



GAP YEAR VOLUNTEER TOURISM

Myths of Global Citizenship?

Kevin Lyons

Joanne Hanley

The University of Newcastle, Australia

Stephen Wearing

John Neil

University of Technology Sydney, Australia

Abstract: The valorisation of cross-cultural understanding and promotion of an ethic of global citizenship are at the forefront of the recent development and proliferation of international ‘gap year’ travel programs and policies. Governments and industry alike promote gap year travel uncritically as a guaranteed pathway to the development of inclusive ideologies associated with global citizenship. In this paper we examine how the neoliberalist context in which gap year travel programs have proliferated does little to promote tolerance. We then consider the recent growth of ‘volunteer tourism’ as an alternative gap year youth travel experience and explore how the implied resistance to self-serving neoliberalist values that it engenders can become coopted by neoliberalism. **Keywords:** global citizenship, neoliberalism, gap year travel, volunteer tourism. © 2011 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

INTRODUCTION

The challenges posed by contemporary population flows, cross-border exchanges and the international mobilisation of human resources are undeniably global in scope and impact. These challenges correspond with important debates about the nature, values, attributes and efficacies of the shifting scales of citizenship most notably evident in discussions about cosmopolitanism, transnationalism, and global citizenship (e.g., Carter, 2004; Dower, 2000). Emerging from this discourse is a meritorious viewpoint that suggests that global forms of belonging, responsibility, and political action counter the intolerance and ignorance that more provincial and parochial forms of citizenship encourage. Such a perspective has underpinned social policies and initiatives in developed nations such as Australia over the past few

Kevin Lyons (Newcastle Business School, University Drive, University of Newcastle, Callaghan 2308, Australia. Email <kevin.lyons@newcastle.edu.au>) conducts research in the areas of ethical tourism, volunteering, youth development, nature-based tourism. **Joanne Hanley** undertakes research in the areas of volunteering, urban redevelopment and tourism marketing. **Stephen Wearing** conducts research in the areas of ecotourism, community based and volunteer tourism, protected areas management. **John Neil** engages in research that focuses upon popular culture, arts and cultural policy, ecotourism.

decades that, at least on the face of it, celebrate diversity and multiculturalism.

One such initiative designed to address intolerance promotes international tourism among young people, invoking the sentiments of Mark Twain who stated that “[t]ravel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness”. Following Twain, it has been commonplace in the literature to argue that tourism can and does function as an important contributor to the development of the attributes of global citizenship. Much of this literature focuses on the role tourism plays in enhancing international and cross-cultural understanding, tolerance-building, disabusing of stereotypes, the exchange of values and the mutual benefits of a global citizenry (D’Amore, 1988; Ketabi, 1996; Matthews, 2008; Smith, 1989). Accounting for over one-twelfth of world trade and by far the largest movement of people across borders, international tourism is regarded by governments and the tourism industry as an important facilitator of global citizenship through the exchange of cultures accounting for 10% of global employment and global Gross Domestic Product (World Tourism Organization, 2007). Notwithstanding this global mobility, evidence of global citizenry and the tolerance it purportedly promotes is far from ubiquitous.

In this paper we argue that although engagement with other cultures is a central tenet of global citizenship, it is not an inherent outcome of tourism. This idea has long been of concern to scholars of the tourist experience. Some time ago, Krippendorf (1982, p. 142) raised concerns about the outcomes of tourist-host contact stating: “Tourists demonstrate behaviour and attitudes which can evoke mistrust, resignation and aggressive dissatisfaction in the [host] population”. More recently, MacCannell (2001, p. 380) has noted “the awkward and difficult quality of cross-cultural understanding in settings that are organized for tourist visits”. However, new ‘ethical’ tourism practices (Butcher & Smith, 2010) emerging from a greater global awareness and a motivation that is counter to mass tourism are, arguably, more cosmopolitan in basis. Volunteer tourism is one form of ethical tourism that is growing in popularity and has been presented in the literature as a form of alternative tourism that creates the kinds of encounters that foster mutual understanding and respect (Wearing, 2001).

There is a growing literature on international volunteer tourism, however, that questions its foundation on social consciousness and cross-cultural understanding. For Raymond and Hall (2008) cross-cultural understanding is by no means a given outcome. Similarly, Nyau-pane, Teye, and Paris (2008, p. 652) state that “contact alone will not necessarily provide a positive cross-cultural experience”. Simpson’s work (2004, 2005) suggests that existing stereotypes may actually be reinforced thereby deepening dichotomies. Others question the reciprocal benefits of such cross-cultural interaction given the inherent complexities of significant cultural (and economic) divides and, more importantly, the dearth of research on host community experiences (see McGehee & Andereck, 2009; Woosnam & Lee, 2011). Sin (2009) argues that volunteer tourists are motivated more by a desire ‘to travel’ than by a desire ‘to contribute’, and that they often regard

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات