

Guest editorial

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Gender and mobility in tourism

In the field of tourism studies, the relationship between tourism and gender has been garnering attention since the mid-1990s (Aitchison, 2005; Figueroa-Domecq *et al.*, 2015; Ferguson, 2011; Ireland, 1993; Kinnaird *et al.*, 1994; Munar *et al.*, 2017; Pluss and Frei, 1995; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000; Swain, 1995). Swain (1995) edited a special issue of the *Annals of Tourism Research* on gender and tourism and began to build a sub-field around the topic (Ramos *et al.*, 2002). Since then, the scholarly attention to gender bias in the production of tourism knowledge has been growing, although tourism higher education remains male-dominated (Hall *et al.*, 2014; Figueroa-Domecq *et al.*, 2015; Lessem & Shieffer, 2010; Munar *et al.*, 2017; Nunkoo *et al.*, 2017; Swain, 2004). Recently there has been an effort to broaden the issues to non-Western contexts, addressing Asian tourism and gender research (Yang *et al.*, 2016). However, there is still a lack of significant research on tourism with regard to gender and sexual minorities, and the literature would benefit from a wider consideration of gender and tourism for different subjects in a broader geographical context.

Despite an increase in scholarly interest, the nexus of tourism and gender has not been thoroughly explored by researchers. Gender and tourism literature is fragmented, with scholarship originating in fields as diverse as sociology, geography, women and gender studies and environmental science. Although there are many overlapping areas of research, there is a lack of communication and collaboration across disciplines. The dearth of interdisciplinary work in this area has resulted in underdeveloped processes and methods of theorisation. In light of these factors, the primary aim of this special issue is to review the theories, theorisation processes and methods/methodology of gender studies in tourism by encouraging the incorporation of queer studies and intersectionality.

Second, this special issue begins to address how mobility and migration in a globalising world have affected gender issues in relation to tourism (Porter, 2011), and the implications of practices, politics and meanings of mobility for women. Migration theory began to incorporate feminist theory in the early 1990s (Chant, 1992), and has provided important insights into the connections and mutually constitutive relationships between the construction of masculinities and masculinist ideologies and migration, (im)mobilities and transnationalism and gender issues. As scholars interested in migration and mobilities work collaboratively and transnationally (Yeok and Ramdas, 2014), this special issue addresses how mobilities and gender issues influence tourism research and practices. The papers in this special issue discuss issues about (im)mobilities, migration, queerness, sustainability and cultural geographies of gender and tourism. The contributors to this issue hail from a variety of disciplines and consider various angles, topics, subjects and geographical locations including gender and migrants, a new conceptualisation of guest-host, tourism in Asian and Latin American contexts, intersectional effects of gender and race, queer studies and sex tourism.

Basagaitz Guerenio-Omil, Gergina Pavlova-Hannam and Kevin Hannam's article adds significant contributions to the field by addressing migrant gender issues that are underexplored but urgently in need of attention in the wake of the Brexit-vote. They note that migration does not simply involve the pursuit of a job, and while work may be important, a

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range of lifestyle factors are equally important factors in decisions to move, and these have gendered dynamics. Based on their qualitative and quantitative data, they highlight that there are different gendered work and leisure mobility practices among Polish migrants in the Northeast of England.

Heather Jeffrey's paper, "Tourism and gendered hosts and guests" contributes to the extant tourism and gender literature by highlighting a tendency towards the conceptualisation of gendered research participants as host or guest depending upon their nationality. The paper identifies a tendency in research on gender and tourism to conceptualise women and men from the West as guests and women and men from the rest of the world as hosts, a framework that risks overlooking important issues women and men globally. This paper paves the way for future research and opens a dialogue on gender and feminist research in the field of tourism.

In "The meanings of solo travel for Asian women," Elaine Yang, Ji Hyun Yang and Catheryn Khoo-Lattimore focus on how Asian women construct and negotiate their identities in the heteronormalised, gendered, and Western-centric tourism space. Western-centric discourse was identified in the participants' interactions with other (Western) travellers and tourism service providers, as well as in the ways the Asian women perceive themselves in relation to Western travellers. Their paper provides a critical examination of the intersectional effect of gender and race on identity construction for Asian solo female travellers.

Carlos Monterrubio's paper, "Tourism and male homosexual identities: directions for sociocultural research" offers a critical review of the existing research on the relationships between tourism and gay male identities from a sociocultural perspective. The results provide directions for future empirical research and call for a solid theoretical foundation that allows researchers to demonstrate, understand and explain how tourism contributes to gay and queer identities. Specific directions for future research are offered regarding the tangible contributions of tourism to the stages of gay tourists' identity development and the (re) construction, etc.

Oskaras Vorobjovas-Pinta and Isaac Dalla-Fontana's paper, "The strange case of dating apps at a gay resort: hyper-local and virtual-physical leisure" contributes original research about the use of gay apps by the patrons of an exclusively gay resort in Australia. This research environment facilitates an understanding of the embeddedness of gay dating apps within contemporary gay culture and community, and the spatial reorientation that comes alongside the juxtaposition of physical and digital geographies. His paper makes a crucial contribution to the sub-field by addressing divergent experiences of social and cultural change by LGBT people, including generational divides.

In "Transformative potential of events – the case of Gay Ski Week in Queenstown, New Zealand," Willem Coetzee, Xiang Liu and Crystal Filep explore the transformative, inclusive potential of event places, social atmospheres and experiences. They note that modern event attendees are part of a diverse niche group within the broader LGBTQ community, including couples from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds; couples with children; and single lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual or intersex individuals in search of more than sex, clubs and feather boas.

Laura Paola Vizcaino-Suárez and Isis Arlene Díaz-Carrión's literature review, "Gender in tourism research: perspectives from Latin America" examines the production of knowledge on tourism gender research in Latin America. Based on a bibliometric analysis of journal articles on tourism gender research in the largest scientific databases in Latin America (Redalyc, Scielo and Latindex), they examine multiple variables. They argue that there is a need to strengthen the theoretical and epistemological frameworks and increase international collaboration for knowledge exchange among tourism gender scholars.

Coming from the fields of Sociology, and Clinical Science, Ann Brooks and Vanessa Healsip's paper, "Sex trafficking and sex tourism in a globalised world" explores the dark

side of the relationship between gender, mobility, migration and tourism. The authors look at one form of human trafficking, the global sex industry and the relationship between sex trafficking and sex tourism. The paper is an interdisciplinary discussion that combines socio-economic, human rights, migration, tourism and health perspectives.

With these very diverse and critical discussions, the papers in this special issue contribute to the tourism field and beyond by opening up new vistas for gender-aware research and providing more issues to explore and study. Tourism gender research still remains marginal, disarticulated from wider feminist and gender-aware initiatives and lacks the critical mass of publications, citations and multi-institutional networks (Figueroa-Domecq, *et al.*, 2015). It is clear that there is:

An urgent requirement to broaden and deepen tourism gender research as we must know more about existing lines of enquiry [...] around gendered tourism behaviours, embodiments and experiences and discrimination in consumption, production and education (Figueroa-Domecq, *et al.*, 2015, p. 98).

Tourism scholars need to pay more attention to an intersectional approach (Valentine, 2007) and a postcolonial perspective (Winter, 2009). As Yang *et al.* (2016) recognise, in tourism-gender studies, great proportion of the studies reviewed have focussed on Western tourist experience; there has been an apparent dearth of investigation on tourists from the developing and emerging nations. Thus, there is a pressing need for more research, which establishes the extent of tourism's gender imbalance and identifies barriers to equality. The field needs scholarship through cross-disciplinary exchanges and international collaborations so the gaps in tourism's knowledge canon can be addressed, enriching and broadening tourism's methodological base (Figueroa-Domecq *et al.*, 2015). Finally, tourism gender scholars need to create "holistic" tourism knowledge and find paths for "transformation".

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Further reading

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