Book Review: *Southern Journeys - Tourism, History, And Culture In The Modern South*

Reviewed By: Greta Reisel Browning

Abstract

Richard D. Starnes has compiled eleven essays that transform the reader into an armchair tourist, journeying on a historical and analytical tour through the southern United States. The tourist-reader becomes an insider as historians and other writers reveal the backgrounds behind some of the South's most visited vacation destinations. Ranging from New Orleans to the Blue Ridge Parkway, Starnes's *Southern Journeys* brings together recent scholarship in the area of southern tourism history that documents and explores tourism as a force in shaping the modern South and provides a springboard for future research in southern tourism. While other writers in the social sciences have explored and published works about tourism, relatively little has been published about tourism in the South. Starnes's contribution in *Southern Journeys* successfully begins to fill a gap in the literature of southern tourism history and opens a new window through which to see the evolution of the modern South.

The eleven essays that Starnes has chosen to include document a wide range of twentieth-century tourism development in southern cities, beaches and coastal areas, and mountains. These essays explore how and why these destinations became tourist destinations, and in particular, interpret the effect of tourism on their economic, social, and racial structures. Arranged loosely in chronological order, the essays' lack of subject grouping allows readers to make their own comparisons and conclusions about the various arguments.

Of those interpreting tourism in cities, Alecia P. Long's well-researched essay about New Orleans's renowned Storyville district at the turn of the twentieth century is the highlight of these urban discussions. Long provides a thorough analysis of the vice district's growth as a tourist attraction amid the context of complex racial relations and attempts by city boosters to shape New Orleans into a tourist destination. Beaches and coastal areas, often associated with...
southern vacations, are also topics among the essays. Of note is C. Brenden Martin and June Hall McCash's history of tourism at Jekyll Island, Georgia. Tracing the island's history from a Gilded Age resort to a late-twentieth-century state-owned recreation park, Martin and McCash skillfully discuss many of southern tourism's broader issues—economics and politics, race and class, environment and historic preservation. Discussions of the success and failures of bringing tourism to scenic destinations are the topics of essays relating to mountainous regions of the South: the Appalachian and Great Smoky Mountains and the Arkansas Ozarks. Broader overviews include Starnes's essay about tourism development in North Carolina and Ted Ownby's closing discussion about the intersection of southern history and tourism.

Although Starnes and his fellow essayists write with the goal of creating scholarly interpretations of southern history through the medium of tourism and thus targeting an academic audience, the collection is generally so well written and accessible that it would appeal to interested non-scholars as well. Notes for each essay are located at the end of the book and often provide leads for further reading, expanded explanations, and background details for those who want to delve deeper. This collection of essays represents just the beginning of new research in southern tourism history with much more left to discover and interpret. Hopefully, historians and other writers will continue to pursue this intriguing southern journey.

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This paper provides a review of current literature in regard to defining adventure tourism. Adventure tourism is a substantial industry sector which to date has received relatively little research attention. Most relevant research is from outdoor recreation. Adventure tourism has a major role to play in the attractiveness of a destination, as it offers tourists a variety of activities taking place in magnificent landscapes, breath-taking views and diverse landscapes. As I have mentioned before, during the past decade, adventure tourism has grown and expanded into a niche market, chosen by participants for the risk and challenge it encompasses.

Southern Journeys is a pioneering work in southern history. It introduces a new window through which to view the region’s distinctiveness. Scholars and students of environmental history, business history, labor history, and social history will all benefit from a consideration of the place of tourism in southern life. Tourism has been, and is still, one of the most powerful economic forces in the modern South. It is a multibillion-dollar industry that creates jobs and generates revenue while drawing visitors from around the world to enjoy the region’s natural and man-made attractions. This collection of 11 essays explores tourism as a defining force in southern history by focusing on particular influences and localities. Starnes edited his first book, Southern Journeys: Tourism, History, and Culture in the Modern South, in 2003. The book collects eleven essays discussing the influence of tourism in the American South. The book aims to define tourism as being created and shaped by twentieth-century inhabitants of the region, and not by the romantic idea of earlier pioneers. Allen W. Batteau, reviewing the book in the Journal of Southern History, described it as “a thickly textured portrait of the coevolution of a region and one of its dominant industries,” pointing out that “the oral histories, particularly interviews with non-elite citizens in the tourism industry, are especially valuable.” Batteau proposed: “I would like to have seen in this book a consideration of why tourism.”