

Book review

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Tourism Security: Strategies for Effectively Managing Travel Risk and Safety. Peter E. Tarlow. 2014. Waltham, MA, Butterworth-Heinemann. ISBN 978-0-12-411570-5

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Insecurity would seem to have become the new normal evidenced by the surge in terror-related activity in 2015. The hyper sensationalized Paris attacks eclipsing the speculated downing of a civilian aircraft in Sinai by terrorists just two weeks prior, the accidental killing of Mexican tourists by Egyptian security forces two months earlier, the deadly bombing of Bangkok's Erawan Shrine three months before it, and a string of adverse events following the Charlie Hebdo shooting at the beginning of the year. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2015a), safety and security remains a global concern compounded by a highly volatile economic climate buffeted by lower oil prices and currency fluctuations, all adversely impacting on tourism demand.

Consequently tourism security has become a highly touted topic but the linkage between security and tourism has been fodder for discussion by academics since the late 1980s (e.g. D'Amore & Anuza, 1986; Richter & Waugh, 1986). The spectre of terrorism combined with safety and security concerns related to pandemics, global weather and data communication makes Dr. Tarlow's book relevant and a suitable reference for all tourism and hospitality practitioners. In addition, this book is an invaluable resource for law enforcement and the private security sector. As an authority in the area of tourism security and safety, he provides a comprehensive coverage of the complex phenomenon of "tourism surety", a term that refers to a lowering of the probability that a negative event will occur. The objective of the book is two-fold: the provision of additional

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tools for the tourism professional, and more profoundly to engender reinforcement of the “principle that yes we are our brother’s (and sister’s) keepers; that is our responsibility to make the world not only a safer place but also a better place” (p. xxviii) through the reduction of violence brought about by gaining knowledge and changing mindsets.

The book begins with a philosophical introduction to the topic and provides the reader an understanding of the interdependency of tourism, surety and the economy. It then provides a contextualization of security within the lodging sector, and the importance of risk and crisis management. A practical 5-step Risk Management Model is explained. Chapters on the threats of terrorism in public gathering places, aquatic venues, and on different modes of transportation follow. Coverage on tourism security legal issues is made before the closing chapter which contains case studies of four popular tourist destination in the Americas.

Dr. Tarlow writes in a down-to-earth and easy-to-read style that would also make the book suitable as an undergraduate and graduate student reference. He brings to the reader a wealth of knowledge gleaned from his many years of researching, writing, teaching and consulting in the impact of crime and terrorism on the tourism industry, event risk management, and in tourism and economic development. The use of case studies is highly effective in providing the reader an insight into the real world challenges and opportunities of practitioners. Including case studies from burgeoning global tourist destinations would have greatly enhanced the book. Given that growth in international tourist arrivals to Europe, Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East outpaced that recorded for the Americas (UNWTO, 2015a), and the increasing participation of emerging economies in international outbound travel (UNWTO, 2015b), the need to account for the different practices and perspectives beyond the Western World view (Knox, Hannam, Margry, Olsen, & Salazar, 2014) should be considered.

In his afterword, Dr. Tarlow wondered, as he finished writing the book in early 2014, how tourism security would evolve in the following years. He put forth some guidelines and challenges for consideration. Sadly, in the period of only one year tourism insecurity has only exacerbated and the tourism and hospitality industries have been dealt with a myriad of severe challenges. For the tourist, caveat emptor prevails and seems likely a complement to the new normal vis-à-vis insecurity. Case in point is the very recent terrorist attack on the Raddison Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali where 19 guests were murdered.

The author laments that “no one knows what the future will bring”, but is confident “that the world’s largest and perhaps youngest industry is flexible enough to find creative solutions for challenges that will sure occur” (p. 264). Apart from taking proactive measures to achieve tourism surety, he wonders if “perhaps we can ask nothing more but to be vigilant and to face the world with a cheerful and caring countenance” (p. 264). Would the perpetrators of tourism insecurity and the degradation of our habitat share this naïveté? Perhaps the tourism consumer should assume a bigger role as a co-producer of tourism security together with law enforcement agencies (Pizam, Tarlow & Bloom, 1997) and service provider (Chathoth, Altinay, Harrington, Okumus, & Chan, 2013)?

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