The Lifecycle of Ski Films: An Image of Winter Outdoor Recreation, past and present

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Outline of Presentation

- Purpose of the study
- Related Literature
- Method
- Analysis
- Next Steps
- Contributions
Background of Study

There is a relationship between film and tourism

- Films can impact tourists’ understanding of destination image (Busby & Haynes, 2013)
- Film can impact positive feelings of place; not have an affect on travel (Warnick, Bojanic, & Siriangkul, 2005)
- Film can impact image and travel decisions depending on cultural background (Hudson, Wang, & Gill, 2011)

Most studies focus on one film at one particular time

*We have limited knowledge regarding....*

- How film has impacted travel over a period of time.
- How representation of place may be changing in film.
- How these changes impact travel decisions.
Purpose of Study

How has skiing been represented in film over a course of 30 years?

How are place and movement represented in film?

Does this have an impact on unconscious tourism expectations?

This study will close this gap by examining a number of films over a staggered period of time using ski recreation as the context.

Uses a longitudinal lens in an interpretive process.
Related Literature: Film and Tourism

Per Connell (2012) in her review of film tourism...

- Driver for tourism development
  - Suggests there is an increase in visitor numbers for film destinations

- Growing in social science field

- In this study....
  - Focusing on the connection between film tourism and the intention to “visit to place marketed through film connection”

- Although film tourism is a popular research area, more knowledge is needed in terms of how places are represented and constructed
Related Literature: Place and Movement in Recreation

► Place
  ► People make meaning based on a relational, natural, or spiritual understanding of the space (Hutson, Montgomery, & Caneday, 2010)
  ► The attachment we feel to that space becomes more important the more we participate (Bryan, 1977)
  ► Physical land is critical to the ski/snowboard local enthusiast because it is crucial to doing the sport (Sheldrake, 2007)

► Movement
  ► Sport reflects the behaviors of a population (Bordieu, 1987)
  ► The current way in which skiing has been adapted in physical movement comes from Norwegian and French influences dating back to the late 1800’s and early 1900’s (Lund & Masia, 2013).
Method

- **Data:**
  - 6 films - 3 documentary, 3 fictional films
  - 3 different decades (1980’s, 1990’s, 2000’s)
  - All ski related

- **Data Collection Process**
  - Watched twice - once for content, once for specifics

- **Data Analysis Process**
  - Similar to Huang and Lee (2000) - looked at discourse, images, and actions in the films
  - Code and re-code - Worked with and through relevant themes multiple times
    (Cyclical process where I am looking for themes and categories)

**Lens:** Critical constructivist. We (consciously and unconsciously) socially construct reality through symbols and discourse.
Data: Films

1980’s
- Better off Dead (1985)
- The Blizzard of Aahh’s (1988)

1990’s
- Aspen Extreme (1993)
- Snowriders (1996)

2000’s
- Out Cold (2001)
- Pretty Faces (2014)
**Coding: 1980's**

*Better Off Dead (fictional)*
- **Skiing:** Scary, challenging, racing
  - Figuring out the self
- **Place:** Large, steep
  - The larger the better
- **Movement:** Structured, fast
  - Practice makes perfect, beat the K12

*Blizzard of Aahhs (doc.)*
- **Skiing:** Scary, dangerous, fast
  - Reluctance to change
- **Place:** Unpredictable, steep
  - The larger the better
- **Movement:** Tight and structured
  - Sport will result in falling, Jump turn
Coding: 1990’s

Aspen Extreme (fictional)
- **Skiing:** Skilled, challenging
  - Trying to fit into the wealthy and popular
- **Place:** Beautiful, unattainable
  - Beyond the imaginable
- **Movement:** structured, group
  - Powder Eights

Snowriders (doc.)
- **Skiing:** Togetherness, name brands
  - Getting to know people in a different way
- **Place:** Steep, vast
  - Making the impossible possible
- **Movement:** Tight, groups
  - Moguls together
Coding: 2000’s

Out Cold (fictional)

- **Skiing:** ownership of skill
  - Reluctance to change
- **Place:** Big mountains, high peaks
  - Need to be preserved
- **Movement:** Big air, jumping
  - The bigger the better

Pretty Faces (doc.)

- **Skiing:** Scary, difficult
  - Explanation of choice
- **Place:** Large, delicate, changing
  - Respect for changing environment
- **Movement:** Big air, loose, daring
  - The more daring and exciting the better
Findings: Film Progression

- Skiing: Reluctant to change-competition
- Place: Unpredictable, Large
- Movement: Structured

Trying to fit in-competition
Unattainable
Precious, Delicate

Reluctant to change- one with the environment
Big Air
Group
Findings: Tourist (Unconscious) Expectations

1980’s: A structured recreation that follows guidelines in an unknown territory.

1990’s: A social recreation that is about the other and being a part of the greater group.

2000’s: An individual recreation that is about the environment and the self.
Next Steps

- **Emerging questions**
  - Are documentaries and fictional films saying the same things?
  - How can we see if this impacts tourism expectations as we think?
  - Where will the changing face of skiing go next?

- **Analysis and Method**
  - More films- Possibly snowboard and other snow recreation films
  - Rethinking through of categories and themes- saturation?
  - Possible multi-method approach with interviews or observation along with more structured thematic coding or discourse analysis processes
Contribution of the study

- **Academia**
  - Theoretical standpoint - time theories
  - Increase awareness that this type of qualitative research can reveal unconscious understandings of recreation
  - Can be a useful guide in other similar recreation research contexts

- **Management**
  - Understand outside forces to tourism influxes (family travelers, beginners?)
  - Increase understanding of different avenues for marketing practices
  - Increase understanding of tourists’ expectations in related contexts

In conclusion, our hope is that this study will clarify how and why film impacts travel over the course of time and explain to management why tourists’ expectations are as they are.
Thank you!

Comments and Questions?
References


