1. Introduction

In this paper I attend to the complexities that surround culture, leisure and tourism. Understanding the ways in which sustainability works requires a deeper articulation of these connections – c-t-l than tend to be available. For one thing, tourism and leisure, or, as I will explain, tourism/leisure, works in a complex relation with culture. To say that requires a clarification of how we might grasp, understand culture as process, complexity and nuance, in the contemporary period. I examine this process through a consideration of how individuals make their own culture, absorbing mediated cultures along the way: our own practice and its meanings in turn fold into and become our future cultural context. As culture is in and of the constitution of meaning, attitudes, values and feelings inform and are informed by these complex and nuanced processes.

In particular I consider the more recent developments of culture from cultural studies in terms of the fluidity between individual and intersubjectivities, and wider, mediated cultural influences, often reduced to contexts. I do this through two particular directions of thought: one, in terms of our performativities in what we do; two, in relation to the matter of space [place, destinations, sites], through a notion of flirting with space. Through these considerations, I set out a means of thinking leisure/tourism relationally, through the notion of play. Thus, how do we, as individuals, find, build a notion of sustainability, how may such be kindled through what we do – ie the “doing” of leisure and tourism?