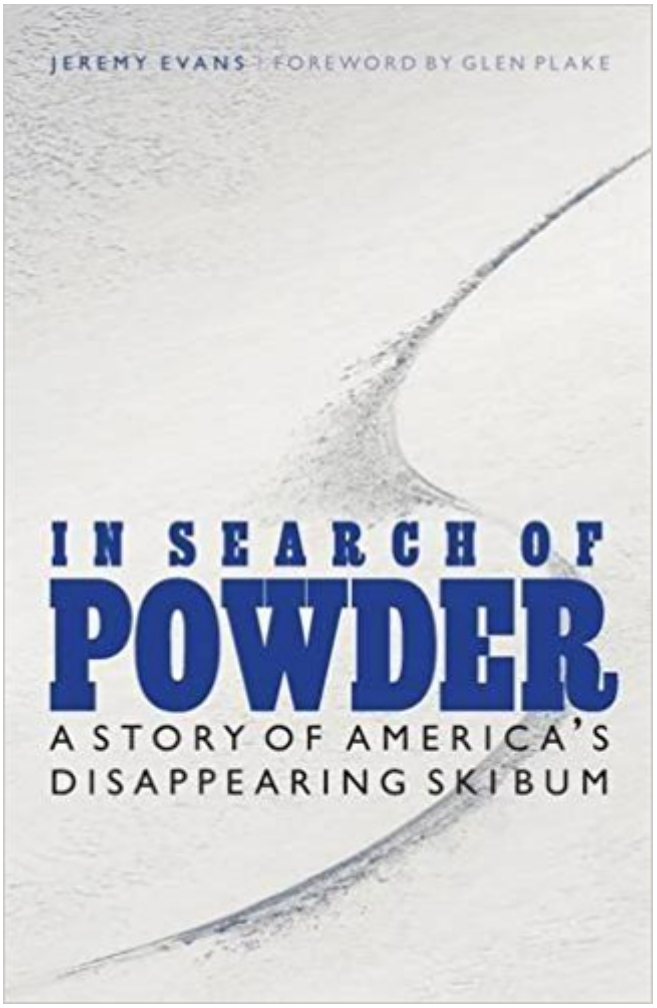
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In Search Of Powder: A Story Of America's Disappearing Ski Bum



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Synopsis

As a recent college graduate and fledging newspaper reporter in the Lake Tahoe area, Jeremy Evans became immersed in ski bum cultureÃ¢â ¬â •a carefree lifestyle whose mantra was simply: Ã¢â ¬Å“Ski as much as possible.Ã¢â ¬Â• His snowboarding suffered when he left for a job in the Portland area; and when, at twenty-six, he suffered a stroke, he reexamined his priorities, quit his job, moved back to Tahoe, and threw himself into snowboarding. But while he had been away, the culture had changed. This book is EvansÃ¢â ¬â„¢s paean to the disappearing culture of the ski bum. A fascinating look at a world far removed from the larger culture, it is also a curious account of a passion for powder and what its disappearance means.Ã Â Evans looks at several prominent ski towns in the West (including Crested Butte, Jackson Hole, Telluride, Lake Tahoe, Park City, and Mammoth) and the ski bums who either flourished or fled. He chronicles the American West transformed by rising real estate costs, an immigrant workforce, misguided values, and corporate-owned resorts. The story he tells is that of quintessentially American charactersÃ¢â ¬â •rejecting materialism, taking risks, following their own pathÃ¢â ¬â •and of the glories and pitfalls their lifestyle presents.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"If you’re an ex-ski bum, this is required reading. If you remember those days, ditto. Or if you just like tales of men and women on the edge, give it a read." -- Nevada Appeal"It’s a terrific book in almost all respects - we wish it had an index, but that’s a quibble. Most of all, we liked his long chapter profiling Keith Erickson. We didn’t know him the way we know him now." -- Mammoth

Times"Evans captures the gritty details of this esoteric lifestyle to a degree not accomplished elsewhere." -- Sports Literature Association"A story about the new American West and those crazy, courageous cowboy souls who strap on skis and live for powder days as a means to find their true essence of peace and happiness. ... A ballsy piece of journalism." --Tahoe Mountain News"Like surfing, skiing first went from sport to lifestyle during the 1960s and thus came of age with the baby boomers. They made skiing sexy and rebellious, and then they made it a big business." -- Wall Street JournalÃ¢â ¬Å“In Search of Powder by Jeremy Evans is funny, irreverent, hedonistic, saucy, insightful, and ski-obsessed. Much like the ski bums detailed within.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Rob Story, editor at large of Powder and Skiing magazines (Rob Story)"A provocative new book."Ã¢â ¬â •Sam McManis, Sacramento Bee (Sam McManis Sacramento Bee 2010-11-14)"[A] superb book about ski towns like ours."Ã¢â ¬â •George Shirk, Mammoth Times (George Shirk Mammoth Times 2010-10-01)"Evans' book chronicles all this in fine details, gathered over several seasons of boarding and interviewing. He has all the history, all the names and all the places. If you're an ex-ski bum, this is required reading. If you remember those days, ditto. Or if you just like tales of men and women on the edge, give it a read. And keep an eye out for Evans, he's still riding our slopes."Ã¢â ¬â •Sam Bauman, Nevada Appeal (Sam Bauman Nevada Appeal 2010-10-03)"In Search of Powder is a comprehensive, well-written and well-reasoned homage to a lifestyle that many of us yearn for, secretly or otherwise."Ã¢â ¬â •Ted Holteen, Durango Herald (Ted Holteen Durango Herald 2010-12-13)"Evans tells the story of quintessentially American charactersÃ¢â ¬â •rejecting materialism, taking risks, following their own pathsÃ¢â ¬â •and of the glories and pitfalls their lifestyles present."Ã¢â ¬â •ForeWord e-newsletter (ForeWord e-newsletter 2011-01-20)

Jeremy Evans isÃ Â a former daily newspaper reporter whose eight-year journalism career garnered numerous writing awards for his outdoor and sports writing. He is currently a freelance writer whose work has appeared in Powder and Skiing magazines. Glen Plake is an iconic figure in American freestyle skiing and extreme sports.

I really wanted to like this book, but I found it fell well short of my expectations. The author begins the story with his own experience that leads him to quit his job and move back to Lake Tahoe to chase the dream of being a ski bum. Like a lot of prospective readers, I once harbored such ambitions, and was expecting a rollicking ride through that lifestyle. Instead, the author tells the story almost entirely through the experiences of others, often introducing so many characters in the

space of a few pages that it’s hard to keep track. And sadly, most of those people never really come alive on the page.The central theme of "In Search of Powder" seems to be a morality tale in which the noble ski bum who discovers a resort town in it’s early days eventually gets squeezed out by the success of the resort, which drives up real estate values and makes a ski bum existence next to impossible. So what I had hoped would be a fun book about underground ski town culture instead took on a rather depressing angle, spiked with bitterness about the growing commercialization of the sport. I’m not saying the author’s point isn’t valid, but it’s a far cry from the book I was expecting.My biggest criticism is that for a book of this genre, there are precious few pages devoted to actual skiing and snowboarding. The book delves more into ski resort economics than floating turns through deep powder.

The book has the feel of a text version documentary. It details with history and interviews the changes seen in America’s ski towns and ski bum culture. Like Evans I’m from South Lake Tahoe (though currently residing elsewhere due to some of the issues in the book) surprisingly I’ve never heard of the guy or even have any facebook friends in common. It’s a very small town, but he is a bit younger.In any case, he covers a lot of the issues that our mountain towns are facing. I moved to tahoe in the 90’s and always assumed I’d spend my entire life there. Those of us who were snowboard/ski bums eventually get older. We want to settle down at some point, we have kids, etc. In a healthy community we’d get some kind of real job, buy a house and maybe start living some kind of semi-mature life. When I moved to town there were condos and houses available for 90k-150k all over the place. However by the time I was ready for adult life I was staring at 300-400k price tags, and keep in mind the average casino dealer (one of the better paying gigs in town) is looking at 40-50k/yr.As mentioned in the book, the price has been driven up by out of towners who buy ’vacation homes’ which either sit vacant or worse yet are VRBO’d out to obnoxious partiers on weekends. Schools are dwindling and educational quality is a serious issue. The town starts to become a hollowed out facade, a ski town themed amusement park for well off bay area folks. The lack of opportunity and high cost led to me making the call to move out. Lots of my friends are still in the area but have moved to carson city (mentioned in the book) and the ones who are still at the lake struggle with the above issues.Evans shows what we’ve seen first hand repeating itself all around the great American ski towns on the west coast and in the rockies. He also goes into detail a little about how the ski/snowboard bum has gone from an alternative to standard 9-5 existence to a marketing front for consumerist culture. From lifestyle to lifestyle marketing.So all this is laid out, and in an enjoyable way. What I really would have loved to see is some kind of discussion near the end

on how to solve these problems, as they surely are problems. There are pros and cons to limiting who can buy, how long you have to stay, funding education and so on. It no longer becomes a truly organic community but an artificially controlled one, and is that better or worse then the 'theme park for the rich' situation that is occurring now?Overall though, an enjoyable read and one that should be read by anyone making their home in a ski town.

A very thought provoking book on how skiing has evolved over the years, and what we are going to miss but also gain despite this evolution .

Excellent! If you have never known the world of the ski bum...this will bring you right in...front and center.Maybe the youth, won't appreciated it..but when they reach their golden years..they will begin to understand.

Wonderful book...I could not put it down and read all night.

A fantastic book that really digs into the cultural shifts of not just skiing itself but the mountains that make it possible, and more specifically the towns, areas and resorts around those mountains and the dramatic changes they've undergone over the past few decades.

Good reading. Not enough about UTAH. Ski Bum's haven'tdisappeared, they just all moved to Salt Lake City !!However, very true about real estate prices in places likeJackson Hole or all of Summit and Pitkin counties Colorado.Skiing has become a sport for the affluent. Back in the day,parking a camper-van in most any 'big-resort' was not a problem.Van-camp these days, and they'll run you out of town.

Love the book

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