

Tourism and Crime: key themes



Edited by

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Introduction: Tourism Studies and Criminology

 Published by Goodfellow Publishers Limited, Woodeaton, Oxford, OX3 9TJ
<http://www.goodfellowpublishers.com>

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Design and setting by P.K. McBride

1 Introduction: Tourism Studies and Criminology

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In this chapter we:

- ◆ Make the case for collaboration between tourism studies and criminology
- ◆ Sketch the emergence of both tourism studies and criminology in the academy
- ◆ Briefly review the key themes in both fields
- ◆ Suggest potential lines of analysis that arise from collaboration.

The ambition of this book is to begin a project that on the face of it might appear somewhat baffling. Holidays are surrounded by images that convey an escape; a promise of freedom from the pressures and problems of everyday 'normal' life. Be it idyllic seascapes, soaring mountains, luxurious therapies, adrenaline-pumping extreme rides, or monumental cultural icons, the images suggest that on holiday we are, primarily, getting away from all those awkward, uncomfortable, damaging and life-threatening bits of human existence that constrain the promised good life. The criminal 'underworld', on the other hand, is the bad life personified. Here the vilified perpetrators of the worst excesses of human depravity dwell. And, despite a voyeuristic fascination with the criminal world when kept at a safe distance through the mediation of the news, or popularised through literature and film, this dark side of human behaviour is necessarily cordoned-off, regulated, incarcerated or even extinguished from sight. Why then bring these two seemingly oppositional domains of the social world together?

It is not that the falsehood of the separation of holidays and crime go unnoticed. Most of us know that the seduction of the holiday bubble bursts when travel inconvenience, marital dispute, frightening encounters with 'other' strangers occur, or when unlawful actions maim and kill. We also know that crime is not cordoned off by tourism and can occur anywhere and at any time, but somehow this has yet to be reflected in the research agendas of tourism studies and criminology. It is as if we have internalised the popular images of holidays and crime and thus closed our collective sociological imaginations to this important interface.

This book intends to spark a debate and encourage the two subject communities to explore the interface of tourism and crime and how it might open new lines of analyses important to both subjects. We hope that the book will be a dialectical

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moment for both subject communities; an opportunity to address the absence of each other in their respective canons. There are substantive reasons why, as social scientists, we should do this. Tourism continues to grow as a human activity in both scale and significance. The voluntary mobility of a holiday uproots citizens from secure and known social and legal structures and exposes them, often unwittingly, to different legal and cultural environments, along with unanticipated dangers and temptations. This same condition of mobility, exercised by those with criminal intent, opens up new opportunities for criminal offending and ambiguously policed territories. Thus we hope that this book is just a beginning of what will become a more important area of academic enquiry for both subject communities leading to increased empirical work, theoretical development and contributions to policy debates.

We begin the task of dialogue by reporting the academic background, key themes and approaches to both tourism studies and criminology. This we hope will be helpful to the book's readers whom we assume will be new to one or other of the subjects. Inevitably, given space restrictions, these overviews can only touch broadly on the key themes of research and writing within each area of study. The overview of tourism studies will focus on tourist behaviour (holiday choice, destination image, perceptions of safety and risk, tourist behaviour and moral codes) and destination management (international and domestic tourism, tourism destination development, tourist enclaves, tourist policing). The overview of criminology will provide a brief outline of the development of academic criminology (focusing mainly on Britain). It will outline three central themes within criminological research that can be seen as particularly relevant in the context of this book. These themes are the measurement of crime patterns and trends; explaining the causes of crime; and societal responses to crime. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the potential benefits of cross-disciplinary collaboration between these areas of study.

The emergence of tourism studies

Tourism studies emerged through the influences of a multidisciplinary set of social sciences but particularly geography, economics, sociology and in more recent times, cultural anthropology and business and management studies. In the UK, the study of tourism at postgraduate level began in the late 1960s and early 1970s at different universities and in different academic contexts. At the University of Edinburgh, tourism became a topic of interest in geography as a part of the growing interest in the leisure and recreational use of land in the UK. This was further stimulated by academics and students at the University of Hull. In 1979, De Kadt published his seminal work, *Tourism: Passport to Development?* from the Institute for Development Studies at the University of Sussex and opened the debates about tourism development impacts on lesser-developed countries (De Kadt, 1979). At the University of Birmingham's Centre for Urban and Regional

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