

1 **Forty years in tourism research: Personal notes from the front line**

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Over the last forty years my academic career has been shaped by a number of influences, students and colleagues across the academic and publishing worlds. In this chapter, I have tried to structure these into a narrative framework that also mirrors the development of tourism research over this time. The key break in this narrative occurs with the development of the Internet, which has profoundly transformed the way we do research, publish, assess, consume it, and even writing styles have changed – I am in the dubious position of having experienced both periods – after all, my PhD was written on a Remington typewriter!

Technology: Personal research influences

My early work in tourism research predated the Internet. The Internet has fundamentally changed the field of academic research. Before the Internet, journals and books were read as hard copy, often in library stacks; indeed, I would argue that the way that journals are now consumed – using keyword searches and sites such as Google Scholar and Scopus – has changed the publishing landscape. No longer do journals need to be crafted into coherent volumes, as this is not how they are read. My first book – *The Geography of Tourism* - with Brian Boniface, ambitiously attempted to profile tourism in every country of the world (Boniface & Cooper, 1987). Pre-Internet, the only way to do this was to source tourism promotional material from each country and combine it with the regional geography books of the country. Of course, for the ninth and most recent edition of the book (2024) we simply used tourist board websites and sources such as the OECD and UN Tourism. Yet the Internet has also transformed not just how we source and read material, but also how it, and its authors are judged with impact factors, citations and research assessment exercises – there is nowhere to hide.

The Internet has also facilitated sophisticated bibliometric methods, facilitating scoping and bibliometric reviews – difficult to get right but often highly cited. In the late 1980s, I tried to provide leadership here with the publication of the first of a series of annual volumes – *Progress in Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality Management* which attempted to “progress the tourism recreation