Glen Michael Alessi

Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia **Place Branding and Heritage Tourism in The American West** For over 150 years, the American West continues to be romanticized, idealized and fictionalized, through film, television, popular literature and more recently through heritage branding and travel both in print and in social media. Today, readers of specialist magazines and websites dealing with historically western themes continue to romanticize events, objects, personalities and places through feature stories, advertising, forums and travel advice, which inform of a past which has been enriched and, and a Bhatian sense, colonized by the language of commercialization and promotion in order to sell clothing, package tours, firearms and promote heritage events and museums. TRUE WEST MAGAZINE, published since 1954 and which is the most widely read and longest running publication of its type, has allowed access to their archives to explore and assess the types of discourse and lexico grammatical features (specialist terms or archaic labels) that this repackaging of the past for the present proposes. A thorough examination of the generic features at play in both the print and online versions will be explored and presented in this paper. Evidence of destination branding, city branding, along with event and heritage branding will be explored using frameworks borrowed from CDA, critical Genre Analysis and Corpus Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS). The conclusions will aim at identifying specific discursive strategies for marketing historical events such as rodeos, re­enactments, heritage place­naming, architecture and tours, and will include the ensuing evaluative discussions and ratings which follow in online forum threads. It also seeks to explore how persuasion and credibility are sought in specific and sometimes innovative lexical choices. The presentation will also refer to a case study of a specific town in Arizona whose economy has largely been based on heritage tourism.

Baker, Bill. Destination Branding for Small Cities: The Essentials for Successful Place Branding. Portland, OR: Creative Leap, 2007. Print.

Govers, Robert, and Frank M. Go. Place Branding: Glocal, Virtual and Physical Identities, Constructed, Imagined and Experienced. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Print.

Paganoni, Maria Cristina. City Branding and New Media: Linguistic Perspectives, Discursive Strategies and Multimodality. London: Palgrave, 2015. Print.

"True West Magazine." True West Magazine. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Oct. 2015.