



Book Review

Tourism and Leisure Behaviour in an Ageing World,
I. Patterson. CABI, Wallingford (2018). 243 pp (Hbk.),
£85.00 ISBN: 9781786390943

It was a real pleasure to receive this book to read and review. What appealed to me was the attempt in the title to depart from the normal pigeon-holing of tourism from its underpinning foundation – leisure. The division of researchers into the domains of ‘leisure’ and ‘tourism’, and never shall the twain meet, still seems to be the *modus operandi*. Throughout my academic career I have challenged this artificial division of tourism and leisure since the two domains are intrinsically linked. Far too few books and journal articles seek to bridge this artificial divide and the consequence is that our holistic understanding of tourism and leisure phenomena remains sub-divided into two polarised domains. For this reason, Patterson is to be congratulated on his bold attempt to consider the synergies of tourism and leisure through the lens of ageing.

Ageing is not a new concept in the study of tourism and leisure, but Patterson’s study is the most accessible to date in producing a synthesis of this topic. Such a synthesis is long overdue because most developed countries have understood the ageing trajectory of their population structures since the late 1960s. Yet like the current climate emergency, policymakers and governments have only belatedly begun to recognise the phenomenon of ageing as a major societal issue.

Patterson brings us a synthesis that is informed by his doctoral study from the late 1980s, engaging with the multidisciplinary literature (e.g. gerontology, sociology, marketing, psychology and other cognate areas) on ageing. This disciplinary anchor and the review of existing leisure and tourism literature makes this a useful overview. The one statement that I find problematic is that this is described as a textbook. I do not disagree with that premise but producing this in a hardback format at £85.00 makes me question how this could be adopted as a textbook at a hardback price. One explanation may be that this book is ahead of its time in both the leisure and tourism field. This is because, despite a wide ranging literature on ageing in leisure and tourism journals, the subject matter is only slowly being assimilated into University curricula. Yet ageing is one of the major challenges that spans tourism and leisure.

This is a very positive and optimistic book that reviews the conceptual and theoretical roots of ageing research as applied to tourism and leisure. The book’s distinct focus is in its title ‘behaviour’, which is progressed throughout each chapter. I found the first chapter very informative, lucid and coherently argued. The case for studying ageing and tourism and leisure behaviour was well made, citing the key studies. Chapter 2 with its focus on tourism and leisure demand factors was well presented and competent. The follow on into Chapter 3 on motivation was both logical and a thoughtful synthesis of the literature applied to

tourism and leisure behaviour. It was at this point I saw where the claim to be a textbook began to emerge as the following eight chapters developed a more topical focus on various aspects of older traveller behaviour. The focus of these chapters on technology, modes of travel, types of travel options selected (i.e. packages versus independent travel), travel markets (e.g. adventure tourism, educational tourism, cruise tourism, cultural and heritage tourism and health and wellness) are the substance of the book. These chapters connect well with the main thesis of the book – behaviour. The last chapter is rather unusual, being entitled ‘Conclusions and Recommendations’. The recommendations read more like a report with a list of summary points for industry bodies. This really confuses the main purpose of the book’s principal aim – to be a textbook. I would not have put this confusing material in the conclusions as recommendations. Perhaps these few pages of recommendations are to justify the statement on the back cover of the book ‘... It can be used by professionals to improve their product offerings for this sector, which, while valuable, brings its own unique challenge’. It is at this point that we need to get a degree of realism about the value of books to industry. All the experience and research on disseminating research findings to industry bodies and individual businesses is that they are not likely to pick up a 243 page book. Businesses are deluged by operational and business-critical issues and so I think it is unrealistic to make such claims on a book. At £85.00 how many businesses are likely to put this as a must read? I understand the author’s sentiments to want to share the thinking to a wider audience, but there are better ways to do this.

So how would I summarise the value of this book?

For anyone researching or teaching tourism or leisure, this is an invaluable resource, particularly the first four chapters. Patterson portrays what is a complex and challenging topic in an easy to understand format. This reflects the ambition for this to be a textbook (which I am sure is the case where this has become a specialist module on degree programmes). A sound grasp of ageing is essential for anyone studying tourism and leisure because it is now centre stage in the challenges facing many governments. In this respect, ageing is a highly relevant topic spanning the social sciences and the sciences and so a useful way for tourism and leisure scholars to make contributions to understanding how ageing is transforming, and will transform societies in both the developed and developing world. This book brings this topic to a broad readership in a very accessible and engaging format. I wish every book I reviewed achieved this as well.

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