

(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.

This introduction to Cerveny and the work at hand is nicely balanced between contextualizing the project's goals and methodology with key geographical and statistical information. Alaska is introduced as an imagined and imaginative space and this research is situated both geographically among the fjords and coastal communities, and culturally among the place that Alaska occupies in collective imaginative visions of the frontier. She weaves this together to provide a solid starting point from which to examine regional tourist trends and local perceptions of the growth of the industry and its effects on individuals' lives and livelihoods. With a focus on the impacts of, and relationships with, tourism for local residents in three rural, resource-based communities in coastal Alaska, the central questions guiding this book are:

- How do local and global actors negotiate their roles to shape tourism development in coastal Alaskan communities?
- How does Alaska's role as a nature destination play into the way its natural resources are used and perceived by the tourism industry?
- How does the growing emphasis on nature-based tourism affect the lives of Alaskans, particularly those relying on natural resources for economic and cultural survival?
- What are the implications of tourism growth for rural development in coastal communities? (8)

With attention paid to the complex intersections of global, local, economic, political, and cultural networks of relations, Cerveny looks at how localized coastal communities become nodes of interaction on varying scales. One of the key contributions that this book makes is that it rests its focus on local, lived relationships with both the tourism industry and the places people live. Coastal Alaskan communities are not just tourist destinations. They are living local communities. By keeping her ethnographic focus on localized interactions with the tourism industry and its growth, Cerveny makes room for residents' narratives of their own perceptions of place, landscape, resources, work, and economy. As she notes, this is an often-overlooked area in tourism studies research, likely due in large part to the time commitment this kind of ethnographic research takes. Cerveny spent years working in these communities, talking with people, observing the seasonal changes marked by the arrivals and departures of tourists. This long-term commitment to the ethnographic process allows Cerveny to speak to the lived, local impacts and implications of tourism growth in these communities from the perspective of local residents. A real strength of

this work is that Cervený is able to accomplish this local-level ethnographic exploration without losing sight of the broader globalized political economy within which it operates. I credit the theoretical framework that she has set for granting her the flexibility to account for the global while continuously attending to the local.

Weaving together environmental history, political ecology, and stakeholder analysis Cervený is able to trace the connections and relationships that come together in the social and physical environments of southeast coastal Alaska. Out of this complex, tourism emerges as an actor within the social and biotic ecosystems within which it operates. Using these theoretical approaches to signpost chapters works well to manage the volume of information and data presented in this book.

I think that Cervený accomplishes what she sets out to do with this book. Her theory, methodology, and analysis fit together nicely. But there is something a little too tidy about it all for my liking. It feels like it must be messier than this. We are talking about dynamic processes and complicated histories and politics as they intersect in localized settings in ways that alter people's relationships with place, community, landscape, and economy. I felt this want for messiness throughout the book and noted it particularly in the ways that Cervený engaged three core ideas—nature, natural resources, and the frontier.

This entire discussion is premised on a series of conceptual assumptions that takes all three as givens. The trouble is, as many have noted, all of them are historical and cultural constructs (see Williams 1980, Cronon 1996, Tsing 2005). Nature, as Williams (1980, 66) famously stated, "contains, though often unnoticed, an extra-ordinary amount of human history." Williams (1980, 69) continues, by stating that nature is, "[a] singular name for the real multiplicity of things and living processes." This is the magic of nature. It has the power to smooth over the surface of complex historical and power relations, dynamic biotic and ecological processes, and produce the idea of a single "thing" called nature. And as Braun (2002, 11) reminds us, "what we see as 'natural' internalizes not only ecological relations but social relations too." This is what this book is about—the dynamic historical, economic, political, social, cultural, and biotic relationships that come together in the making of southeast coastal Alaskan "nature" viewed through (often) competing sets of values and interests. Taking nature for granted as a natural given means that the complexities of the processes in its very making escape ethnographic inquiry.

Picking this thread up, Anna Tsing (2005) suggests that "nature" goes wild on the frontier and comes into view as a repository of raw "resources"

that some, and not others, can exploit. Like Tsing (2005, 32), "...by the frontier I don't mean a place or even a process but an imaginative project capable of molding both places and processes." Key here is understanding the frontier as an imaginative project—made as unmade; planned as unplanned. The "wildness" of the frontier, and what this wildness means, represents, and allows are selective, power-laden, historically specific productions. This wildness entangles itself with modernity's anxieties about its loss and comes into view as wilderness (Cronon 1996, Braun 2002). This is a loaded cultural and ethnographic gun that I kept waiting for Cerveny to fire. It is only through a particular cultural lens that space comes into view as a frontier, and physical features as resources. As Cerveny notes, many of these features that were once viewed for their extractive value are now being infused with sets of cultural ideals that value their wildness. Cerveny attends to the contested views of "nature" and "resources" as they play out in coastal communities whose economies are shifting from extractive economies to touristic destinations. At the same time, she takes "nature" and "resources" on "the frontier" for granted. The result is that she denies this analysis the messy fun of peeling these notions apart for what their construction (and the changes in these constructions) says about the broader processes that produce the cultural terrains upon which the complex networks and flows of relations that Cerveny observes are playing out.

Cerveny leaves us as she herself departs southeast Alaska. Together we board the ferry and set sail, reflecting on her thoughts and observations from the twenty months that she spent in Alaska. Tourism is more than an economic industry. It is a set of discourses, practices, and relations that link the local to the global through the flows of ideas, people, capital, and goods. Of the impacts that tourism can have on local communities Cerveny (36) notes, "tourism can transform the look and feel of communities, changing the way people think about and relate to the places they call home." Not all these changes are good, but nor are they always only bad. This book is about the complexity of these changes; changes that mirror the complexities of the political ecology within which they occur. Sometimes tourism brings great benefit to communities. Sometimes communities are altered beyond long-time residents' recognition. And somewhere in between, daily life is lived as cruise ships come and go, adventurers climb big mountains, and trophy fish are sought.

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***Polar Tourism: A Tool for Regional Development*. Edited by Alain A. Grenier and Dieter K. Müller. Québec, QC: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2011. 294 pp, 58 Figures.**

In *Polar Tourism: A Tool for Regional Development*, the editors collected papers presented at the first International Polar Tourism Research Network (IPTRN) meeting, held mid-August 2008 in Kangiqsujaq (Nunavik, Canada). The book contains nine chapters in addition to an introduction and conclusion provided by the editors. As is to be expected, such a collection takes the reader in many diverse directions and deploys concepts and issues from a variety of sources. However, contrary to expectations, the contributions also vary considerably in terms of quality of content and writing. On a very general note the editors could have had more stringent procedures in terms of spelling, grammar, and syntax and a more rigorous framework for the issues to be dealt with. However, at the end of the day, these are eloquently executed conference proceedings. There are three critical points I would like to discuss below, before concluding.

This book is one of many recent ones that detail the issues and challenges pertaining to polar tourism.¹ This book, however, can be considered somewhat apart from these as it documents ongoing and current research efforts. That being said, contrary to expectations about research being outlined and specific research findings presented, many of the chapters are busy laying out the general issues of polar tourism in too broad terms. This to me indicates how undeveloped research in this field is, yet at the same time I am ambivalent towards developing research into polar tourism as a particular field in and of itself. One chapter author (Enzenbacher, 54) explains how higher education politics might lead to the temptation of "niche carving" by many academics. An effort towards a polar tourism research agenda might indeed lead to such temptations. To counter this, she advocates a dialogue within the research community, and to me the title of the book is a contribution in that vein. This