
Book Review

Reviewed by Michael Hughes

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Tourism and Climate Change: Impacts Adaptation and Mitigation
by: Daniel Scott, C. Michael Hall and Stefan Gössling
Published 2012
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14-4RN, UK, 400pp
ISBN: 978-0-415-66885-9

When I was requested to review this book, my first impression was of the ambitious breadth of the subject matter suggested by the title. On reading the book, I found it brings together the three authors' considerable body of work in this field in a comprehensive, systematic manner. Each of the authors has an impressive track record in the field of climate change and tourism that has afforded them excellent capacity in dealing with this subject matter. The stated aim of the book is to provide a synthesis of the key issues rising from the tourism and climate change nexus from a multidisciplinary perspective. It is quite a dense body of work that succeeds in bringing together two complex fields of study.

The book begins with a fairly broad overview of the main elements of tourism and its impacts. This is followed by a general guide to anthropogenic climate change presented in terms of the timeline of global awareness of the issue, the growth in understanding of the phenomenon and its consequences as well as the science that supports the theory. This section also includes a handy translation guide to climate science speak and what it means in common terms. A subsequent chapter on the relationship between climate and tourism leads into further chapters examining various elements of this relationship and how they may impact on tourism. There is also useful discussion of the role of the tourism sector, media and politics in terms of communicating and understanding the evidence and formulating useful policies and management actions. While the book comprehensively sets out what is known about climate change and tourism, it also identifies significant research gaps. It ends with a somewhat hopeful note that adaptive strategies can be adopted by tourism businesses and destinations based on sound research and effective collaboration with scholars from a broad range of disciplines.

While the book covers a multifaceted and sobering topic, I found a few moments of mild wit and humour. For example, a reference to the 'well-known US environmental expert, Sarah Palin' when discussing ideas emanating from 'climate change sceptics'. With regards to sceptics, the sections highlighting the false debate on anthropogenic climate change and its implications are in my view very interesting and useful. Often enthusiastically promoted by media in the interests of generating controversy, the false debate includes those with expert knowledge in the climate science field based on years of evidence gathering and those with little expertise in the field but who happen to have

an opinion based on vested interests, selective knowledge or poor science. While each side of this debate is treated as having equal validity by various types of media, the result is noted as a significant barrier to adopting responsible policy and adaptive strategies by business and government. The book also notes that the tourism sector in general tends to highlight positives and ignore or down play negatives such as the impacts of climate change on destinations and experiences. Being able to clearly communicate the reality of anthropogenic climate change, to the non-scientific community, and the need for adaptive responses is an important message.

There is plenty of detail about the projected impacts of climate change on destinations, such as disappearing snow fields, coastal erosion and changing ecosystems, that is presented in the context of both the demand and supply sides of tourism. It is not all bad news, though there are significant challenges. *Climate change and Tourism* presents both the problems and challenges but also potential solutions and a way forward. In this way, it is not just another doomsday book on the impacts of anthropogenic climate change, but more a reality check about what is known and what could be done about it within the tourism sector.

Although the book is aimed at 'students, academics, business leaders and government policy makers', considering the mode of presentation, density and type of information, the summary of research gaps and emphasis on research needs the book in my view probably lends itself more to an academic type of audience than business and government. This is mainly due to the academic nature of the book and the time and inclination required to absorb the information as it is presented. Having noted that, the book provides an excellent resource on this very broad and complex topic for those interested in gaining an overview of the issues and necessary response actions around tourism and climate change.

Book Review

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Slum Tourism: Poverty, Power, and Ethics

by: Fabian Frenzel, Ko Koaens and Malte Steinbrink (Eds.)

Published 2012

by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxford, OX14 4RN, UK, 264pp

ISBN: 9780415698788

When I first travelled to Brazil I was interested in samba, beaches, and the ambiance of a country famed for its culture. Yet, the images that most struck me and stayed with me were those I encountered when taking a half-day tour of favelas situated on the mountainsides of Rio de Janeiro. Favelas are Rio de Janeiro's shanty towns, of which there are numerous dotted throughout the landscape. The favelas are never far away in inner-city Rio de Janeiro. When seated in the posh restaurants and driving through well-to-do neighbourhoods you need only look to the closest mountainside to see a favela. These areas have no formal land ownership, many lack sanitation, water, electricity, garbage collection, and other basic necessities, and they are infamous for being home to abject poverty and crime. Award-winning films such as *City of God*, *Favela Rising*, and *Black Orpheus* along with upcoming mega-events (e.g., 2016 Summer Olympics, 2014 World Cup) have brought the issue of favelas mainstream.

While in Brazil I embarked on a favela tour as one of many in a guided tour. The culture of favelas is interesting, but equally interesting is the approach the tour companies took when admitting tourists to the favela. Yes, anyone can simply walk into a favela. But the tour operators chose to make the entrance to the favela a ritual steeped in tourism rather than culture. The tour guides provided each visitor to the favela a light-blue helmet with the acronym 'U.N.' written in large bold letters. The guides spoke of crime and drugs, but generally skipped the unique culture and ambiance of each favela. When driving through the favelas we were kept in cages in the back of a truck, as though we were being kept from harm's way by meshed steel. I was so impacted by my half-day as a slum tourist in the favelas that I began researching pro-poor tourism, sustainable tourism, and other bodies of literature that attempt to better understand the phenomena this text refers to as *Slum Tourism*.

This book, *Slum Tourism*, approaches the complex situation I experienced in Rio de Janeiro's favelas. The text broaches the history of slums, the complex economic and political factors that lead to slums, and joins case studies with academic literature to create a holistic vantage point of the industry of 'slum tourism'. The book is broken into three parts: situating slum tourism, representations of poverty, and power structures in slum tourism (titled *Empowerment* by the editors, but the discourse is power rather than empowerment).

The text situates the slum tours primarily within literature describing discourses of social justice, power, ethics and morality, and various motivational theories. The complex structure of not only slums, but also of the tours and the politics involved in commodifying an impoverished region of a city, is broached by the various authors situating slum tourism in the literature. The authors do not always agree, and each has unique cases to forward their experience and thoughts. For example, some sections identify slum tourism as empowering. This includes Frenzel's chapter, which cites social justice as a positive bi-product of slum tourism. Basu, who does not necessarily disagree with Frenzel, writes a chapter capturing societal problems stemming from the commodification of slum tourism for tourists in India. Local political entities do not want tourists viewing the slums in the Indian context. The elite and political in India would rather see the tourists view India's recent developmental successes according to Basu. Freire-Medeiros takes a third approach, allowing multiple narratives she collected in the five years she spent conducting qualitative research in Rio's favelas to answer questions of social justice. There was no clear-cut answer in the narratives. Obviously, if social justice is a bi-product of slum tourism according to one author and enhanced disenfranchisement of already impoverished persons is another author's stance then the situation is not yet wholly understood. This book does not claim to come to conclusions, but rather accepts these discrepancies and uses these to recommend further research.

The second section of the text covers representations of poverty. This is often the most powerful part of a slum tour for the tourist, as the tour operator has the ability to frame the experience, people, heritage, and poverty for the tourists. For example, by placing me in a U.N. helmet, separating me from the 'others' in the favela, and telling stories of violence and drugs in the favelas, rather than focusing on the close-knit communities, samba parties, and unique heritage of each favela within Rio de Janeiro, the guide of my tour was situating the area in a negative light. Within this manuscript the commodification of city, culture, poverty, people, and heritage are the foci of slum tourism representations. Menezes' chapter, for example, speaks to the commodification of 'city', leading to a lack of authenticity in the culture of persons within the city. There are multiple such examples of the commodification of city in existing tourism literature already, but the impact of slum tourism in this way is unique.

Power structures are the third and final section of the text. The section's discourse attempts to understand the ethics and morality of existing power structures forwarding the creation and continued survival of slums and slum tourism as an industry. For example, Freire-Medeiros works toward understanding current opinions toward the morality of slum tourism from the perception of those living in Rocinho, Rio de Janeiro's largest favela. These narratives go beyond slum tours and often end up with a line of questioning where the resident is wondering what it is about their community outsiders are fascinated by. Another example, Wattanawanyoo's chapter gives a voice to heritage regions. Wattanawanyoo's chapter is of particular interest because while the slums are given heritage and cultural context throughout the book, this chapter evidences how heritage can be overrun by a slum. As Bangkok's urban sprawl has created boorish poverty, slums have begun to creep into historical parks and areas, such as Rattanakosin City, an area in Bangkok.

This book is intended as an academic text, providing fodder for an excellent literature review. This textbook does a fine job of capturing the issues, narratives, and case studies associated with tourism occurring in impoverished areas. The book also establishes more clearly what is meant by slum tourism, the recommended future directions of inquiry, and

provides a more holistic vantage point (hosts, guests, operators, government's role, etc.) than previous slum tourism literature. It should be remembered, literature in slum tourism is new, but pro-poor tourism, eco-tourism, and sustainable tourism have been viewing the same issues associated with slum tourism for decades. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of slum tours will not be possible through a unique line of inquiry.

Book Review

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Tourism and Australian Beach Cultures: Revealing Bodies
by: Christine Metusela and Gordon Waitt
Published 2012
by Channel View Publications
St. Nicholas House, 31-34 High Street, Bristol BS1 2AW, UK, 200 pp
ISBN: 9781845412869

Tourism and Australian Beach Cultures: Revealing Bodies is part of the series 'tourism and cultural change' under the direction of series editors Mike Robinson and Alison Phipps, focusing on the dynamic inter-relationships between tourism and culture(s). The eclectic series offers commentary on a variety of topics ranging from backpackers, ethic tourists, English seaside resorts to the Australian outback. *Tourism and Australian Beach Cultures: Revealing Bodies* employs a cultural geography perspective focusing on the male informed morality as it relates to the use of the beach, and the display of the human body during a 110 year period, from 1830 to 1940. The authors rely on a feminist geography perspective to explore how ideas and experiences of gender played out on the beach during this time.

The book is laid out in six chapters, with Chapter 1 establishing the initial ban on bathing during daylight in New South Wales, a clear attempt to control morality. Having established this background, the authors focus on the emergence of bathing resorts in Brighton, England without effectively establishing the reasons for incorporating this sidebar into the perspective. A clear articulation of the connection between potential mimicry of British bathing ideas, by Australian law-makers, was overshadowed by the author's attempts to establish a feminist perspective. Chapter 2 discusses the manner in which bathing at the beach gradually became more respectable, including amended legislation, the introduction of dressing sheds, and local policing of established regulations. Despite these undertakings, surf bathing was still deemed immoral by many. Chapter 3 discusses the growing popularity of the beaches in Southern New South Wales, due in part to the development of train travel to the area from Sydney, and later on by car, providing the urban dwellers with exciting picnicking, hiking, and camping opportunities. Chapter 4 continues the juxtaposition of Southern New South Wales beaches with Britain, noting the comparison between Brighton (as a beach tourism) place, and Sheffield (industry). Local municipal leaders believed the southern beaches area had more industrial potential than tourism offered, despite the area's natural pull. Chapter 5 notes the emergence of life saving clubs, and the resultant display of the ideal male figure on the beach. Chapter 6 offers a contrast by focusing on the manner in which the female body was promoted through bath suit promotions, an act of a male dominated promotion industry.

The authors attempt to weave a 'story' based on the 'heterosexual' beach through the lens of feminist scholarship. The continuous commentary on gender and space, represented by the beach, is based on a series of historic newspaper articles, magazine stories, organisation's records, guidebooks, and prominent tourism scholarship. The dialogue is well-supported by a variety of illustrations.

The text is aimed at undergraduate and postgraduate students, researchers, and professionals who may have an interest in Australia's changing moral standards as seen through the lens of enjoying the beach and associated public bathing opportunities. This reviewer however found the dialogue cumbersome, repetitive and inadequately edited. Same terms, similar terms, and complex jargon were repeated in sentence after sentence. Where one sentence would have made the point, the same words were remixed for the next two, three, or sometimes four sentences.

The overall purpose of the book was difficult to discern, given the extensive commentary on British scenarios and feminist scholarship. Australian beach culture is a key to Australia's tourism industry, yet this perspective is thinly discussed. Therefore, understanding the issues that impacted the evolution of changes to morality associated with Australian beaches and bathing in public spaces, was not as clearly established, due to the authors' preference to view this very important story through a feminist perspective. Further, the authors made no commentary as to how these changes varied amongst other Australian beach centres, a surprise given their important link to Australian culture.