

Postscript

This is the first foray of TH:TM into print. Possibly the last, too. We are, after all, primarily a blog. Like the project, this publication is a bit of an experiment, and therefore special thanks are due to Goodfellow Publishers.

Plainly tourism is subject to critique, often suggesting it is exemplary of a damaging modernity, be it through 'overtourism', carbon emissions or the commercialisation of cultures. Equally plainly, it is growing, and looks set to continue doing so. Unsurprisingly, the public enjoy holidays ! There are different views on what is to be done about tourism's excesses, and indeed what is excessive. There are also different philosophical and political assumptions underpinning those views. Many feel these are not always subject to, or perhaps open to, debate and scrutiny. Siloed thinking and a conservatism around 'received wisdom' in universities is a defining problem, noted in our interviews and widely acknowledged. It is reinforced by academic communities defined by shared political or philosophical premises talking only to each other and frowning upon other such communities. Those other communities are probably doing the same thing right back.

There are also different orientations towards the future and to the past. For some the past represents human hubris, but for others inspirational progress. For some the future looks bleak, but for others technology and wealth open new possibilities for liberation and progress. For some the problems are questions of policy, for others technical questions and for others again, fundamental questions about the organization of society. For many of us, all three can be important ... it depends on the question you want an answer to.

How are we going to generate the new ideas to confront the tourism-related challenges and opportunities we face ?

Academic research, published in peer reviewed journals, is important. Global bodies and thinktanks have their place. TH:TM attempts to play a small role in bridging a sizable gap between expertise on the one hand, and the experience, views and aspirations of the public on the other.

In publishing this book we are laying down a small marker by proving that it is possible to experiment, and to do things a bit differently. We hope that the blog will develop on that basis, and provide a home for well written accessible writing on all things tourism. Reviews, notes, opinion pieces, responses, reports – if well formulated and well written – are welcome at TH:TM. Distinctive arguments and counter arguments – including arguments contrary to those in this volume – are very welcome too.

But there is also a skill in mediating complex ideas to an intelligent lay audience who may not be versed in the various theories and concepts commonplace in academic journals. George Orwell's last of his six rules for writing was to never use a jargon word when there is a perfectly good word for the same thing in common usage. Unfortunately, the academy has decided to reverse Orwell's view – never use a common word or phrase when there is jargon available to say the same thing. There is a strong argument for good writing – including academic writing – that tries to make complex things simple, but not simplistic. Sometimes it seems as if the academy has decided to make simple things complex.

In a nutshell, the growth of the 'word salad' needs to be countered by good quality writing. That's a skill that remains too rare, and one we should all look to cultivate. Blogs provide an opportunity to do just that.

In addition to its content, I hope the book encourages others to write their truths and write well – to be part of the conversation with the much maligned general public, most of whom enjoy happy holidays.

Finally, I am very grateful for the contributions – small and large – to this project from all the contributors to the blog, and all the readers from around the world. Pete Smith, Sudipta Sarkar, David Jarratt, Vilhelmiina Vainikka and Saverio Bertolucci were integral to the project, conducting the expert interviews that comprise a third of this book, as well as contributing writing, their time and advice. Support from ATLAS has been very valuable for us, as has Sally North's exemplary editorship and PK McBride's fine production work at Goodfellows. Particular thanks are due to 'copy boy made good' David Gillbanks, a great editor for our partner online publication The "*Good Tourism*" Blog, who is a champion of open, challenging and respectful debate about tourism.