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about the author



Bernadette Quinn has a PhD in Human Geography from University College Dublin. She currently lectures and researches in the Department of Tourism at the Dublin Institute of Technology. The nature and meaning of festivals and festivity in contemporary society is one of her key research interests and her work on the topic has been published in a number of international journals including *Urban Studies*, *Social and Cultural Geography*, *Tourism Geographies*, *Event Management* and the *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*. Other research interests include the relationship between culture and tourism, leisure and social inclusion and contemporary forms of tourism mobility. Publications on these topics have appeared in the *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Gender, Place and Culture* and *Leisure Studies* as well as in various edited book collections. Her teaching interests mirror her research interests and she is involved in undergraduate and post-graduate tourism management and event management programmes teaching modules related to cultural tourism, international festival environments, tourism studies, and tourism and event policy.

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introduction

In 1991, Getz wrote that festivals and holiday events represented nouveau, alternative tourism (cited in Lee et al., 2008). How times have changed! Such an assertion is simply unimaginable today when, more than 20 years later, finding a city or town without at least one annual **festival** or planned event would be quite a challenge. Does this constitute progress? How do festivals and events contribute to contemporary society? What has the remarkable rise in festivals and events meant for the development of tourism destinations; for the development of economies, be they local, national or international? These and many other questions preoccupy what is now an extremely large, international community of scholars from a range of disciplines who adopt a variety of research approaches to study the complex and profoundly important communal celebrations at the heart of the diverse festivals and events treated in this volume.

While it is difficult to calculate the size of **festival** and event activity, academic, policy and industry commentators everywhere concur that its recent growth across the world in terms of numbers, diversity and popularity has been enormous (Getz, 1991; Finkel, 2009; Thrane, 2002). In the USA it is estimated that there were 10,000 festivals per year, attracting over 31 million visitors by the mid-1990s (Janiskee, 1996; TIA, 2004). In Australia, the government notes that festivals have become ubiquitous, with hundreds being held every year (Australian Government, 2012). In Europe, the growth has been similarly dramatic. According to the International Festival and Event Association (IFEA), the special events industry is estimated to comprise between 4 and 5 million regularly occurring events (Wood, 2012). This significant growth in the practice of festivals and events brought a parallel increase in the emergence and development of the festival and event management profession. It soon also brought a rise in academic interest: closely allied to the development of tourism studies, academics began to take an interest in charting developments in the sector and the literature has burgeoned over the last 20 years. Much of the research is published in tourism studies and specific event-oriented journals, but it also finds expression in a wide range of journals dedicated to management and marketing, urban and place

studies, arts and cultural policy, as well as many social sciences-oriented journals. In the majority of cases, festivals and special events are presented as broadly positive phenomena. Throughout the literature, opening paragraphs emphasise the important roles they play in advancing local and regional economies, branding places, attracting visitors, extending the tourism season and fostering community spirit. Yet, festivals and special events, the subject matter at the heart of this book represent a very substantial, complex and dynamic set of activities that can be both deeply rooted and rapidly changing in countries throughout the world. In academia, they are studied from diverse management, social sciences and humanities perspectives. As such, interpretations of their impact and contribution to contemporary economies and societies as well as approaches to valuing, managing and shaping appropriate policies for their advancement are multiple and at times conflicting.

The literature in the field is now enormous and growing all the time. Increasing familiarity with the literature brings an increasing awareness of the unevenness of knowledge, the fractures between academic disciplines and the continuous emergence of new sub-fields. The literature on the **Olympic Games**, for example, is now in and of itself very substantial, yet the extent to which knowledge generated on this particular event translates across into the study of other events that differ by scale and type is very unclear. Getz and Andersson (2010) explained that festival tourism has been studied by many researchers from many perspectives: impact (of varying types), place marketing, travel patterns, displacement effects, motivation, market segmentation, quality and satisfaction, **regional development**, relationship to urban renewal and development, and links to culture and community. However, this sector is nothing if not dynamic and while knowledge gaps are closing in some areas, they continue to open up elsewhere all the time. This book tries to take cognisance of this dynamism in including concepts that would seem very important in terms of future development. The concept of '**risk management**', so important from an applied perspective, and that of '**emerging economies**', so important from a geographical perspective, are two examples of this.

This volume is tasked with introducing, defining and reviewing the current state of knowledge of the key concepts in the contemporary study of festivals and events. While this involves reviewing literature that is either part of, or closely associated with, tourism studies, in reality, it is a multi-disciplinary task that draws on a wide breadth of discipline areas.

It is well recognised that festivals and special events are important from community, social, cultural, political and economic perspectives. Despite the growth and popularity of festivals and special events, researchers were initially slow in directing research beyond economic impacts and motivations (Gursoy et al., 2004). However, this imbalance is now being corrected. The recent evolution of the academic study of festivals and events cannot be understood in isolation from the simultaneous evolution of the academic study of tourism. As themes of enquiry have emerged and developed within tourism studies, they virtually always evolve into a new theme of enquiry within festival and event studies. This link between the two areas of study is very strong, with tourism studies the primary field of enquiry and festivals and events a large and distinct sub-field within.

The task of advancing knowledge about the meanings, practices and policies associated with festivals and events remains ongoing. As this volume will show, the understanding of core concepts remains uneven, and our knowledge of certain dimensions of festival and event activity far exceeds that of others. Some of the extant gaps are recent, emerging only when contemporary political and societal debates begin to highlight particular concerns. The concept of **innovation** is a case in point: questions as to the role that the festival and event sector plays in promoting, adopting and managing **innovation** are now coming to the fore in the literature. Others, such as the sustainability of the sector's activities have been an issue for longer. Most recently of all, the question as to how **festival** and event activities are affected by global recession has begun to be investigated, in response to the harsh realities negatively affecting the health of the sector in very recent times. The 35 concepts that are discussed in this volume are laid out in alphabetical order.

1 Authenticity

Authenticity has been a central concept in tourism studies since MacCannell (1976) first argued in a highly influential text that the search for the 'authentic' is what drives the modern tourist. It is an equally important concept in festival and event studies because often these are perceived to offer a glimpse into the 'genuine' culture, lifestyle and beliefs of host communities.

The meaning of authenticity has long been a central question within the social sciences. Early discussions tended to accept the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (1964) definition of authenticity as 'reliable, trustworthy, of undisputed origin, genuine'. Over time, however, 'objective authenticity' (Wang, 1999) with its presumption that there is some means of determining what is definitively real or genuine has been strongly challenged by those who argue that reality is socially constructed and continuously negotiated (Bruner, 1994).

Smith et al., writing in a tourism context, define authenticity as 'the value that tourists and hosts place on the development and consumption of what are perceived to be genuine cultural events, products and experiences' (2010: 13). The development of thought about authenticity as a concept in tourism studies has been closely associated with investigations into festival settings. Many festivals, carnivals and other events have 'long traditions and historic continuity that afford them legitimacy' (Sharaby, 2008). Very often festivals and events of a traditional nature are constructed and represented by tourism producers as being the embodiment of authenticity. Traditional events are revived, repackaged, modified and refashioned, while new traditions are invented to attract tourist audiences. Authenticity seeking tourists often actively target festivals and events for the very reasons that MacCannell (1976) suggests. In such settings, traditions and meanings are actively and continuously being re-negotiated, reinvented and reinterpreted. Researchers, such as Müller and Pettersson (2005) and Kim and Jamal (2007), have been keen to explore the nature of the authentic and the construction of meanings of authenticity in festival and event settings. Tourism's role in promoting cultural change and in shaping the nature of the authentic has also been of key interest.

It was MacCannell (1976) who first argued that the search for authentic experience is crucial to the tourist endeavour. In this context, the festival or event is particularly appealing because it is understood to offer 'outsiders' genuine insights into particular 'insider' cultural practices, traditions and heritages. Furthermore, the very nature of festivals entails an overt outward orientation that sees communities of people generate cultural meanings expressly to be read by the outside world (Quinn, 2005). From a tourism supply perspective, festivals offer experiences 'commodified by condensation' in time and place to fit consumption into the busy schedules of visitors, exhibitors and performers (Mykletun, 2009). The problem, however, as expressed early on in the literature, is that in such circumstances, tourists are condemned to experience only a semblance of authenticity. Drawing on Goffman's (1959) models of front and back regions of social space, MacCannell (1976) argued that tourist settings are constructed to comprise six staged settings, all of which tourists strive, and ultimately fail, to 'get behind' in their quest to access the authentic back stages of the host community. MacCannell's theorisation, however, was later criticised because it equates the authentic with some sort of pristine, 'original' state which becomes automatically destroyed upon contact with tourism (Bruner, 1994). Researchers, such as Bruner (1994), Olsen (2002) and Shepherd (2002), have argued instead that authenticity is a socially constructed process and that the critical question is 'How do people themselves think about objects as authentic?' Following this line of thinking, authenticity is no longer seen as a quality of the object but as a cultural value constantly created and reinvented in social processes (Olsen, 2002). Cohen (1988) further elaborates this thinking by arguing the negotiability of authenticity. Being socially constructed, it has many potential forms and so 'a cultural product, or a trait thereof, which is at one point generally judged as contrived or inauthentic may, in the course of time, become generally recognized as authentic, even by experts' (Cohen, 1988: 379).

Thus, within mainstream tourism debates, it is becoming increasingly accepted that there are many reasonable answers to the question of what is authentic (Olsen, 2002); that questions about the meanings of authenticity are always open to negotiation (Timothy and Boyd, 2003); and that it is now necessary to speak of 'competing authenticities, all products of particular social forces engaged in a process of cultural (re)invention and consumption within the context of existing social relations' (Shepherd, 2002: 196). Recent empirical investigations in

festival and events settings are moving to reflect this theoretical position although the idea that authenticity pertains to the quality of the object is still being explored. McCartney and Osti (2007: 26), examining the cultural authenticity of the dragon boat races in Macau, discuss the risk of commercialisation diminishing the meaning of an event, transforming it into spectacle or entertainment and 'thereby destroying its cultural authenticity'. Richards (2007), however, following on from the work of researchers, such as Cohen (1988) and Shepherd (2002), explores the value that different event audiences attach to authenticity. The latter explored how residents and visitors view commercialisation processes and authenticity in traditional events and found that while residents and visitors generally agree that the Catalan festival studied, La Mercè, is authentic, their perceptions of authenticity vary. Drawing on Wang (1999), Richards (2007) argues that residents were more likely to emphasise a 'constructive authenticity' based on familiar cultural norms (particularly those related to the role of tradition and language in Catalan society), while visitors tended to appreciate an 'existential authenticity', one reliant on enjoying the festivity and the attendant socialisation. Chang (2006) studied tourist motivations among visitors to an indigenous cultural festival in Wu-tai, the home of the Rukai tribe in Taiwan. She found that contrary to the belief that aboriginal peoples' cultures are a quaint novelty attractive to all tourists (Mark, 2002), not all tourists have the same degree of interest in the cultural experience that a festival provides. In her study, some appeared more interested in experiencing the change of pace associated with the festival and appreciating the rural scenery as well as the novelty value that lay in the use of traditional dress.

Elsewhere, Müller and Pettersson's (2005) analysis of a Swedish festival celebrating Sami heritage shows how different sets of meanings can be produced simultaneously and apparently satisfactorily for both producers and consumers. They describe how the experiences available to tourists, local residents and indigenous peoples range from being variously 'staged' to being 'non-staged'. Furthermore, they conclude that it is probably the co-existence of more or less staged, authorised and unauthorised, representations of Sami heritage that makes the festival attractive to a range of audiences, all of whom can relate to, and engage in, the festival in different ways. Thus, an important theoretical argument becoming established in the literature is that local residents, as producers and as established audiences, can engage meaningfully in festivals in ways that address both their own needs and those of visitors

at the same time. More recently Kim and Jamal (2007) debated authenticity in the context of repeat festival attendees. They argued that the notion of existential authenticity is central to understanding the experience of committed, repeat festival attendees. Wang argued that in the context of liminal settings, such as tourism, festival and event arenas, 'people feel that they are themselves much more authentic and more freely self-expressed than they are in everyday life, not because the toured objects are authentic but rather because they are engaging in non-everyday activities, free from the constraints of daily life' (2000: 49–50). Kim and Jamal's findings (2007) supported this theoretical stance, showing how these serious tourists were engaged in 'bonding, friendship, identity-seeking and self-transformation'. They make the point that even though the subjects studied were attending the Texas Renaissance Festival, an example of 'a constructed site of carnivalesque play' (2000: 184) and a commercial tourism event often denigrated as being inauthentic, it actually represented an opportunity for attendees to seek 'self' authenticity.

From an applied perspective, the concept of authenticity and its treatment in the academic literature can appear very complex. Yet, the central idea that festivals and events are prized by attendees (both locals and visitors) because they offer glimpses into the lived cultural and social practices of groups of people, be they artists, athletes, local residents or community groups, continues to be very valid. Recent reporting by the BBC on the difficulties facing the music festival sector in the UK questioned whether 2011 would perhaps mark the end of the proliferation of festivals. It pondered whether, in order to survive, festivals in the future would have to identify and cultivate their uniqueness, those distinguishing elements that identify them as valid and meaningful practices (BBC, 2011).

FURTHER READING

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- Müller, D.K. and Pettersson, R. (2005) 'What and where is the indigenous at an indigenous festival? Observations from the winter festival in Jokkmokk, Sweden', in C. Ryan and M. Aicken (eds), *Indigenous Tourism: The Commodification and Management of Culture*. Amsterdam: Elsevier. pp. 201–16.
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- Wang, N. (2000) *Tourism and Modernity: A Sociological Analysis*. Oxford: Pergamon.

2 Bidding

The market for large-scale special events is very competitive. Hallmark events, particularly in the sporting domain are in tremendous demand, and cities must compete for the privilege of hosting them. The competition between the aspiring host cities is known as the bidding process.

Places and communities the world over decide to invest in organising planned events all the time. Frequently, the events that ensue are driven primarily by self-determined needs and achieved through local efforts. For mega/hallmark events, however, the situation is quite different. Hallmark events in sporting (for example, the Commonwealth Games) and cultural (for example, European City of Culture) arenas are internationally mobile and highly prized planned events that countries and regions rigorously compete to host. Many cities and states have established organisations (variously called event agencies or convention bureaux) with a specific remit to attract events into their area. Molotch conceived of cities as growth machines where the desire for growth creates the conditions for consensus to emerge between ‘politically mobilised local elites, however split they might be on other issues’ (1976: 310). The prospect of re-inventing a city’s image, elevating its profile on the global stage, attracting internationally mobile capital and people, over-hauling infrastructures, and igniting widespread popular interest and excitement galvanises local coalitions. As Hall suggested, ‘sports mega-events have become integral to the entrepreneurial strategies of cities seeking to gain competitive advantage in the global economy’ (2006: 67). To achieve designation, such coalitions must bid to host the event in question and the process of event bidding has now become almost as high profile as the process of hosting events. London, host to the 2012 summer Olympic Games, spent an estimated £15 million on bidding for the event (Benneworth and Dauncey, 2010). As Westerbeek et al. (2002) remarked of the sports arena, only a limited number of hallmark events exist, and this has led to fierce competition among cities wishing to play host. Competition

is fierce because cities expect that designation will lead to numerous positive outcomes for the city. These are widely identified in the literature and cross economic, cultural, social, environmental and political domains. Less written about are the cases where successful bids have led cities to accumulate sizeable debts. As Jones (2001) has suggested, the likelihood of securing economic benefits can sometimes be overstated. The Canadian city of Montreal learnt this to its cost after its hosting of the summer Olympics in 1976 resulted in a debt of CAN\$2 billion in capital and interest costs (Whitson and Horne, 2006). Other costs can emerge in the guise of price inflation for goods and services, and tax increases to cover the cost of hosting the event (Solberg and Preuss, 2007).

The competition to secure important hallmark events has spiralled into a significant amount of bidding activity and there is now a small but growing literature on this topic alone. In Emery's (2002) discussion on sports event processes, the bidding element forms part of the pre-event phase, following on from the earlier 'ideas and feasibility' element. Within a local authority context, he argued that generally speaking, a bidding process will last for at least 1 year and involves (1) earning the local authority's approval, (2) a competitive bid to the national sports governing body and (3) a competitive bid to the international sports governing body. He makes the point that as each stage advances, the process 'requires further resource commitment, more bureaucracy and greater levels of uncertainty as more stakeholders become involved with the partnership' (2002: 320). Not surprisingly, an important question for researchers is what factors characterise a successful bid? An early contribution came from Westerbeek et al. (2002). They used a sample of 135 events from different countries to identify the factors most critical in the bidding process. Their findings suggest that from the perspective of the event manager, eight factors emerge as particularly important. Above all, it is the ability to organise the event, political support, infrastructure and existing facilities that matter most. Communication and exposure, accountability, bid team composition and relationship marketing are also important but perhaps less vital in the bidding process. Emery's (2002) empirical research found that successful bids were underpinned by five key factors: having relevant professional credibility; fully understanding the brief and the formal/informal decision-making process; not assuming that decision makers are experts; or that they use rational criteria for selection; knowing your strengths and weaknesses relative to your competition.

Competing to host such events as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games means engaging in highly structured and rigorous processes, and some researchers have focused on investigating these. Griffiths (2006) described these processes in the context of a non-sports event, the European City of Culture designation, and analysed the bids prepared by three of the cities in contention for the UK title in 2008. His focus was on the role of culture in urban public policy. For Foley et al. (2012a: 123) successful bids must simultaneously develop a strategy that meets internal stakeholders' needs, meets the priorities of the organising authority (for example, FIFA, International Olympic Committee) and out-manoeuvres other bidders. They draw on researchers, such as Shaw (2008) and Black (2007), who have tried to interpret the kinds of core messages that event bids generally try to communicate. Shaw's (2008) work on the Olympics suggested that internal stakeholders' needs can be addressed with bids that advocate three main 'propositions': (1) a promise of economic gain; (2) an appeal to patriotism; and (3) a homage to idealism and the achievement of dreams. Out-manoeuvring other contenders, according to Foley et al. (2012a), usually takes two main forms: bidders may seek to make their case on the strength on their track record. Glasgow's bid to host the 2014 Commonwealth Games, for example, was strengthened because it had previously hosted a series of diverse sporting and cultural events dating from the **European City of Culture** in 1990 to the UEFA Cup Final in 2007. The second approach to out-manoeuvring other contenders relies on making an emotional appeal to the heartstrings, as in South Africa's bid to host the 2010 World Cup which was presented as a way of strengthening democracy in the country. Bids to host hallmark events like the Commonwealth Games and Olympic Games are years in the making. Foley et al. (2012a) track Glasgow's bid for the 2014 Games back to its selection as Scotland's preferred city by the Commonwealth Games Council for Scotland in 2004.

Within the applied event management literature, where educating future event managers is a key occupation, the bidding process is widely treated. Textbooks, such as that by Allen et al. (2011), discuss this concept, contextualise it in terms of event tourism, describe the various steps and organisations involved in the bidding process, and analyse the reasons for bid failure. Some pay detailed attention to particular hallmark events. Mallen and Adams (2008), for example, discussed the highly formalised process involved in bidding for the Olympic Games. Cities must prepare four key documents for consideration by the

International Olympic Committee (IOC): (1) a feasibility study detailing the capacity of the group and location to host the event; (2) a candidature document outlining the processes being undertaken and the timelines being followed; (3) a bid questionnaire, which responds to a broad series of questions laid down by the IOC concerning everything from legal aspects to the environment and the Olympic village. Finally the bidders must submit (4) a bid dossier, which contains the overall plan and strategy and effectively seeks to make the bid stand apart from its competitors. Closer inspection of all the bidding details is facilitated by a 'bid tour' for those 'would-be' host cities that make it to the short list of cities being considered as potential Olympic Games host cities.

Event bidding is a very risky activity. Only one location can win any given designation and yet so many resources can be invested in the process. Emery (2002) suggests that as more and more local governments engage in bidding for sports events then the bidding process is likely to become even more extravagant, expensive and risky. In order to reduce the levels of risk and the amount of financial debt involved, bidding partnerships are likely to increase in number and complexity. In this context it seems relevant to ask whether a failed bid therefore constitutes a waste of resources? Benneworth and Dauncey (2010) posed this question and suggested that even when bids are not won, engaging in the actual process of bidding can yield positive outcomes. They suggested that the process of bidding for large-scale events can boost a city's self-organisation capacity and support the idea 'that international urban festivals could provide a means for network capacity building in terms of persuading partners to work together on something unambiguously of mutual benefit' (Benneworth and Dauncey, 2010: 1096). Their analysis of Lyon's failed 1968 Olympic bid led them to conclude that, indirectly, it became a catalyst for subsequent change. In reality, fear of failure does not seem to act as a deterrent to cities' continued preoccupation with strategically using events to regenerate, reposition and develop their profiles. Instead, the competitive nature of the event business serves to encourage cities to invest increasing resources into developing their attractiveness as event locations. Dubai, for instance, is a good example of a place that has prioritised major sporting events as a mechanism for advancing tourism and economic development (Smith, 2010). Meanwhile, Liverpool has recently heavily prioritised events as a means of revitalising its economy, profile and reputation through its high profile hosting of the **European City of Culture** in 2008. Showing a commitment to **innovation**,