

Livin' the Dream: Working and Playing in a Ski Resort

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Backpacking has become a popular geographical topic. Many studies, however, seem to only look at young people who travel around countries such as Australia to escape entering either further education or the workplace. This paper aims to broaden these definitions by looking specifically at young budget travellers who work their way around the world. Focussing on research undertaken in Whistler, B.C., Canada, this paper aims to explore how narratives of self are defined as much by a naivety of the travelling experience as by the desire to have an adventure. The paper will go on to argue that company culture plays a larger role in this self-narrative than many of these young people realise. This will be illustrated by looking at the ways in which their work often becomes performance before going on to discuss the ways in which these young people can either resist these experiences or utilise them in order to enhance their cultural capital. This paper will conclude by arguing that current popular views on backpackers are often too simplistic and that the role of work within young people's travels needs to be taken into account in order to understand how these young people see their work and travelling experiences as a way of expanding career and life chances.