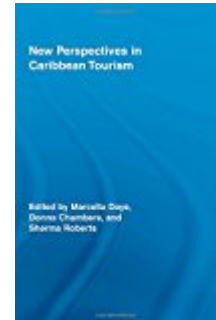


Marcella Daye, Donna Chambers, Sherma Roberts, eds.. *New Perspectives in Caribbean Tourism*. Routledge Advances in Tourism Series. New York: Routledge, 2008. xii + 265 pp. ISBN 978-0-415-95838-7.



Reviewed by Evan Ward

Published on H-Travel (February, 2009)

Commissioned by Patrick R. Young (University of Massachusetts-Lowell)

Scholars with past and present affiliations with the University of the West Indies have produced an intriguing collection of essays about tourism development in the English-speaking Caribbean in *New Perspectives in Caribbean Tourism*. The collection focuses heavily on tourism practice and theory in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Broken into two sections, one dealing with tourism and identity and a second on tourism governance, the collection strikes its strongest chord in its emphasis on alternative tourism possibilities to the sun, sea, and sand tourism that have predominated the region for the past five decades; and in the collective effort of the authors to conceptualize tourism practice and theory from a Caribbean, rather than exclusively Western, perspective.

In the first section, "Image, Culture, and Identity," Marcella Daye addresses one of the more resonant themes in recent tourism development in the English-speaking Caribbean: the need to forge alternatives to traditional conceptualizations of tourism—namely sun, sea, and sand vaca-

tions—which have tarnished the image of places like Jamaica. Underscoring the neocolonialist critique that resonates throughout the book, Daye observes, "the axiomatic power of representations of the Caribbean as images of paradise may disguise the sophisticated machinery and craft that sustain these images" (p. 21). While the search for alternatives to traditional tourism practices in the Caribbean is not new, it provides, in this case, an important organizing theme for the essays that follow.

Subsequently, Jalani Niaah and Sonjah Stanley Niaah follow on Daye's organizing theme by exploring Jamaican tourism identity through the prism of Bob Marley and Rastafarianism as magnets for tourists. Niaah and Niaah examine the relevance of Rastafarianism as a mainstream cultural value in Jamaica, as well as Marley as an alternative global symbol, in making a case for Marley's centrality to Jamaican identity and place among the island's tourist offerings. Similarly, Douglas Webster's intriguing essay, "Jamaican Vinyl Tourism," explores the factors that have ac-

counted for the rise of record collecting as an alternative to sun, sea, and sand tourism on the island. Using interviews from European and Japanese collectors, Webster explores the structure and process of used record sales as a niche tourism market. Finally, David Dodman and Kevon Rhiney examine the issue of authenticity and cuisine in “We Nyammin? Food Supply, Authenticity, and the Tourist Experience in Negril, Jamaica.” Dodman and Rhiney also underscore the idea that finding authenticity in the culinary aspect of island tourism often involves avoiding all-inclusive hotels, and opting instead for smaller establishments that tend to purchase more of their foodstuffs from local merchants and specialize in local dishes. Their close analysis of Jamaica’s retail and wholesale food structure, as well as their interviews of hotel chefs, offer a striking connection between alternative tourism choices and “authenticity” as a tourism objective.

The second organizing theme in this collection is the re-centering of tourism studies in the Caribbean context, as opposed to the view of large tourism operators under transnational control or influenced by Western values. This interplay between core and periphery is evident not only in the business and governance of tourism, but also in the values that influence tourism policies, as in Donna Chambers, “A Postcolonial Interrogation of Attitudes toward Homosexuality and Gay Tourism: The Case for Jamaica.” Other studies that examine core/periphery issues center on spatial analysis. Raymond Ramcharitar’s “Tourist Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago” examines the peripheral historical role of the island of Tobago in the nation’s political relationship, as contrasted with its overwhelming importance to the nation in tourism development. Continuing with the theme of spatial analysis, Sheere Brooke’s essay, “‘A Squatter in My Own Country!’ Spatial Manifestations of Social Exclusion in a Jamaican Tourist Resort Town,” employs innovative interviewing

techniques in the tourism center of Ocho Rios to better understand its informal tourism sector.

Several essays deal more specifically with the need to reorient tourism education, regional planning, and sustainable tourism development away from Western norms. Sherma Roberts’s “Reflections from the Periphery: An Analysis of Small Tourism Businesses within the Sustainability Discourse” is a powerful essay that undercuts the environmental pretenses of “sustainable development” as it has been imagined and ideated in the Western world. Roberts argues that tourism in the Caribbean should take its lead more from the environmental needs of the local landscapes than from the corporate and developmental models created in the West. Similarly, Acolla Lewis’s “New Directions in Caribbean Tourism Education: Awakening the Silent Voices” contends that tourism educational models, as currently practiced in the Caribbean, continue to take their cues from U.K. and U.S. theorists, neglecting the important social and environmental lessons that can be learned from integrating a Caribbean context in tourism training schools. Leslie-Ann Jordan’s “Regional Partnerships: The Foundation for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Caribbean” explores the need for interdependence as a by-product of globalization in promoting tourism in the Caribbean. She discusses the efforts of current organizations and explores the possibilities for other types of collaboration. Finally, Wendy C. Grenade examines a medical core/periphery issue in “An Unwelcome Guest: Unpacking the Tourism and HIV/AIDS Dilemma in the Caribbean: A Case Study of Grenada.” Grenade illustrates the disproportionate impact that health issues--intensified when coupled with environmental catastrophes like hurricanes--can exert on small island governments and their budgets.

Ultimately, *New Perspectives in Caribbean Tourism* suggests a significant interest in identity issues related to tourism, and in the influence that political economy and history (best illustrated in

Roberts's and Ramcharitar's essays) have on the identity and character of tourism in the Caribbean and throughout the world. The book also demonstrates an array of novel methodological approaches used to understand the nature of tourism in the English-speaking Caribbean. Brooke's essay on squatters in Ocho Rios, for example, employs creative interviewing techniques to understand patterns of gender and exclusion in a mass tourism port. In conclusion, despite the narrow geographic focus of the book (largely Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Grenada), this volume gives us an important indicator of current research interests in tourism studies and invites scholars from other regions of the Caribbean to follow their lead.

to

Routledge Press's

strikes on

Bob

:

in order

the

there in "A

Squatter in My Own Country!': Spatial Manifestations of Social Exclusion in a Jamaican Tourist Resort Town."

of the

in the collection

at

's

article

but also

ing

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at <https://networks.h-net.org/h-travel>

Citation: Evan Ward. Review of Daye, Marcella; Chambers, Donna; Roberts, Sherma, eds. *New Perspectives in Caribbean Tourism*. H-Travel, H-Net Reviews. February, 2009.

URL: <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=24175>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License.