm workers acting out issues in farm work as a way to teach, recruit, analyze, relay history, and problem-solve. Such performativity in these acts, Rios argues, is also considered an act of transfer that counts as a literate form. Though he doesn't say it explicitly, this becomes a new way of conceptualizing how cultural acts affect place/space and vice versa, and that such construction of places—the *act* of it—is a form of literacy that we perform to infuse cultural meaning into our places, which then bridge our surroundings and our communities.

Other scholars doing the work of cultural rhetoric within place/space studies reiterate place's use, and its subsequent ability to produce and maintain cultural relationships. Cultural and linguistic anthropologist Basso (1996) stresses the reciprocal and dynamic relationship of place and self to be greatly (1) experiential, and (2) encompassing whole networks of

associations to other people, places, and time. With such stress on experience and acknowledgement of place as an object that is acted upon, Basso reiterates Sartre's claim that place is animated by the thoughts and feeling of persons who attend to them: "places express only what their animators enable them to say" (p. 56). This sentiment also aligns with Lefebvre's (1991) theories on the social production of space, echoing that we have resolved the chicken-or-the-egg scenario regarding place's relation to humans: *we* give place meaning—and in turn, the traces of humanness are then readable on landscapes. Basso's book *Wisdom Sits in Places* is often cited by cultural rhetoricians for his "constellating" views of place, people, and time, and its culturally constructed view of place. According to Basso (1996) experiences of place are sensed communally, and infused in culturally mediated forms such as stories, myths, and other social activity. He demonstrates this connection through an ethnographic description of his time with the Apache in the 1980s. Through various characters, he explores how wisdom is embedded in stories about places, and members of the community achieve this wisdom through observance of place, learning its Apache names, and reflecting on the stories of the places which underscore virtues of wisdom--and its other side, cautionary tales of foolishness. The *sensing* of place then becomes a predominantly cultural activity that follows the original uses of place. Literal and storied uses of place thus become a form of literacy that's tied to the use of land and repetition of land-based narratives.

With the exception of materiality in Rios' study, cultural rhetoricians increasingly explore places' culturally embedded stories which result from uses and occupations of space. For instance, in theorizing movement between the university and communities through service-learning courses, Monberg (2009) proposes a new way of students of color to encounter place/space by dwelling in these sites and their attendant stories, or perhaps there's Kirsch and

Richie's (1995) suggestion that compositionists reflect on the places students' come from, and the attendant literacies that follow these students into the academy based on the 'acts' of home. After all, the functions of home tell a story of the residing culture. Cultural stories around acts once again reside in place in perhaps one of the leading examples of cultural rhetorics' engagement with place and space theory: Malea Powell's (2012) "CCCC Chair's Address: Stories Take Place: A Performance in One Act." She applies the notion of storied acts as place-making by asking audiences to recursively engage with the stories of their past, present, and future trajectories, particularly how the stories told from the Rhetoric and Composition field have shaped the discipline. Many guests share the stage with her, constellating their stories *in place* by reading their own stories of non-western beliefs and practices to exemplify how we must make space for students and each other's stories. The perspectives of the community are fronted through their use of and acts within place, and place is "read" through these stories. Though DeCerteau (1980) noted the traces of our practice that we leave behind on places, cultural rhetoricians increasingly saw these traces as stories.

Acts are embedded in place and connect people who use place for similar cultural acts (what cultural rhetoricians see as storied-making). As a result, places are also shaped by people's use which then affects later use. Use of place carries cultural ideologies which may contend with other cultural ideological use. Trends in computers and writing, for instance, have focused on the spaces of the classroom in terms of its shaping our practices and activities (Callahan, 1962; Selfe, 1989; Moran, 1998). Each spatial design in its dimensions of physicality, accessibility, and arrangement promote and intend on certain ideological uses, such as the capitalistic assembly-line design of the classroom (Callahan, 1962). This has prompted other practitioners in classroom spaces toward spatial re-shaping, or what some scholars such as Walls, Schopieray,

and DeVoss (2009) refer to as "hacktivism." Here, the struggle between administrative or architectural beliefs around the acts of the learning confront teacher and student use. To consider negotiating the shape of the classroom space to fit particular instructional uses, the authors' analytical framework for hacking spaces interrogates the potential of classroom space through functions of motion, collaboration, senses, and leadership. Based on pedagogical needs, they suggest teachers may hack classrooms to align with their goals and the room's current dynamics. Walls, Schopieray, and DeVoss's (2009) study exemplifies how competing group ideologies around the uses of space negotiate and re-shape space to fit group purposes. Acts that re-shape space have natural material consequences for groups that have different uses in mind, so the negotiation and production of space becomes an ongoing dynamic.

From here it follows that if place's function is based on human consumption, and that repetitive or dominant forms of consumption therein shape place to conform to certain uses, the final facet of how function informs place's meaning involves place's ability to then *invite* and *delimit* acts of use. After being shaped by dominant use, place communicates what social behavior is possible, encouraged, and in some cases, prevented in that space (Perec, 1974; DeCerteau, 1980; Mountford, 2001). Probably the most forward endorsements of specific uses of place is through tourist sites or museums which provide a specifically curated experience, one which is difficult for occupiers to subvert by opting into different acts of consumption or use (Smith & Bergman, 2010). Rhetoricians in place/space studies and public memory have heavily written on the rhetoric of memory sites, places which are shaped to dictate a certain way of using and experiencing place, and sometimes how that rhetoric can be eluded by other factors (see Ott, Blair, Dickinson, 2010; Blair & Michel, 2000). These other factors often figure as competing symbolic narratives (Marback, 2004; Poirot & Watson, 2015) or else a wider symbolic and

material landscape for possibilities that allows inhabitants to explore the negotiation of site use in various ways.

From the individual to the city layout, how space is used gives meaning to a place, which further influences what uses place makes possible. A great part of place meaning is constructed through this use because our orientation to these places –how we use them, (re)shape them, and repeatedly visit them for similar uses—endorses cultural values and ideologies. Cultural uses of place leave traces on these sites, the rhetoric which others read as we would a text on a page.

Place Identity. Place function and identity are closely related just as cultural practice is closely related to cultural identity. One feeds the other, as identity is often enacted through practice. However, the identity of place is often made politically visible, especially in instances of public address, as a way to secure resources. Place identity is here distinguished as any declared visual, discursive, or embodied notion of place as associated with a particular identity. This does not mean any form of declaration cannot also be a practice, however, or that any place-based message cannot infer both cultural function and associated identity. Instead, they are separated here because the pointed emphasis on identity is often politically charged to the extent that it demands our attention. For instance, occupying space may not always intend on the presence of an interlocutor as much as declarations of space and identity often double as insinuations of use and public address. Secondly, declarations of associative identity may not be informed by use, such as groups claiming a space they can no longer occupy.

Major examples include murals that are placed at a locale and communicate the identities and/or beliefs associated with that locale. Detroit's Grand River Creative Corridor is one instance wherein a block of neighborhood has been revitalized with murals from local artists delivering local messages to and about the Detroit community (Sands, 2012). These murals are not

immediately a call to specific acts or uses of space, but are public addresses promoting the association of place and what they contend as local identity. As seen in this instance, place identity contributes to a major facet of place meaning. Similarly, Rick Bonus' (2000) ethnography of Filipinx and Filipino American spaces argued identity formation relied heavily on material spaces such as oriental stores and community centers. With these spaces, Filipinx Americans were found to articulate and resist definitions of ethnic identity, as well as maintain ties to their homeland and identity-based communities.

Visual and embodied occupations of space may also inform messages of place identity. Spaces that are occupied by a dominant cultural group, albeit informed by ethnic, age, class, sexual orientation, or interest-related traits become natural markers of place identity through repetition. Not only does this dynamic manifest in socio-economically segregated spaces, but is also deliberately constructed in such spaces that are formally marked by a specific identity (i.e. Chinatowns, Arabtowns, gayborhoods, etc.). Similarly, just as a dominant grouping of bodies by an aligned trait may occupy and mark space, so can dominant groupings of buildings. Buildings that are thematically aligned in their distinguished identities may inscribe place meaning through thematic networks. In this way, a consideration of surrounding material claims considers the link between claims of territoriality and their sustainment through spatial networks. Just as Foucault asserts that power needs constant maintenance, a system of disciplinary measures, tactics, and relations to remain active, so too do assertions of territory need repetitive and parallel networks of visible (material) artifacts to stabilize claims on space. Fairly stabilized territories require what rhetoricians Endres and Senda-Cook (2011) allude to as repeated reconstructions over time, or what other researchers have suggested as continually produced, processual operations that work to produce and stabilize the identity of territories (Karrholm, 2007; Brighenti, 2010).

Place Delineation. Finally, place meaning is informed by some insinuation of its boundaries. A major part of place's naming and identity is the defining of its limits and distinction, what makes it recognizable as a territory or desired space. This dimension of place meaning can be as contentious as issues of identity; as mentioned earlier, negotiations of place not only contend over how and who can use it, but its boundaries. We see the distinguishing and re/setting of place boundaries as a major tool for imposing power onto territories through map-making, for instance. Largely, delineation goes back to territorialization which inscribes boundaries on what's visible. The process of delineating place is repetitive and deeply social, as territorialization requires not only that cultural groups impose boundaries through formal maps, but also a *series* of acts and materiality as a means of inscription, such as the imposition of barriers (Karrholm, 2007; Brighenti, 2010; Deleuze & Guatarri, 1994). Defining visible thresholds works to crystallize where acts are possible and specific identities are welcome.

Cultural rhetorics scholars have highlighted how place delineation as part of place meaning can push back against "formal" recognition of boundaries. For instance, Indigenous claims to place often exemplify claims of boundary delineation. Addressing land loss is intrinsic to arguments about the relationship between place and the sustainment of cultural identity. Powell (2012), for instance, opens her speech by delineating the area of St. Louis, originally referred to as Cahokia by tribal cultures, as spanning "across nine miles on both sides of the Mississippi River" and proceeds to outline the material and symbolic dimensions of its various areas (p. 385). By making its boundaries recognizable and tied to a specific identity, she makes an argument of place meaning and cultural territory that wouldn't be possible if readers and audience members weren't first pointed to directly identify the space associated with the claim. Powell's description of these boundaries also cognitively remaps the St. Louis area for audience

members who previously only recognized its current delineation. Indeed, many studies that speak of invisibilized spaces must work to distinguish spatial boundaries for other claims to be set in motion. Spurred by DeCerteau (1980) and Lefebvre's (1991) work, studies in architectures of the everyday demonstrate how mapping and creating spatial distinctions legitimize practices and ways of being in the world that are often forgotten (Lozanofska, 2002). Delineation creates the self-defining limits that contain specific processes and meanings of place.

Place delineations should not be mistaken as just a limiting, exclusive, or self-protecting impulse, however, as defining boundaries can also mean an *extension* of boundaries for other rhetorical purposes. Works of scale and network flows have expanded the boundaries of places through extended thematic reach. This lens of regionalism show that place delineation can be an ideologically-driven matter completely dislocated from material conditions and conceived as a matter of scale. In the special regionalism issue of *Rhetoric Society Quarterly,* editor Rice (2012) notes the strategic power of regions, hence its rhetoricity. Regions have relational power that is unhinged from material territory, and has been used as such in symbolic constructions and arguments of places. Mainly, regional "folds" can bring together multiple, non-proximate sites, active networks created and conditioned by social acts. For example, Queer South essays point to identity-making patterns in a region, and Greene and Kuswa's (2012) article "From the Arab Spring to Athens, From Occupy Wall Street to Moscow" demonstrate how mutual protest movements provide a distinct region, though of course, only temporary as spatial negotiations persist. Thus, non-proximate sites such as Tahrir Square and Zuggotti Park can become part of a regional assemblage that is rhetorically leveraged for spatial arguments.

Claims of function, identity, and delineation overlap and, as seen above, are co-implicated in the construction of place meaning. Material and symbolic claims of space generally inform at least one of the three characteristics. Previous researchers have drawn similar categories for the social construction or identity of place. Most similarly, Keating's (1998) model saw national identity constructed through three lenses: *Cognitive* relation, which informs the territorial or symbolic shape of a place, thus defining its limits and distinctions; *Affective* relation, which informs feelings toward the region and the degree to which it forms a common identity; and *Instrumental* relation, which informs how the region is used for a particular action. Here, Keating's model demonstrates the delineation, identity-related, and functional attributes of place meaning.

Each of these lenses have been emphasized through major trends in spatial theory, as well. Studies of territorialization have looked at the ways in which the creation and imposition of boundaries have figured into spatial dynamics of power, sometimes leading to a "methodological territorialism" that overshadows sociospatial dynamics (Brenner, 2004; Jessop, Brenner, & Jones, 2008). Place and its connection to social identities and practices have been emphasized in spatial research arguing the social construction of place (Auge, 1996; DeCerteau, 1980; Lefebvre, 1991). Jessop, Brenner, and Jones (2008) describe that research overemphasizing sociospatial dynamics tend to then neglect the contentiousness and elasticity of boundaries such as in territorial, scalar, and networked flows of space. This emphasis has often permeated the social sciences and humanities with notions of closed place-centrism, or static *sendentarist* theories (see critically Massey, 2005; Sheller & Urry, 2006).

By looking at the above three dimensions of place meaning—function, identity, and delineation—we can see the micro socio-spatial processes occurring through social orientations

and movements in space as driven by use, belief, and identity. We also see larger patterns such as groups' establishing specific place boundaries. Boundary-making draws in and contains symbolic and material arrangements that fit ideological narratives, further feeding into function and identity.

(2) Place negotiation is ongoing and inherent in every occupation of space. (Anything said or done in space continually negotiates place). In the first proposition of cultural place/space, I've outlined the types of acts that are conducted in and inevitably shape a space. Since space is inhabited by a number of agents, acts continually occur, build on or resist other acts. For this reason, the second proposition on cultural space follows that place-based acts continually negotiate the rhetoric of a space.

For rhetoric, place began as a container, then a container with rhetorical and transformative potential, but because of this potential for transformation, the "boundedness" that distinguished place by what it contained also became challenged by people's negotiation of place/space. By the late 20th century, notions of boundedness became complicated with the negotiating act of place-making, and post-modern theorists moved to more flexible terms such as semi-boundedness to explain the fluidity and dexterity of spatial dynamics and place stabilizations. In light of negotiated space, the container metaphor could no longer *contain* a distinct set of bodies if its boundaries were moving or continuously contested. For example, the previous section's concepts of regionalism and scale demonstrate that places can extend into regions and are affected by other regions, depending on the contextual spatial scales by which they are viewed (Paasi, 2002; Hudson, 2005; Greene & Kuswa, 2012). Tuan's (1977) canonical *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* bridges the container's boundedness with acknowledgement of shifting spatial negotiations by tempering the distinction of "boundedness"

with time. In his work, movement helps "bind" place in that any meaningful pause in space makes possible sustained intimate relations in a given locale, recognition, and thus ability to substantiate a place. Tuan (1977) argued both literally and figuratively that a pause in movement, and its attendant "settling" designates or crystallizes –even if briefly—a sense of place, whereas movement through space is a sort of freedom, a field of possibilities. Inhabitants of place utilize tactics in movement to reconfigure, contest, or sustain notions of place on a daily basis (de Certeau, 1988; Harvey, 2012 ; Reynolds, 2004). As a result, such movements of possibility make place/space a constant arena of inhabitants' entry, participation, and negotiation of an ever-shifting public sphere (Fleming, 2009; Kärrholm, 2007).

Many different occupations and uses of the same place presents what Lefebvre (1991) referred to as the ideological struggle inherent within spatial production. While cultural rhetorics has seen multiple uses of place for its constellating, place-based stories, other spatial theorists have highlighted these inherent ideological struggles, the less amenable dynamics of coexisting spatial functions. What is it then to say placemaking is negotiated versus constellated? For one, though we may invite different uses of space as constellated relations tying people to place, the potential of these occupations to have *material consequences* naturally inhibit or encourage future spatial use. It is often in shifting our focus to acts' material shaping of place that scholars, especially those in composition[3], have had to re-evaluate idealistically inclusive spatial metaphors. Because the cultural uses of place leave tangible material consequences or traces, it can impact how others enter, participate, and negotiate space. Take again my example of my writing table. The table's traits for writing use become apparent through accumulated writing objects, maybe even its positioning for prime writing conditions (such as its closeness to a

[3] See critically Dobrin (2011), Grego and Thompson (2008), and Reynolds (2004) for critiques of Composition's emphasis on spatial metaphors at the expense of material realities.

window's light), but if a guest were to arrive and attempt to use the table for dining, they would be inhibited by the material effects of its dominant usage. The guest's occupation of that table, though not impossible, would be thwarted by conditions unaligned with their intentions.

In a broader example, by the turn of the 21st century, rhetoric scholars' investigation into the rhetoricity of place-based tactics, how rhetorical acts enter, move, and impact place-making negotiations has often centered on the pushback between material and human agents. Feldman's *Making Writing Matter*, Fleming's (2009) *City of Rhetoric*, and Welch's *Living Room* demonstrate how the places of local neighborhoods and institutions may enforce forms of use and discourse that could be difficult for inhabitants to negotiate through their own uses. Fleming's (2009) study of Cabrini Green, for instance, reveals that urban space is often stratified based on political and socioeconomic lines, in this case segregating the predominantly poor, African American of Cabrini Green from surrounding Chicago. This ongoing segregation and limited potential for alternatives also comes in the form of the spatial organization of place; in one notable example, the spaces for potential discourse tend to be limited to unsafe communal areas. Further analysis of proposals for urban revitalization of the area mask benefit for upper class residents as it proposes unity, yet it offers limited options or space for the low-income residents to negotiate how their spaces would be used. Here, though inhabitants may negotiate space/place through their culturally discursive use, other agents push back in this negotiation; in his study, particularly the rhetoric of material-spatial organization that may actively exclude certain groups from public discourse.

Secondly, the dynamic of negotiation even despite constellation, its simultaneous contestation and connection occurs through every assertion of place meaning (of its function, identity, or boundaries). These acts accumulate in space, and forge newer connections as much

as they push against old ones. Other studies have shown inhabitants' acts create various lines of flight that reinforce and contest narratives. Take, for example, the city walker overcoming the hard lines of the street. De Certeau (1980), along with other authors such as Rice (2008) and Topinka (2012) have demonstrated that everyday movements subvert street narratives, pointing to the spatial potential of overcoming deliberate arrangements of materiality by a walker's choice to take different routes. Topinka (2012), for instance, has taken de Certeau's city walker as a tactic against material space; the walker may take advantage of *kairos* (opportune time) to use time in 'tactical' ways to resist the street's guiding capitalistic features by roaming off designated sidewalks or jaywalking. As a result, the city walker creates a rhetorical situation in which they're provided more agency by either critiquing the material conditions or experiencing them in newer ways. Digital technologies further allow the walker to rewrite maps and formal walkways by recording individualized paths and experiences (Kalin & Frith, 2016). These alternative pathways break up hardened (hegemonic) narratives of space, as the inventive possibilities work to deterritorialize narrow conceptions of space. Going off the beaten path loosens rhetoric's tight relationship between arrangement and invention, which had previously been dependent upon each other as strategically ordered topoi (Rice, 2008). Just like the city walker, everyday people's acts resist or reinforce the embedded symbolic and material narratives of place by exercising any multiplicity of options when moving through space.

Spatial theorists have argued that ideological struggle in place-making is ongoing, that any claim of identity, use, or delineation of place engages with other claims, and in this sense, "all occupations [of space] are political" (Dobrin, 2011, p. 43). Further, since we have moved beyond Structuralist and modernist views of static or closed representations of space, there has been emphasis on place negotiation as a *process* (Massey, 2005). A multiplicity of stakeholders

produce their versions of place, and these continually interact and embed themselves in the creation of the social and material environment. It is not enough then for research on cultural place-making to work only with a snapshot representation of a locale, but to account for its event or process, and must observe the duration and dialogic process, the negotiation, of place-making.

(3) Space is a product of cultural interrelations. Given that any cultural act leaves an imprint on place (proposition one), and that such imprints ideologically conspire and contest with other uses (proposition two), then no place can be seen as authentic containers of uniform culture. Certainly, power dynamics are present through spatial processes as certain forms and usages of place dominate others due to repetitive place meaning and hegemonic assertions of material dimensions, but the full window of place reveals a multiplicity of stakeholders jostling through and against networks of spatial flows. Space as a product of cultural interrelations is similar to the national consciousness that Benedict Anderson (1991) refers to as "imagined communities," particularly in that there are no bounded geographies of cultural authenticity but multiple, interrelated grids of cultural signs, movements, and practices.

To see space as culturally interrelated allows us to theorize what a democratic "right to the city" means, how cultural identity and practices can be embedded in place to the extent that it can feasibly serve the largest collection of its varied inhabitants. This applies especially to theorizing the place-making of cultural groups as semi-discrete entities for analysis. In an article I wrote in 2017 about Detroit's Vincent Chin murals, I discuss Asian American groups' efforts in place-making and public address within the city. One placed in the dilapidated Chinatown and another one on the main walls of the Grand River Creative Corridor block, these Chin murals were eventually overwritten and taken down within a short and unproductive time frame. Despite my attempts to convey these issues as a matter of agency and equity in terms of the right to

transform space for Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) inhabitants, I've counted on a reader or conference-goer to inevitably ask some version of, "But why should there be a strictly Asian space? Since it's in America, why can't it be American?"

Sometimes the avenue of response is semantic: to remind ourselves of what astounds most other homogenous countries about this nation, which is that "America" is always already culturally interrelated. Why can't "American space" also include (and mean) Asian-American space? These distinctions sting of a maintained foreign national identity which promotes the same narrative as "guest in our land" so don't go hanging any drapes. But in its best light, I think what these questions are really aiming at is the implication that to insist on Asian American spaces is to exclude all other Americans. It's often perceived as a form of territoriality, a move that sends us back to dichotomized power relations—and perhaps sometimes necessarily, because many territorializations are spurred by the need for safety in response to a specific oppression or threat[4]. Instead, to insist on Asian American place-making is to insist there is a hybridized lineage that's intertwined with and imbricated in American settlement, and this complicated lineage is practiced and expressed in the places and spaces of inhabitance. These practices and expressions should shape place just as much as place, in turn, shapes identity.

As seen in the previous two propositions, since many inhabitants take up a given space, diverse cultural ideologies imprint themselves onto and through the places they call home. Thus, to argue a conservative notion of place authenticity is impossible to maintain—even from a temporal dimension, where colonizer begets colonizer, spatial interrogation reveals a simultaneous plurality of cultural interrelations. Massey's (2005) work notes the common neglect of spatial multiplicity through temporal sequences, arguing "If time unfolds as change

[4] An example is LGBTQIA+ spaces which began as a response to oppression after World War II, and after growing tolerance, became later dispersed into mainstream spaces (Ghaziani, 2014).

then space unfolds as interaction. In that sense space is the *social* dimension. Not in the sense of exclusively human sociability, but in the sense of engagement within a multiplicity" (p. 61). The problem with studies promoting the symbolic construction of place is that spatial imagination often has the tendency toward and appearance of essentializing place through a singular narrative claim. Just as scholars and activists have decolonized versions of history from a Western European center, there is also a multiplicity of narratives, bodies, and cultures occurring simultaneously in space as they have in history. Thus, a strength of material readings of place/space provide us traces of multiplicity as written in embodied, physical, and visual characteristics of our surroundings. What results is a bigger proliferating picture, a plurality of intertwining cultural ideologies through spatial dynamics that Massey (2005) has referred to as "stories-so-far."

1.4 Outline of Chapters

In this first chapter, I've introduced the concept of place-making, including essential definitions and history around its concepts, followed by a literature review of cultural rhetorics' treatment of place/space. In the second chapter, "PACCM as a Case Study: Methods and Methodology," I then introduce how my project extends the field's research through an in-depth case study of the making of the Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan which explores how we might *identify* cultural ideology in place/space rhetorics, and further, how cultural ideology affects the reading and writing of place. To pursue these questions, my research design isolates and analyzes data samples from the conceptualization years of the cultural center and interviews with the original planning committee and current leaders, in order to illuminate ways in which cultural notions of the site affected the rhetorical process of place-making and its resulting spatial rhetoric.

In Chapter 3 "Filipinx Pursuit of Place in Michigan (1900-2018)," I provide historical background of Filipinx place-making in Michigan, the history of the cultural center, and my own involvement with the center. By setting up the context of the cultural center's establishment geographically and historically, I situate the universal and specific underlying conditions of cultural place-making for this demographic in this particular locale amidst a larger dialogue of cultural place-making in the United States. I also demonstrate the need for democratic input into public spaces and how cultural ideology is implicated in this process.

In Chapter 4 "Rhetoric of Place: Cultural Values in the Place-Making of a Filipinx-American Cultural Center," after data collection and analysis of the conceptualization stage of the cultural center, my findings reveal PACCM was a place "written" and conceived as a space whose function was to promote a Filipinx cultural identity through empowerment and heritage education and sustain this identity through reciprocity and succession; to help delineate insider/outsider status among the center's Filipinxs; and to provide opportunity to exercise values of volunteer time, community service, congregation, and generosity. Many of these values shifted in priority in order to sustain the center through increased membership, activity, and young successors. The chapter follows the stages of grounded theory, from the initial coding of the center's planning documents and its resulting questions, and is followed by coding of group interviews with the center's original members/planners.

In the concluding chapter, "Curating Spaces for Multicultural Perspectives," I extend discussion into the importance of a city's diverse material and social makeup. I highlight the implications of diverse rhetorics of place-making, and how different ontological views of place/space influence this process in various ways. Finally, the dissertation finishes by proposing

the field of rhetoric and writing consider cultural lenses of analyzing place/space rhetorics to improve accessibility of classrooms and public spaces.

Chapter 2
PACCM as a Case Study: Methods and Methodology

Following the three propositions of cultural place/space, this study attempts to understand how cultural ideology figures into the place-making process by confronting two challenges: (1) identifying cultural ideology within the place-making process, and (2) understanding how cultural ideology engages with the negotiating process of place-making, thereby representing ideological acts' role in the shaping of place/space, and in turn, place's influence on future inhabitants.

Other studies have approached these challenges through the researcher's field observation of sites and local interviews of inhabitants and passersby (Bonus, 2000; Lloyd, 2006; Davila, 2004). Many times the interviews and field observations may only comment on a site's current manifestation or material attributes, and are more often than not told by present consumers of the space rather than those involved in the creation of the site. As a result, such research may only comment on the effect of place or its material evolution without discussing the ideological and dialogic processes that occur or are proposed when constructing place's rhetoric. If these methodologies focus on the result of material changes or how cultures are shaped by place, this study then also strives to hone in on how *place is shaped by cultures*. Place-making is a process whose means and ends are social, and if these ends are contingent upon identity configurations, cultural-ideological use and meaning, and material conditions, then ethnographic and qualitative approaches can be a productive approach to how people conceive of, produce, and react to space. The characteristics of a qualitative study exhibit a sensitivity to the places and people under the study, the reflexivity of the researcher, and the emergent design of a project (Creswell, 2013). As a result of such a study, the methodological framework must still rely on local interviews, a

review of place documents, ethnographic field notes, and material readings, but must foremost rely on the cultural community's standpoint behind the place-making process.

To read how cultural ideology interfaces with place, I first explore how cultural groups think of place: what are its functions, boundaries, and identity characteristics—or are there other culturally-specific dimensions to place meaning? To address these challenges, this study's qualitative approach aligns with cultural rhetorics practice, whose unique orientation stresses that insight should come from and be validated by those participating in the community. The researcher must first gather data around how cultural groups discuss and think about a particular place/space, and then analyze the data for patterns of meaning which is then discussed and validated with the community. These meanings—and again, viewing culture as a form of semiotics—help interpret how the place/space is then used and interpreted by cultural groups. For instance, if a marginalized group sees place as a means of security, that gives us insight into how and why place functions for them in certain ways, how they orient themselves to the place, and how this particular occupation of space may continually shape the site in a way that imposes a dominant place meaning for others to react to or negotiate. Hence, by examining how a cultural group thinks of place, and then how that ideology manifests (or not) through everyday activity and occupation, we can get a sense of how ideology interfaces with the construction of place. Because I'm working with the Filipinx-American community center in Michigan, access to the founding and present members of the community center becomes an opportunity to explore a major place-making event from how they originally thought of the place to how it's now used and interpreted. The methodological process can be a productive means of gauging the role of the community center for this culture, and how its manifestation absorbs or negotiates cultural conceptions and movements.

Since this work will be reviewed with community members, it is important that the research design is open and reflexive to community feedback throughout the process. To identify cultural ideology within the process, it is also crucial to work *with* the participating cultural group so that "thick description," the contextualized description of acts (Geertz, 1973), is informed by its members and not the researcher's interpretation of an interpretation. It is necessary that when identifying these cultural views of place, they're contextualized within the specific process of place-making for the community center; to have a concrete event allows cultural data to be interpretable within the dominant infrastructure of placemaking around which cultural strategies orient themselves (see Jepper & Swidler, 1994). Therefore, this study's methodology stresses a qualitative approach, and open and reflexive research design in order to engage with and include the ideological perspectives of the Filipinx community of the Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan around a place-making event.

While cultural elements of placemaking are identified and verified by the community, the process of the place-making event must be limited in scope to the extent that there may be some comparison between a proposed cultural conception of the center and what results through negotiations. To explore Filipinx place-making in terms of negotiation of values present throughout the process of the center's conception and ongoing transformation, I will examine the community's conceptualization of the place/space during PACCM's planning years, and how the original Filipinx values and priorities shifted throughout. By uncovering and then tracking the underlying cultural ideologies present in the initial conceptualization of the center and how these ideologies were or were not sustained in the realization and rhetoric of the center will speak to how and to what degree cultural ideology had evolved and engaged with other factors, stakeholders, and cultural logics in the process.

2.1 Site and Participants

I chose PACCM as a cultural place-making site because of my affiliation with the center and its members. As a volunteer and grant writer, I've also been granted access to the center's documents, activities, and board of directors. The board of directors consist of a majority of the original members who opened the center and who continue to work tirelessly to serve the Filipinx-American community and its allies, as well as curate a certain cultural experience for the center's visitors. As the only Filipinx cultural center in Michigan, PACCM maintains its mission is to "promote, advance and preserve the Filipino culture, traditions, values, and heritage by providing services and programs for the benefit of the community at large." With its street sign of Northland Parkway renamed "Philippines Street" by the city of Southfield, the site of PACCM is deliberately marked with Filipinx identity. Given the site's positioning as a cultural space and my unique access to the center and its leaders, PACCM became an ideal choice for a study on cultural ideology and place-making.

I chose participants for this study who took part in the planning stages of PACCM between 1981 and 2001. They were identified and recruited based on their presence in PACCM's planning committee documents and by word-of-mouth from original committee members. "Tito" Fred Porte, PACCM's vice president, and I have worked closely together in pursuing grants for the cultural center, and he was the most influential in identifying and introducing me to some of the original committee members. Further, adhering to the Filipinx emphasis on collective identity, Tito Fred became the reputable insider to bridge my connection with elders whom I had not yet met[5].

[5] For more information in this practice and Filipinx value, see Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino, (2000), Watkins (1982), and Narag and Maxwell (2013).

2.2 Researcher Positionality

Since community feedback and participation is a driving methodological concern, the transparency of my subjectivity as a researcher is also essential. Though I am a part of the PACCM community now, I recognize the limitations of my experience in regards to the center's history. I became an active member of the center in March 2017, traveling almost every Sunday to help with the Paaralang Pilipino cultural classes, talk with elders, provide food, run workshops, meet about grant writing, and help with events. Though they were initially (and frankly) wary of my presence, I began to gain the community's trust academically by collaborating with them on a webpage I was authoring regarding the center, and personally by continuing my presence at the center as their grant writer and consultant for curriculum development. As feminist and cultural rhetorics has informed my views of community work, it is important to me to remain a participant observer committed to contributing to and not disrupting the community throughout the research process.

Finally, I don't consider myself an expert on Filipinx culture. As a *mestiza* (half Filipina, half white) who is part of the 1.5 generation of Filipinx Americans who were born in the Philippines and migrated to the United States, I am also cognizant of how Americanization and cultural amnesia has overwritten a large sense of my Filipinx mindset and heritage. Sometimes this has resulted in me discovering why I exhibit traits that are distinctly Filipinx (mostly from an Filipinx upbringing through a relationship with my mother); other times, I can't relate at all. This prevents me from understanding underlying cultural concepts (because the lack of both culture and language), so it's also important I validate and generate my findings from the Filipinx community. In turn, I'm grateful for the opportunity to re-learn my heritage through this

community, so in more ways than just the research, my goal is to listen and take in as many perspectives as I'm able to understand.

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis Methods

In order to remain open to the group's ideology, I implemented two approaches: a collaborative research structure that implemented stages of clarification and verification by the community, and an interview method that aligned with Filipinx values of knowledge production.

(1) I looked at a sampling of the center's planning documents between the years 1980-81, and 1999-2001

(2) Interview of the original members of the planning committee and current leaders of the center

Though I initially scanned the planning documents to gather thematic patterns around the planning of the site, the discussion with the elders became the main source of data since it could be expressed and verified by the planners who were also long-time members of the local Filipinx community.

In the earlier sections, I mention the importance of understanding first how a cultural group thinks of place, how cultural ideology affects their perceptions of place (it's function, identity, boundaries, etc.). The planning stage's documents and interviews provide insight into the original intentions of building the center. The documents serve as background information into these plans and purposes through the creation of the PACCM planning committee, constitution, drafted floor plans, assigned functions of certain spaces, and correspondence regarding available spaces and their ability to meet the cultural group's needs, to name a few. Not only are these documents illuminating in regards to the earlier intentions and conceptions of the center, they also serve as artifacts to reference and inspire further insight during the follow-

up interview with the original committee members. By speaking of the planning years, founding members may speak of the center in ways that aren't present in the formal documents, and may also reveal idiosyncratic ways of viewing and talking about the space through their cultural lens.

Coding of the planning stage is driven by grounded theory. Though the term "Grounded Theory" can refer to a whole family of research methods (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007), Corbin and Strauss (2008) outlined a few core principles inherent in the approach, particularly its inductive circular process of theoretical sampling, analysis of emergent codes, and resulting concepts which lead to further questions and further data collection. This process continues until the research reaches a point of saturation, or the point in which the concepts or theory is well explained. Grounded theory approach aligns with cultural rhetorics methodology in that it allows the findings to lead the thematic analysis rather than imposing an adopted pre-set theme or interpretive filter on the data. Essentially, themes emerge *from* the findings, paying credence first to the epistemological nuances of the cultural group instead of imposing, for instance, a Western lens on the interpretation of data from a non-Western culture.

In this study, emergent results drove the process. My grounded theory analysis begins with a theoretical sampling of the planning documents which is coded for general themes. The first round of thematic coding initially screened for place/space traits, labeling each element of the documents under place "function", "identity", or "delineation." A second round of coding then classified the traits under a promoted Filipinx value. For instance, reference to the center as a place for Filipinx Americans to gather would be coded as "Function/identity" and promoting the Filipinx value of "Unity" or "Congregation." These resulting codes and questions generated from the documents are then used as generative topics and questions for the original members of the planning committee (an interview via *pagtanung-tanung*) in order to better understand the

emergent concepts from the first sampling analysis. This is followed by one final round of discussion and coding of the communal interview with the planning committee elders that emulate the same coding process as the document analyses (see Figure 1). After the chapter moves from the inductive process of data to theory, I finish with key insights, observations, and feedback from the community's discussion of findings, as well as discussion and summary of Filipinx ideology guiding the place-making process in this context.

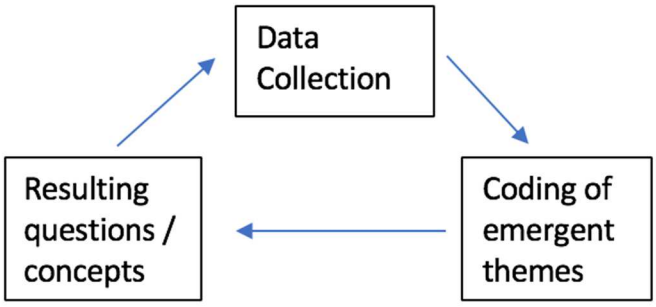

Figure 1. Inductive circular process of grounded theory approach until resulting theory/concept(s) is well-defined.

Initial sampling and coding of planning documents. On December 3, 2017, I met with PACCM vice president "Tito" Fred to receive two folders: Book 1 which contains minutes, brochures, and letters from the PACCM planning committee for the years 1980-81 (beginning of planning for the community center), and Book 2 which contains minutes, brochures, and letters for the years 1998-2001 (period of securing the current building). Both are relevant time periods in that 1980 marked the first official documents around the pursuit of the center, the formation of the PACCM planning committee, and their outlined plans and goals for the center. The years 1998 to 2001 was the window in which the members had raised enough money to secure a building for the center, and were actively negotiating the choice of building based on cultural and financial priorities. Though the twenty years in between were formative in terms of shifting

programmatically, reallocating spaces for the cultural school, and shifting in leadership, the two periods provided more than enough—though not exhaustive—set of materials to gain an initial picture of guiding Filipinx values in the center's creation. Further, these periods contain key instances wherein members attempt to articulate the ideal form and concept of the cultural center as they move toward its "making".

After receiving the sample of planning documents, I coded by first highlighting passages that referred to the cultural center and notions of place/space (such as its perceived role, characteristics, etc.). I then conducted a second read-through wherein I used open-coding to find thematic patterns. In my third and final read-through, I used the previously generated codes to guide a closed coding process wherein I looked for instances of specific themes, and documented new passages that were a fit for the set types. These themes then informed questions and insights for the interview with the elders and center's leaders.

The interview with founding members: Pagtatanung-tanung. Many research "best practices" come from Western approaches, which rely on communicative protocols that might not ring true for groups from non-western cultures. Whereas Western methods may rely on direct approaches such as surveys or individual Q&A, Filipinx cultures rely on more indirect communication and tend to follow communal protocols when providing information (Harle et al., 2007; Narag & Maxwell, 2014). As a result of these differences, many western authors have proposed conclusions about Filipinx culture that were incorrect or falsely cast Filipinx values and psychology in a negative light (see critically Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). In order to more accurately present views from a Filipinx cultural group, it is important to use a Filipinx paradigm with a decolonizing perspective as a way to collect cultural data from Filipinx subjects

and to challenge the dominant western narratives that have often falsely represented Filipinx views.

The Filipinx Indigenous worldview and ontology draws from the cultural and spiritual connection to one's fellow beings (*kapwa*). The communal connection is so intrinsic to their worldview that other concepts such as *pakikiramdam* (shared perception) and *pakikipagkapwa-tao* (shared identity) reinforce the idea that knowledge is created by communal interaction. Thus, in order to gain a culturally accurate (or at least culturally dictated) view of a particular concept or object, it is best to engage with Filipinxs in a communal arrangement wherein the means of discourse and knowledge formation is most familiar. Rather than pull immediately from Filipinx interviewing methods, I went straight to the source. Since I had rapport with the elders, they were candid with their wishes around the interview. Many requested to have the talk in a group, and to be able to use Tagalog (especially with insecurities around their English). Further, though I knew this Filipinx tradition well and planned for it, two of the elders also insisted on bringing food, that we all sit down to a meal, as if it were any other night of *tsismis* (gossip) in a Filipinx household.

With these particular core Filipinx values at center, this study used an indigenous Filipinx research method called *pagtatanung-tanong* to collect data from participants since it most aligned with the elders' requests and asked for adaptation to pre-set dynamics. *Pagtatanung-tanung* relies on the dynamic of casualness, pointing to Filipinx's discomfort and unfamiliarity with formal interview situations rather than the common behavior of socializing informally in groups. Pe-Pua (1990) outlined the characteristics of the indigenous method, drawing out its participatory nature, insistence of equal status of researcher and participant, and capability to adapt to pre-set group dynamics. Under such guidelines, it's important the participants decide the

direction and terms of the interaction in their natural setting and can ask questions to the same extent as myself. Additionally, it's important this discussion occur in groups, as Filipinx core values of *kapwa* insist in communal rather than individual validation.

This approach conforms with the general literature behind Filipinx methodologies which encourage researchers to approach Filipinx cultural data with a "suppositionless orientation" toward interpreting internal Filipinx frameworks, an approach termed *pagkapa-kapa* (Torres, 1982; Mercer, 2007). Under Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino's (2000) survey of research on Filipinx psychology and research methodology, I've approached Filipinix epistemological orientation through *patatanung-tanung* in the following ways:

Guideline 1: For good quality data, a level of mutual trust, understanding, or rapport (*pakikipagpalagayang-loob*) should be reached. As PACCM's grant writer, youth mentor, and volunteer, I've been granted trust over the private documents of the cultural center, and have been welcomed by various members of the community to take leadership and volunteer roles. It is with this rapport that they have agreed to participate in the research and have openly communicated with me their reservations as they arise.

Guideline 2: Equal treatment of researcher and participants. Throughout the study, participants have equal input in the research process itself. The elders decide the timing of the interviews, the structure of the questions, and the place of interview before the communal gathering.

Guideline 3: The welfare of the research participants take precedence over the data obtained from them. Data from the interviews are scrubbed of any information that could hold them financially or legally liable, but what's more, the participants will confirm the findings before they're submitted for outside readership. It is also important to collective identity that

shared data does not shame the community (Narag & Maxwell, 2014), so confidential information that may go against what they want shared will also be left out.

Guideline 4: The fourth guideline states, "The method to be used in a research should be chosen on the basis of appropriateness to the population (and not sophistication of the method) and it should be made to adapt to existing cultural norms" (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 60). After discussions with the president and vice president about my plans to use *patatanung-tanung*, we tweaked the approach to correspond to the elders' comfort. For instance, though the indigenous method allows them just as much a right to lead with their own questions, the elders requested I lead with specific questions to get them started.

Guideline 5: Finally, the research and participants should communicate with their mother language (Tagalog) as much as possible, and if not, local researchers should be tapped to translate. In the communal setting of the interview, participants are allowed to speak with their variations of Tag-lish (Tagalog and English), especially amongst each other without obligation to translate. Translations occur during the transcription process and are verified by participants.

2.4 Research Process and Timeline

The study began in December 2017, at which time I received the planning documents from the center and informally discussed the nature and scope of the study with the center's leaders Fred Porte and Rebecca Tungol (PACCM president). After receiving the president and vice president's permission, I approached other elder planning committee members such as "Tita" Fe Rowland, Dr. Ernestina De Los Santos-Mac, and "Ate" Flor Penner. Tito Fred put me in touch with an additional ten members. The respondents were willing to participate in the research after discussing the terms under which it would be conducted. Communal interviews were held on October 16, 2018 with eleven members of the cultural center's original planning

committee and current leadership. These discussions and interviews took place at the cultural center during weekday operating hours so only the adults and none of the students from the cultural school would be present. The communal interviewing with the planning committee lasted approximately two hours. The interviews were recorded with two audio devices and one video recorder. The elders agreed to the recording formats since the videos would also serve as a recording of the cultural center's history to be stored on the upcoming Filipinx-American archives of Michigan, a project I've been helping facilitate under PACCM and the Filipino American Historical National Society, Michigan Chapter.

2.5 Research Limitations

This case study of Filipinx placemaking is best understood in a wider context, one that takes into consideration how other cultural ideologies (especially dominant ones) are negotiated within an event. Though ideologies of participating stakeholders are also present, this study is limited to one sliver of the dialogic process by following only the Filipinx ideology and how it figured into a placemaking event. Further, the particularity of this event is just that, particular to a given set of metro Detroit's environmental (material, social, economic) factors. A much wider study that takes into account multiple case studies in different locales would help strengthen general patterns around the nature and circumstance of Filipinx placemaking within the nation's dominant urban structures.

Finally, as a natural consequence to the ethics of a cultural rhetorics methodology, this study's findings are limited to what the participant community signs off on and respectfully removes any information the community wishes to keep within the community.

Chapter 3
Filipinx Pursuit of Place in Michigan (1900-2018)

"Without exaggerating the importance of a community center suffice it to say, that the Community Center will be the only tangible expression of our identity as Pilipino, our Culture and our Heritage…And it is through this endeavor that our long dream of a place, a home that we can call our own be realized."
-Fred Baliad
Samahang Pilipino ng Michigan President
1980

The Midwest has always been a challenging place for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) to establish ethnic enclaves, demographically concentrated areas with recognizable physical boundaries (i.e. Chinatowns, Koreatowns, etc.). Without clearly designated spaces, midwestern AAPI communities have been considered "less advanced," less authentic, or weaker than their coastal counterparts in places such as California or Hawaii (Wong, 1997; Kim, 2007). There are several historical and sociopolitical reasons for the Midwest's less than fertile climate for AAPI space: (1) the Midwest continues to have the lowest population of AAPI's than any other region in the United States; (2) the Midwest has a history of displacing and splitting up AAPI groups; and (3) national patterns of the growing privatization of public spaces and increase in *non-places* fragments and displaces AAPI spaces in Michigan. It is within this historical backdrop that the Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan (PACCM) emerged despite continuing struggles to establish and sustain itself.

3.1 Region with the Lowest AAPI Populations

According to the 2010 census, Filipinos are the second fastest nationally growing group amongst the AAPI population at 44% growth, trailing only the Asian Indian population. Despite these growing numbers, the Midwest remains the region with the least amount of Filipinos. The West, with states such as California, continue to have the highest number of Filipinos (65.5 percent), followed by the South (16.3), the Northeast (9.7), and finally the Midwest at 8.4

percent (U.S. Census, 2012). Though Illinois carries half of the 8.4 percent, the Census counted 22,500 Filipinos in the state of Michigan.

These numbers—the larger concentration in the West and lowest numbers in the Midwest—follow the general history of Filipino immigration patterns to the United States. Many of the major waves of Filipino immigration settled in Hawaii or California due to earlier American labor demands, and eventually made their way in greater numbers to the Midwest in search of jobs. Though the first two purported instances of Filipino arrivals to the States are still unproven, it has been generally reported that the first arrival of Filipinos to the States occurred in 1587 when "Luzon Indians" accompanied the Spanish galleons exploration of Morro Bay on the California coast (Posadas, 1999). Filipinos on American mainland weren't reported again for some three centuries later; in 1883, *Harpers Weekly* reported a community of "Malay fishermen—Tagalas from the Philippine Islands" in Louisiana, and by the end of the century, an established Filipino community in the New Orleans area (Posadas, 1999).

Though technically the first documented Filipinos arrived in Ann Arbor, Michigan[6], the first "wave" of Filipinos included a group of 104 government sponsored students called the *pensionados*. Since the goal of the pensionado program was to place elite Filipino students in American universities so they could learn ways of governance and apply that training to serve the Philippine government, they were first sent to California schools to stay in close proximity, but were later settled in different universities across the states. A greater number of Filipino students followed the pensionados, and by the 1920s were financially supporting themselves (Posadas, 1999). Though students were the first wave, they certainly were not large enough in

[6] Recruited by University of Michigan alumni and Philippine Commission member Dean C. Worcester, three "elite" Filipino students, Santiago Artiago (21 years old from Manila), Juan Tecson (21 years old from Bulacan), and Lorenzo Onrubia (11 years old from Cavite), settled in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1900 as precursors to the pensionado students to follow.

numbers or concentrated enough in any one region to generate the prevailing coastal numbers we see today. It was during the 1930s that the United States saw the vast majority of Filipino immigrants arriving to take part in the agricultural export economy. This steady growth in laborer numbers began during the 1910s as Filipinos slowly took over largely Japanese populated labor jobs in Hawaii's sugar plantations (Posadas, 1999).

Filipino laborers were heavily concentrated in Hawaii, California, particularly San Francisco, and Los Angeles, major ports of entry from the Philippines. Due to racism, the Great Depression, and poor working conditions in the fields, some Filipinos looked for jobs in Michigan, enticed largely by the booming automobile industry in Detroit (Lawsin & Galura, 2015). By the 1920s, 15-16,000 Filipinos were now in the U.S., 800 of whom were pensionados (Frantz, 1928). According to "Bene" Benemerito's 1919 survey of young Detroit Filipinos:

> [D]roves of young Filipinos from the farms of California, Washington State…the salmon canaries of Alaska…the wind beaten rail tracks of Montana…the windy city of Chicago, etc. came to Detroit hoping to land a job in one of the high paying auto factories. Many came by driving broken down jalopies, others either by bus or on top of rail freight cars as tramps.

However, for many of them, these dreams were hard to come by as discriminatory housing practices and the Great Depression followed them from the West, and most of these students and laborers often settled in low-income, crime-infested, or declining neighborhoods as they worked tirelessly to save for an education.

Filipinos in Michigan tended to stabilize in Detroit neighborhoods during the 40s and 50s. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 removed race-based exclusionary laws, and a boom in Filipino immigration to the states shortly followed with many Filipino immigrants moving into highly trained positions, such as nursing. According to the most recent 2012-2016

census, Filipinos remain most concentrated in California (44 percent) and Hawaii (6 percent) (Zong & Batalova, 2018). As of 2018, Filipino numbers in Michigan reached 40,847 (APIA Vote).

As evidenced in its history and continuously growing numbers, states such as California have been privileged in the history books on Filipino Americans, as large demographic concentrations tied with discernable physical sites (ethnic enclaves) became most prominent examples of Filipino ethnic communities (Wong, 1997; Kim, 2007). Michigan's lack of physical sites may be also tied to the lower midwestern concentrations of Filipino population, but other researchers such as Vo and Bonus (2002) have pointed to the possibility of more fluid and complex formations of Asian American community space capable of forming outside of the bicoastal contexts.

3.2 Displacement in the Midwest and Growing Privatization

Considered the region of Asian American "unsettlements," the Midwest has historically been known for its displacement of the Asian American community, in stark contrast to states such as Hawaii and California. For example two of the largest relocation movements in the United States involved the forced displacement of Asian Americans – the Japanese community in the 1940s, and the Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees of 1975—which scattered these groups across the Midwest to disrupt pre-war ties and prevent the formation of ethnic enclaves (Jew, 2003; Kim, 2007; Bily, 2015).

Further complicating the possibilities of concentrated APIA sites is the growing occurrence of privatized spaces and proliferation of what Marc Augé (1996) termed "non-spaces." A symptom of globalization that increases "spaces of circulation, communication and consumption, where solitudes coexist without creating any social bond or even a social emotion"

(p. 178), non-places include airports, shopping centers, theme parks, even Target stores with identical layouts that show little mark of local culture. Counters to non-places are sites with a clear localized history, one that reflects back identities and relationships of its inhabitants. An example of such sites includes the shaping of Detroit's bustling Chinatown by immigrants before it was demolished for the building of the John C. Lodge freeway in the 1950s. Chinatown was displaced to Cass Corridor and Petersboro where it's currently being eroded by newer, modern and privatized businesses (Wasacz, 2016). Cultural place-making in the face of the goliaths of privatization, urban development and gentrification has been heavily documented (Delaney, 1999; Warner, 1999; Lloyd, 2006), along with the growing occurrence of *non-places* in increasingly globalized cities (Augé, 1996). With global, governmental, and technological pressures cramping down on what's left of a democratic public, in general, marginalized communities are faced with an additional societal regulation of moving their cultural identities out of the open and into private domesticated spaces (Warner, 1999). Indeed, for most of the twenty-first century, Filipinx American organizations in Michigan used members' houses, restaurants, and rented spaces in churches and schools before they were able to secure a publicly demarcated site (Navarra, 2001). What's at stake in the disruption of these cultural spaces is a disruption of sustained cultural practices and values, as well as a means of community advocacy, and negotiation of resources. Culturally localized interpretations and formations of place demonstrate the rhetorical power of cultural places as a "text" which influences access, participation, and recognition into public space and narratives of the greater public.

For Asian and Filipinx Americans in Michigan, the pattern of dispersal is compounded by metro Detroit's urban development, making it difficult to sustain APIA ethnic space, such as the dismantling of an entire Chinatown to make room for a freeway (Chan, Kim, & Gauri, 2015;

Hunter, 2016). In a study by Barbara Kim, Asian Americans in Michigan exhibited less discernable ethnic enclaves as their western geographic counterparts, and instead, demonstrated dispersed patterns of (largely heterogeneous) ethnic space. Marking the interplay between material spaces and political participation, she found that in order to produce a concerted response to their racialized group's political issues, Michigan's Asian Americans were, to a greater degree, operating within multicultural geographic boundaries[7] with other co-ethnics rather than within Asian ethnic groups. Kim revises Vo and Bonus' bicoastal model of formal ethnic enclaves, by echoing Ling's Midwestern cultural community model wherein dispersed Asian American groups are found to "enjoy" the heterogeneity of co-ethnic communities (cited in Kim 86). In other words, for Asian Americans in Midwestern states such as Michigan and Missouri, participating in the public sphere for their groups' political interests is less likely to occur from their own racialized group, but through multicultural collaboration.

3.3 Michigan Filipinx Americans' Pursuit of Place

Though the Filipinx-American community of metro Detroit has played substantial roles in co-ethnic organizations such as Detroit Asian Youth (DAY) Project, and Council of Asian Pacific Americans (CAPA), they've steadily maintained a growing multi-organizational presence under their ethnic identity since the group's first arrival to the state – it was only the possibility of a formally designated public space that had eluded them. Though many documents by PACCM founders and historians speculated the first articulation of "a space to call home" occurred in the 1930s, it wasn't until the 1960s that the first Filipinx-American space in Michigan was established. The Federation of Filipinos Clubhouse was a small house on 9115 St. Cyril St., Detroit (Lawsin & Garula, 2015). It opened in 1961 and was a building for club socials,

[7] According to 40 interviews of Asian American Michiganders in 1998 and '99, Kim found such community formations to occur within the spatial boundaries of college campuses, churches, and temples.

baby showers, wedding parties, and general Filipinx get-togethers. It closed in the 80s to what was suspected were financial reasons or what Eduardo Navarra claimed as a result of the "old-timers" passing away without successors. With the leadership of Marcellano "Bene" Benemerito, the Filipinx community immediately began fundraising for the Philippine American Community Center of Michigan.

Benemerito wasn't the only leader of a Filipinx organization to push for the planning of a cultural center, however. Philippine Cultural Center Organization under Felisa De Luna, Philippine Cultural Center project under Dr. Norma Espiritu and a group of physicians, alongside Benemerito's Filipino American Community Council (FILAMCCO, now the umbrella organization for all Michigan Filipinx organizations), among many others in the 1970s and 80s, galvanized pockets of support for the establishment of a Filipinx space (Navarra, 2001; Navarra, n.d.). Eventually, the leading organization Samahang Pilipino Ng Michigan (SPM) led by Rev. Fred Baliad took the first formal steps to create a center. Their five-year plan was first introduced with forthcoming details in a memo by Baliad, and was outlined in two phases: (1) cost estimates and feasibility studies of a new building, and (2) establishment of consistent funding activities. SPM launched the five-year plan at their kick-off party on March 1980, with the intention of breaking ground on June, 1981, and planning a dedication of the building in November of 1984 (Baliad, 1980a). The campaign kicked off with $2,000 profit toward the building (Baliad, 1980b), but their five-year plan set an ambitious fundraising mark to half a million dollars or more for the building of the center (SPM, 1980).

In January of 1982, FILAMCCO established themselves as an umbrella organization and sought to unite all organizational efforts toward a center. Baliad's Philippine American Community Center (PACC) became officially the Philippine American Community Center of

Michigan (PACCM), and was incorporated the following year with such leaders as Fred Baliad, Delia H. Rayos, Lucita Z. Ocampo, Ross Arellano, and soon to be first chairman Bayani Domingo. Under Domingo's term, PACCM began the Philippine School (Paaralang Pilipino), but without a center, they held classes at Grissom Junior High School in Sterling Heights. The school began with 7 adults and 20 children, ages 6+ and taught Pilipino language, history, dance and music (Sitchon, 2002). Sterling Heights had a growing Filipinx American community, and the school benefited from increasing enrollment numbers, though they worried about maintaining space and resources in a building that wasn't officially theirs. Though they continued to reach out to the Filipinx community for building funds, it wasn't until Dr. Bobby Barretto took over the reins in 1986 that the PACCM project gained momentum through fundraising and tax breaks. Dr. Barretto leaned on his medical circles and other major events such as the Valentine's Day Party (which generated over $25,000 that year), donations from major Filipinx orgs, as well as charter membership organizations. In that same year, Dr. Sid Almeda and his lawyer established a temporary ruling for the organization's tax-exempt status, largely because of the presence of the cultural school, and gained a permanent ruling in 1989 (Navarra, 2001).

Despite the financial progress the community was gaining, they experienced two major drawbacks. The first was Paaralang Pilipino's closure between the years 1985 to 1987 due to Grissom Junior High School's high maintenance fees. By 1987, however, the community leaders were able to secure space at Guardian Angel School at Clawson, and the school resumed with 25 students and 9 volunteer staff (Sitchon, 2002). The second drawback came from what was initially considered a victory: the purchase of vacant land in Rochestor Hills on Crooks Road for $46,000 in 1986. The land was intended for the building of the community center, but without approval from the city due to zoning laws, the land was sold (Navarra, 2001). Many in the

community began to question the possibility of a center, particularly since the initial timeline proved much harder for the leaders than anticipated. The grass roots campaign to gain money for the center prided itself not on pulling support from any government, business, or corporate sponsor, but through PACCM's local newsletter, *Pilipinas Newsletter*, reports to the community, town hall meetings, and professional Filipinx circles. However, the Filipinx community was now doubting, hesitant to give any more money unless they could *see* a center. A typical response would include "Call me when you have a building, and I will again [donate]" ("Selection", 2002).

Regardless of the setbacks, by the end of Barretto's term in 1994, PACCM fundraised more than $550,000, and the next chairman, Dr. Ben Fajardo, inherited the large sum but also the challenge of sustaining community support and securing a building once and for all. In that time, the Filipino school and members were still meeting in high schools, churches, restaurants, and members' homes (Navarra, 2001). After being pushed out of Guardian Angel School, Paaralang Pilipino and its students relocated to Davis Junior High School on 17 Mile Rd in 1998. The constant relocating of the cultural school motivated Fajardo's team to settle on a building. They began reviewing offers and proposals for a building site. With the help and suggestions of Comerica Bank, the board grappled with such factors as price, zoning regulations (i.e. some sites would not approve a cultural center), and location. In one instance of a promising site, board member Flor Sitchon took a pulse on the community which conveyed a hesitant move: "A survey was conducted to determine how many would be willing to move to Queen of Peace if no other site is found. Among 18 teachers, only 3 would go; among students, only 12 out of 77; among adults only 10 out of 80" (PACCM minutes, Sept 19, 1998). It was clear that they were

taking the risk of losing numbers through the relocation process, but the dream of their own building had been a long-term dream with long-term benefits.

It was at the end of Dr. Fajardo's term before handing leadership to Dr. Efren Platon that PACCM finally found a building. With location, price, and zoning laws continuing to provide a mixture of challenges, the board eventually settled on a 10,000 sq. ft. building in Southfield in 2000, largely based on its affordability so the community could then renovate the building to their liking (Navarra, 2001). With $721,450.83 in generated funds, the PACCM board purchased the building at $240,000, followed by the renovation project at approximately $380,000. Renovation began in March 2000 and was completed September, 2001 ("Selection", 2002). A group of Filipino architects and engineers, such as Jess Anayas, Ross Arellano, and Arturo Bada, donated their services for the building renovation. Renovated features included the change of the copy room to a kitchen, and a widening of the main lobby (see Figures 2 & 3).

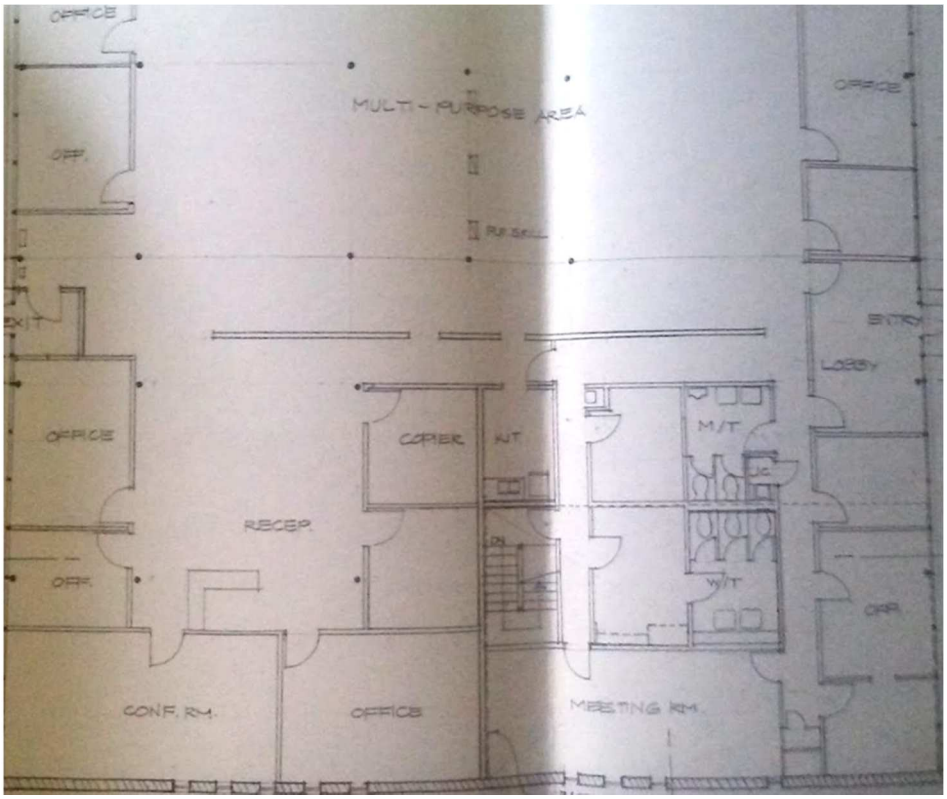

Figure 2. Layout of Southfield building before renovation.

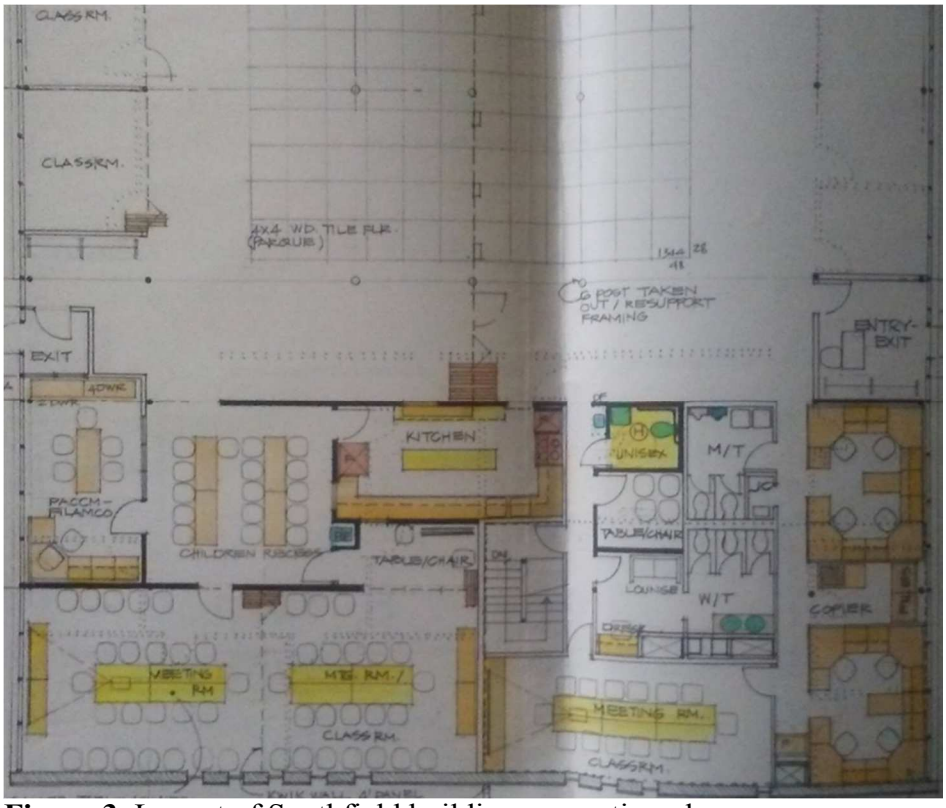

Figure 3. Layout of Southfield building renovation plans.

Given the decades long, cumulative effort, volunteer hours, and sacrifices of board members, youth, Filipinx-American community, presidents, and fifty-one Filipinx-American organizations, PACCM officially opened on September 22, 2001 (“Selection”, 2002). The opening attracted a round of media including Channel 15 of Southfield, WDTR 90.9FM, and several news sources such as the Troy Eccentric, and the Troy Gazzette. On the next day, Paaralang Pilipino school held open house and registration in the center (PACCM minutes, 2001). With recognition by the governor, PACCM’s residing street, Northland Park Court, was later declared “Philippines Street” on April 19, 2002.

3.4 PACCM Today Amidst a Climate of Cultural Place-Making

Today, nearly two decades later, the center is bustling with Filipinx-American youth and adults of all ages. The kitchen is almost always occupied with a helping hand to make or distribute food to students and visitors, a typical demonstration of the Filipinx values of feeding

(and perhaps over-feeding) one's guests. The board members, including President Tungol, Fred Porte, Tony Kho, James Beni Wilson, previous President Dr. Ernestina de Santos-Mac, among other leading members, are often seen greeting the regulars, dancing or playing with the students, and occasionally descending into the back office to continue the difficult work of generating funds to keep the center operating.

The center serves over 4,000 community members of every age who are of Filipinx heritage and/or are interested in the heritage. Current programs include:

- Health and Wellness Expo which provides health screenings for people without health insurance coverage;
- senior programs by the National Alliance to Nurture the Aged and the Youth (NANAY) – charitable arm of PACCM committed to providing psychological, health and emotional support for the youth and the elders 60 years of age and older;
- consulate on wheels, an outreach service provided by the Philippine Consulate where they travel to Michigan to renew passports, process dual citizenship and other notarial services;
- enrichment classes;
- honoring high school and college graduates with dinner reception and awarding of certificates for their accomplishments;
- and main regional donation center for Philippine disaster relief.

As for PACCM's biggest component, the cultural school, Paaralang Pilipino continues to serve local adults and youth interested in learning Filipinx heritage by providing cultural education centered around Filipinx history, politics, folk dance, and language (Tagalog) classes every

Sunday at the cultural center. Paaralang began as a way to address community need for heritage classes with an emphasis on Tagalog literacy and folk dance, but has also blossomed into community collaborations with the Hula dance group and Filipino Youth Initiative (FYI). Paaralang currently serves 45 students annually, with an expected 16% increase of enrollment for the 2019-2020 instructional year. With the makeup of its attendees including spouses of Filipinxs and other locals who are eager to learn the culture, as well as second and third generation Filipinx youth who are recognizing the increasing loss of their culture and parents' language, the classes continue to work to strengthen newly formed and intergenerational ties to community and cultural identity.

"We want to keep this place a home for the community where Fil-Ams can gather," said Vice President Fred Porte. In order to do so, the center has kept its doors open for different organizations, many of them Filipinx American affiliated medical groups, who would sponsor PACCM's services and raise funds for the community. PACCM's services also extend through the continued help of the FILAMCCO Foundation, what Dr. Mac refers to as "the charitable arm of PACCM." Along with the Mac family which continues to play an indispensable role in providing financial resources for the center, the majority of funds rely on PACCM's two events: the annual Valentines Ball and annual golf tournament. Newer events are largely led by Filipinx college students from surrounding universities, such as Wayne State, Michigan State, University of Michigan, and Central Michigan University. The events focus on Filipinx empowerment and social justice, such as the annual Mestiz(x) panel that discusses difficulties in navigating interracial identities, or movie screenings/discussions around concepts of colonialism, intersectionality, US and Philippine relations, and LGBTQIA+ rights.

Nonetheless, rising building and program expenditures mixed with a struggle to generate newer and younger community leaders has made the task of sustaining the center one heavily resting on the shoulders of the senior members and local donations. In this sense, Philippine Street exhibits the insulated, community-run entity which it houses. Though funding to sustain operations is a common challenge for ethnic spaces, PACCM's history also points to the difficulty of securing buildings in light of city zoning policies, such as the zoning regulations that prevented the initial Rochester Hills location. Zoning laws have sometimes served as an impediment to the visibility and establishment of community spaces within the public sphere, tending to lean toward market capital space.

As PACCM nears its 20th anniversary in 2021, it continues to welcome the old and new: the Filipinx youth eager to learn the cultural ways, language, and customs and the elders eager to pass them on; local Filipinx Michiganders in search for that other sense of "home"; and community members hoping to experience the richness of Michigan's array of cultures.

Chapter 4
Rhetoric of Place: Cultural Values in the Place-Making of a Filipinx-American Cultural Center

In this chapter, I examine planning data for the PACCM in order to understand how it was "written" and talked about as a place. Since they cover the time period in which PACCM had not yet materialized as a physical building, these data—which include original planning documents from 1980-81 and 1999-2001, and discussion with the founding members—represent the blueprints of the center's social and metaphoric spatial makeup. In this chapter, I explain the major cultural ideological values steering the creation of the center. These ideological themes are concluded from combining the resulting themes from the site's planning documents, which were further clarified and built upon through discussions with PACCM's founding members.

4.1 Beginning Plans for the Center

Though Filipinx values steered the concept of the center and what it should provide for the Filipinx-American community, these values were often shifting in presence and/or priority throughout the two planning decades. Given to the pressure of zoning laws, limited building and financial options, as well as the need to secure a succession of Filipinx-American members, the center's leaders needed to forefront certain values and negotiate different cultural logics to bring a sustainable cultural center into fruition. The center was initially envisioned as a site that promoted Filipinx identity, heritage, and support/recreational services.

When the first group to take a formal approach toward creating the center introduced a 5-year plan for the center's building, the goals of the center were to largely promote cohesiveness and unity amongst fragmented Filipinx groups (Samahang Ng Pilipino [SPM], 1980). SPM's "United-Progressive Coalition" outlined plans for a community center building that would also explore options to provide a credit union, sports development, radio broadcast, health clinic,

scholar's support, bilingual education, and a voter's league. SPM, led by president Fred Baliad and regional vice president Norma Bada, among others, published a brochure for the community with an artist's rendering of the Philippine-American Community Center (then PACC) (see Figure 4), that repeated these proposed services, in addition to "Human and Social Services" (i.e. Child care, youth and student activities, senior citizens, counseling, housing employment, education, and immigration), and "Cultural Cultivations and Ecumenical Programs" (i.e. library, folk songs, dances, cooking, and language) for the community ("The PACC FUND" brochure, 1980). The original documents for the five-year plan stress *bayanihan* (togetherness), alongside words of "unity" and "cohesion" which becomes a core Filipinx value throughout the creation and planning of the center.

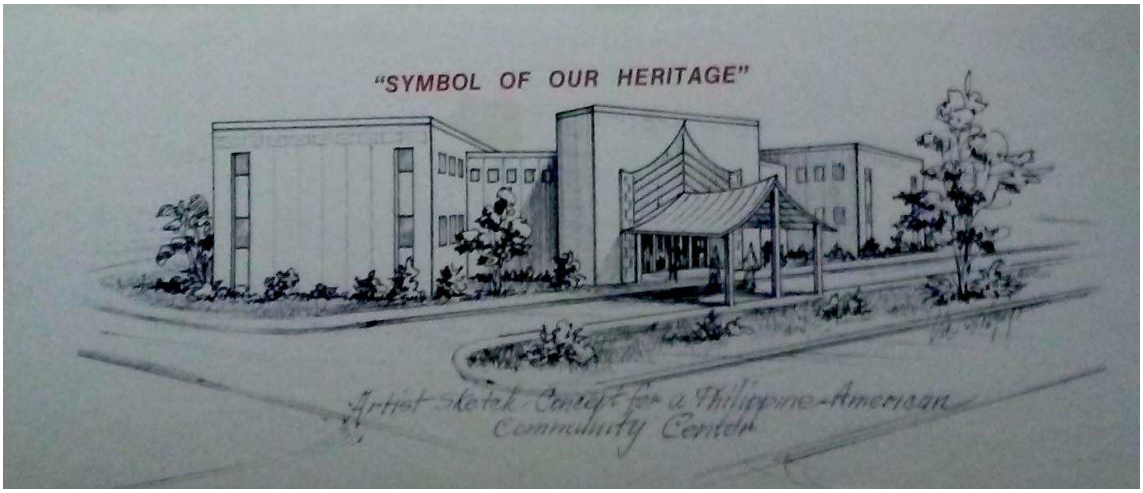

Figure 4. Artist Sketch Concept for a Philippine-American Community Center.

However, features of the site are later re-prioritized away from the explicit promotion of Filipinx values in order to prioritize and sustain the value of togetherness, and the early planners negotiated a series of Filipinx values to stay aligned to this end. Eventually, the center was transformed into a semi-malleable site for members to give back to their Filipinx community. This giving back no longer had to be explicitly Filipinx related, but just a means to continually

call back members into the community for this sense of unity or togetherness. The following sections explore the Filipinx values steering the center's creation based on the center's documents and later clarified by the original planning members and leadership.

4.2 Preliminary Notes on the Coding Process

Round 1 of coding began with taking a theoretical sampling of the planning documents which had been coded for general themes. The resulting questions were used as generative topics/questions for Round 2 of data collection, the interview with the original members and presidents of the center. According to grounded theory, generated questions must be tested against additional data samples until the research reaches a point of saturation; however, carrying over round 1's questions were difficult when using a cultural rhetorics methodology, as Filipinx indigenous interviewing calls for equal leadership and flexibility between researcher and participant. Mainly, this meant that I could go in with specific questions, but I had to let the elders have as much say in the direction of the conversation. Naturally, all of round 1's questions were not addressed during the actual interview, but it did provide a more authentic engagement with the community which clarified some of the thematic codes I had generated from the documents alone.

On October 16, 2018, I met with the founding members of PACCM to discuss and record their part in the history and making of the center. Since the interview is meant to serve the community above simply providing "data" for a dissertation, I received consent from the participants to coordinate with PACCM Vice President Fred Porte and the board of the Filipino American National Historical Society of Michigan (FANHS-MI) to videotape and record the discussion for FANHS-MI's newly developing Filipinx-Americans of Michigan digital archive, and PACCM's fundraising event for the center's 20th anniversary in 2021. From 4 to 6 pm that

Tuesday evening, I gathered with the participants in PACCM's main eating area. After reviewing and signing consent forms, we filled our plates with Filipinx food and made our greetings, easing into our usual mode of *tsismis* (gossip) and communal chatting, while a FANHS-MI member and I set up the camera and recorders, pressing "record" surreptitiously so as not to interrupt the conversation.

The participants. I did a preliminary coding of the planning committee's documents but ultimately relied on the discussion with some of the original members and current leadership. All members were involved in some capacity during the planning stages of the building, whether through committee, fundraising, or renovation work, and/or have been involved in the continued evolution of the center. The participants included:

Arturo Bada—husband to Norma Bada, Arturo was PACCM's volunteer engineer who was part of the renovation team in the early 2000's. Arturo also played a strong hand in the feasibility studies of potential buildings before they secured the site on Northland Parkway. He passed away two months after the interview, but is remembered by the center and locals for his generous spirit and consistent uplifting of the Filipinx-American community.

Norma Bada—wife of Arturo Bada, she was part of the founding community members and donors when Filipinx-American organizer and FILAMCCO leader Marcellano Benemerito first introduced the idea of a Philippine American cultural center. She also served as the regional vice president on the original PACC board which produced the initial five-year plan.

Dr. Roberto M. Barretto—husband to Milagros Barretto and Chairperson of PACCM from 1986 to 1993, Dr. "Bob" Barretto is often attributed as the one to secure the greatest amount of funds toward the materialization of a building. He was responsible for fundraising and outreach with Dr. Manny Tan during this critical period, and by the end of his term, PACCM had

raised around $700k for the establishment of the center. During his term, PACCM also bought its first plot of land in Rochester Hills.

Milagros Barretto—wife to Dr. Bob, Mille was an active member and fundraiser for the cultural center.

Dr. Ben Fajardo—Chairperson of PACCM from 1994 to 2000, Dr. Fajardo continued the fundraising efforts from Barretto's term. During his time, the plot in Rochester Hills was sold for a profit, and they continued the search for the next building site with Fajardo's guidance toward certain key goals for the center and building.

Tony Kho—Current Executive Director of PACCM, Tony plays a critical hand in decisions around the center's purchases, fundraising activities, sustainment of the building, and the securing of potential buildings.

Josie Palu-ay—Co-director of Paaralang Pilipino cultural school with Fe Rowland.

Fred Porte—husband of Dr. Ellen Porte, current vice president of PACCM, and long-time member of the cultural center. Fred worked to secure buildings for the cultural school when they were without a building. His mother is also known as one of the early prominent figures in the Filipinx community and PACCM.

Dr. Ellen Porte—wife of Fred Porte, and long-time active member and fundraiser at PACCM.

Dr. Efron Platon—Chairperson of PACCM from 2000 to 2006. The building on Northland Parkway opens during his term.

Fe Rowland—Director of Paaralang Pilipino since 1998. She led the cultural school at its various locations at schools, churches, and eventually the current PACCM building.

Rebecca Tungol—Current president of PACCM since 2012. She revived the NANAY program for seniors and the Health and Wellness fair.

Before presenting the resulting themes of the discussion, four notes about the coding: (1) Frequency was not important. Though there were a few themes repeated throughout, all mentions of PACCM's role and meaning were considered (2) Statements often had overlapping themes, so context was important for distinguishing the most prominent theme. For instance, a simple sentence about Tampa having a bigger center alludes to concerns earlier about needing a bigger space for more groups to get together (hence coded as "congregation"); though themes of "Filipinx identity" or "Service" could also be argued for the sentence if it is considered in isolation, the context around the statement involved the need for a space for groups to get together outside of restaurants or members' homes. (3) Themes were confirmed with a few of the participant elders after coding. (4) Though many of the members had views of their time and engagement at PACCM which could indirectly allude to views of the site, thematic codes were only generated for statements about the center.

4.3 Results: Filipinx Values Steering the Center's Creation

After two rounds of thematic coding of the original planning documents, I saw several broad themes emerge around the creation of the cultural center: *Heritage, ethnic (Filipinx) identity, unity, religion*, and *financial profit*. An interview with many of the members behind the planning documents and long-time active members of the center yielded clearer insights behind the nature of some of the first round codes (planning documents) and some newer themes. Still major themes such as "*Heritage*", "*Unity*", and "*Filipinx identity*" remained present, but "*Congregation*," "*Empowerment*," "*Service*," "*Reciprocity*," "*Succession*," and

"*Volunteer/Donated Work*" newly emerged (see Table 1 at the end of the themes section for examples of each). I present each belief's association with the concept of the center with a definition used to identify the belief and examples of its presence in the documents and interviews.

Heritage – many of the documents referred to the purpose of the cultural center as a site that will pass on and sustain the community's traditions or traits to both Filipinxs and other Americans. The connection between the cultural center and heritage was noticeably apparent, for instance, in the center's famous "Symbol of Our Roots" proposal by Samahang Pilipino ng Michigan (and technically PACCM's first) President Fred Baliad. In the document, Baliad (1980) outlines the anatomy of the planning committee's board, and introduces the 5-year plan of the center's creation, followed by the center's purpose as "the only tangible expression of our identity as Pilipino, our Culture, and our Heritage." The other earliest document, the proposed constitution of the cultural center, reiterates Baliad's sentiment, as in addition to a number of proposed services around health, immigration, and education, the center's goals were of "cultural cultivations and ecumenical programs" followed by a listing of folk traditions relating to Filipino culture ("Proposed Constitution," 1981)[8]. Here, notions of preservation, or the passing down of Filipinx values makes an immediate debut in the community's earliest and most referenced documents.

Many other passages referred specifically to the use of the center for the handing down of Filipinx heritage to the youth via folk performances and cultural classes. This cultural heritage was framed in many of the earlier documents in terms of offered education, but later stress the

[8] Telling to note that on the original constitution document, a heavy checkmark is only placed on the cultural cultivations goal.

importance of the passing down of this heritage. In a document by the board of directors outlining PACCM's purposes and objectives to the local Filipinx community, for instance, the center proposes to "make available to the youth of Philippine ancestry the cultural heritage of the Filipino People (its history, art, music, folk dance, customs, and traditions) for them to learn and preserve for posterity" ("PACCM Purposes," 1999-2000).

When not passing down the culture, the center's goals also sustain cultural traditions and traits for educating and sharing Filipinx culture with outsiders: "Americans" and those of other ethnic groups. In "PACCM and You" (1999), a brochure circulated to the community of metro Detroit describing what the center is and why it exists, the primary goal is stated to:

> foster excellence through the development promotion and preservation of Filipino family values, culture and tradition and to enhance the image of the Filipinos through celebration of differences and enjoyment of their similarities with American friends and other ethnic groups.

Filipinx culture is here intended to stay preserved for the Filipinx community, but also plays a strong role as part of the mosaic of the city's ethnic heritages. Documents and promotional material about the cultural center mainly centered the purpose of heritage.

Consistent with the planning documents, the elders saw PACCM's main role as advancing the cultural and historical legacy of Filipinxs to future generations. Fe Rowland discussed the role of Paaralang Pilipino and Filipino Youth Initiative classes as educating the younger generations of Filipinx Americans in Filipinx language, culture, folk traditions, history, and historical positionality within American contexts. Embracing heritage, over time, became a more insular pursuit, hoping to remind, empower, and uplift Filipinx students through their cultural history.

Filipinx Identity – Unsurprisingly behind the creation of the cultural center, passages referred to the community center's role as fostering a common identity of Filipino/a. As explained in chapter 1, identity associated to a particular site can involve any declared visual, discursive, or embodied notion of place as associated with a particular identity and/or can mean acts that reinforce a particular identity. These passages, for the majority of the time, directly refer to the word "identity" and became a distinct theme due to their repetition and presence in major documents explicitly outlining the center's purpose and affiliative Filipinx identity. The strongest example comes from Baliad's (1980) "Symbol of Our Roots" proposition that explicitly marks the center as the "symbol" and "only tangible expression of our identity as Pilipino." The brochure "PACCM and You" (1999) later reinforces the center's role in terms of identity representation: "We all realize how important the Philippine American Community Center is to us. It will be a testimony…to our cultural identity."

Closely linked to the heritage theme (as acts promoting Filipinx identity are tied to heritage performances/knowledge), the theme of Filipinx identity demonstrates that the Filipinx members are likely oriented to the center in ways that construct the space as one accommodating to specific acts and behaviors related to Filipinx culture.

In the brochures, planning, and fundraising documents, PACCM as representing and fostering the common identity of Filipinx is reinforced in the elders' discussions. PACCM's meaning fuses function and identity affiliation, as many times PACCM's functions to endorse and teach Filipinx history and culture simultaneously reinforce a shared affiliation to Filipinx identity. Similar to the congregation theme, the elders talked of the center being a place to be with other Filipinos. Solicitations to join the center are open to anyone who identifies as having

even “an ounce of Filipino blood in them” (F. Rowland, personal communication, October 16, 2018).

However, the elders also depart from the planning documents in that they nuance Filipinx identity through actions that take place around the center. Such actions help them perceive who is an “insider” or “outsider” to their common identity, or the cultural center identity the members are trying to fashion or instill. Filipinx identity thus has two functions, to pass on “insider” status by initiating outside Filipinxs into the community and to reinforce a behavior of generosity that is considered part of Filipinx identity (to be discussed in further length under the “Volunteer/Donated Work” and “Reciprocity” theme). Just as I was initiated into the cultural center’s community by Tito Fred, similar studies on Filipinx culture observe that newcomers who are endorsed by an insider benefit from his/her reputation, often making entry into the community an easier endeavor (Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino, 2000; Watkins, 1982; Watkins and Gutierrez, 1989). The elders discussed the center as a space to substantiate insiders through member introduction or solicitation to join or contribute to the center: “It’s not, you approach a Filipino for a donation, it’s not the cost; it’s the guy who approached you,” said Dr. Barretto. The other chairs reinforced insider Filipinx status to bring in other Filipinxs, emphasizing how important that connection is over the “sales pitch”. “That’s why it’s our strategy when we send invitation, we ask [Dr. Ernestina Santos-Mac] to write with her penmanship,” laughed Rebecca Tungol, gesturing toward a letter, “Please sign, and then she signs it.”

Insider/outsider status as Filipinxs was also distinguished based on behaviors around forms of generosity. Generosity as a Filipinx value plays out in a complicated code of ethics under the “Reciprocity” theme and is seen in particular form under “Volunteer/Donated Work” theme, but in both senses establishes what is seen as insider Filipinx identity via center-related

actions. The elders discussed that a notion of generosity for the "continuity of supporting our community" is what made a member "one of [them]." When discussing the lack of this giving among the younger generation or even the presidents of affiliated Filipinx organizations who were more preoccupied with status or individual legacy than community, an elder concluded, "They're not like us. It's not the same," followed by agreement, "It's the – I don't know, it is the mentality" (R. Barretto, B. Tungol, & F. Rowland, personal communication, October 16, 2018). Filipinx identity is thus established through "insider/outsider" status as demonstrated by behavior in and around the cultural center.

Unity – Easily the most heavily represented theme, unity refers to passages that repeated or alluded to the cultural center's purpose of fostering "unity" or "cohesion" among the Filipinx community. Unity has been a consistent thematic priority from the start of the center to the present. Passages referring to "unity" and the center overwhelmingly tied the successful building of the cultural center as dependent on the unified action of the Filipinx community. First, the theme often occurred as a common slogan and marker for galvanizing community support—both from Michigan's broader Filipinx community and from across the Filipinx organizations—for the building of the center. For instance, after Baliad's (1980) proposal closed with "It is through this Center that we can show our Unity and Strength," the theme moves from symbol to motivating call, often reoccurring as a means to incite support for the center's creation. Unity is used as a strategic call for the broader Filipinx community to come together, such as one chairman's relayed attempt to explain to Filipinx locals the importance of the cultural center to the community, the difficulty that lay ahead of them in its building, but the reassurance "it can be done with the undying support of everyone." Town hall meetings gauging support for the center's creation were often summarized as to whether the community was willing to pull behind

the project, and the bottom of many of the board minutes and PACCM letter templates within the years 1998 and 1999 were concluded with "Together We Can Build Our Cultural Center" or "Nasa pagkakaisa ang lakas, nasal akas ang tagumpay!" (In unity there is strength, in strength there is victory!) (Sitchon, 1999).

The need for unity becomes a cause for concern in some instances, the lack of cohesion often correlating directly to the center's struggling existence. The "PACCM and You" brochure (1999) reiterates the correlation:

> Today as our community grows and spreads its wings, we are continuously facing the struggle to be *united* and remain *cohesive* as Filipino-Americans. We have come to realize, just as well as other Filipino-American communities across the country, that a Philippine center is necessary to effectively promote our mission and to achieve our goals. As we see the center rise and stand, then it becomes the *symbol of our unity* and identity…a source of pride for the Filipino community.
> The building and completion of a center is our community dream, our community project. *The time has come for our community to give it their Number One priority.* Together, we must invest on the ideas that we have laid and bring triumph to our dream. We all need to work together. And together, we can build our own community center. (emphasis added)

"Togetherness" is here repeated as the essential ingredient for the center's success. Fundraising documents in the later years stress the notion of cohesion, sometimes referring to inter-group conflict, but overall, concerns over the cultural center's success is perceived to be dependent on the level of unity and cohesion among the community. This unity refers to the Filipinx community, specifically, perhaps drawing from Filipinx values of *utang na loob* (reciprocity) and *kapwa* (fellow beings) which stress obligations of internal reciprocity within Filipinx culture. Enriquez (1993) defined kapwa and utang na loob as delineating and reinforcing the "insiders" from outsiders, and maintaining conformity within the cultural group. This conformity, or movement as a unit, is maintained by cultivating an ongoing "debt of gratitude" which keeps the individual tied to their homeland. However, in this case, the cultural center may be serving as an

extension of the homeland, and unity a means of galvanizing support through cultural obligation. The imposition of the cultural obligation becomes more explicit in later interviews with the founding members, but is implicitly present across planning and community documents.

Religion/Spirituality – Though a minor theme, the center's use for religious purposes is established in the early documents outlining the proposed goals of the center ("Proposed Constitution," 1981) as promoting ecumenical programs. The center moves away from religious purposes—though this isn't documented formally in this sample of documents—but is reintroduced in August of 1998. The then president Efren Platon moved that PACCM reintroduce into the center's objectives its use as a non-denominational facility "to meet the religious and spiritual needs of the Filipino-American community (PACCM board, "Minutes Aug 23," 1998). This objective is formally added to the constitution the following month.

Religious use of the center is not present in other documents or activities relating to the center, at least through the center's formal documents of this time. However, religious content such as psalms and references to religious guidance are present from the board leaders, though they do not point to center activities.

The center serving a spiritual or religious function was not mentioned throughout the interview, except that they would sometimes rent out the space to religious groups for supplemental income. Over time, there seemed to be less emphasis on Filipinx religious values.

Financial Profit – In the later documents (1998-2001) building options precipitate discussions around PACCM's role in producing profit, but particularly profit to help sustain its longevity. PACCM's "Purposes and Objectives" (1999) first outline the goals to "raise funds through memberships, donations, contributions, and proceeds from social functions or other means such

as gifts and bequests," as well as "to collect funds derived from any trust, corporations, or any other source at any period to build [PACCM]." Thus, the cultural center is envisioned as a central entity for pooling in money for community endeavors. Reports, property checks, and board minutes reflect the evaluation of potential buildings for their ability to generate financial support with a particular eye toward generating funds through the leasing of the building to outside groups. For instance, for a potential building on 19 Mile and Dequindre St., the committee recommended buying the lot with the clause that "the City allow the building of PACCM in this area with the understanding of the functions including occasional leasing of the Hall to outside to help finance itself without violation of the ordinance" (Report of Property, 1998).

Congregation – PACCM, as a site, was considered a means of getting (Filipinx-American) people together in one centralized space. Though, and perhaps especially because PACCM entities such as the planning committees and cultural school would meet in various spaces for two decades, it was the building that would be considered the main catalyst for congregation among the various programs' members, Filipinx-American organizations, and Filipinx-American locals of Michigan. Similar to the Filipino Clubhouse on Cyril Street, the earliest ideas of the center grew from a need to congregate with other Filipinos in the area. Elders Arturo and Norma Bada recalled their conversations with the early group of Filipinos in the 70s and 80s: "We started looking for a building simply because we didn't have that many Filipinos at that time, and we would like to mingle with Filipinos[…] a center or something like that for congregation." From the elders who were present when the idea of PACCM was birthed to the elders behind the securement of the building, discussion of PACCM as a centralized holding space for congregation was a common theme. The elders also discussed the wish for a bigger building so

that they could accommodate the increasing demand for meeting space: “This is really the problem now is it’s too small for us,” said President Rebecca Tungol. “That’s why we have to move. We were trying to sort of, we are dreaming of buying a bigger place.”

Though PACCM’s perceived function as a means of congregation is not as explicitly related to bigger space in the planning documents, it does explain part of the reason for the renovations that occurred in the early 2000s. The main lobby was opened up, and removal of the copy room for a kitchen, for instance, allowed for food sharing, a necessity for any form of Filipinx congregation.

Empowerment – Mentioned only briefly in the planning documents without connection to youth services and cultural classes, empowerment became a theme in terms of PACCM holding graduations for the Filipinx youth and hosting classes for the Filipino Youth Initiative (FYI) and Paaralang Pilipino. Two years after the building opened, the elders had the idea to honor Filipinx graduates in the main lobby, a tradition that has continued strong since. The elders spoke of the pride and empowerment that manifested every year PACCM celebrates the graduates, invites the families, and facilitates the cheering on of these graduates from their Filipinx-American community. “When they come to the recognition of graduates, we order the Filipino graduate stole from the Philippines,” Fe Rowland emphasized.

Another way to honor and empower the youth was through Paaralang Pilipino and Filipino Youth Initiative classes. One of the main aims of the programs is to teach Filipino American history and tell the often untold story of Filipino Americans. Director Fe Rowland, after discussing the importance of PACCM in helping foster this empowerment, even used the October 16th discussion to solicit the elder doctors in the room to come speak to the FYI kids about their professional experiences and hardships in America. Through such events as the

graduation and FYI classes, the center reinforces feelings of empowerment for the Filipinx youth and locals.

Service – PACCM as a means of providing services to the Filipinx community remained a prominent theme, consistent with the planning documents and elder dialogue. Elders reinforced the values of generosity and help to any Filipinx Americans and immigrants in need. Many of the offered programs that weren't explicitly related to heritage or culture included the NANAY program for seniors, which the elders proudly discussed and even solicited to others in the room who were yet to learn about it. The NANAY program holds events and activities for Filipinx and other metro Detroit seniors, such as their monthly trip to the Detroit Institute of the Arts. Dr. Ben Fajardo discussed the original plans of the center were largely to make it a resource center: "the vision for the building at the time, we were trying to express this is that we would have it as a resource center where we could meet and then get some information, new people coming in, you know…job fairs and all these things." According to the original planning documents in the 1980s, PACCM was envisioned having a credit union, sports development center, health clinic, and voters league, to name just a few services. What was eventually feasible would be the NANAY program, health and wellness fair, and consulate services. This largely had to do with financial limitations, and these surviving programs were products of coordination with separate Filipinx organizations.

Reciprocity – PACCM is also discussed as an agent of reciprocity between Filipinx locals and the center. This Filipinx cultural value, earlier discussed as the concept of *utang na loob,* is talked of by the elders as a more nuanced concept from unity. Since reciprocity as a Filipinx value is seen as an ongoing "debt of gratitude" that keeps one tied to their homeland, the theme

of reciprocity feeds other values present in and through the center, such as its reinforcement of the insider/outsider status and unity as *kapwa*.

The elders insistently refer to the center as "home" to Filipinx locals, particularly when soliciting Filipinxs to attend, donate, and continually return. However, reciprocity takes a preferable form to the elders: it is encouraged locals repay their gratitude by giving their *time* to helping the center and the community. As the elders discussed the dynamic of giving between the center and locals, there was a notable discouragement (yet need) around those who just gave donations versus praise for those who donated their time and services. Dr. Barretto lamented the Filipinx leaders who donated were more concerned with their status and legacy than supporting the community. Many of the elders followed with the encouraged form of giving, repeating often that the center has been built on the donated time and effort of key people. In one notable example of reciprocity, Arturo Bada recalled how he moved his office to a rented space in PACCM so that he was able to continuously support and return to the center. This example was compared to one-time donors and members who needed explicit incentive to give. For members, Rebecca Tungol and Dr. Fajardo emphasized the necessity of providing potential members with the benefits they would receive. "We include whatever: we have a discount or rental, we have your Christmas party are included," recounted Tungol. Major donors were even given recognition on a mural inside PACCM as incentive: "There used to be a mural here with a tree and we put in there a donation, but somehow it got lost when this guy repainted the building," described Tungol. " It's a good incentive for people to see what their donation is from." The give and take here is often through recognition and provided services, but ultimately, the center encourages members to become a fixture of the community, to return in person with their time and services.

Though the donations were seen as a necessity, the elders expressed disappointment in Filipinxs needing incentive to give rather than seeing the center as an umbrella that takes care of them and thus should be taken care of, in turn. Many of the forms of recognition for major donors had been suspiciously lost or erased over time. Tungol recalled one couple who refused to donate again after their name was not found on the building's mural. By contrast, the elders humorously described this common dynamic as responsible for the wealth of the Filipinx cultural center in Tampa, Florida. Known for its large building, the Tampa center's rooms were each named after a major donor. "Yeah, they do, and even the floors, you know the tiles, you could tell who donated it or something," said Tungol. However, the elders again praised donated time and service in comparison. Many of the major awards and room names were, after all, named after Filipinx volunteers who demonstrated major, long-term commitment to the center. Setting herself apart from the one-time donors, Norma Bada finished, "I don't know how many we are when they requested us to contribute at least one thousand dollars to initiate, to start, and we were the first few who did that, but we never announced it though we want our name to be there. That's not our character." Reciprocity is seen largely as donated time or service to a center which takes care of the community, thus continually calling them back "home" through these exchanges.

The dynamic of reciprocity, of spelling out what the center does for the member and, in turn, that the member return to the center to give back (preferably as an embodied rather than financial presence), has been a priority Filipinx value. However, over time, the form of the reciprocity began to shift how the members formed the center in order to accommodate this reciprocity. By lauding the examples of Arturo Bada and his engineering office, or the volunteer hours of all the long-time members, the elders demonstrated that over time, the center began to

be open to members' varied uses – as long as they returned. The center began to materially and symbolically form with the various forms of embodied and financial reciprocity, whether it be a tree that marked the names of major donors, or an empty room to accommodate a member's business.

Succession – The center as a means to secure succession by younger generations was not explicitly mentioned in the planning documents, but a major purpose behind PACCM. After introducing the issue of finding successors for the center, Dr. Barretto questioned how they might use the center to draw in youth for more leadership positions. "Yeah, it's always been a question every time we meet, even earlier years: how to attract the youth," explained Dr. Fajardo. He believed the center, by holding folk dances and cultural events, could be used to remind the youth of the familiarity of their Filipinx upbringing: "I just, I just knew that, I just knew that from upbringing at home and they see that this is what you used to see at home, you know." The elders recognized the urgency in finding their replacements and bringing in more youth, joking that they would like to leave their long-held positions. Under this light, the center serves as a vehicle for succession or longevity, reminding youth of heritage in order to carry on its sustainment.

Volunteer Work – Tied closely with the "reciprocity" theme, and arguably intertwined with the rest, volunteer work was lauded as a treasured value amongst the center's members, one that the center provides opportunity and space for. While discussing the planning of PACCM, the elders continuously drew attention to those who donated their time and effort, careful to bring up every name that might be missed off the record. "I think that is the very very important part of the existence of PACCM is Filipinos who get involved in this PACCM are very generous in time

and money because they come to volunteer," asserted Fe Rowland. "They also donate so and talking about my experience as the director of this school or before that, all the teachers that came to teach the language, the music, the dance, and kumintang, they come from all over Metro Detroit but with a generous heart they give their services and they are not paid for their talents." The center formally rewards those who donated substantial volunteer time, such as the community service award named after a previous volunteer's name. The elders conclude that through the center, there is hope: "You have people with ambition and people that are willing to help. You never know the people you are going to meet, the people with ambition…" (R. Tungol, personal communication, October 16, 2018).

Table 1. Sample Codes

Coding Category	**Sample Coded Data**
Place as a means of *congregation*	DR BEN FAJARDO: "That's when [Dr. Bob Barretto] told me, and I got very interested because I was always thinking about community work and the idea of the Philippine American Community Center was really good. I mean, it gets us together" (ll. 209-210). FE ROWLAND: "…the problem is we don't have enough space so when there is people having meetings, we send them to the library to have their meeting." REBECCA TUNGOL: "This is really the problem now is it's too small for us" (ll. 438-439).
Place as a means of *empowerment*	DR. BOB BARRETTO: "Then I think in 2003, we had that idea that to honor graduates, Filipino graduates, high school and college, and with the help of Fe (Rowland), Fe was still going on strong, so every year we had more graduates" (l. 272). FE ROWLAND: "And then the issue of Filipino Americans, like we had our program yesterday, the Filipino American History (Event), our Filipino American history experiences here, and I would like you, because we need somebody who had their experience according to our schedule of classes, we would like you doctors and other experiences come to share how your experiences within your profession and how is this American community affected your being here in America" (l. 422)

Table 1 (cont'd)	
Place as a means of fostering a *Filipinx identity*	ARTURO BADA: "We started looking for a building simply because we didn't have that many Filipinos at that time, and we would like to mingle with Filipinos" (l. 76) ARTURO BADA: "That was the, one of the earliest talks." NORMA BADA: "…about having a center." ARTURO BADA: "A center or something like that for (Filipinx) congregation." (ll. 83-85)
Place as a means of promoting *service*	DR BEN FAJARDO: "And obviously once we had it, the school moved here, and we got it going, and then we had other programs, you know, the NANAY program with the seniors, and then we had our health fair. We started then the health fair every year, until now, I guess, which is a service to the community" (l. 237). DR BEN FAJARDO: "And there were other programs that I can't remember now but, and so, the vision for the building at the time, we were trying to express this is that we would have it as a resource center where we could meet and then get some information, new people coming in, you know, a resource center, job fairs and all these things, and then the programs, the school, of course, the school" (l. 239).
Place as a means of *heritage*	FE ROWLAND: "It's a Filipino class within Paaralang Pilipino that the ages is thirteen and above and it is Filipino American history and community so we tell our story as Filipino Americans" (l. 404) FE ROWLAND: "Okay, going back to what PACCM offered here, we established a PACCM library, and it is there, but one of the many issues is people come and borrow the books even if we have a sign-in, and then they don't come back and return it, and Fred would follow up or phone call, and, "Yeah we will be there," but they never come, so anyway." ARTURO BADA: "I have a set of books on the Philippines from way to the Middle Ages until after Marcos" (ll. 424-425)
Place as a means of promoting *reciprocity*	[DR BOB BARRETTO] "You know one of the things, and I've talked to a lot of organizations, we have 44, 50, 60 organizations here, and I asked them, you know, why don't they have fundraising, but none of the fundraising is essentially created to donate to the PACCM" (l. 382). DR BOB BARRETTO: "Number three, you know, how do we get all these organizations that have the president for that year that are also concerned about their status and what they're going to be remembered for, and don't have the continuity of supporting our community. Number four, you know, how do

Table 1 (cont'd)	
	you get the large filipino community--you know, we have young people now. Vet techs, nurses, they don't even – REBECCA TUNGOL: "No, they don't really. They're not like us. It's not the same." FE ROWLAND: "It's the –I don't know, it is the mentality." REBECCA TUNGOL: "The mentality is different." (ll. 613-619)
Place as a means of fostering *succession*	DR BEN FAJARDO: "Yeah, it's always been a question every time we meet, even earlier years: how to attract the youth. […]Even if it's just for the first time just to watch or anything, but to get them here because once they set foot in this building and see the activities, they will feel something. I just, I just knew that, I just knew that from upbringing at home and they see that this is what you used to see at home, you know, and when they have the family, that's when it becomes difficult, but again, we have to keep track of them because that's why membership is really important."
Place as a means of fostering *volunteer* or *donated work/time*	DR BOB BARRETTO: "[Filipinx Organizations] are complaining because, you know, somebody says, 'why do you have to give to the PACCM? Let them raise their own funds.'" REBECCA TUNGOL: "Correct" […] DR BOB BARRETTO: "So there's a lot of dynamics, and I don't understand why because you know the people that work in the offices that work here donate their time." REBECCA TUNGOL: "We don't get paid." DR BOB BARRETTO: They set up the tables, they clean the tables, they pack it, and they don't get paid. It's all purely donated time." (ll. 390-398) FE ROWLAND: "One of the, excuse me, Bob, because you're talking about not being paid, I think that is the very very important part of the existence of PACCM is Filipinos who get involved in this PACCM are very generous in time and money because they come to volunteer and they also donate so and talking about my experience as the director of this school or before that all the teachers that came to teach the language, the music, the dance and the kumintang, they come home from all over Metro Detroit but with a generous heart they give their services and they are not paid for their talents" (l. 400)

4.4 Summary of Values Steering the Creation of PACCM

Based on the themes generated from the planning documents and the elder interviews, PACCM as a place was "written" and conceived as a space whose function was to promote a

Filipinx cultural identity through empowerment and heritage education and sustain this identity through reciprocity and succession; to help delineate insider/outsider status among the center's Filipinxs; and to provide opportunity to exercise values of volunteer time, community service, congregation, and generosity.

Essentially, I saw the center serving Filipinx cultural values with two overarching focuses: cultural identity and cultural continuity (see Figure 5). The center is not only a means to express, celebrate, and define Filipinx identity but a vehicle for calling community members *back* as the center's also a refuge, home, resource center, and place of continuous exchange with the community. Because of these values, the elders and the planning documents eventually needed to create a space that was malleable enough to incorporate ways in which people donated their time/service to the community (i.e. rent rooms as an office; open a lobby big enough for congregations of all shapes and sizes; potential recreation room to draw in youth).

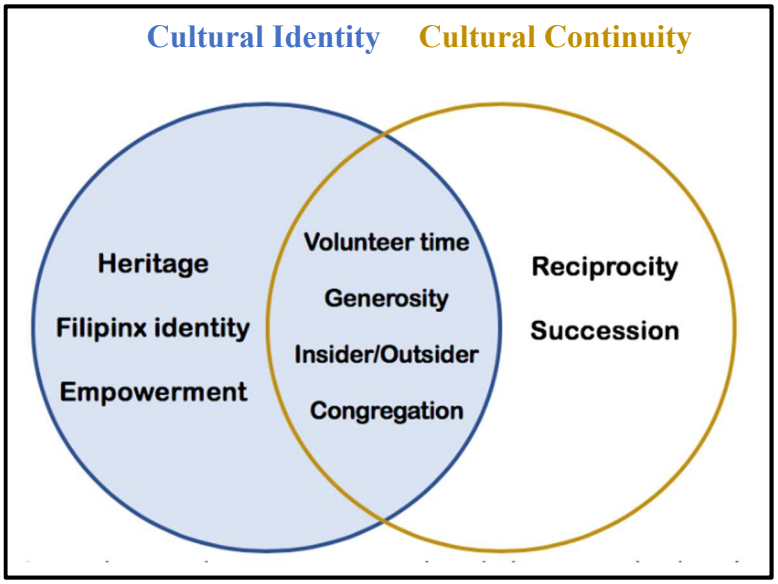

Figure 5. Filipinx values promoting cultural identity and cultural continuity.

Also notable is though cultural identity and continuity were two main focuses, they also seemed to be poles of tension. Sometimes the value of succession or serving the community did

not align with traditional views of Filipinx identity. For instance, the idea of a recreational room for the youth did not serve ideas of heritage or identity, but became purely a strategy for providing a service and also calling them back into the center wherein they might be enticed by the folk traditions. Similarly, the renting out of the rooms as offices, such as Arturo Bada transferring his engineering business to the center to financially support them, indirectly served the community through his presence but didn't explicitly promote Filipinx identity. Fundraisers wherein Filipinx locals donated their money—and oftentimes *not* their time—was also a need serving continuity, if not Filipinx identity and its associated values of communal generosity. Thus, the center grapples with sometimes opposing cultural logics in order to serve the two overarching purposes. Nonetheless, these dynamics demonstrate how Filipinx place-making (at least in the context of a cultural center in metro Detroit) prioritize the celebration and sustainment of cultural identity through acts that precipitate a continuous return or homecoming.

Chapter 5
Curating Spaces for Multicultural Perspectives

Strategies for placemaking produce place/space rhetorics that are based on internal logics (epistemologies), histories, and structures. In this study, I focused specifically on the cultural dimension of these logics and histories. Though financial factors set some limitations, the creation and ongoing evolution of the Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan is a process largely driven by cultural ideologies around how place functions for its members. Since culture as a grid and system of meaning encodes and decodes the driving rhetorical dimensions of place/space, I began this research with a hunch that Filipinx ideology had a unique perspective on place that would differ from what we would typically expect under Western frameworks. Though on the surface many of the discussions at and about the center involved negotiations around drawing in more Americanized Filipinx youth through American entertainment, or responding to zoning laws and policies by the city, or the center's financial limitations—typical concerns for creating a community space—an overarching Filipinx view of place as a sort of surrogate motherland or vehicle of reciprocity and insider succession underscored these negotiations. As the Filipinx-American members negotiated competing or overlapping cultural logics to continue to call back members, this Filipinx belief in place and place's role for the community drove the material and symbolic formation of the site.

The larger pattern behind the gradual transformation of the center demonstrated the center's scaling down from a one-stop-shop for Filipinx services (i.e. credit union, sports development center, voters league, health clinic, etc.), to a more malleable space for members to transform rooms for specific, fluctuating, and even temporary functions. The initial Filipinx values steering the formation of the center changed throughout the several decades of the place-making process. The negotiations relied on a reprioritizing of certain Filipinx values, and in this

case, it was the values that promoted unity and succession (through reciprocity). Unity of the Filipinx community was emphasized from the beginning, with many of the planning documents stressing the center's role in galvanizing or restoring a sense of unity and cohesion, especially amongst the Filipinx organizations. It was reciprocity that gradually became one of the central means of achieving this unity over time.

5.1 Implications

As a researcher who spent the majority of her Sundays at the cultural center working with the community and doing research, I can say *this dissertation is also a product of the center's function toward reciprocity and togetherness*. I continuously returned to my Filipinx-American community to do this research, and I participated in the Filipinx value of reciprocity by offering the project and video recordings of the elder interviews back to the center. This dynamic added another dimension to the research process; naturally, researchers become more sensitive to the factors that affect methodology (such as an oral historian becoming more aware of environmental conditions affecting audio recordings), and I became more attuned to dynamics of reciprocity while working with this community. In fact, the project resulted in similarly unanticipated insights that affected my growth as a researcher. After reflecting on what I thought I'd find and what I actually found through this project, I can further vouch for the importance of a cultural rhetorics methodology in diluting researcher bias and making space for surprising communal insights.

When initially asking the question of how cultural ideology factored into the rhetoric of place-making, I had two major assumptions as to what I'd find. The first assumption was that place would be largely culturally curated through common material markers. For Filipinxs in the United States, there are a number of iconic items that grace the Filipinx home and space: for

instance, the *walis tambo* (native style broom), the spoon and fork décor as a symbol of good health, and the Catholic altar, a major product from Spanish colonization but also a symbol of strength and security. Material items all circulate Filipinx values in the home. The material rhetoric of Filipinx spaces were also an emphasis in articles from the 1960s-70s, as Filipinxs began to be more financially stable and develop larger families. Their private homes in the suburbs were described in several editorials in terms of their material qualities. Finally, phenomenologically, we might also think of these cultural items in terms of how objects and bodies are oriented to each other in ways that serve cultural histories and functions. The material crops up in many of theoretical examples in the first chapter as it's often easier to conceptualize, so for all these reasons, I believed I'd find more material emphasis in the process of Filipinx place-making.

My second assumption came from my cultural rhetorics background in that I expected to see further examples of place as facilitating a constellation or network of stories/narratives that build communal knowledge and kinship. Like Monberg's (2016) work on Filipinx community stories emerging from a constellation of community formations across time and space, or Powell (2012), Basso (1996), or Rios's (2015) work on place-based stories and land-based literacies tying communities together, these communities' use of place/space carried a generative and survivalist quality. Though this is certainly an effect of the Filipinx place-making at PACCM, it wasn't a driving motivator in the deliberate process of their place-making, at least not one the community was cognizant of or intentional about.

Instead, what I actually found was that in the process of creating their own place/space, Filipinx cultural ideology was not so on the nose, so explicit about Filipinx-ness. In prioritizing the flexibility of symbolic and material forms of place-making, the center's Filipinx values of

bringing others back into the community, particularly through the vehicle of *utang na loob* (reciprocity), material items could be repeatedly swapped in and out of the center, and social functions could co-exist, even compete with each other, as many didn't have to be Filipinx-centered. These insights would not have been possible had I not talked with the community and observed these shifting iterations as a *process* of place-making, as opposed to what much other research concludes through looking at a synchronic snapshot of space.

Finally, what I also discovered was that some cultural findings should stay in the community. There were some parts of the decision-making and dynamics the elders didn't want shared or felt belonged solely to the embodied experiencing of the center. This consideration completely shook the way I dealt with my preservation work (many of which was digital) around Filipinx cultural heritage. One of the major arguments for digital and multimodal forms of research, after all, is its accessibility, but the community helped me see that simply because something is accessible, does not entitle everyone to it. Some experiences are preserved specifically for those visiting the center in person, and this makes sense as Filipinx communication can be kairotic, heavily relying on bodily movements, unsaid understandings, and performances of welcoming.

What I found were as much elements of the dissertation project as they were personal for me as a researcher, but the following takeaways are what I considered contributions to the field. First, *cultural ideologies are a major factor in the curation and reception of spaces, and should be explored as a process*. Most work on place/space in rhetoric looked at how place/space shaped communities and/or treated cultural place/space synchronically, as if it were a snapshot of a place at a particular time which launches an analysis from there. Though most work on place/space by cultural rhetoricians has involved the acknowledgment (or *constellation*) of

cultural multiplicities existing in place (Powell, 2012), contentious perceptions of place have often revolved around imagined or invoked geographies (Basso, 1996; Monberg, 2009; Marback, 2004) or the cultural acts of place-making (Rios, 2015; Kinloch, 2009), but few contextualize these conceptions of place/space alongside competing cultural logics. Even fewer explore the rhetoric of place-making as a *process* rather than a pure product. Since the driving characteristics of this project is its deliberate attempt to explore the dialogical process of place-making as it moves from a culture's ideological conception of space to its resulting materialization, I foresee the project furthering theoretical discussion within the subjects of spatial theory and cultural rhetorics.

Though the place-making process connotes a temporal process that many previous spatial theorists would say results in a static atemporal representation of space (as if it were a photo of a building rather than a space of multiplicities; or for compositionists, a final paper without its embedded process), this project's wider view of place-making in context—its communal consideration of a variety of influences—opens up a more dynamic view of space that Massey (2005) describes as "stories-so-far." Thus, the project's closer look at place-making process over product disrupts inherited conceptual binaries such as time vs. space, conservative notions of place stabilization/authenticity, and even De Certeau's popular strategies versus tactics[9].

This processual view of place/space rhetorics offers an expanded picture around the cultural place-making acts as explored in the field of Cultural Rhetorics. Place-making continues to be a form of literacy for communicating knowledge between places and communities (i.e. Rios, 2015; Basso, 1996), yet these place-making acts are subject to ideological, economic, and material negotiations that require further analysis behind what drives rhetorical decisions in the

[9] Meaghan Morris' (1992) critique of DeCerteau's analysis of the World Trade Center as reinscribing structuralist binaries such as the city as a secure system of strategy against romanticized notions of mobile tactics.

place-making process. To bring back the metaphor of the composition essay, a student's writing process is subject to a variety of values and influences which the student negotiates in order to make writing decisions. Similarly, communities in a space are driven by certain ideological values and factors that help determine rhetorical decision-making around the creation of place.

This study also highlights that though symbolic constellations within space (a popular premise in the Cultural Rhetorics field) may highlight networks of connection and disconnection, to say space is negotiated is to also take into account the material consequences of competing, overlapping, or multi-faceted ideological acts of placemaking. Through a processual view of the cultural center, negotiations of cultural logics occur daily: symbolic narratives of the space shift with each event, and the material traces of these events can sometimes occlude later Filipinx functions. I see this when the folk dancers must put away the array of chairs and tables in the lobby after the previous night's showcasing of an American film, or how the elders are now making arrangements for a side entrance to be built so they're not interrupting a separate cultural function when they make their way to a Filipinx event in another area of the building. This study suggests that we not only recognize larger constellating narratives in space and its function in securing communal ties, but also the messiness of spatial negotiations. Place-making as an always evolving process illuminates the slipping contradictory nature of socio-spatial assemblages, and though we may only be able to *describe* a particular shift in "stories-so-far", we can come closer to discovering the underlying values and frameworks that guide a group's spatial decision making.

Finally, *a cultural rhetorics methodology to community research helps us ethically explore and understand a culture's orientation to place and place-making.* This study particularly provides one cultural rhetorics methodology for working *with* Filipinx-American

groups rather than strictly *about* them. Though the indigenous interviewing method of *pagtatanung-tanung* is one tool that is sensitive to Filipinx psychology and knowledge production, it does provide principles that could be helpful in ethically navigating research with other cultural or marginalized groups. For instance, the method's push to adapt to a group's pre-set dynamics, its insistence on building rapport, and its equal treatment of researcher and participant allow an analytical approach to lean closer to communal forms of knowledge production. Ensuring alignment with the group's form of knowledge production allows for more accuracy in data interpretation and ethically allows participants agency around the data gathering process. It is through this cultural rhetorics methodology that the study is able to add to the growing work of specific cultural place-making rhetorics, such as Bao's (2008) work on Thai place-making in the face of California building codes and regulations, or Davila's (2004) study of competing commercial and Latino/a marketing efforts in New York's East Harlem. I foresee similar methodological approaches across a growing number of cultural studies will continue to provide rich insight into the unique rhetorics of various communities.

5.2 Limitations

As stated in the methodology section, this case study of Filipinx placemaking is best understood in a wider context, one that takes into consideration how other cultural ideologies are present and negotiated within an event. Though ideologies of participating center members are present, this study is limited to one sliver of the dialogic process by following only the Filipinx ideology and how it figured into a placemaking event. The Filipinx ideology that manifested at PACCM is also a product of a specific locale; the place-making event of PACCM is particular to the context of metro Detroit and its material, economic, and social context. Not only is this embedded context a factor in the members' decision making, but also, not all members of a

specific cultural collectivity are equally committed to the Filipinx culture. Members of a communal group are not homogenous, and a much wider study that takes into account multiple case studies in different locales would help strengthen general patterns around the nature and circumstance of Filipinx placemaking within the nation's dominant urban structures. For instance, the members discussed the Filipinx cultural center in Tampa Florida as an example of a completely different place-making model.

Sample size and wider accommodation of representative voices are also a limitation to this research study. Though I interviewed the center's leaders who were immediately in charge of decision making around the center's creation and evolution, there were some leaders who were deceased or unable to make the group discussion, such as previous chairperson Dr. Ernestina de los Santos-Mac, or the first planning leader, the late Marcellano "Bene" Benemerito, to name a few. Additionally, though they didn't have leadership roles, some long-term members had some input in the formation of the center, and they also were not present. Current Paaralang Pilipino teacher James Beni Wilson, for instance, has played a formative role in drawing in Filipinx university students to direct cultural and social justice events at the center. These students are playing a growing role in the use of the center for a newer generation's values of unity, especially a unity that seeks to bridge American and mainland Filipinxs[10] solidarity around social justice issues.

Finally, time was also a factor. Though I've been an active member of the center since 2017, two years of participation (most of which only taking part on Sundays and the occasional Saturday event) is not enough to get a fuller picture of the center's history, members, and

[10] In a recent example on January 13, 2018, Filipinx students from Wayne State and Michigan State University transformed PACCM's main lobby to host a screening and discussion of the documentary *Call Me Ganda*, which chronicles the injustices of American crime against Filipinx transgender sex workers.

perspectives. Additionally, data was only collected from one interview, and built upon through later individual and casual follow-ups with the members. As part of the built-in structure of reciprocity, the group interview was a one-time event as part of the members' wish that the taped discussion be part of PACCM's historical archives. A more thorough investigation into Filipinx views of place/space would incorporate additional opportunities for group discussion, as each phased interview may only touch on the group's thematic interest at the time and/or allow for different configurations of group discussion to provide additional insights. For instance, I've had many discussions with other Filipinx oral historians in Michigan who drew my attention to the gendered dynamic of these discussions. Since the Philippines has been touched by colonial and patriarchal influences, these oral historians found that by doing a separate sit-down with the Filipina women, the participants were more forthcoming about their perspectives without the men dominating or steering the conversation. If this research study were allotted more time, I thought a lot about what including an all-Filipina discussion would provide to social perspectives of the center's role as a "home".

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

By analyzing Filipinx American place-making efforts through the Philippine American Cultural Center in Michigan, the goal of my dissertation was to (1) provide insight into the distinct rhetoric of Filipinx-American place-making, and (2) convey that the rhetoric of a cultural place/space is an ongoing dialogic process, a negotiation between distinct cultural perceptions of place/space and the environment in which it is embedded. Future research may address the earlier section's limitations for a more robust study of Filipinx and/or processual place-making, but I also see a cultural rhetorics investigation into how inhabitants view space as enhancing how we create equitable spaces within academic institutions and public spaces. By raising

understanding of spatial dynamics based on cultural orientations, educators and policymakers can accommodate uses of space across diverse stakeholders.

Writing Spaces. By gaining insight into diverse cultural orientations to space, educators may continue to unpack (materially and symbolically) *who* our institutional spaces are serving. Historically, the composition classroom served white, middle-class students and has evolved since the 19th century from a masculinized prison into a feminized space that promotes a calm, clean, domestic environment for "bringing up" students (Enoch, 2008). In recent decades, the composition space has been remade through rhetorical strategies to enhance pedagogical functions from the instructor and students' perspective (as opposed to administrators). In computers and writing, for example, trends in research have involved rhetorically curating space as it relates to access (access to machines; resources to navigate them); software as space (i.e. "politics of the interface" by Selfe & Selfe); virtual space (bulletin boards, forums, emails, etc.); and physical layouts of classroom space (Walls & DeVoss, 2009).

Though symbolic and material makeup of the composition classroom has evolved to lean heavily toward gendered, white, and pedagogical orientations, there has been less attention to the cultural and racial dynamics of the classroom space. Future composition research may benefit from investigating the cultural multiplicities inhabiting classroom spaces in order to create more accessible and inviting classroom, writing, and/or campus spaces for the many communities that inhabit them. For instance, we may consider a similar study on the student bodies and backgrounds that enter the writing center space. Since the earliest descriptions of writing centers' physical spaces, researchers have consistently remarked on the affective qualities of centers as comfortable, inviting, and "homey" (Singh-Corcoran & Emika, 2011; Mckinney, 2005; Boquet, 1999), a feminized space for 'nurturing' the student through their writing process (Miley, 2016;

Nicolas, 2004). These domestic qualities run parallel with the material transformations of composition classrooms primarily fashioned for white female values and nurturance, the composition instructor constructed again and again as "the dedicated mother" (Enoch, 2008). However, what if we took up Mckinney's (2005) call to explore the assumptions and power dynamics underlying the materiality of writing center spaces and the sort of "home" they are promoting and reproducing—particularly as it relates to cultural orientations to space? Material spaces and dimensions of the writing center may primarily serve the values of "white mothering" and its attendant forms of nurturing. Not only does the material rhetoric of these domestic spaces construct a dominant notion of "home" that may not translate for non-white students and staff (see critically Mckinney, 2005), but the notion of white mothering runs the problem of perpetuating the imposition and inheritance of white values for colonized and foreign bodies. White womanhood is constructed and sustained through writing center material spaces, and follow with its particular effects on diverse students who are "nurtured" through grammar correcting, cultural decoding, and inherited identities of foreignness. An investigation into multicultural perspectives of writing spaces may destabilize accepted notions of writing center space as inclusive and 'caring' by challenging how these spaces may subsume cultural multiplicities through assumptions of white and gendered values.

To consider the cultural orientations to space is essentially a means of extending work in literacy studies from students' familial spaces to the institutional space. Educators could lengthen Deborah Brandt's (1998) seminal work on students' literacy sponsors (which may include material and conceptual agents) by taking account of students' engagement with spatial influences of the home as a model for curating classroom characteristics. In doing so, we continue Enoch's (2008) call to re-see the possibilities of the classroom space and observe how it

might "condition, welcome, bar, and suggest certain kinds of cultural identities and practices" (p. 291).

Rhetoric studies. As mentioned earlier, the field of rhetoric should (1) continue to build on the unique place-making rhetorics of various communities, and (2) continue to build culturally-sensitive methodologies when working with communities. Rhetoricians and cultural studies scholars have built a strong foundation for investigating place-making processes of Native American (Basso, 1996; Clark & Powell, 2008), Latinx/Chicanx (Anzaldúa, 1987; Rìos, 2015), Black (Kinloch, 2009), White (Poirot & Watson, 2015; Ahmed, 2007), and Asian American (Bao, 2008; Bonus, 2000) communities. However, there is still a lot of ground to cover and communities to hear from in order to explore and raise awareness of rhetorical cultural spaces since these are "texts" which influence access, participation, and recognition into public space and narratives of the greater public.

Further, this study with the Filipinx-American groups highlights a culturally-sensitive approach to working with Filipinx groups and their forms of knowledge production, and though some of the indigenous interview method's principles may be distilled into general concepts of ethical approaches for other communities, it is still limited in reach. When working with communities, rhetoric scholars of various communities may offer additional considerations for working across epistemological frameworks. Given these opportunities, there is great potential for cultural geography to contribute to material and symbolic theories of rhetoric and discourse.

If we start to see places as sedimented, as Nedra Reynolds (2004) calls us to, with histories, stories, and pluralistic possibilities, places/spaces can have the power to stimulate, empower, exclude, disturb, and validate its inhabitants. By exploring the driving ideological forces behind place's multiplicities, histories, and stories, we get closer to a sense of how our

cultural and material realities affect our discourse, and the ways we write and learn, and engage with others.

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