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Introduction

Janne Liburd and Deborah Edwards

More than one century ago, in a revolutionary piece of prose, D. H. Lawrence wrote:

“And barrenly, the professors in their gowns offered commercial commodity that could be turned to good account in the examination room; ready-made stuff too, and not really worth the money it was intended to fetch; which they all knew” ([1914] 1995: 367).

One of the most important challenges facing the world today is educating the leaders of today and tomorrow. In order to avoid blind reproduction, as implied in the opening quote by D.H. Lawrence, and to create challenging vistas, these leaders should be equipped with a holistic understanding of the concepts, values and principles of collaboration and sustainable tourism development.

The reader is hereby challenged not only to think about the means to current problem solving but to reflect philosophically upon processes and ethics in the context of desirable futures with others. Reflecting upon the kind of tourism we wish to have does not imply moving away from one’s own, or industry’s, needs and demands of the market place, nor of meeting those of society. More fundamentally it raises the issues of stewardship, the kind of tourism to be developed, by whom, how it should be governed, and what the objectives behind these activities should be.

This book positions itself among recent contributions to sustainable tourism development. Its original contribution lies in its critical focus on collaboration and the juxtaposition of conceptual and practical themes, and to open up for new possibilities for sustainable tourism development. The overarching purpose is to provide an original textbook based on robust research in the area of sustainable tourism development, which is framed by cutting edge understandings of collaboration. We aim to help identify positive options for how sustainable tourism development can be re-imagined as a collaborative endeavour in the 21st century to attain its full potential in the world. Aspects of this may already be seen in current and experimental practices of sustainable tourism development. These can be gleaned from case studies of industry practice, discourses, new learning approaches and collaborative communities.

Collaboration for Sustainable Tourism Development is an optimistic and critical undertaking. New visions for the sustainable development of tourism are needed to learn from past mistakes, to fully seize its possibilities, and to meet its responsibilities, and to embrace complexity and chaos in collaborative efforts for resilient action. The latter suggest that tourism has responsibilities not only to itself as an industry, but to its customers, investors and staff, to governance, to society, to other nations, and over time. Tourism is more than a hedonistic phenomenon. Tourism is a lens through which we can begin to understand contemporary society, e.g. in the organisation of free time, in representations of self to others, in interpretations, in perceptions of risk and safety. Tourism shapes parts of the world into sites of work and play, places to be revered and preserved, or turned into production and development. Tourism affects design, aesthetics, buildings and food. Tourism challenges the boundaries of the world and where tourism can take 'place'. Consider, for instance, tourism enabled by virtual reality, tourism in (lower orbit) space, and whether tourism should be in fragile areas and nature conservation zones.

As a field of study, tourism contributes to critical knowledge about the past and present, for transformations, for engagement in future world-making, for collaboration with and for society. This should not be mistaken for a demonstration of the importance of tourism, or tourism's usefulness as a global industry. Rather, and without losing sight of tourism as fun, it sets an ambitious scope for how such a far reaching phenomenon must contribute to resolving current societal problems and global challenges.

The UN 2030 *Agenda for Sustainable Development* recognizes the insufficiency of more sustainable accomplishments for people, planet, peace and prosperity. Tourism is accentuated in three of the seventeen UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and partnerships are seen as central tenets for action. The global problems addressed by the SDGs are 'wicked', in as much as there is no one resolution to be found. And if a solution is identified, it may well be that it causes unforeseen consequences creating new problems to be solved. We are deeply concerned that partnerships and conventional development approaches based on economic growth and historically unequal relations of cooperation and partnerships are futile. Moreover, the SDGs reduce sustainability to a static, achievable goal by 2030, whether for cities, communities, the oceans, or the planet. The Earth has entered a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene. The Anthropocene is characterized by the extent of long-lasting, if not irreversible human degradation of the biosphere. More of the same will not meet the urgency for transformation.

Collaboration for intentional change with others is needed to gain advantages in an unpredictable world. Human preferences, practices and actions are the