



Institut de Recherche et d'Etudes Supérieures du Tourisme (IREST)
Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Tourism Studies Working Group (TSWG),
University of California at Berkeley

Cycle de Conférences **INDIGENOUS TOURISM**

Alexis BUNTEN, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Humboldt State University ; Co-Chair Tourism Studies Working Group, visiting professor à l'IREST

Les 18 - 19 -20 Mai de 18h à 20h
Sorbonne

18 Mai 2009 18h - 20h : Amphithéâtre Bachelard Centre Sorbonne Place de la Sorbonne 75005 Paris ou (17 rue Sorbonne 75005 Paris)

1. Selling Culture Without Selling Out: Self-Commodification in Indigenous Tourism

Native American heritage industry professionals often describe their work as “sharing culture” when in fact they are transforming their culture and ethnic identities into an alienable product commodified for outside consumption. Participation in the heritage industry can be a powerful catalyst for local cultural reproduction outside the tourism venue, but it also poses a danger to the reproduction of those aspects of culture which are consciously protected from cultural appropriation and commodification.

Native tourism professionals respond to this threat, in part, through the construction of a “commodified persona” within the general parameters of self-commodification.

Within the heritage industry, self-commodification is a dual process; it is both an economic response to the global expansion of the service sector, as well as a politically motivated expression of identity. The emotional labor combined with the cross-cultural skills necessary to entertain groups of tourists make up the Native tour guides development of a “commodified persona”. Drawing from a case study of a Native American-owned and operated cultural tourism venue in Southeast Alaska, this presentation addresses the ways that Native Americans control their presentation of ethnicity to non-Native, paying audiences in the emerging Native American-owned tourism venue, and how these processes, in turn, affect Native peoples understandings of their ethnic identities.

19 Mai 2009 18h - 20h : Amphithéâtre Bachelard Centre Sorbonne Place de la Sorbonne 75005 Paris ou (17 rue Sorbonne 75005 Paris)

2. "More Like Ourselves" Understanding Indigenous Capitalism through Tourism Development

Indigenous participation in tourism forces collective introspection.

With the choice to commodify one's culture comes great responsibility over cultural, material and spiritual resources.

Developing a model for Indigenous cultural tourism that is competitive within the dominant political economy and upholds cultural patrimony is not an easy task.

Beyond the practicalities of daily operations, Indigenous leaders must measure the potential for political, financial and cultural benefits of participation in tourism against cultural degradation that can result from packaging culture according to outside tastes and consumptive patterns.

Approaches that support economic growth in tourism can be in direct conflict with traditional protocols governing cultural resources, intellectual property and secrecy, a tactic employed by many Indigenous communities to survive generations of physical and Cultural genocide.

Drawing from a range of case studies across the Pacific (and beyond), this presentation explores the innovative solutions that Indigenous leaders have developed to boost local economies through cultural tourism while upholding traditional values. These solutions can best be understood in terms of "Indigenous capitalism," a holistic approach to business drawn from Indigenous heuristics, yet highly compatible, and competitive in the new global economy.

20 Mai 2009 18h - 20h : Amphithéâtre Descartes Centre Sorbonne 17 rue Sorbonne 75005 Paris)

3. Critical Themes in Indigenous Tourism Research

Identity-based, Indigenous involvement in cultural tourism is a relatively new phenomenon worldwide. Most Indigenous cultural tourism venues are less than a decade old, made possible largely through increased communications technology, the rapid expansion of the international tourism industry, and neo-liberal government policies aimed to rectify multi-generational trauma resulting from past colonial engagements, assimilationist policies, genocide, and slavery. While a growing body of literature in a variety of disciplines touches upon aspects of the cultural tourism industry, such scholarship has tended to emphasize a development-based theoretical framework that regards at tourism as a panacea for struggling communities to revitalize their economies. A growing group of scholars organized through the UC Berkeley Tourism Studies

Working Group propose a different approach, one that emphasizes analysis of the cultural production and generative interactions that take place through the tourism venue as a "crucial site."

This presentation synthesizes a number of current case studies from around the world that fall within this emergent framework of critical Indigenous tourism research. Regarding Indigenous tourism as a lens for examining articulations of identity, this body of work fosters critical dialogue on issues of representation, (re)claiming heritage, cultural revitalization, and self-commodification. These case studies are currently being assembled into a groundbreaking publication (edited by Alexis Celeste Bunten, Jenny Chio, and Nelson Graburn) addressing themes of Indigenous capitalism, identity construction, art and performance, self-representation, state subjectivity, and political mobilization explored through a variety of case studies of Indigenous tourism sites.

Alexis Celeste Bunten est professeur associée en Anthropologie à la Humboldt State University. Elle est la co-présidente du Tourism Studies Working Group pour 2008-2009. Elle participe activement aux recherches de ce groupe d'études depuis 2006 dans le cadre de ses études post-doctorales effectuées à UC Berkeley sous la direction du professeur Nelson Graburn. Elle a obtenu son Ph.D. en anthropologie au UCLA et un BA en Histoire de l'Art au Dartmouth College.

<http://www.tourismstudies.org/People.htm#AB>

Conférences en anglais, ouvertes au public, dans la limite des places disponibles, sur réservation obligatoire (de préférence par mail), à : rairest@univ-paris1.fr ou par téléphone au 01 55 43 46 51)