

Title: Travel and Tourism in Film and Literature: A Critical Review

Author: Nigel Morgan¹, Rich Harrill², Leonardo Dioko³

Affiliation: University of Swansea¹; University of South Carolina²; Institute for Tourism Studies, Macau³

Contact: Nigel.Morgan@Swansea.ac.uk

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Abstract:

This article takes up Beeton's (2015) challenge of more integration between critical tourism and tourism film studies, in an attempt to close the hermeneutical circle between film and audience, theory and practice, and reflection and experience. Travel and tourism in film and literature provides an effective method of teaching the questions posed by critical tourism, while critical tourism adds theoretical depth to tourism film studies. Similarly, audiences make explicit the connection between critical tourism learning outcomes and lessons gleaned from travel narratives, informing their own travel experiences. Personal transformation (enlightenment) is often central to these outcomes, as well as recognition of power, oppression, and exploitation (empowerment and emancipation) encountered through travel. By providing some examples of travel *and* literature, this review provides for the broad exploration of geographies, histories, cultures, genders, identities, and socio-economic classes.

The purpose of this critical review is to explore selected works of film and literature that may be helpful in understanding the (1) possibilities of transformation and self-discovery through travel, (2) negative consequences of colonialism and neocolonialism in travel and tourism, and (3) sex tourism and the North–South divide. This review does not provide an exhaustive bibliography of travel and tourism in film and literature—such an undertaking would likely consume several volumes—nor does this review address film- or literary-induced tourism, or travel to destinations based on actual, disguised, or faux portrayals in film and literature. Despite limitations, this review provides examples of travel and tourism in film and literature with themes and concepts relevant to the critical tourism literature.

This review is loosely based on the structure of an honors undergraduate course regularly taught by one of the author(s). The works were chosen over a number of years based on particular tourism learning outcomes, but also how well they created a *gestalt* or holistic understanding of issues faced by the travel industry as a critical business (Tribe, 2008) when taken together. The films and books presented here were identified over many years from multiple sources, including, but not limited to, (1) researching and comparing published lists, newspaper columns, and personal blogs, (2) identifying films and books that directly address some critical tourism concept such as enlightenment, empowerment, and emancipation (3) examples cited by other tourism scholars, and to a lesser extent, (4) how well the work resonated with popular audiences as rated by IMDB, Metacritic, and Rotten Tomatoes, and (5) an emphasis on contemporary films and books. The films and books are arranged in a way that addressed more intuitive issues such as personal transformation, then moving toward more morally and ethical complex issues, bringing closer the parallel, yet related, arcs of critical tourism studies and tourism film and literature studies.

References:

Beeton, S. (2015). *Film-induced tourism*. Clevedon, UK: Channel View.

Tribe, J. (2008). Tourism: A critical business. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(3), 245–255.