

# Book Reviews

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*Tourism and Change in Polar Regions: Climate, Environment and Experience.* Edited by C. Michael Hall and Jarkko Saarinen. Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2010. 336 pp.

This latest addition to the eclectic and very successful *Routledge Studies in Contemporary Geographies of Leisure, Tourism and Mobility* series takes the polar regions as its geographical focus. In fact, readers of the *Northern Review* will be glad to know that northern Canada is well represented with no fewer than five of the fifteen case studies presented in this volume coming from the provinces (Ontario and Manitoba) and territories (Nunavut and Northwest Territories) of Canada. Also included are two cases covering Polar Eurasia and six cases focusing on the Antarctic region. The volume also contains two chapters preceding the case studies and two concluding chapters, which offer a more general overview of the subject and a broader geographical scope.

The opening chapter written by the editors offers a wide overview of the Antarctic and Arctic regions before moving on to discuss polar tourism. "Polar tourism is difficult to define" (14)—this familiar concept germane to many subdisciplines within tourism is where the authors depart from, going on to offer a plethora of existing definitions and visitor arrival figures for the various sub-regions before concluding with an interesting table detailing the context within which polar tourism occurs. Hall's chapter two offers an overview of environmental change in the polar regions, highlighting the future impacts of climate change on host communities in the Arctic region and the exposure of the sensitive biodiversity of the Antarctic to invasive species, which is a serious concern of increasing tourism to the region.

Chapters three to six are case studies from northern Canada. Stewart, Howell, Draper, Yackel and Tivy (chapter three) focus on cruise tourism and caution decision makers on the dangers of "navigating a warming climate" (71). The receding Arctic sea ice creates greater accessibility to, and a wider choice of routes through, Canadian Arctic waters and this has obvious opportunities for cruise tourism in the region, not least regarding the famous Northwest Passage. However, their study of the climate records shows that "the navigable areas through the Northwest Passage have exhibited increases in hazardous ice conditions" (82). The future scenario of increased cruise tourism and increasingly dangerous waters means route planning

that is aware of the dangers is greatly needed to avoid a major accident. Chapter six by Patrick T. Maher also discusses cruise tourism using surveys of cruise tourist experiences to assist, among others, Parks Canada better manage the growing Arctic cruise tourism sector. Chapter four examines the effects of climate change on polar bear viewing in northern Manitoba. The town of Churchill has a significant polar bear viewing industry and the threatened *Ursus maritimus* population means the long-term possibilities for the industry are dire. The interesting notion of “last-chance tourism” (100) is introduced to highlight the expected demand increase, even as polar bear numbers fall, driven by tourists who want to see the animals while they still can. Chapter five continues with the polar bear theme, this time in northern Ontario, highlighting how inclusive planning for Polar Bear Provincial Park was a success and calling for “active management strategies [with] a systematic approach to monitoring the effects of implementation” (115). In chapter nine the reader is back in peripheral Canada where Noakes and Johnston discuss diamond tourism development in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. Highlighting the fact that tourism is the third largest economic driver in the Northwest Territories (after mining and petroleum production), further development is argued to help balance the regional economic mix which is, like many resource-dependent regions, susceptible to boom and bust cycles.

Chapter seven and eight turn attention to northern Europe. Lundmark’s chapter covers the Eurasian Arctic from Iceland to Nenetsia in Russia and focuses on adaptation to and mitigation of climate change in the tourism system. Saarinen and Tervo follow this chapter by investigating how nature-based winter tourism stakeholders perceive climate change in Finnish Lapland. There is a much increased awareness of the issue in recent years but a lack of long-term planning, and the authors caution against the lack of planning due to the future negative impacts of climate change. Chapter ten focuses on cultural heritage tourism inside both polar circles with examples from historic sites in Svalbard and Antarctica. The following chapter continues in a similar vein with Mark Nuttall offering a narrative analysis of expeditioner-tourists in Antarctica. Maher’s chapter on visitors’ on-site experiences in the Ross Sea region offers further insights on how tourists experience such a unique voyage. Vereda goes on to offer some further tourist images of Antarctica and, interestingly, their views on Ushuaia, Argentina, as the gateway to the Antarctic. It appears to be still primarily seen as a gateway although visitor surveys suggest it has strong potential as a complementary destination in its own right. Chapter fourteen presents scenarios for tourism in Antarctica with “Four Antarctic Futures”

(254) generating important discussion on Antarctic tourism issues. Hall and Wilson (chapter fifteen) present an interesting study of the sub-Antarctic islands and their particular opportunities to gain from increasing Antarctic tourism. Timothy's contribution (chapter fifteen) tackles the important issue of sovereignty claims in the polar regions including an interesting discussion on the Northwest Passage which "has significant shipment potential" (296). The concluding chapter by the editors highlights the "last chance to see" conundrum and concludes that humankind must engage in sustainable practices from now on or else the current, incredible polar attractions will disappear forever.

*Tourism and Change in Polar Regions: Climate, Environment and Experience* maintains a fine balance between offering conceptual development of polar tourism (most notably with "last chance tourism") and highlighting management implications that can be acted on by planners. The Canadian contributions cover both land-based and cruise tourism. Readers of the *Northern Review* interested in tourism and regional development will find this hardback anthology a useful reference text in the years to come.

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***Nature and Tourists in the Last Frontier: Local Encounters with Global Tourism in Coastal Alaska.* By Lee Cerveny. New York: Cognizant Communication Corporation, 2008. 263 pp.**

In *Nature and Tourists in the Last Frontier: Local Encounters with Global Tourism in Coastal Alaska* we meet Lee Cerveny perched on a bluff, notepad in hand, observing the arrival of the season's first cruise ship in Haines, Alaska. Noting the flurry of activity taking place as the town prepares itself for the change in season, I could imagine myself sitting with Cerveny observing the goings on. This engaging narrative strategy draws readers in and invites them along on this ethnographic journey exploring local impacts and perceptions of the growing tourism industry in three coastal Alaskan communities. While unable to keep this narrative tone throughout the book, Cerveny does periodically "check in" with her readers by way of this descriptive narrative strategy. What I also appreciate about this opening approach is that Cerveny situates herself, as an observing anthropologist and newcomer to town, alongside the arriving tourists. Interested in observing local impacts and perceptions of global flows of people, goods, capital, and ideas she locates herself within these flows.