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Breaking Benjamin: A Woman's Pilgrimage to New Mexico

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Title: Breaking Benjamin: A Woman's Pilgrimage to New Mexico

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Abstract:

The majority of research method courses preach about the importance of the *researcher* being objective, unemotional, and completely divorced from their *subjects*. However, I'm proposing a different epistemological view with this study exploring first-hand the film-tourism industry of *Breaking Bad* in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

For this study, I investigated, from a visual auto-ethnography approach informed by feminist theory, the *Breaking Bad* television/film-tourism industry phenomenon in Albuquerque, NM. Using a visual auto-ethnography methodology, I expressed my emotional experiences as a female participant observer with *Breaking Bad's* film tourism landscape in NM. Additionally, I shared *my story* and *experiences* of being a film-tourist through social media outlets. Using a visual auto-ethnography and feminist theory framework, I explored the following research questions:

R1: In what ways does being a female *fanatic* film-tourist of *Breaking Bad* affect the tourist pilgrimage to Albuquerque, New Mexico?

R2: What emotional and sensory components are connected when the *Breaking Bad* tourist experiences hedonist acts that mimic fictional characters and landscapes?

This study took place in Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 20–22, 2016. I participated in two *Breaking Bad* Film Tours (RV tour and biking tour) as a tourist. I used the social media application, Snap Chat, to document my lived experiences with the tours. I created a film with my personal video diaries and snap chats to document my lived experiences. The footage captured showcases the environment of the two tours and my lived experiences of being a female film-tourist.

This study is informed by an ethnography and feminist theory framework. Goodall (2000) argues for a more feminine communication style in academia by emphasizing rapport-building through listening and observing (for example, reflecting, personally, about meanings) rather than problem solving. This methodological approach allowed me to report my findings in creative expressions. For this study, I addressed my personal, emotional relationship with film-tourism as an “emotional sociology” framework (Goodall, 2000, p. 59). The video and presentation shared will showcase the different perspectives of film tourism from a feminist framework and my pilgrimage of traveling as a solo female tourist.