

Tourism: A Critical Business

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Abstract

A research and practice gap is identified demonstrating tourism to be an insufficiently critical business. Initially the idea of critical tourism is addressed in two ways. First an array of meanings is exposed from which the idea of critical theory is developed. Next discussion turns to how critical approaches can contribute to good management and governance of tourism by providing understandings that technical rationality can overlook. Finally the limited extent of critical tourism research is established. The article concludes that tourism should be a critical business and offers pointers for such an agenda. For although positivist research informed by technical rationality is crucial to the better operational management of tourism, critical research is essential for setting an agenda for ethical management, governance and co-existence with the wider world. Indeed it is critical to deep, long term sustainability and even the survival of tourism. **Keywords:** critical theory, ideology, power, governance.

Introduction

Barnett's (1990:71) critique of higher education provides the rationale for this article. In it he noted that higher education:

produces technicist, managerial and economic ideologies for society; and it produces critical ideologies - e.g. ecological, feminist, deconstructionalist and humanistic ideologies - consciously counterpoised against the former set.

Barnett was alluding to a dualism evident in higher education with management and engineering schools on one side and departments of sociology, philosophy and cultural studies on the other side. To caricature the situation, the former can produce highly employable but largely uncritical compliant human resources whilst the latter can produce highly critical, non-compliant human resources with limited employability skills. This article wishes to seek synthesis and practical engagement with both sides of this dichotomy by presenting the case that tourism ought to be a more critical business. Its main aim is to identify a research and practice gap in critical tourism research and practice and consider the implications of this. This aim gives rise to three objectives. First it is necessary to clarify the meaning of critical tourism research. Second an analysis of the contribution of critical approaches to management and governance is undertaken. Third the limited deployment of critical tourism research to date is empirically demonstrated. The main part of the article is divided into three sections in line with these objectives. Initially the idea of critical tourism is reviewed. Next the importance of critical approaches for the management and governance of tourism is discussed. Finally the extent of criticality in tourism research is interrogated.

In terms of the contribution of this paper, whilst there has been some limited discussion in the literature of the idea of critical tourism, no interrogation of the extent of critical tourism or its importance for the business of tourism has been previously undertaken. Several researchers (Swain, Brent and Long 1988; Kim 1998 and Xiao and Smith 2006) have offered various types of content analysis of tourism journals. Their deployment of content analysis has concentrated on what is *present* and operated at the level of topics and subjects. They have usefully identified significant themes and plotted changes in these (amongst other things). In

contrast this article is looking for *absences* (specifically of critical theory) and is searching at the level of methodology. In doing so it surfaces issues not found in these previous works whilst offering a deeper inspection of criticality than that offered by Riley and Love's (2000) important work on qualitative and quantitative approaches. Additionally its use of the CABABS data base offers a new method of data mining.

The Concept of Critical Tourism

Is tourism research critical? When examining this question we are immediately faced with a problem. The term critical has several meanings and so it is important to clarify the particular meaning to be used in this discussion. One typical definition posits critical as a special (or even the top) category of importance where failure to understand and act may result in an irretrievable loss. Hence we have critical illness, etc. Tourism research is surely critical in this sense since it encompasses issues such as critical success factors (Brotherton 2004) and critical incident analysis (Ravenscroft and Rogers 2003). Another meaning of critical is based around the notions of close scrutiny of the facts, looking for weaknesses and faults and offering judgement. Again there are many examples of such research in tourism ranging from analysis of consumer satisfaction and destination quality to evaluation of sustainable practices. Both of these usages of the term are familiar to those in the tourism industry. But neither reflects the precise use of the term for this article where discussion will engage in the more specialised and technical meaning of the term as deployed in the concept of critical theory.

Critical theory is the research paradigm developed by the Frankfurt School (Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and Habermas). Critical theory traces its intellectual roots to Marx, Hegel and beyond and its meaning emerges by reference to its difference from other research paradigms. Typically studies into research methodology classify research approaches into between three and five paradigms. These encompass positivism (and post-positivism), interpretivism (and constructionism) and critical theory.

There are several key features of the positivist research paradigm. Most crucially it concentrates on positive data - that is on facts that can be verifiable and can survive attempts at falsification (Popper 1975). To underpin positivism, rigorous scientific method is used, based upon hypothesis formulation, and testing against empirical evidence. Quantitative measurement and experiment are the key techniques of positivism and quality control is governed by the need to survive falsifiability and demonstrate validity, reliability and value-neutrality. Whilst positivism assumes the existence of an objective reality that can be empirically observed, post-positivism (Guba 1990) is more reflexive and allows for a less certain view of reality - one that "can never be fully apprehended, only incompletely understood" (Hollinshead 2004:76). However it holds that there is a sufficient basis (a practical adequacy) for useful investigation whilst conceding that fallibility in observation calls for underpinning by triangulation.

The interpretive paradigm seeks understanding and meaning arguing that human actions and social constructs cannot be treated by researchers in the same way as natural objects. Here, understanding and meaning in tourism are sought by reference to its participants for it is their voice which interpretivist research wishes to catch. In this way participants in interpretivist research are "regarded as subjects, not objects" (Grundy 1987:69). Grundy seeks to highlight the positivist power relations of researcher-as-subject and researched-as-object. Under interpretivism the researched should be promoted to subject and be offered more power of authorship. Research findings should be written to minimise the pre-conceived ideas of the

researcher and maximise collaboration and dialogue. This is in contrast to positivism which objectifies the researched world so that the understanding of the world may become boxed-in by the meanings which have been ascribed from the researcher's preconceptions and which permeate the research instrument. Significant truths arise from positivism but their extent can be limited by the aperture provided by the researcher and research instrument (Tribe 2006). The research techniques used under the interpretive approach include unstructured interviews, focus groups, participant observation, case studies, hermeneutics, literary criticism, and emics.

Table 1: Aspects of Critical Theory (based on Kincheloe and McLaren, 2003)

Domain	Objective	Potential Proxy Terms
1. Critical enlightenment	"To uncover the winners and losers in particular social arrangements and the processes by which such power plays operate" (437)	Power Enlightenment Social Structure* Justice Equity Femminist* Gender Exclusion Oppression Inequality
2. Rejection of economic determinism	To understand rather that there are "multiple forms of power" (437)	<i>Power</i>
3. Critical emancipation	To achieve "greater degrees of autonomy and human agency" (437)	Emancipation * Autonomy* Agency Utopia Freedom Equality Liberation
4. Critique of technical rationality	To understand its separation of fact and value, the promotion of the former over the latter and the concentration on means rather than ends.	Value* Habermas*
5. Desire	To understand "the impact of desire" [and] "rethink the interplay among the various axes of power, identity, libido, rationality and emotion" (438)	Desire <i>Power</i> Marcuse
6. Ideology	To understand that "dominant ideological practices and discourses shape our vision of reality" (440)	Ideology* Discourse
7. Hegemony	To understand the subtlety of power (e.g. "not use of physical force" but its diffusion through sites of "social relations ... [which] are legitimised by their depiction as natural and inevitable" (439) as well as the productive aspects as well as the oppressive aspects of power.	Gramsci* Hegemony* <i>Oppression</i>
8. Discursive power	To understand that "language is not a neutral and objective conduit of description of 'the real world' ... [and that] linguistic descriptions are not simply about the world but serve to construct it [with particular reference to]: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what can and cannot be said ... • who has authority and who must listen ... • whose social constructions are valid" (441) 	<i>Discourse</i> Foucault
9. Culture, power and domination	To understand how "the proliferation of signs and images [of contemporary mass culture] function as a mechanism of control" (442)	<i>Power</i> Gaze
10. Cultural pedagogy	To understand "the ways particular cultural agents produce particular hegemonic ways of seeing ... [and] the corporate-dominated pedagogical process" (442)	<i>Hegemony*</i> <i>Ideology*</i>
11. General Domain of Critical Theory		Critical Critical Theory* Gramsci* Adorno Marcuse Horkheimer Marx*

Notes:

1. Italics denote repeated word

* denotes that the proxy term uses the "wild symbol" of an asterisk in the search to pick up its various forms.

To some extent constructionism finds itself bridging the paradigms of interpretivism and critical theory. On the one hand, Berger & Luckman's (1966) *The Social Construction of*

Reality underlines the importance of interpretivist methods in portraying reality. On the other hand Burr (1995) and Delanty (1997) discuss some key issues of constructionism which move us towards critical theory. These issues include the critical stance towards taken for granted knowledge and understandings that knowledge is historically and culturally specific, that knowledge is sustained by social practices and that knowledge and social action are interlinked.

Critical theory largely shares these considerations but distinguishes itself from constructionism in a number of key ways. Kincheloe and McLaren (2003) enumerate the major concerns of critical theory and these are illustrated in table one which organises them around eleven domains. These domains and their associated objectives are now discussed.

A key distinguishing feature of critical theory is its interest in critical enlightenment (domain one) particularly in relation to power relations. Indeed a main consideration is its wish to expose the interests which are associated with different research paradigms. Habermas's (1978) contribution is important here, particularly his theory of knowledge-constitutive interests, where he concludes that there is no interest-free knowledge. For example in *Knowledge and Human Interests* he argues that knowledge derived from positivist methodology generally serves technical interests – in particular those of management and control and the finding of technical solutions to problems. This concentration on technical solutions takes the current ordering of things as given whereas for critical theory the current ordering of things is deliberately foregrounded as a possible problem. Power is a fundamental issue to be researched and a critical approach to tourism would seek to expose whose interests are served and how power operates in particular formations of tourism as well as in the process of research. However Kincheloe and McLaren (2003:437) also explain that critical theory rejects crude forms of economic determinism (domain two) and rather posits that there are “multiple forms of power.” The post-structuralist concepts of ideology and discourse are therefore found to be more relevant to critical tourism than structuralist explanations based on simple economic determinism.

The next goal of critical theory is its interest in emancipation (domain three). This is described by Grundy (1987:99) as leading to a “transformation in the way in which one perceives and acts in the world”. The emancipation which is sought here is action which results in a move to a better production and consumption of tourism. In other words critical theory entertains ideas about utopia and the good life for tourism with a particular emphasis in unleashing human agency and autonomy.

In response to this domain four develops a critique of technical rationality and the latter's focus on means rather than ends and demonstrates how in this respect critical theory differs from positivism. Positivism espouses value freedom, excluding questions of a moral or ethical nature which cannot be settled by an appeal to facts. It thereby rules out consideration of what might or ought to be in favour of what is so that only means, facts and theory remain. In contrast critical theory deliberately seeks to engage with normative questions of values and desirable ends. In particular as Young (1989:2) observes a key concern of critical theorists is that the “society which exists is only an imperfect representation of what it could be.” Critical theory wishes to engage in the process which Hegel referred to as the authorship of history and Gibson (1986:37) explains that for critical theory:

knowledge and interest in emancipation coincide and thus make
for those unities which positivism severs - theory and practice,

means and ends, thought and action, fact and value, reason and emotion.

A further aspect of critical theory is an understanding of the embodiment of the researcher and researched (domain five) and indeed an admission of first person reporting in research where positivism insists on third person distancing of the researcher in their reportage. In this way identity, libido and emotion are considered as part of a complex set of factors that can influence research and therefore deserve reflexive recognition in along with issues of rationality and power.

Critical theory also sets itself apart from interpretivism for one important reason. It does not necessarily trust the accounts of the researched to give a true reading of the world. It is wary of the possibility of their false (or at the very least, not fully engaged) consciousness and their inability to escape the knowledge-conventions of their epoch or culture. For example when witchcraft was an accepted explanation of human activity interpretivist research would have resulted in rich accounts of the phenomenon without necessarily challenging the concept. Barnett (2003:56) describes false consciousness as the situation where “that which is contingent is seen as inevitable. That which is iniquitous is seen as just. That which is imposed is seen as natural.” For this reason ideology (domain six) is central to critical theory.

Ideology is a term that has two distinct meanings. First it refers to an overarching network of guiding ideas that frame, direct and inform thinking. Marx and Engels (1845:53) were important in developing the concept of ideology and they identify the ruling ideology is the ideology of the dominant class.

The ideas of the *ruling class* are in every epoch *the ruling ideas*, i.e. the class which is the *ruling material force* of society, is at the same time its *ruling intellectual force*. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it.

Ideology's second meaning describes discrete, coherent belief systems. The list of such ideologies is long, ranging from political systems e.g. communism, through idea systems e.g. pantheism, utilitarianism (Mill and Sher 2002), liberalism (Hayek 1978) and Confucianism to religious faiths e.g. Judaeo-Christianity, Mohammedism and Hinduism. Here, an ideology is a system of beliefs that directs the policies and activities of its adherents. Ideology then, frames thought and guides action and its presence may lead to the suppression and partial exclusion of other world views. But the operation of an ideology can remain hidden from view, for the deeply embedded nature and long tradition of a particular ideology can serve to camouflage its existence. Apple (1990:5) explains how ideology "saturates our very consciousness" so that it becomes the taken for granted way of thinking and doing. It becomes the accepted or common sense view of the world. The job of critical theory is to identify ideological influences at work and Habermas deployed ideology critique as a method of identification of ideology and a possible means of escape from ideology. Critique encourages self-understanding and the placing of any representation of the world in competition with other possible views of the world.

It is suggested that the underlying dominant common-sense view (ideology) which permeates much literature, research and activity in tourism is materialism. Its guiding idea is that tourism should be organised to bring profit to the organising company and satisfaction to the paying tourist. This is the common-sense background in which much tourism research operates. Moreover it operates without much consciousness or critical scrutiny of this ideology. This ideology promotes particular kinds of knowledge favouring marketing, measurement, management and planning and whilst there are signs of questioning components (sustainability, environmental impacts) they are often as adjuncts to the main thrust of the (uncritical) business of tourism. Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony (domain seven) offers a more subtle re-working of the Marxist reading of ideology. Gramsci does not hold with the view that there is an explicit, conscious imposition of one ideology by one group on a range of unwilling groups but rather that ideologies are negotiated.

A more subtle and distributed exercise of power is illustrated in the Foucauldian (Foucault 1971; 1974; 1980) notion of discourse (domain eight). Here the constructive power of language is revealed. Hall (1997:44) describes a discourse as "a group of statements which provide a language for talking about ...a particular topic at a particular historical moment." Foucault was interested in the rules and practices that gave statements meaning and in turn regulated what could be said. He illustrated this by a study of how madness came to be constructed out of such discourses. In particular discursive formations perform a selector function by legitimising what counts as knowledge and what does not. Discourses thereby regulate the bounds of the sayable and discourses of managerialism and sustainability, amongst others, may be discerned in tourism research.

Critical theory also foregrounds the controlling aspects of culture. Here Kincheloe and McLaren (2003:436) consider the ways in which mass contemporary culture (domain nine) can contribute to the situation where "...individuals ... have been acculturated to feel comfortable in relations of domination and subordination rather than equality and independence." In tourism guide books, brochures, adverts, postcards and travel sections in the media are often complicit in portraying an uncritical, idealised, untroubled world of tourism (Jaworski and Pritchard 2005). Examples include the plane as a symbol of escape and empowerment rather than of pollution: the five star hotel as the ultimate in luxury rather than a symbol of social class and division and the developing world as the playground of the exotic other rather than a site of development and self determination. Kincheloe and McLaren (2003) also point to pedagogical practices (domain ten) as being implicated in and contributing to the production of "hegemonic ways of seeing".

Summing up the key features of critical theory (domain eleven) Best (1997:ix) explains its role as follows:

Rejecting the positivist dichotomy between fact and value, theory and politics, critical theory interrogates the "is" in terms of the "ought," seeking to grasp the emancipatory possibilities of the current society as something that can and should be realized in the future. It thereby gains a leverage for normative criticism and "utopian" projection by analyzing the social forces that constrain and inhibit the realization of human potentialities for greater freedom, social justice and solidarity, as well as a harmonious relation with the natural world, while envisaging the new social forms and sensibilities required to enable and realize these possibilities.

Critical tourism, management and governance

The following section offers a more practical examination of the potential significance of critical approaches for the management and governance of tourism. Under the heading of management, issues of criticality are considered in relation to the specific issues of managing a tourism site. This is done through a discussion of the management of the contested site of Uluru in Australia. Under the heading of governance issues of criticality are considered in relation to the political environment in which tourism operates as well as issues of planning and control.

Management

The importance of critical theory can be illustrated by analysing the way in which Uluru / Ayers Rock is understood, (re)presented and managed for tourism using managerialism as a point of critique. Managerialism is an example of an ideology that privileges business management over other ways of managing and elevates profitability as the key end for appropriate action. Under such a view the management of Ayers Rock becomes a technical issue covering aspects such as crowd control, health and safety, consumer satisfaction, efficient supply of services geared towards profitability – all of which generate research agendas.

But critical theory points up the fact that Uluru is a highly contested space where the localised, deep-rooted aspirations of the indigenous population come into sharp play with the demands of global, post-modern tourists. A starting point when considering the place is of course its name, since the use of name discloses a bundle of pre-conceptions and associations about the place. Indeed it might be argued that in semiotic terms “Ayers Rock” signifies the place as a tourist attraction for pleasure and self-fulfilment whilst “Uluru” signifies it as an aboriginal homeland with deep traditions and cultural practices to be respected. A brief review of some of the research literature on Ayers Rock / Uluru helps to further clarify the implications of different research paradigms for its management.

For example, McIntyre and Boag (1995) examined the relationship between visitor density and perceptions of crowding at Uluru National Park and the effect of these perceptions on the level of visitor satisfaction. Two sites were investigated - the Uluru Climb and Malaku Wilytja. A critical theorist would cite this as an example of the use of instrumental reason and research to serve technical interests. In this case the research issue is objectified by the researcher. The issue and approach has been imposed (wittingly or unwittingly) upon the place – a western environmental discourse for the management of tourism problem. The status quo is taken for granted. The aim of the research is perhaps to understand visitor satisfaction and perhaps to find ways of better management of overcrowding. But there is no attempt to understand the issues of the place (interpretivism) or to understand the cultural construction of knowledge about Uluru (constructionism) or the power/knowledge and ideological issues (critical theory) infused in tourism in Ayers Rock / Uluru. Similar comments would apply to Fielding, Pearce, and Hughes’ (1992) study into the relationship between individual differences in motivation and the experience of climbing Ayers Rock.

Against this, Brown (1999) adopts a more critical starting point for his research focussing on conflicts of use, respect for the host culture and specifically what he terms the culturally inappropriate tourist behaviour of climbing Ayers Rock / Uluru. His study explores visitors' beliefs as a starting point to inform efforts aimed to discourage visitors from climbing Uluru. Additionally Mercer’s (1995) work examined the relationship between western tourism

development and native peoples. It focused on the social appropriateness of tourism development from the native Aboriginal viewpoint. This concern to give voice to the people of the place demonstrates a strong interpretivist and critical motivation for the research. The project presented case studies of Kakadu National Park and Uluru with a particular emphasis on control and choice. Control was determined by the degree to which native populations control their own destinies when negotiating decisions regarding tourism development on their land. Choice related to their freedom to choose to negotiate, or simply to refuse to do so. Mercer concluded that growing Aboriginal militancy arose because what they viewed as their basic rights had come up against the western practice of eminent domain. This is a process where government gains control of individual (or group) owned land for the good of the many, through a legal process often including condemnation. Mercer comments that this practice, together with other denials of land ownership can lead to a reading of the events as the invasion and theft of the Aboriginal nation. This latter part of Mercer's work clearly treats with constructionism as its different interpretation of the situation calls on a reading and production of knowledge from a different cultural perspective. It also demonstrates several aspects of critical theory referred to in table one. It deploys critical enlightenment in its analysis of the winners and losers in the current managerial arrangements. It also uncovers the hegemonic tendency and discursive power by which the dominant ideology of tourism constructs and forms the tourism landscape.

The management challenge posed by this section is one of finding appropriate ends for management. Critical theory can subject conventional management plans to ideology critique and can offer a way of generating a more meaningful stakeholder analysis and one where other the aspirations of "other" stakeholders are not subjected to an ideological framing and interpretation by the most powerful. For example utilizing critical theory's (and a Foucauldian) understanding of discursive power, Whittaker's (1999) study illustrated how tourism knowledge about aboriginal Australians is often generated from an ethnocentric (Western, developed, colonial) position. The challenge suggested here is to reclaim and reposition knowledge of indigenous people in order to deliver better management of tourism that impinges upon them.

Governance

Mowforth and Munt (2003:252) describe governance as:

... the web of institutions and agencies that are central players in the political environment [including] ... national governments, bilateral development agencies and the supranational institutions (such as the World Bank, IMF and United Nations).

But if these are its institutions what does governance mean for tourism? It refers to the complex set of agencies that are involved in the planning, regulation and control of tourism itself and the political environment in which it operates.

Turning first to the political environment, tourism above all requires a stable international environment in which to develop. But here tourism is in a period of crisis. Witness this statement from the Chief Executive of British Airways (British Airways 2005:4): "It has become the norm for me to report on the impact of one crisis after another in my statement to shareholders." Yet tourism cannot easily admit to its crisis. This is because tourism depends upon a strong ideology for its success. Tourism is about freedom for travel and enjoyment. Much of the rhetoric of tourism is still that of dreams. Yet those dreams are increasingly punctuated by nightmares. As a form of escape, tourism eschews the political. Yet tourism is

deeply implicated in politics. If it is, as the World Tourism Organisation often reminds us, the world's biggest industry it clearly contributes significantly to the ordering (Franklin 2004) of the world. That ordering includes its contribution to as well as its feedback from global terrorism. Here, the key crisis facing tourism is that of global security which quite simply and starkly can no longer be guaranteed. There have been increasing attacks both directly and indirectly impacting on tourism. These include attacks on airports and the hijackings of planes from the 1970s, the Lockerbie bombing (1983), the 9/11 attacks in the USA (2001), the 7/7 bombings in London (2005), the Bali bombings (2002 and 2005) and the Sharm el Sheik bombing (2005).

But the response to such events mainly operates in the technical domain. For example British Airways offers an insight into a typical response from the business community:

Security has always been paramount, more so since the tragic events of 9/11. Since then, new security and immigration regulations have been introduced, which range from fitting new cockpit doors to providing authorities with passport information in advance of arrival (British Airways 2005:4).

The response of the research community has also mainly been driven by technical concerns. Examples from the recent literature include Blake and Sinclair (2003) who suggest subsidies and tax reductions as a means of addressing the situation arising from 9/11; Henderson (2003) who examines the responses of official tourism and marketing agencies to the 2002 Bali bombing and Pizam and Fleischer (2002) who analyse the severity versus frequency of acts of terrorism to determine which has a larger impact on tourism demand. Similarly Massey (2005) examined the public relations efforts of the US airlines to restore consumer confidence in the industry in the wake 9/11. What is noticeable about all of the above examples is the lack of attention to understanding critical issues at the heart of global terrorism. Of course security measures are important but tightening up security in one area often results in displacement of terrorist activity to a new weaker area and there are an almost infinite number of weak spots in the tourist system. (Witness the move of attacks from air transport to rail transport exemplified by the Madrid and London bombings). It leads to problem shifting not problem resolution.

There is surely an urgent case for more research of an interpretive and critical nature to supplement that of a technical nature. But the nature of the crisis makes this doubly difficult because the political reaction to the crisis has been to re-invigorate existing ideological positions and create sharp binary divisions. Just as tourist academics have concentrated on the us/other (exotic), the post-crisis binaries have become more deeply divisive between for example: us / other (terrorist): peace and freedom loving peoples / the enemy: those with us / those against us. The last of these makes critical enquiry, which deeply questions issues of power and truth, especially difficult because critical enquirers can easily be cast into the "against us" category and therefore become marginalised and isolated.

Two examples demonstrate limited forays of interpretive and critical research into terrorism and tourism. First Robinson and Meaton (2005:69) investigated disparate discourses surrounding the Bali bombing where they found other discourses competing with official discourses for the "voice of Bali":

Following 12 October there was a politically powerful and urgent call for Bali to get back to 'business as usual'. This opinion was presented rationally, coherently and with authority. It is, it implies, the voice of Bali. However, for many in Bali the events of 12 October presented a critical time for reflection and seeds were evident of fledgling calls for change.

Robinson and Meaton therefore seek a more critical understanding of the reaction of the people of Bali to the bombings beyond the technical issues of security and reconstruction. Their argument contends that a failure to capture and take account of the concerns of critical local voices will threaten the recovery and sustainability of tourism in Bali since issues of conflict, alienation and marginalization would remain suppressed and liable to resurface. In a similar way the resolution of conflict in Northern Ireland was unlocked by interpretive and critical approaches that sought understanding and liberation where technical solutions based on increased security had repeatedly failed. Concomitantly tourism in Northern Ireland has shown remarkable recovery.

Second, Higgins-Desbiolles (2005) offers a critical polemic focussing on terrorism and tourism. Here she replaces MacCannell's (1992) concept of "Empty Meeting Grounds" with a more chilling one of "Hostile Meeting Grounds". The emancipatory spirit of the article is signalled in its preface:

No one seems to ask why there is terrorism, and if a war against terrorism will solve any problems at all. Justice and justice alone will bring peace ... as long as the world is asymmetrical, there will be no peace (5)

Leaning heavily on Fanon's (1967) banner of *The Wretched of the Earth* Higgins-Desbiolles provides an alternative system of analytical binaries which include: wretched/rich: world as playground/world as home and workplace. These binaries serve to demonstrate basic asymmetries in the tourism system leading Higgins-Desbiolles to conclude that:

Tourism must serve the "wretched" as well as the "rich" if it is to continue to enjoy the open access it has been given to the world's resources and the faith that has been instilled in it for improving the lives of people (p. 29).

Her article points up an alternative battleground for the war on terror underlining the importance of peace for the prosperity of tourism and the connection between peace and justice. Both these articles represent progress in the theoretical side of critical tourism studies since they attempt "to uncover the winners and losers in particular social arrangements and the processes by which such power plays operate" (Kincheloe and McLaren 2003:437).

A further goal of critical theory is that of critical emancipation where the end is "greater degrees of autonomy and human agency" (Kincheloe and McLaren 2003:437). This signals a move from theory to practice and the following examples demonstrate how the findings of critique can be translated into practical actions. The first example is Tourism Concern. The mission of Tourism Concern is to effect change in the tourism industry by campaigning for fair and ethically traded tourism. Its activities include campaigning about the displacement of the Maasai from their homes in East Africa, the conditions endured by some porters who accompany trekkers in mountain environments and fair pay. Tourism Concern has also provided a voice for the less powerful developed countries concerned about the imposition of the GATS free trade treaty that

represents the interests of the powerful developed nations neglecting issues of fair trade.

The second example is Pro-Poor Tourism. Here Ashley, Boyd, and Goodwin (2000:1) note that:

In the tourism sector, national governments and donors have generally aimed to promote private sector investment, macro-economic growth and foreign exchange earnings, without specifically taking the needs and opportunities of the poor into account in tourism development.

They make the additional point that

Donor-supported tourism master plans focus on creating infrastructure, stimulating private investment and attracting international tourists. Investors are often international companies and local elites, whose profits are generally repatriated abroad or to metropolitan centres. Links with the local economy are often weak, with the possible exception of employment.

Hence the development of the concept of Pro-Poor Tourism represents a move in critical enlightenment and its programme of action illustrates critical emancipation as it seeks to increase the net benefits derived from tourism for poor people. It aims to enhance the linkages between poor people and businesses to increase tourism's contribution to the reduction of poverty and involve poor people in the development of tourism. Typically 'the poor' include staff, producers of food, fuel and other suppliers, operators of micro tourism businesses, craft-makers, hawkers and those who could benefit from tourism as well as those whose resources are directly affected by tourism development. Pro poor tourism strategies range from increasing local employment to the provision of consultation.

To summarise this section, critical research can play an important part in extending, supplementing and challenging the dominant discourses that pervade the management and governance of tourism. It can question taken for granted recipes and responses and lead to a deeper engagement with aims and ends. It can illuminate tourism's blind spots. In the light of this the next section will examine the extent to which tourism research exhibits critical approaches.

The Extent of Critical Tourism

The findings here are based on data from the CAB International abstracts database CABABS. This is used to provide tentative indications of the overall dimensions of tourism research and relative size of critical tourism research. The CABI (www.leisuretourism.com) database (CABABS) contains abstracts from around 400 publications in leisure, sport, tourism and hospitality research from 1974 to the present. The data collection method was as follows. First a filter was applied to the database using the search code UU700 to narrow the search to just tourism entries. CABABS was then searched to provide data from tourism entries using a variety of different terms that might indicate use of the concept of critical tourism as discussed earlier. These are based on potential proxy terms that might indicate the presence of critical theory. The third column in table one illustrates the list of these terms. The list was compiled from keywords or authors' names relating to aspects of critical theory that were evident in columns one and two of table one or in the description given in the text.

However terms such as “equity” include meanings unrelated to critical theory (e.g. shares) and over-reporting may therefore take place. In order to minimise this problem a test of ambiguity was applied to the list of potential proxy terms. The list was divided into those which appeared to be ambiguous and those which appeared to be unambiguous. This division was adjusted after a deeper inspection of the titles and abstracts of the terms. In each case a random page of 25 search results (in some cases fewer because of a low total) was examined in detail to ascertain whether the proxy term was being used in a critical theory context or not. For example the term “values” was found to have high ambiguity due to its use in the context of economic and ecological valuation. Similarly the string “autonom*” was frequently found to refer to “autonomous regions” and most notable was that “agency” mainly referred to travel agency. A margin of error of 12 per cent was applied and terms which failed this test (i.e. were used in a different context in more than 12 per cent of cases) were excluded. The final list of least ambiguous terms was designated robust proxy terms and this appears in table two.

Two periods were examined: 1974 to 2000 and 1974 – 2005 (where no period is mentioned the survey covers the period 1974 – 2005). 1974 is the date when the abstracts were first fully compiled and the two periods were chosen to identify both the total picture and to see whether there had been any noticeable increase over a recent period. In many cases an asterisk was used in the search string to stand for a wild character to enable the derivative forms of terms to be included – for example hegemon* would stand for hegemony and hegemonic. However the simple robust proxy term (e.g. hegemony) is used in the analysis that follows.

The results of the searches are found in table two but there are some limitations to the method which should be noted. First, only titles, keywords and abstracts are interrogated and therefore articles where their orientation is only apparent in the main body of their text are not found. However it is likely that research which is determinedly critical would include at least one of these keywords in the fields that were searched. Second the use of UU700 coded CABABS abstracts may miss literature that is classified elsewhere (e.g. under sociology or management). The main results of now follow.

Table 2: Frequency of robust proxy critical terms in CABABS titles and abstracts

Term	1974- 2000	1974 - 2005
Adorno	0	0
Critical Theor*	5	10
Discourse	41	118
Emancipat*	10	16
Equality	23	36
Exclusion	30	60
Feminis*	41	53
Foucaul*	3	17
Gaze	23	58
Gramsc*	1	1
Habermas*	0	2
Hegemon*	9	16
Horkheimer	0	0
Ideolog*	152	190
Inequality	37	48
Marx*	16	22
Oppress*	8	12
Total of above terms (1)	399	659
Total tourism articles	28079	35194

Note: (1) These totals may include double counting of some articles

The first point to note is the large number of articles in the CACBABS database that fall into the UU700 category of tourism – a total of 35194 between 1974 and 2005. But the interesting question for this enquiry is the extent to which critical theory is deployed in this large sample. The first line of enquiry was to interrogate the CABABS database to discover the incidence of the term critical theory itself. An example found is Jamal and Everett (2004) who use Yellowstone National Park to show how a critical narrative interprets natural spaces as cultural, political and economic texts mediated by a number of scientific, promotional and symbolic tools serving a diverse range of interests. But such articles are rare and it turns out that this term only occurs in the summary details of ten of the 35194 articles abstracted. This indicates a very low incidence of critical theory and this finding triangulates well with Botterill *et al's* (2003:293) survey of doctoral theses which found “few abstracts that indicated the influences of critical theory”. But what of the other robust proxy terms that can indicate research that is operating within the critical theory domain? The main contributors to the critical theory school were Gramsci, Adorno, Habermas and Horkheimer and it is interesting to note that these names appear in only three abstracts in the CABABS database.

The terms ideology and hegemony and discourse are related terms that are central to critical theory in that they demonstrate how power and partiality can be transmitted in tourism. Each has also survived as a robust proxy term. The term ideology appears in 190 abstracts and as such represents the most widely found critical theory term in this survey but still a very small proportion of total tourism outputs and this triangulates again with Botterill *et al's* survey of doctoral theses where the authors suggest that little tourism research foregrounds ideology. One of the examples found here is the work of Hillali (2004) who examines ideological rivalries surrounding tourism development in Maghreb. In particular Hillali analyses the opposition between conservatism and modernism as symbolised by tourism. Hillali shows that tourism appears as a promoter of Western countries' values based on personal freedom but that such values are heavily contested in some parts of the world especially in Islamic countries.

There are 118 instances of the term discourse including Chambers' (2004) study which analyses the power/knowledge relationships at work in the representation of heritage in and through tourism. The term hegemony is found in 16 cases. For example Saarinen (2004) offers a critical reading of tourist destinations as dynamic, historical units with specific identities characterized by hegemonic and other discourses which all produce a notion of what the destination is and represents at the time. Discourse is closely related to the Foucauldian approach to research but it appears that few tourism researchers turn to Foucault for their theoretical insights – only 17 of the CABABS articles returned his name in their summaries. Included here are Cheong and Miller (2000) who provide a Foucauldian observation on power and tourism demonstrating that power is omnipresent in tourism relationships and that the touristic gaze is considered a primary mechanism by which travel agents, guides, and some locals operate in the power relationship vis-a-vis tourists. Indeed the concept of the gaze is found in 58 cases in this survey, including of course the seminal work of Urry (2002).

The conditions of inequality, exclusion and oppression often stimulate an interest from critical theorists whilst the ends which are typically sought by critical theory are those of emancipation and equality. In the former set, 48 returns are found for inequality, 60 for exclusion and 12 for oppression. For example Mordue's (2005) ethnographic research on the walled historic city centre of York (UK) examines issues of power and control regarding the activities the "historic core" is meant for. He concludes that this is a contested space which

certain social groups are encouraged to consume while others are subject to accusations of performative incompetence and tactics of social exclusion. In the latter set there are 16 instances of the term emancipation and 36 of equality. Deutschlander and Miller (2004) write on the issue of tourism as a project that may support marginalized groups in their political struggle for equality in mainstream society. Using a discourse analytic approach they examine counterhegemonic claims regarding the buffalo-hunting Plains Indian Culture Complex of the First Nations of Treaty-7 in southern Alberta, Canada. In particular, they challenge the dominant view regarding the technological inferiority of indigenous cultures, which has been perpetuated in the colonial binary of Western/non-Western societies.

Finally standpoint research - where research is carried out from a declared ideological position - is a specific form of critical research. The two examples of feminist and Marxist research are examined here. Interrogation of the CABABS database finds the term feminist only in the summaries of 53 of its entries suggesting that few tourism researchers have adopted an overtly feminist methodology. This finding is readily triangulated. In the Meyer-Arendt and Justice (2002) review of dissertation studies only one out of the 377 dissertations examined were classified under women's studies. Similarly only ten of a total of 57 contributors listed in Lew, Hall and Williams's (2004) *A Companion to Tourism* are women. Hall, Swain and Kinnaird (2003:11) note "relatively little engagement to date between feminist studies and tourism studies in the development of gender thinking in tourism". However there is some evidence of a mounting of a Foucauldian form of resistance including the 1995 special issue of *Annals of Tourism Research Gender in Tourism* edited by Margaret Swain and the 2003 special issue of *Tourism Recreation Research Gender Tourism*. Hall, Swain and Kinnaird who edited the latter reports that "a transnational network of researchers focusing on gender dimensions of Tourism Studies has developed over the past decade" (2003:7). Finally the term Marx is found in 22 of the CABABS entries.

In summary the data provided in table two points to a very limited engagement of tourism research with critical theory. By 2005 the proxy terms were apparent in only 659 research texts out of 35194 texts in total (1.87%) and even this small number includes instances of double counting where one text might contain multiple proxy terms. This data therefore confirms the findings of Riley and Love (2000:180) whose study concluded that:

Based on the number of quantitative versus qualitative articles in the four tourism journals, there is little doubt that the "dominant" paradigm is positivism.

The data also demonstrates that within the critical paradigm the greatest interest has been shown in the areas of ideology, discourse and exclusion. Additionally the data does point to an increasing overall interest. Whilst the total research texts recorded in CABAS has risen by 20.2% between 2000 and 2005, the incidence of the proxy terms has increased by 39.4% - almost double the rate.

Conclusion

Returning to the aims of this paper a significant research gap has been found between the lack of critical research and the many significant issues requiring its insights and guidance. In terms of its objectives this paper first identified the various meanings of critical as applied to tourism. Taking a lead from the Frankfurt School it identified what it is to be critical in the sense of critical theory. It next examined the potential use of critical theory in the management and governance of tourism and through its examples established a strong case for the business of tourism to embrace a more critical agenda. At the same time it was found

that criticality is threatened and marginalised by the very forces (terrorism and its response in deepening ideological retrenchments) that make its deployment so very necessary. Third the extent of criticality was examined by making some crude quantitative estimations of the size of critical research in comparison with total tourism research output. Here it was found that critical tourism is still marginal in terms of the whole effort of tourism research.

These findings have important implications for the management and governance of tourism. If we look to the key issues that are likely to affect the tourism industry into the future they fall into two categories. On the one hand there are issues such as the changing nature of tourists (often referred to as new tourists or post tourists): the rapid pace of change in information and communication technologies: destination competitiveness: the rise of China as a tourism generating and receiving country: new business models and tourism satellite accounts. On the other hand there are issues such as sustainability (in environmental terms including global warming and tourism's contribution to it via the carbon emissions of air travel but also in terms of the very survival of tourism): terrorism and peace: globalisation and community tourism: ethical tourism and social exclusion; equity and poverty elimination. The successful management of the first group of issues will generally call on research of a technical nature which must typically be undertaken using positivist methods. The second group of issues also generates some technical research issues (e.g. measurement of air emissions and tourism multipliers). But an important distinction between each group of issues is their relationship to power. Current configurations of power structures and the operation of the free market will generally assist in the delivery of better management for the first set of issues. However progress for the second set of issues can often be inhibited by current configurations of power and the operation of dominant ideological practices. For example Rowe (2005) argues that an ideological deployment of culture and tourism can hide the need for more profound structural remedies to social and economic problems. Here critical research is uniquely placed to contribute to better management and governance of tourism. For ideology and power relations and particularly those that are well-disguised and taken for granted, are a key focus for critical tourism research. If we are to make genuine and deep progress in sustainable tourism in both its environmental and survival senses there is an urgent need to understand the operation of ideology and power as a prelude to better management and governance.

What might this mean in practice and what are the some possible pointers for a more critical research agenda? At the researcher level more cross-fertilisation and sharing of ideas and research across the paradigm divides would help. Increasingly conferences, journals and research groups have become less fluid and more boundary conscious. Researchers need to communicate across these divides and the publication of this article in *The Journal of Travel Research*, a journal with a strong positivist tradition, represents such a move. Additionally critical researchers would be encouraged to locate the practical implications of their research. Tourism firms might address more research to a better understanding of their stakeholders with the aim of ensuring that their business practices benefit a fuller range of stakeholders than the narrow ones of shareholders and customers. Tourism industry lead bodies might seek to identify and engage with the broader political questions that impinge on tourism. Perhaps governments (and NGOs such as the UNWTO) currently see tourism development too much in terms of investment incentives, destination planning and the measurement of economic impacts. A critical issue for research and action is a need to understand what can disrupt the peace and stability that tourism depends on. Similarly governments need to concentrate on evidence-based policy to maximise the benefits of tourism development for all and indeed to identify the values that should govern tourism development. Meanwhile NGOs such as

Tourism Concern should continue to research basic issues of ethical tourism with a view to encouraging better tourism practices.

Finally, critical tourism aims for understanding, belonging, being, emancipation and accommodation in and with the world. But if tourism does not become a fully critical business it will seek only technical solutions to issues of management and governance. In terms of the current crisis of terrorism and the latent crisis of asymmetries such technical (uncritical) solutions may include the erecting of higher barriers and more intricate security between its privileged self and the rest of the world which by definition tourism needs to be part of. Such a route is sure to lead to tourism's alienation and catastrophic demise long before any serious effects of global warming come into play. Hence the importance to rise to Barnett's challenge, to incorporate the critical into business, the business into critical, and to realise the critical business of tourism. This is not an obvious agenda for tourism businesses but it has become ever more critical one.

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