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The “Shawshank Trail”: A Cross Disciplinary Study in Film Induced Tourism and Fan Culture

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ABSTRACT

Tourism, as a sustainable means of economic development, has attracted a considerable amount of attention from municipalities seeking to better understand their available development options. Film induced tourism has seen appreciable growth and represents a considerable opportunity for many communities to use filming locations seen in popular movies and/or television to draw additional visitors. These opportunities create an increasing need for communities and the organizers of events to better understand their attendees, the fans, in order to better serve their unique needs and desires. Fan culture studies, as an outgrowth of media studies, examine the nature and make up of fan communities. This article posits a cross disciplinary approach using fan studies to inform tourism research. This article reports on an analysis of attendees to an event celebrating of the 20th anniversary of the filming of the popular American film “The Shawshank Redemption.” Attendee characteristics, desired outcomes, and motivating factors were examined.

Keywords: Film Induced Tourism, Fan Studies

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Introduction

Film induced tourism has existed for as long as moving pictures have served to excite the popular imagination. Film induced tourism is an advantageous and growing part of the tourism industry with increasing economic impact; not only providing short term employment and publicity for the filming site but also enduring tourism impact from fans (Tetley, 1997). In the early 2000s, the Lord of the Rings film trilogy was credited with giving over a 33 million dollars (USD) boost to New Zealand's already considerable tourism economy (Film Tourism Fast Facts New Zealand, 2013). Going back even prior to the LOTR movies hospitality stakeholders had begun to more fully appreciate the substantial impact movies have on exposing people to new destinations and creating demand to visit sites associated with the creation of these stories and films. Particularly, films like "Jaws" redefined the cultural impact of a feature film and extended into tourism (Grihault, 2003). With this demonstrable impact, hospitality professionals and tourism researchers have taken note and sought methods to better understand and serve this considerable community of travelers. One path to understanding the phenomenon of film induced tourism is to look at the tourist and to focus on their status as members of fan communities.

The study of fan communities seeks to better understand the interactions and emotional rewards for "fans" of popular culture (Baym, 1998). A better understanding of film induced tourism may be made possible by using the insights from fan culture research and integrating concepts from fan culture studies to identify unique characteristics and needs of these film induced tourists in a more familiar hospitality context. As relationships between fans and the producers of media content become more important in an increasingly connected media environment, the impact of fan communities should be considered.

1. Literature Review

Film Induced Tourism and the "Fan"

Using a very broad brush, "film induced tourism" refers both to the visitation of sites where movies (and television programs) have been filmed, with particular attention paid to tourist activity associated with the film industry (Beeton, 2005) and those sites that may only have association with a film, movie or program (Busby & Klug, 2001). Visitors to these sites who are visiting as a result of a film (or sometimes television show) are fans. The fans who seek out these experiences do it for many reasons. The fan motivations to travel are wide ranging, often unique to the individual, and frequently internalized and ill defined. A great deal of research devoted to film tourists has identified a myriad of motivations (Busby & O'Neill, 2006) (Chan, 2007).

It is commonly accepted that the film induced tourist is not simply responding to media influences, but are seeking physical representation of cultural values (Busby & Klug, 2001). This is important in light of at least one of the significant differences between film fans and other types of fandom. As opposed to other fans, like music or sports

fans, the film fan is participating in a fictional, or at least fictionalized, world instead of following real people or occurrences (Karpovich, 2010). Even given the fictional component of these fan experiences, the relationship is still important to the fan. At the core, fandom is seen in film induced tourism as the emotional connection between the fan (viewer) and their fan object (viewed) (Connell, 2012).

Researchers have identified additional important factors motivating film fans to undertake journeys to the filming sites related to their fan object. For some fans the pertinent factors may be proximity to celebrity, whereas for others a desire for an authentic experience may be the determining factor (Lee, Scott, & Kim, 2008) (Couldry, 2005). Some of the motivations commonly identified by researchers might include nostalgia, romance, fantasy, self identity and self actualization, and might also be rooted in the idea of pilgrimage" (Macionis, 2004) or "security and nostalgia" (Grenier, 2011).

The relationship between fans, communities and films is complex and rich in that cinema presents a unique relationship that is both personal yet universally recognized (Shiel, 2001) (Urry & Larsen, 2011)(Lee & Yoo, 2011).

Even with this awareness the picture of fan motivations is largely incomplete. Some tourism researchers have identified a need to more clearly understand the motivators of the film induced tourist (Connell J. , 2012). It is worth noting the caveat that tourism motivation and behavior are commonly misunderstood or misidentified through conventional tourism research techniques (Connell J. , 2012). When looking at film induced tourism this is even truer, as fan culture motives are more complex than what accepted tourism models would indicate (Beeton S. , 2005). One result in particular worth noting is that the film tourists themselves may not be able to precisely state what their motivations are (Roesch, 2009).

2. The Call for Cross-disciplinary Work

Given this simultaneous interest and uncertainty, researchers have said that in order to fully understand film tourists as a group, additional expertise and perspective from outside of the hospitality discipline would be beneficial. One particularly interesting avenue has been suggested by authors C. Lundberg and M. Lexhagen who call for researchers to combine the study of fan culture with the study of tourism guided by "the holistic perspective of finding the important links between these aspects" (Lundberg & Lexhagen, 2013).

The need for cross disciplinary work is specifically spelled out by a number of researchers when noting a gap in research literature between the onsite experiences of film induced tourists and the ensuing paucity of insight regarding "how screen tourists perceive, interact and relate to the destination" (Connell & Meyer, 2009). While both the creative industries and the tourist destinations are affected by fans' interest in pop culture, a better understanding of "complex interaction between factors influencing pop culture tourism is needed" (Lundberg & Lexhagen, 2013). While many approaches may be successful and no particular approach has been singled out, researchers readily

acknowledge that there are a multitude of useful viewpoints tourism research might adopt to help progress the film tourism agenda (Connell, 2012). The wide variety of disciplines which can be considered to have substantive contributions include but are not limited to topic areas as varied as landscapes, urban and rural studies, art, popular culture, psychology and consumer behavior (Connell, 2012). Tourism researchers have come to recognize the possibility of building a greater understanding into film induced tourism by reaching across these disciplines (Karpovich, 2010) (Mazierska & Walton, 2006). By 2010 scholars had chronicled the advance of film tourism research and noted the progression from simply estimating tourists travel rationale through destination management concerns toward a postmodern examination and understanding of film induced tourism (Beeton, 2010). The attraction for fans to filming sites as destinations is readily apparent as these sites are hyper-real with the distinction between an artificial fictional world and an actual tangible world being blurred. The filming sites offer actual history and concrete reality as well as the fictional back story of the literary universe represented. These sites where fictional worlds are created are viewed by fans as authentic within a self consistent fan narrative (Frost, 2009). This aligns neatly with the post modern, hyper reality tenet of humanity constructing a superior non-reality to be consumed as real (Eco, 1986). This interplay of real/unreal, individual histories of each fan and the cultural forces at work all serve to point out that fans are motivated by "complex sets of motives" (Lundberg & Lexhagen, 2012). For tourism researchers "knowledge about the visiting fans' complex set of travel motives, fan identity, (and) community activities... is essential" (Lundberg & Lexhagen, 2013). When considering the need for a better understanding of fan motives the shortage of work building on the combined research framework of tourism and media studies comes to the fore. This is paradoxically both readily apparent and puzzling given the "consumption related focus and approaches adopted widely by both subjects" (Kim, 2012) (Beeton, 2010). The study of fans, fan communities, fan culture and the media that inspire them fall under the umbrella of media studies. Media (and culture) studies would be particularly useful in providing context for film tourism, particularly given that the links between film and tourism are apparent as offshoots of broader cultural tourism concepts (Ryan, Yanning, Huimin, & Song, 2009). Better understanding of the needs of fans can help destination stakeholders create value for the fan tourist. These elements that determine value for visitors are difficult for any destination to identify (Murphy, Pritchard, & Smith, 2000). In order to clarify the important fan elements researchers have noted that empirical studies, using insights gained from cross disciplinary sharing of academic worldviews, would serve to clarify the very nature of film tourism and identify the significant marketing and management issues for film themed destinations, especially in regards to better serving the committed film tourists (Connell, 2012) (Peteres, Shuckert, Chon, & Schatzmann, 2011).

3. Fan Culture

Fandom studies is an aspect of media studies that would be of particular use to tourism researchers in regard to film induced tourism. This includes but is not limited to theoretical examinations of fans, fandom, fan communities and fan culture. Foundational texts on fan studies have attempted to define the nature of fan communities and their patterns of behavior while cognizant of the inherent difficulty of this task (Hills, 2002) (Sandvoss, 2005). The task of describing or analyzing fan groups without resorting to reductionist ideas or pathologizing fans' motivations is a constant struggle for those working within Fandom Studies (Couldry, Livingston, & Markham, 2007). Whether or not they categorize themselves as performing fan studies, scholars have examined the "interpretive practices" of fans who visit filming locations (Couldry N. , 2000) or who gather with other fans to celebrate a beloved fan object, exhibit costumes, writing or musical performances (Jenkins H. , 2012), or connect personally with fellow fans in a safe, welcoming environment free from judgment and shame (Zubernis & Larsen, 2012). The parallels between these efforts and those of tourism researchers are readily apparent at a prima facie level.

Fan culture studies might be broadly defined as the examination of individual and collective communities (virtual, real world, or a combination of both), which gather around a common interest. Members of this community may share enthusiasm for a sports team, a film, a particular television program, or an entire genre such as graphic novels, science fiction films, or fantasy literature. Fans are frequently defined by their actions or by how they participate in the fan culture to which they belong. Often called "participatory culture" (Jenkins H. , 2012), fandom requires some level of engagement on the part of fans, but the nature of this participation varies widely. Some fans may merely engage in consumption practices, such as viewing a program and then reading/learning more about it through magazines, books, news features, websites, blogs, fan-videos, and DVD special features. Other fans may participate in fandom by creating "fanworks" which might include:

- Fan art (drawings, paintings, sculpture, crafts), fan videos, fan fiction, fan websites
- Dressing up or "Cosplay" (making and wearing costumes or apparel related to the fan object; purchasing and wearing team or fan related merchandise)
- Fan food items (NFL themed cookies, Mad Men influenced cocktails, a birthday cake shaped like the TARDIS from the British TV show Doctor Who)
- Role playing games or RPGs (fantasy football leagues, Live Action Roleplaying as particular characters or types, board games or online games in which players assume the roles of characters or types in the show or genre of their fandom)

Other forms of participation might include: attending fan conventions, visiting filming locations, touring a studio or stadium, attending sporting events, attending a "meet and greet" with stars, joining with a group of fans for a charitable event, or even just hosting a viewing party for fellow fans.

Current iterations of fandom studies focus on the relationships between fans and media products, between fans and producers (creators, writers, actors, crew, etc.) of

those products, and on fan behaviors, practices and productions (fan art, fan videos, fan fiction, etc).

Henry Jenkins, author of several influential books on the academic study of fans and fandom notes that, "media audiences and participatory cultures [are] at a moment where fans and fan-like activities are absolutely central to the way the culture industries operate" and that "we are seeing enormous experimentation into the potential intersections between commercial and grassroots culture and about the power of living within a networked society" (Jenkins H.).

One possible explanation for the lack of cross-disciplinary collaboration could be the reticence toward many traditional tourism research approaches that are part and parcel of fan research. Scholars Lynn Zubernis and Katherine Larsen, editors of the *Journal of Fandom Studies* and authors of *Fan Culture: Theory/Practice, Fandom at the Crossroads: Celebration, Shame, and Fan/Producer Relationships* and *Fangasm! Supernatural Fangirls*, note:

Much has been written over the last three decades about fans, often in an attempt to rehabilitate the image of the fan, to validate fan practices, to celebrate and defend fandom, to declare certain battles won. But for all the positive declarations about the positive force of fandom, a pervasive sense of shame permeates both fan spaces and academic approaches to the subject. There is shame about being a fan at all, shame over the extremity of 'some' fans, shame over 'certain' fan practices, [and] over having those practices revealed to the rest of the world (pp. 212).

Larsen and Zubernis illustrate one of the greatest difficulties in conducting quantitative research on fan communities; fans are resistant to being studied, since the prevailing popular image of them in our culture is negative, with the probable exception of sports fans (Jenkins, 2012). Fans worry about being scrutinized, pathologized, or exploited. In addition, any suggestion that their passionate love for a fan object will be "monetized" or otherwise used for profitable gain by private industry rankles fans. A market research oriented approach to the question of fan culture is likely to be met with suspicion by fans, who resist responding to surveys (Mikhaylova, 2012) (Zubernis & Larsen, 2012). Perhaps the chief reason for resistance to outside research among fans is the fear that commercial interests will attempt to influence the content and nature of fan expression. Although some say it fell somewhat short at being universally accepted by fans (Zubernis & Larsen, 2012), sites such as the "Archive of Our Own" hosted by the academic journal *The Organization for Transformative Works* attempts to articulate fandom's values of inclusivity and resistance to outside (i.e. non fan) interest groups, describing themselves thus:

...a noncommercial and nonprofit central hosting place for fanfiction and (long term) other transformative fanworks: i.e. it is free to use and does

not make any money...[it is] designed and built by and for fans. It is hosted on servers owned by the OTW and therefore not vulnerable to a commercial hosting company deciding they don't like our fanworks. (Archive of Our Own, 2014)

Zubernis and Larsen theorize that fans may not have fully accepted Archive of Our Own precisely because of its academic connections as fans have a fear of being "studied," a fear that is nearly equaled by the fear implied here of outside interests seeking to profit financially from fan interests.

This very fear of exploitation by fans identified by fan studies researchers and the subsequent distrust potentially has a significant effect on the film induced tourism research results. The insights from fan studies can be a particularly useful tool in better understanding film induced tourism by helping researchers to more appropriately examine the film fans who are in fact in all likelihood to be the film tourists.

4. Fan Motivations

Because fan practices and means of participation are as diverse as fans and fan communities themselves the researchers sought to identify aspects from fan studies that would be easily transferable to a tourism context.

Interaction with "participants": Zubernis and Larsen note that conventions, whether the bigger celebrity-centered, for-profit sort or the smaller, fan-only event are "one of the most commonly utilized (and least-studied) in-person fan spaces" (Zubernis & Larsen, 2012). Zubernis and Larsen discuss in detail the ways in which for-profit conventions—even ones that offer an unprecedented level of intimacy—nonetheless maintain boundaries between Fans and what Fandom Studies usually calls "Producers" or "Participants." Fans often choose to travel so they may interact with "Participants" (directors, actors, writers, crew), to get closer to those involved in producing the fan object. By traveling to fan events, the fan can have the opportunity to interact in a "neutral space where fans and celebrities can come together...facilitating closer connection than fans could otherwise gain" (Zubernis & Larsen, 2012).

Place: Fans also engage in participatory culture by traveling to filming locations as a way to get close to the fan object. Fans can stand where they knew the stars and crew stood, can replicate scenes from the film or fan object by taking photographs, can touch and interact with the location in a more intimate way than can be done watching a DVD or looking at a book of photographs. Sue Beeton (2010) stresses the importance of visiting an iconic location or at least a "tangible representation," as she refers to a location or installation made to stand in for a "real" location elsewhere or for the series or film the fans are visiting. This might be a Braveheart statue in Stirling, Scotland, a statue of Gollum in Wellington, NZ, or a recreation of Andy Griffith's Mayberry in

Mount Airy, NC (Alderman, 2012). Fan scholar Matt Hills notes that a fan's "affective experience is quite literally mapped onto spatial relations" (Hills, 2002) and that fans' sacred spaces vary widely in their significance or symbolic meaning depending on the fandom in question, which Hills calls a "monumental distinctiveness" unique to each fandom/location relationship (Hills, 2002, p. 154). Moreover, Hills claims that Fans' desire to re-enact or recreate the film through visiting the locations is a powerful form of participation. We conclude from this and from the previously cited research about the importance of interaction and consumption (meeting participants, purchasing souvenirs, taking photographs), that the authenticity of the location is a significant factor. Other research indicates that the actual filming location matters less than the named location in the film or television show, such as *The Office's* fictional setting of Scranton, PA (the show is actually filmed in Los Angeles), which has boosted tourism since the show began airing (Rewtrakunphaiboon, 2009). What seems to be suggested is that if the locations used in filming are represented as existing in a different place than they are in reality, then they must look like they do in the movie. Hudson and Ritchie (2006) also suggest that iconic locations and recognizable scenery are important to a successful film tourism product.

Fan Community: Of particular importance to fans is the ability to interact with others who share their interests. Fans often seek out gatherings of fellow-fans to realize the benefits of being in a space where fan shame is minimized (i.e. safety in numbers—no one will question their devotion to their beloved fan object in this space as they might in the wider culture), and to have their fandom recognized and validated by others who share it (Jenkins H. , 2012) (Zubernis & Larsen, 2012).

Merchandise: Fans are often collectors of merchandise, of photographs, of autographs, and other memorabilia. Collecting such objects can be part of something beyond a consumer act, but including rather a path to friendships and community (Yockey, 2013), or sites "of cultural production" (Pritchard & Morgan, 2013). In one of the first studies into why tourists purchase souvenirs, Wilkins observed that tourists see the souvenirs as "a facilitator of memory" while others commented on the need for a "tangible evidence to relive the experience" or simply as "evidence" of their experience to show others that they had participated in the experience (Wilkins, 2011). Wilkins also observed that women tended to purchase more souvenirs than men.

Interacting or Recreating(with props): Fans participate in a number of practices that might be called interactive. This is referred to by many as "Participatory Culture" (Jenkins, 2012) and can encompass a wide range of practices such as art and other objects (as described above), chiefly for the enjoyment of themselves and their fellow fans. When these objects are sold, it is seen more often as a service than as a money making enterprise, since any profits realized are often miniscule and simply enable fans to travel to share their enthusiasm with others. Part of the enjoyment involves the fansimaginaryparticipation in the world of the fan object. In this way, many of the practices already named are included in this category, so we chiefly applied this to

being able to "go in" to the locations and to touch objects and parts of the locations (walls, props, furniture), as well as stand in the locations and take photographs.

5. Background of the Study

The Shawshank Trail, a tour designed by the Mansfield Convention and Visitors Bureau(CVB) in Richland County Ohio, was developed in response to requests by fans for information on the filming sites of The Shawshank Redemption. The filmmakers selected Mansfield, Ohio, a small town in the American mid-west, for the base of its film production, due to the suitability of the Ohio State Reformatory as the location for the prison in the film.

The tour grew out of the CVB's desire to help fans locate the film related sites they were asking to see. Eventually, 14 sites were added to the trail, a brochure, website, and Facebook page were developed, along with unique local products available for purchase at selected sites. The sites are marked with a distinctive logo and podcasts are available online for a self-guided audio tour. In 2013, the CVB organized a 3-day 20th anniversary celebration event over Labor Day weekend, complete with special events, celebrity guests and locals involved in the filming.

6. Research Objective

This study examines the motivation criteria for prospective film induced tourists for choosing to attend a film themed event. The authors posed the following research questions:

1. What are the important factors to film site tourists at fan events?
2. How do the film induced tourism motivation factors expressed by attendees match those expected from fan culture research?

7. Methodology

Based on an extensive literature review of both fan studies and film induced tourism the authors had composed a written survey. The research instrument consisted of fifteen questions with the questionnaires broken into three sections. The first dealt with demographic information. The second section consisted of open ended questions designed to illicit respondent motivations and needs. The third section consisted of questions with Likert scales, rating from 1 to 10 with ten being the most, which were used to examine importance and satisfaction with services and products available related to the film and film fan community.

This third section of the survey instrument was designed using specific insight and understanding of fan communities gleaned from the theoretical underpinnings of fan culture studies. The five important fan motivation factors (participants, place, community, merchandise, interacting) described by the fan culture research were the same categories respondents were asked to evaluate: 1. The importance of interacting

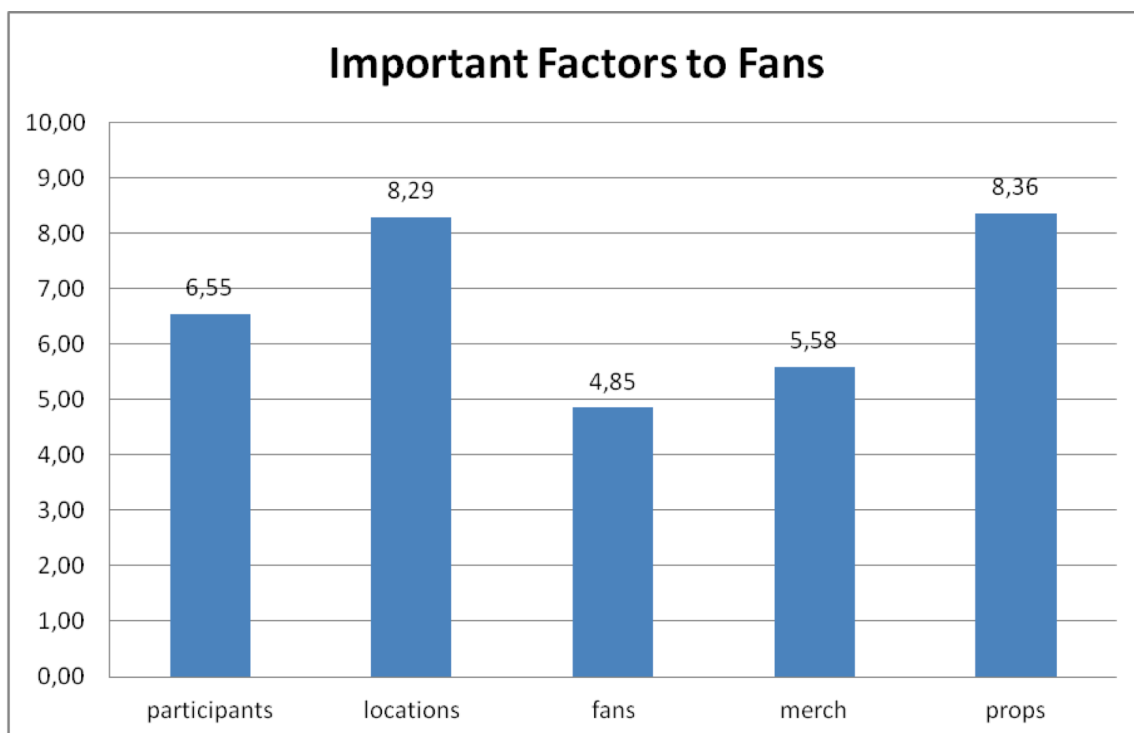
with the creators or participants who were involved in the fan object, in this case the movie, *The Shawshank Redemption*. 2. The importance of visiting and seeing iconic filming locations. 3. The importance of opportunities for interaction with other fans. 4. The importance of the available merchandise themed to the particular film. 5. The importance of opportunities for self directed creation or interaction with the fan object (such as costumed recreations, striking iconic poses from the movie, handling props or in some way recreating the filmic object with fan participation). The research instrument addressed these specific areas in an effort to determine the effectiveness of the organizers' efforts to meet fan wants and needs and to identify more effective means to serve the fan community with future events.

The 20th anniversary of the filming of the *Shawshank Redemption* was celebrated over Labor Day weekend, August 30-September 1, 2013. The CVB, in conjunction with local businesses and non-profits, organized a celebration including themed hotel packages, tours of filming locations, and appearances by actors in the movie. The event drew in excess of 7000 participants over the 3 days. Thirty trained interviewers were assigned to the various sites on the tour and selected participants as they exited the tour sites. Surveys were administered using a convenience sampling method. Interviewers selected attendees as they left the tour attractions at each of the fourteen filming related sites that fans were allowed to visit. By selecting respondents at many different sites and times considerable effort was made to reach a representative sample. Researchers conducted approximately 250 interviews which yielded a total of 224 usable responses.

Survey data was analyzed using SPSS version 17.0. Descriptive statistics were used to compile the demographic profile of attendees of the Shawshank Trail. Frequency distribution and percentage frequency were obtained. Further analysis included Chi-square tests for goodness of fit to determine if differences exist across some of the response categories and results were determined to be significant at the .05 level.

8. Results

Researchers spoke to fans from 26 different states. Demographic data revealed that there were slightly more females (53%) than males (47%) who attended. The average trail visitor travelled approximately 280 kilometers (174 miles) to attend with females travelling a greater distance on average (315 km/195 mi) to attend than the males (237 km/147 mi) with the greatest reported distance travelled being 3756 km (2334 mi). For both men and women, the average respondent age was approximately 45 years old (44.9 male vs. 45.3 female). Visitors travelled almost always with others. Of the 224 respondents only 8 reported that they were visiting the trail alone. Of those who responded 23.3% had previously visited filming sites related to other movies.



Note: Results of fans rating the categorical importance of interaction opportunities

Figure 1- Relative Ranking of Important Factors to Fans

When asked to rate the importance of 5 attributes (participants, place, fans, merchandise, interacting) on a scale of 1 to 10, the ability to interact with the props and the visit to the location were the two most important factors, followed by meeting participants, the merchandise and finally interacting with other fans. (Figure 1) These attributes retained their relative positions regardless of gender (Table 1).

Table 1-Ranking of Important Fan Factors Relative to Gender

Factor	Ranking (f/m)	Mean Score(s)(f/m)
Props	1/1	8.23/8.51
Location	2/2	8.18/8.43
Participants	3/3	6.56/6.54
Merchandise	4/4	5.79/5.36
Fan Interaction	5/5	4.89/4.80

Responses were then examined, dividing them into cohorts selected by the distance travelled to attend the event. The categories were: those that travelled 100 kilometers (62 miles) or less; those who travelled between 101 (63miles) and 240 kilometers (149 miles); and finally those who had travelled more than 240 kilometers (149 miles) to attend the event. (Table 2) Among those who had travelled the shortest distance the location and props appear to be the strongest factors. Otherwise the same relative rankings held for each distance based cohort as for the overall group of attendees.

Table 2-Ranking of Important Fan Factors relative to distance travelled

Factor	Ranking	Mean Score(s)
	≤ 100km/ 101 to 240km/ > 240 km (62mi/63 to 149 mi/ 149mi)	≤ 100km/ 101 to 240km/ > 240 km (62mi/63 to 149 mi/ 149mi)
Props	2/1/1	8.42/8.27/8.36
Location	1/2/2	8.48/8.38/8.28
Participants	3/3/3	6.65/6.42/6.52
Merchandise	4/4/4	5.69/5.25/5.47
Fan	5/5/5	5.05/4.42/4.73
Interaction		

Amongst fans who had visited other film sites the highest two ranked categories were also the iconic location and props. The relative rankings of Participants, Merchandise and Fan Interaction remained the same as 3, 4, and 5 respectively. (Table 3)

9. Data Analysis

Further analysis included Chi-square tests for goodness of fit to determine if differences exist across some of the response categories. Results were determined to be significant at the .05 level.

Table 3-Ranking of Important Fan Factors Relative to Visiting Other Filming Sites

Factor	Ranking (n/y)	Mean Score(s)-(n/y)
Props	1/2	8.25/8.94
Location	2/1	8.19/9.02
Participants	3/3	6.39/7.16
Merchandise	4/4	5.32/6.50
Fan Interaction	5/5	4.45/6.20

Responses from questions rating the importance of the five factors were coded so that the responses were divided into two sets. Responses of 8, 9 or 10 were coded as “very important” whereas scores of 1-7 were coded as “less important”. It can be seen from Table 4 that for the demographic variable of distance travelled the chi-square values for the factor of interacting with fans is significant ($p < 0.01$) while for the rest of the variables it comes out to be insignificant (i.e. participants, location, merchandise and props). This shows that there are significant differences in the frequency of rating the category “fans-interacting” as very important depending on the distance one travelled to attend the event ($\chi^2 = 11.162$, $df = 2$, $p < 0.01$). When examining the data more closely it is apparent that the actual number of respondents considering “fans interacting” as very important in both the shortest (100 km/62 mi) and under) and longest distance (over 240 km/149 mi) travelers is greater than the expected count. (Table 5) Similarly when considering the characteristic of whether not fans had visited other filming sites the factors of participants ($\chi^2 = 5.818$, $df = 1$), location ($\chi^2 = 8.018$, $df = 1$), fans ($\chi^2 = 6.761$,

df=1) and merchandise ($\chi^2= 6.847$, df=1) were al significant at the $p<0.01$ level. The factor of props ($\chi^2=3.846$, df=1) was significant at $p<0.05$.

Table 4- Chi-Square Test Statistics of Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristic/ Factor	Chi-square	df	Significance
Distance Travelled (N=208)			
Participants	1.937	2	.380
Location	.745	2	.689
Fans (interacting)	11.162	2	.004**
Merchandise	.807	2	.668
Props (interacting)	1.690	2	4.30
Visited other Sites (N=208)			
Participants	5.818	1	.016**
Location	8.018	1	.005**
Fans (interacting)	6.761	1	.009**
Merchandise	6.841	1	.009**
Props (interacting)	3.846	1	.05*

Note. **Significant at $p<0.01$

*Significant at $p<0.05$

10. Discussion

Results will be necessarily limited because of the scope of the research model, looking at a single fan event during a single window of time. The results and conclusions could likely be different if events related to other movies were included and if fans had been surveyed during a time period not related to the themed anniversary celebration of the making of the film in question. Based on this limited study, no matter how fans were classified (gender, distance travelled, visiting other film sites) the measured factors largely maintained their same relative importance. The ability to interact with the props and to physically visit the iconic movie locations were the two most important factors for fans of this particular movie. The importance of meeting those who participated in the creation of the film was consistently rated as less important than both props and location but more so than the available themed merchandise with the opportunity to interact with other fans as being the lowest ranked factor.

This interest amongst the observed fans in visiting and interacting with the film locations and props suggests a level of congruence between tourism research and fan studies research on the topic of fan motivation. The relevance of place is primarily important from the perspectives of both disciplines.

Appreciable amounts of tourism research literature in point to importance of an “iconic” location for the success of a film related tourist destination (Beeton, 2010)(Alderman, 2012)(Bolan, 2012). Similarly fan studies talks about fan’s “sacred places” and their importance to each fandom (Hills, 2002). The fans at the Shawshank

Trail mirrored this priority to location back to the authors by ranking the visiting and interacting with the film site as the most highly ranked factors.

Table 5- Expected vs. Actual Count of Importance Accounting for Distance Travelled

		fans		Total
		less important	very important	
Distance ≤ 100 km/62 mi	Count	41	20	61
	Expected Count	46.3	14.7	61.0
101/63 to 240/149 km/mi	Count	90	15	105
	Expected Count	79.8	25.2	105.0
> 240 km/149 mi	Count	27	15	42
	Expected Count	31.9	10.1	42.0
Total	Count	158	50	208
	Expected Count	158.0	50.0	208.0

On deeper inspection, some of the differences identified within the fan community become suggestive of the importance of a fan culture-centric perspective in the examination of film induced tourist motives. As the phenomenon of film induced tourism has become better understood through more study certain gradations of fans have become commonly acknowledged and accepted. Macionis classifies film induced tourists as serendipitous, general, or specific depending on the primacy they assign to film-related tourist activities within the context of traveling (2004). Bolan distinguishes between fans who seek settings, locations, or both. The results of this study present other possible hierarchical understanding of film induced tourists as fans.

Respondents who had visited other filming locations related to other films formed a distinct subgroup within the subjects. These respondents rated all of the fan importance factors identified from fan culture studies as being more important than the respondents who had never visited another film site. These tourists who had visited other similar types of attractions had different priorities in regard to fan related activities than the film-tourist population at large. This suggests the importance of developing a stronger cross-disciplinary understanding between these two approaches to film tourists/fans. It appears that as film induced tourists venture to more film sites their expectations are altered by these activities. Exposure to tourist related film sites in some way seem to initiate film tourists to the ways of fandom. As film tourists travel to additional filming locations they are exposed to the different ways that stakeholders in the various locales have sought to capitalize on a film related attraction. This education in the variety of approaches available from other film related sites appears to make “film-induced tourists” think more like the “fan” of fan culture studies. These “educated fans” are a distinct group.

The results specific to the distance that respondents travelled also offers insight that should be considered from a fandom centered perspective. The desire to interact with other fans, which is a hallmark of fandom intensity (Zubernis & Larsen, 2012), was greater depending on the distance the subject had travelled to the film site. This broke out in two ways that are revealing and challenging.

The particular event studied in this project was a celebration of the filming of the movie which featured heavy participation from the local community and many of the visitors were travelling less than an hour to attend. For these participants, local pride in this unique locale attraction was commonly mentioned as a reason for attending. These (local) film site visitors wanted to interact with other fans to share the pride of community. The other group who expressed a desire to interact with other fans were those who travelled the greatest distance, in this case film induced tourists who travelled more than 240 km/149mi. The willingness to travel such a distance in order to attend the event indicates the greater effort travelers exerted. These fans who made the most effort to attend were also more interested in being able to interact with others who share their adoration of a fan object, in this case a film.

In fan culture studies levels of fan intensity are readily acknowledged (Jenkins, 2012) (Zubernis & Larsen, 2012). Using distance as an analog for effort or intensity it becomes apparent that those fans who make the most effort to attend are most interested in activities where they get to interact with other fans (Mackellar, 2009). This realization could present a number of opportunities for better serving fans at film sites.

Recommendations

The two disciplines of tourism and fandom studies have a great deal of common interest in better understanding, and by extension being better able to serve the fan community. The common ground between the two areas is rife with unexamined possibilities. Further research using fans from a wide variety of movies and the attendant film sites would allow researchers to gain insights from fans that would be generalizable to film induced tourist experiences across the board. Two specific areas of recommendations come about as a result of this study: topics for closer examination and methodological insights.

One topic worthy of future research is the idea of the "educated fan". Subjects in this study that visited multiple film sites exhibited preferences that were more in line with fan preferences as described in fan culture literature. Follow up studies would be useful in clarifying whether this is a spurious result or if exposure to additional film sites in fact "educates" tourists in the ways of fandom.

Another topic propped by the data is the desire of the most intense fans for more interaction with other fans. While other tourism studies have provided behavioral categorization of fans based on their activities, this desire of the most dedicated fans to share the tourist experience with other fans provides represents an avenue worth exploring (Mackellar, 2009). Effective operators of film site attractions seek ways to provide a better experience to their consumer. Those consumers who are most

interested in these attractions would seem to value opportunities where sharing the experience with other fans is possible. This suggests a number of opportunities for operators to design activities where fan interaction is possible if not overtly encouraged.

Significant methodological insights arose from the execution of this project. Issues central to fandom studies were considered from the conception of the undertaking. The issue of fan shame was a foremost concern in the execution of the study. To the uninitiated tourism researcher this may seem a peripheral concern, but those who passionately consume popular culture products express those passions in manners which may be denigrated or dismissed by the population at large. This diminishment of the fan object or activity by others, may lead fans to be reluctant to participate in or openly reveal much to an outsider, the researcher. The authors sought to moderate this effect as much as possible by embracing their role of aca-fans.

Matt Hills described the research done by academics about fans in his influential 2002 book *Fan Cultures*, where he distinguished between different types of academic fans and fan researchers based on primary interest. Hills defined "aca-fans" as academics first and "fan scholars" as having "fan" as their primary identity. As with any observation analysis, the key concerns of aca-fans are access, bias, and responsibility. In order to accurately study a fan community, scholars must obtain access to that community and this can be difficult if the fan community is particularly protective of its borders. Scholars must approach the community without overt bias and without any objective to diagnose or pathologize a group of fans. Karen Ann Yost explains in "Academia Explores the Final Frontier: A look at fandom theses and dissertations," why fans can be wary of "outside" researchers examining fandom.

An "us against them" attitude will always exist in fandom. This is not fan snobbery, but fan fear. Fans have created a unique community with valid forms of expression... The possible results of academic studies of fandom include an influx of people who come to conventions in search of a world they've only read about... Disinterested or uninvolved people may change the very nature of the community... One does not become a fan merely by watching a television show. As any true fan can tell you, fandom has become as much about the friends we make, the ties that we establish, than just about the shows we love.

Yost reveals that one of the primary desires of fans is to find a community of like-minded individuals with whom to interact, share, and build relationships starting from a common interest in a media text. The picture of self-formed community with a unique culture of its own is one that is frequently imagined by fans and fan researchers. The goal then, was to proceed with caution and respect, assuming that fans might be nervous and to continually emphasize our goals in improving their experience of the ShawshankTrail events by preserving and enhancing what fans tell us they value. Over the course of a year, the authors were granted unparalleled access from the planning stage of this event by the organizers and were able to become immersed in the culture of this fan community. From the beginning the organizers stressed that the event was a response to serve fan interest rather than an attempt to

monetize a film site. The authors transitioned from mere observers to participants and planners of the event able to provide insight into fan desires to the event organizers. The researchers were provided access and credentials to match all of the other participants and stakeholders who participated in the event. To the fans who attended the distinction between researcher, guide, participant and fan were indistinct. The familiarity with the fan text and the surrounding fan community legitimized the researchers with the fans not as outsiders but rather as one of their own.

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