

S. Horner, J. Swarbrooke, *International Cases in Tourism Management*, Elsevier, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, ISBN 0-7506-5514-3, 2004 (404pp., £29.99, pbk).

The first business book of cases for instructional use in higher education was published in 1920 by a marketing professor at the Harvard Business School (Garvin, 2003, p. 60). Books devoted to cases in various aspects of tourism and hospitality management appear to date back to Doswell's and Nailon's (1967) book, *Case Studies in Hotel Management*, followed by Doswell's *Case Studies in Tourism* (Doswell, 1978) 11 years later. Apparently, case studies took off in popularity thereafter, for by 1985, Mann and Doherty had published a 51-page bibliography of the subject.

According to the present authors, this new book was designed to fill a void for real-world examples for faculty members to use in the classroom and for students who learn principles and ideas better through such cases rather than "through lectures and general reading" (p. vii).

The book begins with three chapters addressing how to make best use of cases in teaching, the authors' views on what the key issues in international tourism management are today, and a brief summary of all 38 case studies presented. The first chapter, "The Role of Case Studies in Learning", is quite an effective short guide to positioning case studies in the classroom and outside, and how the instructor can prepare to maximize the learning return on their use.

The authors point to two features of the present book "designed to help the reader gain full benefit from reading" each case: a "key issues" section "highlighting the most important lessons arising from the case study" and discussion points and exercises. "International" relates to the examples from 25 countries or so across six continents, although the authors have fairly noted their "rather Eurocentric view" (p. 23).

At its beginning, the book suffers from any connections to tourism/hospitality scholarship. There are no definitions presented for "tourism", "management", "tourism management", or any other terms, except sometimes in passing. Resources quoted are primarily websites and brochures. The Bibliography is two pages long, listing books and 28 journals by title, but no journal articles.

Second, the key issues are not placed in any sort of context through citations and references to prior research. The 20 key issues presented in Chapter 2 seemed salient to the authors in spring 2003 but appear unconnected to earlier scholarship or to the "Key issues" sections toward the end of each case. Even more puzzling is Exhibit 1, which maps ten issues into the 38 case studies, but their relationship to the 20 issues of the prior chapter is not explained.

Finally, 16 cases appear in a section entitled "Issues of Tourism". These include all-inclusive resorts, clubbing/party tourism, corporate social responsibility, employment,

ecotourism, sex tourism, disabled travelers, terrorism and purchase of property in foreign countries. One comes away with an "issues" overload but no clear idea of the role of "issues" in student learning.

Indeed, the case study key issues are a mix of true issues ("subjects of concern" as the *Encarta World English Dictionary* (Soukhanov, 1999) has it), and "factoids" ("single fact, a small and often unimportant bit of information" Mann and Doherty, 1985). Some "Key issues" on the Las Vegas case serve as examples of this genre. The factoids of "Las Vegas has constantly innovated and updated its product in line with market trends. The city knows its markets, understands their desires and meeting their needs effectively" could be said of scores of destinations, and the evidence to distinguish this city from other destinations in these regards is lacking. But then there is the astute "When the tragic events of 11 September together with the economic downturn in the USA, took place, the response of Las Vegas was impressive and rapid. It has helped minimize the adverse effects on the businesses in the city and has speeded the recovery". (136) Three pages of tables and narrative bolster this finding. Focusing students on issues like the latter seems more enriching to their understanding than bland bits of information.

The cases are sufficiently broad in covering the tourism industries: airlines, tour operators, publishers, associations, destinations, NGOs, tourism ministries, attractions, hotels, cruise lines, specialty tourism, education/training, time-shares, and others. The cases range from 3 pages (Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao) to 16 pages (Sex Tourism) in length, with a mean of 9 pages per case.

While most view marketing as an important management topic, there is very little on market segments or segmentation processes. "The UK Cruise Market" is a case in point. After providing useful background information on cruise activities and British tourists, most of the narrative focuses on the characteristics of cruises (excellent on product details), cruise ships and cruise packages. Various aspects of the size of this market is presented in bullet points, but market segmentation is confined to a listing of four "target markets", as follows:

- Older or younger people, or a cross-section of people.
- Single or multiple nationalities.
- Couples, singles, or families.
- Experienced or first-time cruise passengers.

These segments cover practically the entire market for tourism. Income and education could be expected to play a role in cruise market segmentation but these dimensions are absent. Indeed, it is unclear how these "segments" have been conceptualized by cruise marketers and how they might be matched to individual cruise products (e.g., region, season, theme, fare level and duration).

Market segmentation is a *sine qua non* of tourism marketing today, and the authors allude to a reason why in their exceptional case, "Researching Tourist Satisfaction":

We have to look at destinations through the eyes of different market segments. Destinations are not single products but are like “Lego” sets where each segment uses the “building blocks” in different ways to create different tailor-made experiences. (p. 297)

It seems essential, therefore, that these cases include what segments are involved and how organizations determine their most productive target markets. Perhaps this can be added in a second edition.

“Discussion points and exercises” conclude each case study. These are typically four in number, and usually include a “critically evaluate” exercise: “Critically evaluate the impact of cruise ships on their ports of call destinations.” (p. 179) “Evaluate the findings that will lead to the growth or decline of international visitors to Las Vegas in the future.” (p. 136) “Critically evaluate the idea that ecotourism and sustainable tourism are one in the same thing.” (p. 259) This seems fine for early undergraduates as it introduces them to the evaluation process. However, it would be a significant disservice to suggest to advanced undergraduates that such sparse information, absence of management principles and lack of comparisons to similar cases constitutes the critical evaluation process or even enables it.

Many of these exercises involve developing a strategy, approach, plan, code of practice, or brochure based upon the facts of the case. Such assignments move these cases closer to the Harvard Business School objective of using cases to teach students to make decisions under uncertainty (Garvin, 2003, p. 62), but not close enough to draw out their management conclusions as the book’s title suggests.

The book is uneven. Parts of the book are idiosyncratic, presenting, for example, the timeshare hawking, independent travel, and hotel employment experiences of one or both of the authors. I found the cases on sex tourism and clubbing/party tourism much too raw for discussion in a multicultural undergraduate class. The authors apparently do not recognize innuendo as an appropriate tone for such subjects, preferring to leave nothing to the imagination. And the authors are far too glib about terrorism: “One

person’s ‘terrorist’ is another person’s ‘freedom fighter’”, and “‘Terrorists’ tend to be people on the opposite side of an argument who use violence to try and get their way.” (p. 358) These are placed in the context of European resistance fighters attacking the German army in World War II. Refusing to acknowledge the cogency of current arguments that terrorism is politically motivated violence against civilians provides a distorted view to students unequipped for navigating the murky contemporary world of international affairs and diplomacy.

But the cases on Tourism Concern, corporate social responsibility, tourism education/training, and research tourist satisfaction are quite good: clearly stated, focused, suggesting management decisions and deep enough to found lively class discussions.

In brief, most instructors will find some cases in the book to enliven the classroom experience for early undergraduate students. The challenge is to complement the information in the cases with management principles and to encourage students to take stands on divisive issues based on information.

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