Introduction

Objectives

1. To broadly introduce research on the topics of commodification and ranches with a global example
2. To display how the ranch industry is important in British Columbia and the Thompson-Nicola Regional District (TNRD)
3. To show that there are stages in the commodification of ranches by introducing specific case studies of ranches within the TNRD
4. To propose the idea that commodification and technology in rural ranches may be able to go too far, and a bottom-up approach should be used going further

Methods

• Literature review
• Analysis of ranch websites and their histories

Key Terms

Rural:
• Vague, ambiguous
• Social Construct – identity with social, cultural, aesthetic, and ideological characteristics (Woods, 2005)
• Differing definitions by discipline, organization, and individual

Idyl:
• An ‘aspirational picture of an idealized rurality, often emphasizing the pastoral landscape and the perceived peace and quiet’ (Woods, 2005, p.13)
• Myth, but powerful and influential (produces in-migrants) (Woods, 2005)

Commodification:
• When an objects ‘exchange value’ (what it can be sold for) is greater than its ‘use value’ (Woods, 2005)
• A commodified object is removed from its use and valued for cultural or aesthetic reasons (Woods, 2005)

Global Example of Chiapas, Mexico

Livestock production is an important part of the developing world’s economy, and in particular, the rural economy in Chiapas (Ferguson, 2013)

Conventional cattle ranching in the lowlands of Chiapas, Mexico (Ferguson, 2013)
• Typically employs:
  • extensive grazing,
  • annual pasture burns, and
  • frequent applications of agrochemicals.
• Threatens biodiversity and long-term productivity

Holistic management is adopted by a small group of innovative ranchers in the Central Valleys (Ferguson, 2013)
• Through:
  • careful land-use planning,
  • rotational grazing,
  • diversified forage, and
  • diminished use of purchased inputs.

Objectives 2: British Columbia and the Thompson-Nicola Regional District

Ranches in the TNRD vary in terms of how commodified they are

Ranches in the past were mainly supported by raising cattle and other livestock production is an important part of the developing world’s economy

Proposed for moving forward:
• A bottom-up approach, that includes the opinions of the people using the commodities, should be adopted

Case Study – Cliffs of Moher, Ireland

• Interviewed and surveyed tourists using the visitor centre
• Results:
  • high technology displays (such as virtual experiences) were not preferred by tourists
• Argument:
  • people’s perspectives should be emphasised throughout the planning of tourism

References


From Cows to Cabins: The Commodification of Ranches

Lindsey Jepsen