
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Gregory Gullette is currently an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Santa Clara University and a Visiting Research Fellow at the Social Research Institute at Chulalongkorn University and the Institute for Population and Social Research at Mahidol University. He has conducted ethnographic research in Mexico, New Zealand, Thailand, and the USA. His most recent research in Thailand explores the process of state development, urban expansion, agrarian change, and migration strategies.

Welcome to this special issue of the *International Journal of Tourism Anthropology* where several authors have dealt with the theme of ‘emergent integrative research strategies within tourism studies’. As seen in tourism studies’ wide body of literature, scholars within anthropology and allied disciplines invariably find creative ways to examine the intricate entanglements between tourism activities and social, economic, political, and environmental matters. The complex effects of tourism and touristic travel often require integrative, comprehensive methods to answer research questions that seek to more fully understand the tourist phenomenon. The dynamic nature of tourism systems, the surprising ways tourism unfolds over time, and the discontinuities and instabilities located in tourism development strategies have encouraged anthropologists to increasingly explore interdisciplinary research or mixed methods approaches. The goal of which is to understand the varied and complex relationships formed within tourism events.

Yet, the integration of different methodological systems and engagement across disciplinary boundaries may introduce complications within data collection, analysis, or translation of findings. The authors in this issue focus on emergent research strategies within tourism studies that seeks to overcome such challenges. Their work considers the types of data necessary to unpack the intricacies of tourism activities, as well as ways to increase the methodological and analytical connection between disciplines in order to enhance the sophistication of tourism studies.

Using a case study of spring break activities in Cancun, Mexico, Drs. Juan Carlos Monterrubio, Bharath M. Josiam, and A. Pricila Sosa consider how best to examine the wide range of practices and behaviours that might characterise tourists that travel to beach destinations to celebrate this vacation period (for example, alcohol consumption, drug use, or risky sexual behaviours). The authors note that while studies have commonly focused on activities that occur at destinations such as Daytona Beach, South Padre Island, or Montego Bay, fewer studies have focused on the ways in which local people’s attitudes toward these tourists are structured, including the best ways to collect data on local people’s understandings of spring break participants. By incorporating qualitative

methods and theoretically framing their study with Doxey's index for tourist irritation, the authors uncover the affective and cognitive components of residents' attitudes and move beyond the limitations of a strictly quantitative methodological approach. In so doing, the authors' work builds on Doxey's index and recognises that while the number and intensity of tourists that come into an area prove important for creating irritation among residents within a tourist destination, future research should too more closely consider tourists' behaviours as a key factor in shaping residents' attitudes.

Similarly, Dr. Ann Reed considers how one might use both quantitative surveys and more established qualitative techniques such as participant observation, field notes, and interviews to understand the complex motivations for travelling to heritage tourism sites. Reed reflects on her experiences researching the cultural motivations and dynamics of African pilgrimage tourism to heritage sites in Ghana through a mixed method approach. Yet, while mixed methods might increasingly prove popular for researchers seeking to triangulate data or produce robust findings, they too create particular challenges for researchers, namely collecting 'too much data' that might require additional time to analyse and disseminate research results. Furthermore, by incorporating quantitative surveys into traditional qualitative research designs, researchers face other challenges such as ensuring that field assistants follow consistent procedures, that respondents vary considerably in how they understand terms or words within a survey, or that the translation of English words or concepts into other languages might obscure the intended meaning. Reed argues that while such drawbacks might be present, the different sets of data derived from a mixed method approach can be effectively (and efficiently) combined to enhance the ethnographic study of heritage tourism or other complex socio-cultural phenomena.

Ending this special issue, Dr. Amelia Moore draws from critical studies of nature and design and the (contested) frame of the Anthropocene to consider new areas of research within tourism studies. Working from the understanding that scholars within sustainable tourism studies must craft the conceptual tools necessary to analyse emergent developments within the field, Moore considers the shifting nature of tourism, socio-ecological instabilities, and ideas of sustainability in The Bahamas by situating such issues within the frame of unsettled global change (read the Anthropocene). Here, Moore contributes to scholars' long interest in the relationships between nature and culture. Yet, Moore's work extends the nature-culture field by explicating the ways in which linking tourism to the Anthropocene creates new analytical possibilities for sustainable tourism studies, and in turn, new types of analytical toolkits.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the reviewers whose expertise and dedication to the field have helped maintain the journal's goal of serving as an outlet for quality scholarly work. As always, the journal hopes that our readers find their time well spent exploring these authors' forward-thinking engagements with tourism studies.