



# **Community Development Through Tourism**

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# 1

## Communities and tourism

Globalisation may be dead (Saul 2005)<sup>1</sup>, but internationalisation certainly prevails. In an age where communications technology encompasses the world, enabling us to sit in our lounge rooms and participate in others' lives through our television sets and communicate with them via the Internet, those with the ability to visit other places want to experience something that technology can't provide.

What that 'something' is, is debatable. However, many of those searching for that difference are looking to the people at the places they visit – the local communities. Tourism has had a close connection with the local communities, particularly as hosts and guides, but the opening up of travel to the mass market from the 1960s propelled the development of the package holiday that in effect removed the tourist from the community. With tour leaders from their own country, specialised transport and hotels, the visitors' interaction with their hosts became moderated to the extent where the local community became objectified as a quaint picture opportunity. Yet as these masses increased their travel experience, and learnt more about the world from the television, the desire for interaction increased.

However, before such interaction can be positively achieved, we need to understand what is not possible as well as what is in terms of meaningful tourist–host interaction. Unfortunately, as tourism has grown organically in most places with limited planning, some people have

been burnt and they now reject tourism as a viable community asset. On the other hand, many believe that tourism is the answer to 'everything' and the only means for developing their community. Understanding the capabilities of tourism so that the correct decisions can be made in terms of community development is what this book is about.

This chapter introduces the main contention and theme of the book, namely the possibility of (or potential for) developing our communities through the judicious application of tourism. After an overview of the book, the terms 'community' and 'tourism' are described and discussed. We consider community in terms of those constructed communities of the 20th century (including theme parks) as well as those that have formed organically. The remainder of the chapter looks at tourism in general and introduces some of the main issues that communities have to face when considering their future in relation to tourism. This includes some discussion of one of the primary paradoxes of tourism – it carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction. This is particularly pertinent to the focus on community development, as is the presence of many truths (multiple realities), which is also discussed.

The chapter concludes with a common format for each chapter with an empirical case study that demonstrates some of the principles or theories discussed. In this case, we look at different approaches to tourism from two indigenous communities that occurred primarily as a response to the complications and even dangers that tourism may bring with it.

## **Outline of the book**

Tourism in communities is not simply a case of whether to encourage visitors or not, but also what type of visitors and what type of tourism the community decides it wants and needs. Each chapter builds on the understanding gained from the previous chapters, and while they do not necessarily need to be read in strict order, such an approach would benefit the reader new to this field. Others may find it more beneficial to dip in and out of the chapters as required.

Chapter 2 takes this discussion into the theoretical realm, outlining some of the most pertinent tourism, community development and business theories. This chapter underpins the book and

argues that an understanding of theory is crucial for any activity, regardless of its nature.

Community tourism planning and development are considered over the next three chapters, that move from strategic to community-inclusive planning and then to marketing. The main aspects covered include strategic planning for community development, the concept of the triple bottom line, capacity building and the notion of community empowerment. Chapters 3 and 4 directly relate to each other, moving from general areas of strategic planning (Chapter 3) to some of the more specific aspects relating to tourism and community development planning, which include the notion of capacity building and the important aspect of the power relations in a community and their influence on tourism (Chapter 4). The reader may well find that these two chapters need to be read in conjunction and referred to regularly. The planning chapters finish with Chapter 5 that focuses on marketing community tourism and some of the specific issues involved, such as how to use marketing to control visitor numbers and behaviour.

Chapter 6 looks in more detail at tourism in rural communities while Chapter 7 moves into the critical area of disaster and crisis management. The concluding chapter brings together material from the previous chapters and considers them in terms of the future of community development through the (judicious) use of tourism, outlining concepts such as corporate social responsibility, poverty alleviation through tourism (Pro-Poor tourism) and private philanthropy. This chapter demonstrates how we can move from taking a cultural imperialist stance of 'knowing what is best' for others to listening to them and working cooperatively to achieve shared goals.

Each chapter includes a piece entitled 'From theory to practice', which outlines a case study pertinent to its theme. These cases primarily come from personal (often ethnographic) field research. This empirical approach enables the reader to see how things work in the 'real world', and ways that various theories can be and have been applied. As they are real-life instances, many of the cases will include elements discussed in other chapters, as it is impossible to describe an empirical case purely in terms of the very arbitrary divisions of these chapters without heavily editing them to the extent where they are no longer 'real'.

## Why 'Community'?

It has been argued that, as a response to the increasing alienation individuals were experiencing due to the impersonal effects of globalism and what has been coined by Ritzer (1993) as the 'McDonaldization' (or homogenisation) of culture and societies, there has been a desire to return to the 'community'. Simply put, Ritzer maintains that McDonald's restaurants operate along the lines of five basic principles: efficiency, calculability, predictability, control, and the concept of rationality, and that these principles have also become more prevalent in other parts of society. Others argue that there is more choice and difference in the world – yet many of these consumer choices are provided by a fewer number of global/international/multinational corporations.

'Community' is a term that is used by politicians, social commentators, religious leaders, academics and media reporters. However, it is rarely defined – rather it seems to be a given that we all know what is meant by the term. This is a problem, as communities can be defined in many ways, and I often suspect that what a politician may mean when using the term is very different from my own interpretation.

The word 'community' is derived from the Latin *communitas*, which refers to the very spirit of community, or an unstructured community in which people are equal. (It is the first part of this definition that we are primarily interested in here.) It also has special significance in relation to community development as a term that has been appropriated for particular use in cultural anthropology and the social sciences. In the 1960s, Turner (1969) described *communitas* as relating to a community in process – 'a whole group of people cross[ing] a threshold and together enter[ing] a liminal time and space – that is, an in-between that is neither past nor present, and a space that is neither here nor there.' (Turner 1969: vii.). While this term may appear to be a long way from the theme of this book of community development through tourism, as you progress through the various discussions of communities, tourism and development, you will see how important this anthropological notion of *communitas* really is. We re-visit this later in this chapter where we discuss issues of postmodernism and communities, as well as in Chapter 8.

Taking the above notion of *communitas* into account, we start to see that communities can be described in many different ways. The

most common uses of the term in today's culture tend to see communities defined geographically as in a valley, mountain range or water catchment, or politically as in towns, cities and countries. The expression, 'local communities' often refers to small towns or units of an urban centre such as suburbs. Differences between urban and rural (or even regional) communities, however, are more than merely geographical or political – access to services, education and the natural environment, as well as differing social issues, levels of homogenisation and personal preferences influence such communities quite differently.

Family groups also form a particularly powerful type of 'community', especially in those cultures based on strong family ties, responsibilities, reciprocity and respect, referred to in Chapter 8 as 'authoritative communities'. Many indigenous communities are based on a complex hierarchy of familial ties, which for many tourists from Western cultures where extended family ties are diminishing is a fascinating concept that they wish to view, experience and understand. Even the most culturally sensitive visitors to such communities tend to view them as 'inferior' in the sense that they need protection from the outside world, so we can continue to enjoy the spectacle. Such tourism smacks of cultural imperialism, and the notion that these (usually) poor indigenous communities have 'got it right' (particularly in social and environmental terms) and should remain in stasis is anathema to the inevitability of cultural change. Often the tourist, who has had the means to travel by aircraft to get there, wears clothes made from materials not seen before and demonstrates a level of education not attainable by people living in the host community, does not desire those visited to have similar access to the world. I often find myself asking the question, 'Who are we to decide what others can and cannot have?' Nevertheless, visiting and experiencing traditional indigenous communities is a popular form of tourism that we must acknowledge and consider in terms of community development.

Apart from the communities of family at a destination, there are groups of tourists who travel in a family group, which has its own cultural influence and needs. In fact, travellers in general form their own communities while in the act of visiting others. This is not an aspect that is covered in much detail in this book, but it certainly needs to be acknowledged that each community (the host and the guest) influences

the other. This is partly discussed in Chapter 2 when we look at the theory of social exchange and the marketing discourse in Chapter 5.

Finally, we have 'communities of interest', such as the artistic community and academic community, as well as professional communities of doctors, lawyers and so on. These communities can have a geographic or spatial component, but can also transcend physical borders. The changing nature of communication has also influenced our notion of communities, with virtual communities of common interest existing outside of any physical place – in cyberspace.

In summary, a community is an amalgamation of living things that share an environment. What truly delineates a community are the acts of sharing reciprocity and interaction, which can be realised in a number of ways. In human communities, intent, belief, resources, preferences, needs and a multitude of other conditions may be different for some community members, which in turn influence the mixture of that community. Nevertheless, the definitive driver of community is that all individual subjects in the mix have something in common. Such complexity can be seen in any community group, particularly those based on geographic boundaries (which is often the case in tourism as people tend to visit *places* or *destinations*), as their members are continually changing, evolving and developing.

### **Constructed communities – an oxymoron?**

Many of the world's cities are planned cities, notably Washington, DC in the United States, Abuja in Nigeria, Brasília in Brazil, Canberra, Perth and Adelaide in Australia, New Delhi in India, and Islamabad in Pakistan. It was also common in the European colonisation of the Americas to build according to a plan and it can be argued that the ancient cities of Peru and others were also planned.

While cities have been planned for many years (dating back to Roman times and before), it was during the early 20th century that the first so-called 'planned' *communities* were constructed, where an attempt was made to create a sense of place and *communitas* in an artificially constructed environment. Early attempts to create public housing 'communities' were dismal failures, with their consequences still being felt today in terms of the concrete ghettos they created. The first of these so-called modern community-creation movements is arguably the

Garden City movement of Europe and the United Kingdom, followed by the post World War II New Town movement in the UK.

Inspired by Utopian desires for a return to nature and the 19th century Romantic desire for a rural idyll (all strong tourism drivers – see Chapter 6 for more on the rural idyll), the Garden City movement began in England in the late 1800s as an approach to urban planning and a reaction to the increased urbanisation related to industrialisation. Garden Cities were to be planned, self-contained communities surrounded by greenbelts, containing carefully balanced areas of residences, industry and agriculture. This idea of the Garden City was influential in German worker housing, the United States and again in England after World War II, when the New Towns Act triggered the development of many new communities based on this egalitarian community vision. Following World War II, 28 towns were designated under the 1946 Act as New Towns, and were developed in part to house the large numbers of displaced people who had lost homes during the War.

Ultimately, these New Towns did not centre around the Romantic, rural idyll of the Garden Cities, instead becoming tributes to post-war development, featuring a car-oriented layout with many roundabouts and a grid-based road system. Construction of the New Towns was often rushed, and the inhabitants were generally plucked out of established communities, instead of the displaced people they were intended for, developing a reputation as the home of ‘New Town Blues’. The results of such community ‘experiments’ should also be heeded by those wishing to capitalise on tourism’s interest in communities – rarely can they be constructed, whereas they can be so easily destroyed.

In Australia, after the separate states formed a Commonwealth Federation at the beginning of the 20th century, there was much dispute as to which of the country’s two major cities (Melbourne or Sydney) would be the nation’s capital. To resolve this impasse, and in a nod to the New Towns movement of Europe (and a reflection of Australia’s place in the British Commonwealth), it was decided to create a new capital city of Australia. The site of the nation’s capital, Canberra, was pronounced in 1908 at a site almost equidistant from Melbourne and Sydney on farmland that had not before seen a town or city. In 1912, after an extensive planning competition was completed, American planner Walter Burley Griffin’s concept, based on the New Town and Garden

City movements, was chosen for this planned community. Unlike most Australian cities, the road network, suburbs, parks and other elements of the city were designed in context with each other, rather than the organic growth witnessed in much of Sydney. However, many Australians argue that Canberra has no 'soul' or sense of community, and has difficulty in attracting tourists, demonstrating the difficulties surrounding created communities.

The era of the modern planned city in the United States began in 1963 with the creation of Reston in Virginia, sparking a revival of the New Town concept. Reston incorporated higher density housing in order to conserve open space, as well as mixed-use areas for industry, business, recreation, education and housing. The first residential section of the community, Lake Anne Plaza, emulated a European village on a lake – a totally constructed site not unlike the recreated places of today's theme parks.

It is the development of theme parks in the United States that is of particular interest in terms of tourism and constructed communities. The Disney parks are the most famous American theme parks, replicating a Romantic notion of small town America. This is particularly so for Disneyworld in Florida with its re-creations of other American towns such as New Orleans – in a far cleaner and safer environment than the real place. Even the 'residents' are constructed, either as staff coming in each day for work or with residential 'communities' being constructed in conjunction with (usually adjacent to) the modern-day theme park. In Florida, Disney constructed the modern residential community of Celebration in Orlando, 10 minutes from Disneyworld.

Eventually, inexorably, Disney began to move to other parts of the world, including Paris and more recently Hong Kong. The story of the constructed community surrounding Disneyland Resort Paris (originally called Euro-Disney) is in itself a fascinating study of communities and tourism, leading on from the construction of Celebration in Florida.

Disneyland Resort Paris is a vacation and recreation resort near Paris, featuring two Disney theme parks, Disneyland Park (usually called Disneyland Paris) and Walt Disney Studios. The theme park officially opened as Euro Disneyland in 1992, but attendance was disappointingly low – 500 000 visitors were expected on opening day, but only a fraction of this number turned out, with numbers falling further after the first

three months. So, Euro Disneyland and Euro Disney Resort changed their name to Disneyland Resort Paris, inferring that it is more akin to a resort than simply a theme park. As a result of the name change, the reconstruction of the complex to better appeal to European tastes and the addition of more 'relevant' attractions, Disneyland Resort Paris finally turned a (small) profit in 1995. After this re-start, Disneyland Resort Paris has become the most visited tourist destination in Europe with more than 12 million visitors per year.

As with Celebration in Disneyworld in Florida, there is a created urban area known as Val d'Europe – a 'high standard' housing area with a large (75 000 metre<sup>2</sup>) shopping mall, a shopping village dedicated to *haute couture* and 'Aquarium Sea Life' – an aquarium where visitors can journey from the River Seine to the Atlantic, then beyond to the Caribbean. The question that comes to mind when we consider these constructed, theme-park-related communities is, are people living in or simply visiting this 'community'? Do they contribute to the *communitas* of the place?

As with the French example above we are even seeing shopping malls becoming their own constructed community, not unlike theme parks. The development of the 'Mall of America' in Bloomington has a Lego Space Station, a medieval castle and a series of theme-park-based rides. At the (supposedly) world's largest shopping mall, West Edmonton Mall in Canada, shoppers can gamble at roulette tables, soak in a spa near a volcano or view sharks from a submarine (and go shopping!) (Goeldner *et al.* 2000). The line between places to live, work and play is becoming extremely blurred – a fact that anyone involved in community development and/or tourism needs to remember.

In an interesting work that considers the consequences of such blurring of roles, Hannigan (1998) introduces the concept of a 'Fantasy City'. He describes many of these constructed communities (and theme parks and shopping malls) as having six main features. The 'Fantasy City':

- is based around a single or multi-theme (drawn from popular entertainment, sport, history or the city's geographic locale);
- is aggressively branded with sponsors and highly reliant on licensed merchandise sales;

- operates day and night;
- is modular (mixing and matching an array of standard components such as themed restaurants, cinema megaplexes and high tech amusements);
- is solipsistic (that is, self-contained and physically, economically and socially isolated from its locale); and
- is postmodern in that it is constructed around simulations, virtual reality and the 'thrill of the spectacle' (Hannigan 1998, pp. 3–4).

And finally, the exponential growth in controlled, 'gated' communities (not unlike the theme parks discussed previously and Hannigan's Fantasy City) can be seen as today's equivalent of the Garden City and New Towns movements. This time, the communities are based on safety and security, arguably among the primary human motivations (see Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs' in Chapter 2). How this relates to tourism is problematic, as tourists may be prevented from even entering these 'secure' sites to interact with the community.

### **Sense of community**

While most communities, as we generally perceive them, have grown organically, there are various attempts to develop planned communities as outlined above, with varying degrees of success. It is argued that many planned communities actually lack a 'sense of community'.

'Sense of community' is itself imbued with individual meaning and related to the notion of *communitas* presented earlier. It is often seen as a feeling of belonging to a group (community) and a shared faith that members' needs will be met together, primarily through informal social channels. McMillan and Chavis (1996) identify four factors: membership, influence, shared emotional connection, and integration and fulfilment of needs. In addition, the notion of 'empowerment' is also central to a sense of community. Others define sense of community as an environment in which people interact in a cohesive manner, continually reflecting upon the work of the group while always respecting the differences individual members bring to the group (Graves 1992). These various descriptions present the most essential elements of community as:

- empowerment;
- the existence of mutual interdependence among members;
- having a sense of belonging, connectedness, spirit, faith and trust;
- possessing common expectations, shared values and goals.

### **Indigenous communities**

As noted in an earlier publication, the descriptions of communities introduced in the various discussions above

... can be applied to both indigenous and non-indigenous communities, large and small. It is important to recognise that most of the elements of a community revolve around emotional rather than physical aspects, such as the sense of belonging, heritage, sense of place and social organisation. It is easy to overlook these more intangible areas when considering a tourism development (which includes guided tours and activities, not just resorts) as they are not easily quantifiable. However, to have a sustainable tourism industry that is around for many years to come these aspects of community must be carefully considered (Beeton 1998, p. 35.)

While not given separate attention in this publication, all of the elements discussed in the book relate to indigenous communities in varying degrees, and some of the examples and cases are taken from such groups. However, what we tend to see when looking at indigenous communities that exist within a different, dominant culture (usually a 'Western' hegemony) is that the level and degree of complexity of the issues they face are multiplied. This is particularly so in terms of the various power relations and notions of 'empowerment', which is discussed briefly below and in more detail in Chapter 4.

In any wide-ranging publication such as this, it is necessary to generalise, however it is important to acknowledge that all communities (indigenous and non) have their own specific circumstances. As a case in point, the case study outlined at the end of this chapter looks at two geographically related indigenous communities and their differing historical relationship with tourism and tourists.

## The use of 'community' in this publication

While we have established there are many different ways to look at communities, the primary focus in this book is on communities defined spatially or geographically – often the members of a small town or region, which in tourism terms is a destination. So, we are looking primarily at 'destination communities'. Yet many of the arguments and ideas presented can be applied to other types of communities (many of which are often located in a certain place), which at times will be noted when they are particularly significant.

Destination communities are alternatively referred to as host communities (which can also relate to other types of non-geographic communities), local or even residential communities. A problem with using the term 'resident' is that it ignores the homeless and itinerant residents who are very much a part of any community, particularly in tourism terms where often many of the encounters with locals are with the homeless and itinerant. It is assumed throughout this book that they are part of the community and must not be ignored in community and tourism development and the processes of consultation and empowerment.

## Community empowerment

'Community empowerment' has become the buzzword of the 21st century. How has this come about, and what is so important about it? In his book, *Empowerment for Sustainable Tourism Development*, Trevor Sofield (2003) not only defines the concept, but also traces the development of the notion as well as providing real-life, in-depth cases for critical analysis and discussion. This comprehensive publication is referred to throughout this book, particularly when talking about the empowerment of communities through (and for) tourism in Chapter 4. He observes that '... the concept of empowerment by and of communities is at once a process and an outcome' (Sofield 2003, p. 8). This is an important aspect of empowerment – the process of empowering people (and communities) is just as important as the actual final outcome. I believe that it is often more important.

In this book, when referring to the term community empowerment, I am adopting Sofield's approach and understanding. It is not possible to provide a glib, simple definition that students (or even someone

trying to impress others at a dinner party) can rattle off, parrot-fashion. In an earlier publication, Sofield talks of two main components of the empowerment process – the government and the community (Sofield 2001). This inclusion of government is significant, as many theoretical discussions of community empowerment fail to acknowledge the role of government and the associated power relations in actually achieving an empowered community. Without political will and support, communities remain ‘empowered’ in name only, yet with it run the risk of being misappropriated by the more powerful government interests that may not be in the locals’ best interest.

Sofield’s concept of empowerment and the issues involved in understanding the various power relations are considered in detail in Chapter 4.

### **Why tourism?**

The first form of recorded tourism is arguably that of pilgrimages to sacred sites. Many of these sites resided in and were tended by a local community that either already existed or actually developed to serve the pilgrims and manage the site. Where the communities became compromised with an abundance of visitors, we have witnessed dramatic changes, particularly if the residents have had little input into the site’s development. This is the case in many host communities, but is particularly evident at pilgrimage sites, which were not planned. However, even tourism that has been planned requires a community to support it – either one that already exists or one that is created for that purpose. In some developing countries, resorts have been built as enclaves where tourists are ‘contained’ in the area of the resort. Paradoxically, tourists also want to have some sense of the place they are visiting, even if it is by proxy through constructed communities at the resorts.

‘Tourism’ has been variously defined and described in terms of the traveller, the businesses servicing the traveller and the places (communities) in which the traveller goes to and through. Many of the theoretical models in Chapter 2 consider the structure of tourism as an industry and an experience. For the benefit of clarity in this publication, and because of its inclusive description, I have adopted Williams and Shaw’s approach to understanding tourism as:

... crucially important. In most countries tourism is 'statistically invisible' and, usually, only the most obvious sectors or those exclusively devoted to tourists are enumerated in official tourism data. Inevitably, this tends to be the accommodation sector and, perhaps, cafés and restaurants. Yet the tourism industry is far larger than this. Tourists also spend money directly on recreational facilities, tourist attractions, shops and local services. In turn, these have indirect effects on agriculture, wholesaling and manufacturing, while secondary rounds of spending of tourism create induced linkages in the economy (Williams and Shaw 1998, cited in Hall 2003a, p. 13).

From the previous discussion of the definition of community, it is clear to see that where people gather to work, live and play, they form some type of community. Tourists themselves form a temporary community within that host community, particularly if they are on a tour or in any other group configuration. Simply put, tourism exists **in** communities, not outside them.

### **Tourism platforms**

One of the first academics to actively study tourism is Jafar Jafari. In 1973 he founded the first academic journal in tourism, *Annals of Tourism Research*, which remains the pre-eminent journal in the field. In 1988 Jafari published one of his seminal articles that outlined the development of how we perceive, study and approach tourism in the world, nominating four themes or 'platforms': advocacy, cautionary, adaptancy and knowledge-based. While Jafari used this to describe the development of tourism research and theory over a period of time, all of the platforms are still relevant today – not everyone has taken the journey from advocacy to knowledge-based, and for some, their political/personal situation will not permit them to do so. Due to the continued relevance of Jafari's platforms, it is important to outline them here:

#### *1 Advocacy platform*

Those who focus on the advocacy platform are generally trying to advance the interests of tourism and the industry in general, claiming

that tourism is beneficial, particularly in economic terms. This is based on post World War II economic reconstruction. Such a stance was particularly important when trying to convince others that tourism is an industry in its own right and should be treated as such, particularly in terms of government support and assistance. Tourism is presented as the 'saviour', particularly for rural, regional and remote communities. Those who still follow the advocacy platform tend to come from the commercial areas as well as many government and non-government tourism agencies.

### *2 Cautionary platform*

This platform came out of the 1970s with the growing interest in broader issues beyond the economic and increased writings by thinkers and researchers who were saying 'Yes, it CAN be beneficial, but it is also very damaging.' The impacts of tourism were becoming acknowledged, particularly by sociologists and environmentalists.

### *3 Adaptancy platform*

The adaptancy platform is in many ways a mid-point between the first two groups, where its proponents believe that certain forms of tourism can bring economic and other benefits without the same level of environmental damage that other types of enterprises might. This opened up the concepts in the 1980s of alternative forms of tourism, using terms such as green, soft, nature-based and ecotourism. This period also saw the emergence of community-centred tourism where local resources are deployed. Proponents of the adaptancy platform maintain that tourism can benefit both the hosts and the guests. You will find many examples of the adaptancy platform throughout the book, however this publication is actually based on the following platform.

### *4 Knowledge-based platform*

The final platform that Jafari identified comes out of the three preceding it and attempts to build on previous work by taking a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of tourism. There is a focus on the discovery and development of scientific knowledge about tourism and tourism-related issues while maintaining bridges with the other platforms. This is the preferred platform of many tourism professionals and academics and is

the basis of this book, building on theory and research knowledge along with practical experience in order to further improve the quality of life for people in various communities as well as enhance the visitor experience.

### **So what do we mean by ‘community’ and ‘tourism’?**

As tourism relies on visiting places and people, it cannot exist outside a community. So, both tourism and the communities it is in must be viewed simultaneously – any change to one will affect the other. Consequently, tourism is one of the most significant community development tools, particularly in marginal or peripheral communities such as indigenous, remote and rural communities.

The earlier quote regarding tourism from Williams and Shaw (cited Hall 2003a) demonstrates the intricacies of understanding tourism and its links with the communities in which it occurs. There is increasing recognition of the intrinsic role that the host community (or destination community) plays in the creation and delivery of tourism experiences, so many have combined these terms into the term ‘community tourism’. It has been variously described as:

Tourism in which local residents (often rural, often poor and marginalized) are active participants as land-managers/users, entrepreneurs, employees, decision-makers and conservators (Ashley n.d.).

An industry which uses the community as a resource, sells it as a product and, in the process, affects the lives of everyone (Murphy 1980).

Community tourism shifts the focus away from the tourist and their experience to the host community and THEIR experience (Kelly 2002).

Reflecting Sofield’s (2003) comments regarding the process of community empowerment is the following quote from the Business Enterprises for Sustainable Tourism’s (BEST) Community Tourism Summit, where they conclude that ‘community tourism is a process rather than a product’ (BEST 2003).

In spite of the use of the term, I am not entirely comfortable in using 'community tourism' as it has connotations of tourists visiting a community to observe (or gaze at) the lives of the community members – the community becomes the entire tourism 'product'. Tourism does more than simply gaze upon communities – it can assist in the development of communities in terms of their economic, social and environmental wellbeing, while at the same time can have the opposite effect. This is the premise of this book, which considers how tourism can (and can not) contribute to the development of sustainable, healthy communities; hence I will avoid using the term 'community tourism' per se, even though it may occasionally slip in.

### **Tourism: Maintaining the status quo or bringing change?**

Tourism is a major agent of change, and while it is often promoted by those with a positivist (advocacy platform) perspective as a force for positive contributions to society, economy and natural environment, such change can arrive unnoticed.

The cost of change can be high, particularly if it is not recognised – too often the negative impacts of tourism are realised only once the damage has been done. This is due to the fact that much change is incremental and difficult to isolate and measure. Residents may simply feel overwhelmed by the sheer number of tourists. Some of the more commonly reported costs include role conflict and social problems where women and even children may be earning more than the traditional male breadwinner. This can result in loss of pride and a sense of helplessness, resulting in increasing social problems such as depression and even suicide.

Tourism is more complex than many people believe it to be. There is a general unspoken belief in Western culture that as most of us have been on a holiday, consequently we understand tourism. Such a simplistic notion would be laughable if it was not so common. It was not many years ago when a group of tourism researchers were in the audience of a late-night popular American TV chat show where the ('famous') host derided tourism research as not 'serious' or 'real research'.

Tourism is intricately woven into a community's regular activities, as locals often utilise tourist facilities, while visitors also utilise locals'

facilities. In addition, the growing interest in many tourists for experiential encounters can result in loss of privacy or the commodification of the community.

Environmental and economic issues also come into play in many ways in communities, depending on numerous social as well as economic variables. A focus on the natural environment by tourists can encourage its conservation and constructive management, whereas too many visitors run the risk of ‘loving it to death’. The section below considers the main issues surrounding the social impacts of tourism development on community development.

## Social impact issues of tourism development

A multitude of impacts that tourism development has on communities has been identified and is well documented by researchers including

Table 1.1 Reported social impacts of tourism

<b>Tourism development</b>	Modifies the internal structure of the community
	Divides the community into those who have/have not relationships with tourists
	Has colonialist characteristics
	Employment in tourism offers more opportunities for women
	Instigates social change
	Improves quality of life through infrastructure development
	Increased pressure on existing infrastructure
<b>Tourist–host interactions</b>	The nature of contact influences attitudes/ behaviour/ values relating to tourism
	Young locals are most susceptible to the demonstration effect
	Cultural exchange/increased understanding and tolerance
	Increased social interaction increases communication skills
	Hosts adopt foreign languages through necessity
	Hosts develop coping behaviour and avoid unnecessary contact
<b>Cultural impacts</b>	Arts, crafts and local culture revitalised
	Acculturation process likely to occur
	Assumed negative effects of commodification of culture
	Meaning/authenticity not necessarily lost

Source: Beeton 2005a, p. 122.

Murphy (1981), Craik (1991), Robinson and Boniface (1997), Bramwell and Lane (2000), Singh *et al.* (2003b), to name but a few. Table 1.1 outlines the range of these impacts in terms of the development, interactions and cultural impacts. The list does not judge whether the impacts are positive or negative or better or worse than each other, as they will often be both, for different people, or in different circumstances. In addition, the magnitude of the impacts will vary, depending on the rate of change in a community and its capacity (willingness) to embrace such change, as well as the actual community being considered.

One of the issues with the negative elements of tourism development is that it is often not until after some time that the negative impacts become evident. It may well be too late to correct some of these impacts, particularly when they affect local community attitudes and beliefs, which are difficult to consciously alter. This hidden and irreversible nature of some of the negative effects is the greatest danger of any blind acceptance of tourism as a sole development tool.

Yet, when it works, tourism is an outstanding community development tool. The case study at the end of this chapter is of two related yet different indigenous communities' responses to the various impacts of tourism.

## **Postmodernism, communities and multiple realities**

The term 'postmodern' has become one of the most used and abused words in English today. Those who understand little of its meaning and application in the world are often the most vociferous in its denigration. Others feel that the concept is far too complex and removed from them to understand it, so they rarely bother. This was my own attitude until a few years ago when I was required to read on the topic and 'discovered' that so much of what I was thinking, believing and saying about tourism (and the rest of my life and culture) was from a postmodern perspective. As with any evangelist, I now feel that everyone should at least understand, if not embrace, some of the basic tenets of the postmodern paradigm.

Simply put, postmodernism is 'a rejection of many, if not most, of the cultural certainties on which life in the West has been structured over the past couple of centuries' (Sim 2005, p. vii). In other words, it is a reaction against the 20th century concepts of modernism and modernity

and their social and political failings. This more widely accepted usage of the term was not apparent until the latter half of the 20th century, when it was used in architecture as a reaction against the so-called 'modern' International Style architecture of concrete and glass with little ornamentation. Today, postmodernism is committed to 'dissent, pluralism, cultural difference, and skepticism towards authority' (Sim 2005, p. xi).

Postmodernists accept that there is no single, universal truth or 'grand narrative' (nor should there be an 'International Style') and embrace scepticism about what our 'culture' stands for. However, grand narratives that explain everything still speak meaningfully to many, a pertinent example being the reassertion of religious fundamentalism where institutional authority is accepted without question, and conformity, not difference, is sought (Sim 2005).

Postmodernism acknowledges the existence of multiple realities, where the same thing or incident may be seen by many people in different ways, depending on the 'lens' through which they view it (Beeton 2005a). In many cases, the same person may also have a multitude of realities on the same thing, depending on his or her current position. For example, if I am going to an extremely crowded concert with very loud music, as a fan of that music my reality is that this is a great thing. However, if my children are attending, my reality now shifts to that of 'responsible adult' where I may be concerned about the concert in terms of its effect on their personal safety and their hearing. This is an extremely simple example, but one that holds true in many circumstances.

In addition, the notion of 'reality' is challenged in that a model or representation may be as real as the 'real thing' that it represents (Baudrillard 1983). This is particularly the case when we look at theme parks – they are constructed and controlled representations of the 'real' world, yet they exist in time and space and many people actually celebrate the fact that they are 'fake', acknowledging a different type of reality. Las Vegas takes notions of representation and simulacra to yet another level.

In terms of tourism, postmodernism has been described as 'post-tourism' by some (Ritzer and Liska 1997), representing a particular type of tourist and way of interpreting tourism experiences from a post-modern perspective. What this means is that 'tourism is seen as an end in itself, not as a means to the loftier goals of personal development, cultural interaction or education' (Beeton 2005a, p. 177). Urry (1990, p. 100)

supports this notion, stating that ‘the post-tourist knows that they are a tourist and that tourism is a game ... with multiple texts and no single, authentic tourist experience’.

If this is how those visiting our communities perceive tourism, then this will affect how our community can benefit from tourism and develop in the ways it desires. This is an important planning and marketing issue, which is re-introduced in Chapter 5.

The notion of Hannigan’s (1998) ‘Fantasy City’ comes from a post-modern perspective, particularly in the way that he acknowledges the receding space between ‘authenticity’ and ‘illusion’ in relation to theme parks and movies. Tourists to theme parks and film sites rarely expect to see something authentic, rather they are looking for simulacra and representations, often searching for the ‘fake’. This is where many of those involved in community tourism fall down when they fail to acknowledge or understand that their version of ‘authenticity’ may be very different from the tourist’s who may not be looking for ‘authenticity’ at all!

The discussion here on postmodernism has been purposely kept brief so as to simply introduce some of the terms and concepts that are presented throughout this publication. For a more comprehensive outline of postmodernism and its relationship with tourism, see John Urry (2002) which has an excellent, readable synthesis of postmodernism from a sociological tourism perspective.

While not specifically postmodern, the following case study illustrates some of the issues facing indigenous communities and their responses to them. This is particularly based on what type of community they desire and what type of visitor they are prepared to host and is informed by their interpretation (reality) of past experience. The message in this case study is from the Knowledge-based Platform with a cautionary focus.

**From theory to practice: A case of the wrong type of tourism, or just too much?**

There are hundreds of American Indian tribes, each with their own community structure and relationship with tourism, from intense to virtually zero. Much has been written on gaming on Indian

lands and its associated pros and cons, both in terms of economics, tourism and community development. This case study is not looking at this issue, but at two different responses to tourism in general from two neighbouring, yet very different communities, namely the Hopi and Navajo Indians.

The Hopi and Zuni Indians migrated north from Aztec and Mexico 900 years ago and settled in Northern Arizona, not far from modern-day Flagstaff. They were a horticultural community, settling in where the earliest indigenous peoples, the Anasazi, had lived over 1000 years ago. Along with the Apaches, the Navajo Indians migrated south from Canada's Subarctic around 500 years ago. They were primarily hunter-gatherers, and the Navajo lands took in much of Northern Arizona as well as parts of Utah and New Mexico, including some of the Hopi lands. Both tribes used similar tracts of land – the Hopi tilling the poor soil, while the more mobile and aggressive Navajo hunted over the same lands. Today, the much smaller Hopi Reservation is surrounded by the significantly larger Navajo land.

The Hopi Reservation consists of three mesas edging the Painted Desert, where at 6000 feet above sea level the annual rainfall is between 10 and 13 inches. The Reservation was ceded to the Hopi in 1943, but is extremely small to support the 8500 residents, consequently overuse of the land has resulted in poor soil and erosion. Nevertheless, from an early date in terms of Indian tourism, the Hopi community welcomed and cared for the visitors attracted to their unusual culture.

The Hopi became particularly famous for their Kachina Cult and their dances, in particular the Snake Dance, where young men in a trance danced with poisonous snakes. The Hopi believe that Kachinas are supernatural beings who visit Hopi villages during the first half of the year. They bring rain, punish offenders and act as a link between gods and mortals. They provide pleasure and amusement as well as play a more serious religious role. At many ceremonies, masked impersonators in traditional costume are believed to take on supernatural qualities, becoming the Kachina.

Visitors were welcomed at these ceremonies. However, by the 1950s there were so many lay anthropologists visiting and imposing on the Hopi community, that it was only a matter of time before there was a reaction from the Hopi people. This came during a Snake Dance around 1956, where the flash bulbs of the tourists' cameras disturbed the snakes in the Snake Dance, killing two of the community's young men. Immediately, all tourists were banned.

Today, the Hopi community continues to be extremely sensitive of its culture, with their pueblos (villages) varyingly open or closed to tourists, depending on local circumstances, such as sacred dances and events. All visitors are restricted as to where they can go and photographing or sketching any Hopi people is strictly forbidden. In order to limit the number of sightseers, there are no signs announcing that the traveller has entered Hopi Land, unlike the Navajo who proudly announce their Navajo Nation (which surrounds the Hopi Reservation). However, the Hopi people themselves remain extremely welcoming of tourists who do visit and respect their culture, which they are determined to retain. While many of their youth move away to study, they return to assist at harvest time and to contribute back to their community. Maintaining the Hopi traditional ways is not only a link to their past, but grounds them in today's modern society.

The American Indians of the Arizona region are among the poorest in the nation, apart from those who adopted gaming as a source of tourist income. The Navajo Nation has the largest Indian reservation in the United States, covering some 17.5 million hectares (27 000 square miles) with a population of around 160 000. The land is extremely barren, with the average income of its population standing around US\$4400 per annum, making them one of the poorest of the Indian groups in the poorest region. Apart from tourism, their primary sources of income are from coal mining and the filming of commercials in the striking desert regions and badlands of Arizona.

The Navajo council decided, in spite of the attractive financial arguments and their own poverty, not to allow gaming on their

land, relying on their natural resources as a source of tourism. Part of their land includes Monument Valley and Canyon de Chelly – both strong natural and cultural attractions. Their tourism tends to rely on these iconic sites, along with so-called ‘Trading Posts’ throughout their land selling artefacts and crafts. Many of these Trading Posts are historical sites and attractions in their own right and have become must-see stopovers for visitors. While they desire more visitors, the travel distances are vast and are reliant on vehicle-based transport to get there.

However, they do little to encourage visitors into the communities, which are dispersed and poor, in a barren environment with little to attract the tourist. Consequently, they retain some privacy, but the benefits of tourism rarely trickle down to many of these communities.

Travelling through this region, the different responses to tourism from these two groups is marked – the Hopi who have an enormous tourism appeal are trying to limit their tourism, while the Navajo, with limited tourism appeal and dispersed sites are keen to encourage it. Such is the contrary nature of tourism and communities. If we want to develop communities through tourism, care must be taken and the requirements of those communities taken into consideration.

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#### Endnote

- 1 This comment from economist John Raulston Saul is based on his understanding of globalisation as the outwards expansion of a single dominating culture, resulting in a single global economy that is dominated by Western-style capitalism. Saul argues that this is no longer true and that the Western capitalist economy has failed as a homogenous global force.