

Cold is Cool and Hot is Not: Promoting Insular Paradise in the Periphery

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How does the tourism industry promote “island-ness” when it seems to be so unilaterally associated with the paradise myth of the tropical, exotic and erotic? What are the opposing attributes of a cold-water island as a “place” that comprises a unique medley of pull factor appeals for potential visitors, and how is this verbal and pictorial amalgam formulated in “the language of tourism” (Dann, 1996)? What, in turn, are the corresponding push factor motivations and activities of the tourists who are drawn to such peripheral regions and how are their attitudes and behaviour articulated by publicity? Finally, as and where they have an actual presence, how are the inhabitants of these extreme locations described in such a way that touristic interaction with the Other is viewed as an attraction in itself?

This chapter seeks to address most of these issues by adopting a triangulated approach. It does so, first, by content analysing some recent British travelogues featuring a number of cold-water islands, thereby allowing the characteristics of these isolated locales to emerge inductively from the text. Travelogues are chosen as the preferred medium of communication since, with the exception of word-of-mouth, they have the singular ability to demote as well as promote. All have been drawn from the online files of the same newspaper (*The Sunday Telegraph*) over an eight year period from 1997 to 2004 in order to control for cultural and national contamination had a variety of journalistic sources been alternatively selected as the research base. Second, these impressionistic accounts are supplemented by neo-classical travel writing and scholarly commentary from within and without the current volume which, together, provide a corresponding (dis)-confirmation. Through such complementary description and interpretation, several characteristics of place, hosts and their visitors are derived. They are contrasted with their induced counterparts of tropical islands in order to reinforce their distinctiveness and subsequently act as a promotional framework.