



CONTEMPORARY GEOGRAPHIES
OF LEISURE, TOURISM AND MOBILITY

TOURISM AND ANIMAL ETHICS
DAVID A. FENNELL
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Tourism and Ethics



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Tourism and Animal Ethics

There is a long history of the involvement of animals in circuses, zoos, fairs, ecotourism, and wildlife tourism. The wave of responsibility and sustainability that currently permeates the tourism field is catalysing deeper moral questions about welfare, rights, justice, and values in regard to this use.

Tourism and Animal Ethics represents a required extension of the sustainability imperative and environmental theory by providing a critical account of the role that animals play in tourism. This book explores the rich history of animal ethics research that lies outside the field of tourism for the purpose of providing greater theoretical, empirical, and conceptual guidance inside the field. It examines historical and current practices of the use of animals in the tourism industry from both *in situ* to *ex situ* consumption and production perspectives, identifying a range of ethical issues associated with such use. This detailed examination of current animal ethics theories will be instrumental in determining the rightness or wrongness of these practices, and hence allow tourism practitioners and theorists to think about these issues and practices in a different light, minimizing the impact that the industry has on animals.

This text provides an interdisciplinary overview of the moral issues related to the use of animals in tourism, and contains cutting edge research and boxed international case studies throughout. It will appeal to students, academics and researchers interested in Tourism Ethics, Sustainable Tourism, and Wildlife Tourism.

David A. Fennell teaches and researches in the Department of Tourism and Environment, Brock University, Canada. He has written widely on the topics of ecotourism and tourism ethics, and is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Ecotourism*.

Contemporary Geographies of Leisure, Tourism and Mobility

Series Editor: C. Michael Hall

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of Business & Economics, University of Canterbury,
Private Bag 4800, Christchurch, New Zealand*

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**Backpacker Tourism and Economic
Development in the Less Developed
World**

Mark Hampton

This book is dedicated to the students of tourism studies, both undergraduate and graduate, who stand poised.

*'To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.'*

—John McCrae

Figures

1.1	Present relationship between tourism, animals, and ethics in tourism studies	7
1.2	Conceptual framework for tourism, animals, and ethics	10
3.1	Anthropocentrism	39
3.2	The extension of liberty rights under the common law	51
3.3	Anthropocentric 'othering'	65
4.1	Tourist attractions: animals and captivity	71
5.1	Improving equine welfare now and for the long term	111
7.1	Human priorities and actions in recreational interactions with fish	182
8.1	Classification of wildlife appeal	199
8.2	A mindfulness model of wildlife-based tourist experiences	205
9.1	Relationship between various bear-human interactions	219
9.2	A process of species reinvention over time	245

Tables

1.1	Cohen's conceptual framework of human–animal engagement	4
2.1	Types of human attitudes toward animals	17
3.1	Species mentioned in participants' deliberations concerning where to 'draw the line' between those which can and cannot suffer	52
4.1	The evolution of the circus	92
5.1	Use of draught animals worldwide	107
5.2	Companion animals owned in US population, 2007	121
5.3	The travel veterinary kit	125
6.1	Types of blood sports	133
7.1	Total wildlife-related recreation	158
7.2	Percentage of Swedish groups in support of hunting option	164
8.1	The potential benefits and risks (costs) of bear-to-human habituation	207
9.1	Terms used in describing bear–human interactions	219
9.2	Some local and systemic symptoms and signs of venomous snakebite	224
9.3	Human fatalities and marine animal envenomation	227

Boxes

1.1	British Columbia sled dog cull	2
3.1	Did animals sense tsunami was coming?	49
3.2	Swiss say no to animal lawyers	61
4.1	Transporting the Black Rhinoceros	74
4.2	Elephant attacks	94
4.3	<i>Lolita: Slave to Entertainment</i>	98
4.4	Animals torn to pieces by lions in front of baying crowds: the spectator sport China DOESN'T want you to see	100
5.1	Iditarod Rules, 2009	115
5.2	The first rescue dogs	118
5.3	German airports use honeybees to sniff out air quality	119
5.4	Your Time Travels	127
5.5	Animal sex tourism	128
6.1	Crackdown appeal after swoops on badger-baiting ring	135
6.2	Turkey: tradition of camel wrestling making a comeback	141
6.3	Bullfighting ban a first for Spain	147
7.1	New South Wales Council of Anglers Code of Conduct	184
8.1	Going anywhere nice this year?	191
8.2	Whale shark tourism: tour guides, boatmen and fishermen	202
9.1	How deadly are stingrays?	229
9.2	Dengue/DHF press release, WHO	233
9.3	Killer bat disease closes Cadomin Cave	240
9.4	Recommendations for best practice in reducing disease transmission to great apes	243
10.1	World Society for the Protection of Animals: animal-friendly tourism	253

Preface

The title of this book could have, and perhaps should have, been ‘Tourism, Animals, and Morality’. I follow Loftin’s (1984) lead in this regard, who argues that the ethics of hunting is different than the morality of hunting. In the latter case, philosophers talk about whether or not hunting should be allowed in a principled society, whereas the ethics of hunting entails following, for example, regulations and codes of conduct, pertaining to the way we should hunt. My reasoning for keeping the word ‘ethics’ in the title is for consistency of terminology in the field, despite the fact that most of what the reader will encounter is of a moral rather than ethical nature.

The intended audience for this book – tourism students and scholars, and travel industry practitioners – should be aware at the outset that most of the material sourced for this volume comes from other disciplines. From this perspective, the present work does not deviate far from past projects of mine, which emphasize the importance of theory from outside our field. I view the incorporation of such as vital, especially here, because without this approach a book of this nature *for tourism* could not have been written. Indeed, the shortage of work on animals and ethics in our field is the reason why such a volume has not been written. My hope is that this book induces tourism students and scholars to think broadly about the many uses of animals in the tourism industry, and to undertake critical investigations of these uses to challenge the conventional mindset. It is not as though tourism scholars have left this area completely unattended, but rather for a field relying so much on the importance of animals as attractions, workers, companions, objects of pursuit, and so on, there is much work that needs to be done.

Finally, in venturing outside of my academic ‘comfort zone’, as I have done here, my hope is that I have represented well the thoughts, ideas, theories, etc., of those who have made animal ethics such an important and exciting area of study. The work of these scholars is deep and textured and in my efforts to synthesize all of this, I sincerely hope that it comes packaged in way that is informative, accessible, and meaningful.

David A. Fennell
May 2011
Fonthill

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My job was made easier because of the work and dedication of two fine undergraduate students: Nicolle Lalonde, initially, and later Olga Yudina. Both students were enormously helpful in tracking down many of the sources used in this book, and both were passionate about the need for a voice that speaks for the interests of the animal 'other' in tourism. Thanks are also extended to Val Sheppard for the time she placed into chapter organisation. I should also acknowledge Brock University for providing me with the support and freedom to engage in this project.

I wish also to thank my wife, Julie, and children, Sam, Jessie, and Lauren, for their ongoing support of this work and the many other large projects of my past, which have often drawn me away from the more important things in life.

Contents

<i>List of plates</i>	xii
<i>List of figures</i>	xiii
<i>List of tables</i>	xiv
<i>List of boxes</i>	xv
<i>Preface</i>	xvi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xvii
1 Introduction	1
2 Animals and humans – an evolving relationship 1: Misothery and theriophily in religious, philosophical, and cultural contexts	13
3 Animals and humans – an evolving relationship 2: On the use of criteria to assign moral value to animals and associated theories	37
4 Captives	70
5 Animals at work in the service of the tourism industry	103
6 Animal combat and competition: Blood, bravado, and betting	131
7 Animals pursued for sport and subsistence	155
8 Wildlife viewing	187
9 The animal threat	215
10 Conclusion	247
<i>References</i>	256
<i>Index</i>	299

Plates

2.1	Hogarth: <i>The First Stage of Cruelty</i>	20
2.2	Animal themes that sell: Busch Gardens, Florida	31
2.3	Dog sledding as representative of the character of the 'north': Algonquin Park, Canada	31
3.1	Circus procession, 1888	40
4.1	Bear pit at Bern, Switzerland	77
4.2	Zoo breeding programmes: photo taken by author at Naples Zoo, Florida	80
4.3	Part of the education message regarding conservation, Naples Zoo, Florida	81
4.4	Zoo education, Naples Zoo, Florida	83
5.1	Camel riding at Naples Zoo, Florida	108
5.2	Shanghai monkey working the streets for money	116
6.1	Badger baiting, 1824	136
6.2	Fox tossing, 1719	142
6.3	Mounted bullfighting, Seville, c. 1850	143
6.4	Protest against bullfighting	146
6.5	Showing the dogs before a race in Fort Myers, Florida	152
7.1	Hunting dogs with a day off, Griffith Island, Ontario	159
7.2	Market hunting in ivory	160
7.3	Legal hunting and its benefits	171
8.1	Taniwha rock carving, Lake Taupo, New Zealand	198
8.2	Girl swimming with bottlenose dolphin, Hawaii	209
9.1	The female <i>Anopheles</i> mosquito	234
9.2	Manatee tours, Florida	245
9.3	Manatee	246

1 Introduction

The cull of the wild

The Olympic Games provides the international community with a chance to demonstrate excellence not only in athletics but also in common virtue. We come together as the union of one, developed and less developed nations, to celebrate the accomplishments of humanity as a measure of civilization, progress and, of course, sport. The games also provide the opportunity for one city and its surrounding environs to play host to the world. Along with the prestige of hosting these games, there is the potential for local and regional economies to prosper through substantial gains in international and domestic tourism receipts. The 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver is a case in point. The games attracted 2.3 million attendees, with a total contribution to the British Columbia economy of 2.5 billion Canadian dollars in Gross Domestic Product, and the creation of 45,000 jobs (Calgary Herald, 2010).

While the games themselves are the main attraction for visitors, the host region has the opportunity to showcase many of its most important attractions. In British Columbia during the time of the Olympics, one of these attractions was dog sled tours – an activity not confined to British Columbia, but widespread across Canada. The Vancouver Olympics provided the opportunity for international visitors to experience part of the Canadian culture and wilderness through this unique form of adventure tourism. One Canadian dog sled company boasts that tourists are given the opportunity to experience ‘beautiful Siberian huskies, awe-inspiring wilderness, and breathtaking adventure’. A testimonial from the same company reads as follows: ‘Thank you very much for the experience of a lifetime. We could not be happier with the level of service and the professionalism shown by our guide.’ The dog sled tour is thus an archetypal Canadian winter event and carries with it a tremendous amount of pride in heritage. When a Canadian dog sled company – one that offered tours to tourists during the Olympics – was found guilty of culling 100 dogs in January of 2011 because of a slow season less than one year after the games, the Canadian public took this very hard. This event is detailed in Box 1.1.

A reading of a case like the sled dog cull, provides an opportunity to test values – what an individual believes to be important. At first glance we may decide that it is a heinous act and wonder how a tourism organization could ever ask an