

## Foreword

As I write, the Hollywood film producer Harvey Weinstein has been convicted of sexual assault and rape. This is a watershed moment for fourth-wave feminism, which started with the #MeToo movement that gave courage to women to speak out. While we can hope this is a new dawn and not just one monster on his way to jail, we have to be clear that this is just one high-profile case where women won. The case of the British teenager gang-raped by 12 Israelis in the Cypriot holiday resort of Ayia Napa (Smith, 2020) reminds us that sexual assault and tourism are frequently intertwined, and so often women's voices are silenced or unheard.

Violence against women, in all its forms, is about the assertion of power as an expression of entitlement (Pankhurst, 2018) that underpins patriarchy. Tourism provides a space for it to happen. Weinstein thought his abuse would stay in the hotel room, until it didn't because finally one brave woman spoke up. While we are frequently reminded of the potential of tourism to empower women and advance gender equality, this book follows my edited volume (Cole, 2018) to critique these frequently expounded assumptions. This study draws attention to the ways in which tourism may perpetuate gender inequality in its most exaggerated form, i.e. gender-based violence (GBV).

This important book covers a continuum of overt forms of GBV from micro-aggressions and harassment through to rape, trafficking and femicide; and covert forms including the economic constraints and restrictions, and the silencing of women, in both the consumption and production of tourism. While we know patriarchy and structural factors are the root causes of GBV, this volume explores specifically tourism-related causes. As discussed in Chapter 2, these include: the industry structure riddled with power inequalities that create a sense of powerlessness and susceptibility to sexual, physical and emotional abuse; the prevalence of alcohol and drug consumption; night-time operations; and the erotic liminal spaces of hotels (Pritchard and Morgan, 2016). Furthermore, as 'the customer is king', tourism employees put up with abuse as part of their job, or violence against women employees is covered up. This is not helped either by extremely low unionization rates in many countries (only 2.8% in Turkey, see Chapter 5) and how, in many places, frontline staff must have pleasing physical attributes, must apply heavy make-up, and wear high-heeled shoes and clothes that show off their body contours (see Chapter 5). This sexualization and objectification of women in tourism (Andrews, 2009) results in the legitimization of violence against them in different ways.

The spatial environment plays a key role in tourism-related GBV. Hotel rooms are clearly dangerous places for women. Although workers are more commonly the objects of abuse, there are also reports of assaults conducted by hotel workers. As discussed in Chapter 7, due to the fragmented and diverse nature of the hotel industry, and facilitated by technology and automated operations, hotels and motels are 'activity spaces' for the sexual exploitation of trafficked victims. Public transport is another unsafe space for female

travellers, who suffer verbal abuse, and unwanted touching (see Chapter 11).

This book is rich in its uncovering of the importance of the context underscoring GBV in tourism. In many contexts GBV is socially and culturally acceptable, making reporting difficult. Women in a tourism project in northern Tanzania ranked freedom from GBV second highest in a list of factors that represented empowerment; second only to educating their daughters, and above increasing their income, decision making powers or control of family finances. As highlighted by the story of two femicide victims in Ecuador, victim-blaming is common. As discussed in Chapter 8, dominant attitudes and cultural representations in the *machismo* culture of Mexico influence each other, and women are blamed for the aggressions they experience in public spaces. Likewise, the Turkish patriarchal and neoconservative gender regime blames violence against women on women's clothing styles and their use of public space, while the perpetrators are protected (Chapter 5).

The chapters in this book remind us that women are nearly always the victims in GBV but that it is worse for some women than others. The tourism industry frequently employs women who are vulnerable to workplace harassment: young people, migrants and ethnic minorities. This work engages with some of the forms of intersecting identities including age and race such as the Guerrilla Girls, a movement that reveals the stories of women and people of colour who are unfairly overlooked and undermined. There remain gaps in the literature in relation to other intersections including sexual orientation, rural/urban residence and dis/ability that need to be considered in future studies.

Several of the studies in this volume point to the resilience of female tourism workers, but this issue is too big for women to put up and shut up. Fourth-wave feminism may well be providing a space for women to share lived experiences and provide and receive support, but we have to ask how far it will change entrenched social structures. The Harvey Weinstein trial has shown a success of hashtag activism, and certainly smartphone and Internet use will allow women to come together to report abuse, and give women agency and courage. The Everyday Sexism Project (see [www.everydaysexism.com](http://www.everydaysexism.com)), which collects stories from women across the globe about street harassment, sexual harassment, workplace discrimination and body-shaming is an important part of this. Las Kellys is an example of a tourism-specific fourth-wave feminist movement. It is a Facebook group of housemaids that started in Spain in 2016 and has started making changes. They are being heard. Dismissed staff have been re-employed, they have an action plan against exploitation in hotels and are recipients of a To Do award ([www.todo-contest.org/eng/to-do-award-hr/award-winner/winner-2019-las-kellys/](http://www.todo-contest.org/eng/to-do-award-hr/award-winner/winner-2019-las-kellys/), accessed 23 April 2020).

However, this is but one part of creating solutions: the social structures that stigmatize victims of sexual violence and marginalize their voices are entrenched. The answer must be more than the ability to report sexism. The concerns must be heard, and acted upon. Importantly, as Koppa and Duffy, in Chapter 2, point out, violence against women is also a tourism problem

that should not be left to the criminal and justice systems alone for solutions. In many jurisdictions there is a need for change in the legislation, although as Finniear et al. in Chapter 3 identify, even when overt discrimination is dealt with in the law, neoliberalism perpetuates gender inequality in many forms. This volume explores some initiatives and suggestions to reduce GBV in tourism.

As discussed elsewhere, striking occupational segregation and power inequalities are present in the tourism and hospitality workplace. As Equality in Tourism's 'Sun, Sand and Ceilings' report (<http://equalityintourism.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/SUN-SAND-AND-CEILINGS-new.pdf>, accessed 23 April 2020) outlined, there has been little improvement in the gender imbalance in the make-up of tourism company boards. This gender disparity extends through senior management and leadership. GBV is an extension of this power imbalance. Without change at the top, workplace culture will not change. Employers need to act. Chapter 3 of this volume discusses the need for workplace training to go beyond 'unconscious bias' to mandatory gender justice training in relation to higher education; this is equally needed throughout the tourism sector, and as the authors suggest should extend to racial justice and white privilege.

Chapter 6 suggests employers should adopt codes of practice to deal with customer sexual harassment and establish clear reporting procedures, but again, such reports need acting on. Chapter 11 makes the sensible suggestion that online travel companies and platforms could compel travel businesses/hosts listed on their sites to follow an ethical code of conduct to combat GBV. However, as Linda Kinstler (2018) has reported, there is censorship of advice for women travellers on TripAdvisor, especially when that advice relates to GBV. Censorship contradicts the idea that forums are democratic. Censorship shapes who speaks to whom and about what, and, in this instance, it could be contributing to the rape and abuse of women and girls.

This points to the power held by the online travel agents (OTAs) to shape and transform tourism. There is a duopoly between just two parent companies (Priceline Group and Expedia Inc.), or possibly three if we include Airbnb. Just imagine if women decided to harness their power and boycotted one company that refused to include gender equality issues, and to facilitate the easy reporting of all sexual harassment. Let's force one to be the OTA for women, by pressing them to include a gender equality rating for every tourism organization, hotel, transport or activity they list.

This is CABI's second volume on gender equality in tourism; in the academy, we are being heard. GBV is a particularly difficult topic to research, but this volume will open readers' eyes to the extent of the problem, the pervasive nature of male power in tourism and some of the possibilities to challenge it. I look forward to CABI's next volume of critical feminist, gender and tourism scholarship.

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