



Narcotourism: a conceptual framework and research agenda

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ABSTRACT

Despite existing in practice, as well as in other social science and policy literature, narcotourism has not appeared in tourism journals, and its full scope remains unarticulated. This paper aims to introduce narcotourism to a broad audience of tourism scholars, provide its conceptual foundations, and guide subsequent tourism scholarship on this topic. Looking beyond writings that have previously focused on the consumption of drugs during travel and tourism experiences, this paper presents a conceptual framework distinguishing six different tourism-related activities encompassed by the term narcotourism: consumption-oriented narcotourism, production-oriented narcotourism, acquisition-oriented narcotourism, dark heritage narcotourism, narcotrafficker tourism and emulatory narcotourism. This framework describes the hallmark characteristics of each form of narcotourism, identifies linkages between these forms of narcotourism and other areas of tourism scholarship, and concludes by suggesting a future research agenda for narcotourism. Given a long history of association between tourism activities and drug consumption, shifting legal dynamics regarding drug use, insights emerging from related disciplines, and narcotourism's coexistence alongside myriad forms of tourism already explored by tourism scholars, this paper provides a timely foundation for future research on narcotourism within tourism studies.

摘要

毒品旅游虽然在实践中以及在其他社会科学和政策文献中都有出现,但在旅游期刊中却没有出现,其完整的范围仍然不清楚。本文旨在向广大旅游学者介绍毒品旅游,提供其概念基础,并对后续的旅游学术研究指引方向。为了超越以往关于旅行和旅游体验中毒品消费的著述,本文提出了一个概念框架,以区分术语“毒品旅游”所包含的六种不同的旅游相关活动:消费导向的毒品旅游,生产导向的毒品旅游,学习制毒导向的毒品旅游,黑暗遗产导向的毒品旅游,贩毒为导向的毒品旅游,以及尝鲜导向的毒品旅游。该框架描述了每种形式的毒品旅游的特征,确定了这些形式的毒品旅游和其他旅游学术领域之间的联系,并提出了毒品旅游未来的研究议程。鉴于长期以来旅游活动和毒品消费之间的联系,吸食毒品的法律动态,相关学科呈现出的见解,以及毒品旅游与旅游学者已经探索的多种形式的旅游共存状况,本文的研究为今后旅游研究中的毒品旅游研究提供了一个适时的基础。

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Introduction

'Narcotourism' appears in existing social science literature and United Nations policy documents. Nevertheless, this concept is absent in mainstream tourism journals. In practice, narcotourism takes many forms, including but not limited to drug consumption during travel. Articulation of all these forms is necessary to advance understanding of narcotourism, its socio-cultural implications, linkages to work in related academic disciplines, and how new research could connect narcotourism with other existing scholarship within tourism studies. This paper aims to introduce narcotourism to the broader audience of tourism scholars, provide clear conceptual foundations for the term, and guide subsequent scholarly thinking on the topic in tourism studies.

As argued here, specific attention to narcotourism is warranted since many activities that fall under the umbrella of this term are not addressed in existing tourism scholarship. As a comprehensive review of all writings related to drugs and tourism is beyond the scope of a single article, readers will find citations to representative readings in that broader literature. In other instances, this paper describes forms of narcotourism that have no precedent in the literature. Moving beyond writing focused only on the consumption of drugs during tourism experiences (e.g. cannabis, cocaine, and hallucinogen tourism), this paper closes the gap between existing theory and the various practices of narcotourism. Critically, it presents a conceptual framework that outlines six distinct types of tourism activity encompassed by this term. This framework distinguishes the hallmark characteristics of each form of narcotourism, identifies linkages between these forms of narcotourism and other areas of tourism scholarship, and then provides guidance on how scholarly attention to narcotourism may proceed in the future. In elaborating these distinct forms of narcotourism, this paper draws upon extensive writings by anthropologists, geographers, and tourism scholars to provide examples from numerous geographic contexts. Clarification regarding where prior work exists, and where it doesn't, will facilitate new linkages between the growing narcotourism scholarship and existing lines of tourism scholarship.

With a conceptual framing of narcotourism introduced, this paper proceeds to elaborate a preliminary agenda for future research on narcotourism. While narcotourism is rightly presented here as a research frontier, many tourism scholars are likely to recognize one or more forms of narcotourism occurring alongside other forms of tourism in the destinations in which they conduct research. New attention to narcotourism is timely as the shifting legal stance toward drug use may blur the boundaries between tourism categories. By contributing a robust conceptual foundation for future scholarly writing on narcotourism and elaborating on its implications for other forms of tourism, this paper sets the stage for further inquiry into the impacts of narcotourism on the communities and environments in which it occurs.

A conceptual framework for narco-tourism research

The term narcotourism has so far evaded a single definition as it can refer to numerous distinct activities (Hoffman, 2014). United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

(UNODC) alludes to some, but not all, of these activities in one of the only published definitions of narcotourism as a 'kind of tourism in which domestic and foreign people visit one or more specific areas of a country, with the intention to acquire, consume and transport drugs, mainly marijuana, cocaine and heroin, and even to visit plantations and clandestine laboratories to get to know the elaboration process' (UNODC, 2013, p. 4, in Van Broeck, 2018). This definition already introduces several specific narcotourism activities – acquiring, consuming, transporting, and learning about the elaboration of drugs. Yet as expanded in the conceptual framework that follows, additional tourism activities currently being practiced necessitate a broader definition and conceptualization of narcotourism.

As is evident in the UN definition above, narcotourism overlaps considerably with drug tourism. When tourism scholars have implemented the terms 'drug tourism' (e.g. Uriely & Belhassen, 2005, 2006), the dominant focus is on consuming drugs during tourism experiences. Though this paper describes a form of consumption-oriented narcotourism, it is just one of the six categories of narcotourism outlined in the following conceptual framework. This framework, therefore, provides crucially needed conceptual clarity that reconciles differences in how narcotourism is used in prior writings outside of tourism studies, how it is being used in practice, and how the term can be applied to ongoing and new tourism research.

A comment on terminology

Before proceeding, a comment on terminology will be helpful. As seen in the UN definition, narcotourism does not always revolve around the category of drugs known as narcotics. A synonym for opioid, narcotic is technically defined as legal and illegal drugs derived from the opium poppy or synthetic variants that bind to the same neurotransmitter receptors, such as morphine, heroin, oxycontin, and fentanyl (DEA, 2020). In comparison, a dictionary definition recognizes the broader usage of the word narcotic, defining it as either 'a drug (such as opium or morphine) that in moderate doses dulls the senses, relieves pain, and induces profound sleep but in excessive doses causes stupor, coma, or convulsions' or 'a drug (such as marijuana or LSD) *subject to restriction* similar to that of addictive narcotics whether physiologically addictive and narcotic or not' (Merriam-Webster, 2021, emphasis added). For this reason, the cocaine trade is generally considered narco trafficking despite cocaine not being an actual opioid.

Consistent with this broader use of narcotic as referencing any category of restricted substances, this paper includes as narcotourism those activities that revolve many types of psychoactive substances (e.g. opioids/narcotics, marijuana, cocaine, psilocybin, lysergic acid, ayahuasca, etc.). What will bound this discussion of narcotourism is the explicit focus on drugs that are ***illicit, illegal, restricted, or controlled*** in some form or another, either in a destination or in tourists' point of origin. The legal dynamics regarding drug use have varied over time and between locations, and they continue to do so with legalization trends underway in many places. Implications of this variation will arise throughout this paper. The six existing forms of narcotourism revolve around drugs considered illegal in a given context.

Consumption-oriented narcotourism

The first form of narcotourism revolves around the *in situ* consumption of illicit drugs by tourists while traveling or on holiday. *Consumption-oriented narcotourism* is the form of narcotourism that most closely aligns with existing drug tourism scholarship, where the focus has been on the consumption of illegal drugs in specific locations (Flaherty et al., 2017). Prior writings on drug tourism include, but are not limited to, descriptions of ‘marijuana tourism’ and ‘cannabis tourism’ in Amsterdam, Colorado, Morocco, and elsewhere (e.g. Belhassen et al., 2007; Kang et al., 2016; Kang & McGrady, 2020; Keul & Eisenhauer, 2019; Taylor, 2019); ‘opium and heroin tourism’ in Thailand (e.g. Dearden, 1991); ‘psychedelic tourism’, including ‘ayahuasca retreats’ to the Amazon (e.g. Holman, 2011; Kavenská & Simonová, 2015; Prayag et al., 2015; Winkelman, 2005); and even ‘absinthe tourism’ across Eurasia and Northern Africa for travelers coming from countries where absinthe remains controlled (Bauer, 2020). In this conceptual framework, nearly all of this activity would also fall under the umbrella of consumption-oriented narcotourism.

Consumption-oriented narcotourism is growing in popularity, and it will continue to evolve as locations move to legalize marijuana and other currently controlled substances (Kang et al., 2016; Kang & McGrady, 2020). As a consequence of particular destinations having a reputation as permissive regarding drug consumption, many of the geographic locations referenced above are now associated with drug consumption (Uriely & Belhassen, 2006; Winter, 2009). Just as a destination’s comparative advantage may have once centered on the presence of sand, sun, and sea, liberal attitudes toward drug consumption and increased legality can provide new forms of competitive advantage for consumption-oriented narcotourism in particular locations (e.g. Kang et al., 2016, Kang & McGrady, 2020; Taylor, 2019), allowing them to tap into demand arising from contexts where drugs laws remain more restrictive. Scholarly attention to consumption-oriented narcotourism is likely to grow in parallel to these legalization trends. Eventually, as substances become less controlled, what was once considered consumption-oriented narcotourism could gradually morph into culinary tourism (e.g. Ab Karim & Chi, 2010), gastronomy tourism (e.g. Hjalager & Richards, 2003; Kivela & Crotts, 2005, 2006), and even heritage tourism (e.g. Bessièrè, 2013), depending on the substances involved.

In contrast to this consumption-oriented variety, the additional types of narcotourism outlined in the remainder of this conceptual framework have received significantly less prior attention from tourism scholars.

Production-oriented narcotourism

As referenced within the UNODC definition above, the second form of narcotourism accounts for travel to drug production sites. A conceptual distinction of *production-oriented narcotourism* from consumption-oriented narcotourism is necessary. Production-oriented narcotourism can involve visits to locations where drug-related materials are cultivated or to facilities where they are elaborated. Examples of this form of narcotourism include tours to cannabis farms and elaboration facilities in Colorado (Hauser, 2019; Heuer, 2016) or clandestine cocaine laboratories in rural Colombia (Naef, 2018a, 2018b). The popular press even details ‘make

your own cocaine' tours, attesting to the growing interest in this form of narcotourism (Koebler, 2013).

While it is certainly possible, and perhaps likely, that consumption also occurs during visits to sites of cultivation or elaboration, it is essential to clarify that consumption is not necessary in this form of narcotourism. Interest in drug production nevertheless parallels the interest in other forms of tourism revolving around the production of legal substances. For instance, several subcategories of culinary tourism emphasize sites of produce, such as winery tourism (e.g. Bruwer, 2003), olive oil tourism (e.g. Vázquez de la Torre et al., 2014), and tequila tourism (e.g. Vázquez de la Torre et al., 2014), to name but a few examples. Visits to sites of cultivation of drugs and drug-related ingredients also share several characteristics of agritourism (e.g. Kizos & Iosifides, 2007; Lopéz & Garcia, 2006; Nickerson et al., 2001; Phillip et al., 2010), and production-oriented narcotourism is merging directly into agritourism to pot farms as the legalization of marijuana unfolds across the United States (Heuer, 2016). Visits to production sites may be possible in contexts where actual consumption is yet to be permitted (e.g. medicinal marijuana cultivation sites).

The legality of consumption and production are unfolding along different timelines in different places, and legalization trends are likely to drive visits to sites of drugs (e.g. marijuana, hallucinogens) cultivation. More destinations are likely to cater to the growing interest in production sites. Additionally, as the frontiers of tourism expand, an increasing number of adventure and nature-based tourists are arriving in increasingly remote regions (e.g. the Amazon). This expansion brings tourists into areas where the cultivation and processing of coca leaves and ayahuasca occurs. Yet as is the case with consumption-oriented narcotourism, more permissive legal arrangements may similarly see production-oriented narcotourism morph into more mainstream culinary tourism, agritourism, or heritage tourism in the future.

Acquisition-oriented narcotourism

Acquisition-oriented narcotourism involves leisure-oriented travel involving at least one overnight stay for the purpose of acquiring drugs. Surprisingly, few, if any, tourism scholars have made any efforts to distinguish travel to obtain drugs from consumption-oriented drug tourism. There are several key distinctions. First of all, acquisition can be pursued with the ultimate goal of personal consumption, though this is not necessary. Acquisition can just as easily be pursued to provide gifts to friends and family upon return from travel (e.g. Uriely & Belhassen, 2005, 2006). In this regard, acquisition is akin to shopping for items otherwise restricted in the traveler's place of origin. For instance, Cuban cigars are highly sought by those traveling outside of the United States, where Cuban products remain embargoed. Acquisition-oriented narcotourism can involve returning home from Amsterdam, Colorado, or British Columbia with legally purchased cannabis. Acquisition-oriented narcotourism merits further distinction from the forms of narcotourism outlined earlier since it can occur without consumption or visits to production sites.

Acquisition-oriented narcotourism may indeed overlap directly with the illegal drug trade itself. Tourism scholars may be reluctant to recognize this as a form of leisure-related travel even though acquisition-oriented narcotourism occurs in practice,

as regularly depicted in popular media, films, and television in international (e.g. the films *Midnight Express*) and domestic contexts (e.g. the movie *The Mule* or television programs like *Weeds* or *Breaking Bad*). As these depictions demonstrate, consumption-oriented, production-oriented, and acquisition-oriented narcotourism can also often co-occur. The illicit purchase of drugs can often involve ritualistic participation in quality control of the trafficked substances (i.e., consumption-oriented narcotourism); however, just as is valid with production-oriented narcotourism, purchased drugs are not necessarily consumed at the time. Furthermore, while acquisition-oriented narcotourism can also involve consumption and visits to production sites, acquisition can also occur outside these realms. It, therefore, warrants a conceptual distinction from the other forms of narcotourism outlined in this paper.

As long as demand persists for particular controlled psychoactive substances, acquisition-oriented narcotourism is likely to exist in parallel as individuals engage in travel to seek difficult-to-obtain or otherwise controlled substances. Despite extensive attention to other forms of illicit travel, including, but far from limited to, sex and prostitution tourism (e.g. Brennan, 2004; Oppermann, 1999; Ryan & Hall, 2001), organ and transplant tourism (e.g. Budiani-Saberi & Delmonico, 2008; McGuinness & McHale, 2014), and trafficking of archeological remains (e.g. Timothy, 2020), acquisition-oriented narcotourism has been ignored to date by tourism scholars. The legalization movements in many origin markets (e.g. US, Canada, Europe and New Zealand) will stimulate growth in this form of narcotourism in specific destinations. However, over time, legalization may remove local restrictions on controlled substances and reduce the need for individuals to travel to acquire drugs in the future. Scholars should nevertheless be aware of this form of narcotourism, its conceptual distinctions, and its potential linkages to other forms of tourism in destinations where they conduct research.

Dark heritage narcotourism

Dark heritage narcotourism combines the narco-heritage of places with a history of drug trafficking (Naef, 2018a) and the dark tourism associated with drug-related bloodshed and violence (Flores Gamboa & Sanchez Mendoza, 2018; Van Broeck & López Lopéz, 2018). This form of narcotourism can involve tours to sites habituated by narcotraffickers, to places where massacres between rival drug factions occurred, the location of famous narcotrafficker deaths (e.g. Pablo Escobar), and even to sites where cartel-related bombings took place (Flores Gamboa & Sanchez Mendoza, 2018; Naef, 2018b; Van Broeck, 2018). The emergence of tour operators specializing in 'the living narco-heritage' of places like Medellín (Naef, 2018a; Van Broeck, 2018) and Sinaloa (Flores Gamboa & Sanchez Mendoza, 2018), both sites that were made particularly famous due to their association with violent cartels. Escobar's brother has even taken to providing tours offering tourists the 'narco-viewpoint' (Naef, 2018a). While the anthropologists and humanistic scholars of narco-heritage and dark tourism in Colombia have drawn attention to the forms of narcotourism associated with, attentiveness to this form of dark heritage tourism remains limited in tourism journals.

In contrast, widespread interest in narco-heritage, and its prominence in popular culture, grew noticeably in recent decades. Details of the activities and historical

events associated with famous narcotraffickers are now widely known due to serial dramas in Latin America (i.e. *narco-novelas*), widely distributed Hollywood movies (e.g. *Blow*, *American Made*, *The Infiltrator*, *Loving Pablo* and *Sicarios*, to name but a few) and highly accessible internet-based television series (e.g. Netflix's *Narcos*). Just as occurs with film tourism (e.g. Buchmann et al., 2010; Connell, 2012; Croy, 2010; Hudson & Ritchie, 2006; Kim, 2012), destinations featured in such programming are now formally and informally promoting themselves to capitalize on the interest these depictions have generated. To the extent that destinations are associated with violence, bloodshed, and death related to drug trafficking, and particularly when these elements are the motivation to visit particular locations, this form of narcotourism embodies the thanatological aspects of dark tourism, that is, focus on consumption and social neutralization of death (Robb, 2009; Stone & Sharpley, 2008). The narco-tours currently being led by former police officers whose peers were killed in the process of pursuing drug cartels, kingpins and henchmen (Amrani et al., 2021) epitomize such social neutralization of death.

For now, the interest in dark heritage narcotourism in Medellín appears to exist mainly among international tourists (Van Broeck, 2018), who also make up a significant portion of narcotourism in Sinaloa (Flores Gamboa & Sanchez Mendoza, 2018). Despite the popularity of the *narco-novelas*, many residents in these places remain reticent to celebrate the particularly violent aspects of their history (Flores Gamboa & Sanchez Mendoza, 2018; Van Broeck & Lopéz Lopéz, 2018). This reticence parallels residents' hesitancy to having their towns branded as a dark tourism destination that tourism scholars have described in other contexts (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). While destinations like Medellín and Sinaloa seek to transform their branding with alternative slogans that distance themselves from narco-heritage, the continuing narco-glamorization that thrives in film and television suggests that interest in this form of tourism is likely to persist for years to come. Accordingly, dark heritage narcotourism warrants distinct conceptualization from other forms of narcotourism.

Narcotrafficker tourism

The narco-heritage that often serves as the attraction in dark heritage narcotourism is another distinct form of narcotourism – the form of tourism in which many notorious narcotraffickers themselves engaged. Notable vestiges of narco-heritage are evident in the Rosario Islands near Cartagena, Colombia (Durán Bernal, 2007), where narcotraffickers established their own vacation homes in the 1970s. The lavish waterfront properties they constructed there represented the first wave of tourism development in what is now the most visited national natural park in Colombia. Several of those properties are now available for booking on Airbnb and Booking.com, and in some cases, they are actively marketed as former narcotrafficker properties. For many of the historically marginalized Afro-Colombian residents in these islands, the boom of narcotrafficker visitation was their first exposure to the tourism industry. Given the abundant financial resources of the visiting narcotraffickers, the islanders characterize this form of *narcotrafficker tourism* as an economic bonanza for these islands (Durán Bernal, 2007), one that continued well into later years (El Mundo, 2012).

In addition to extravagant ocean-view properties on privatized islands that remain visible to passersby today, other symbols of narcotrafficker vacation culture are high-speed boats, yachts, and parties characterized by highly conspicuous and excessive consumption. Anthropologists have termed these characteristics and artifacts of *narco-glamour* (Naef, 2018a). As the indemnity that narcotraffickers enjoyed in the 1980s and 1990s has waned, their activities are now less overt. Narcotrafficker tourism, as distinct from other forms of tourism, has also diminished dramatically in the Islas de Rosario (Durán Bernal, 2007), before it had a chance to receive much in the way of scholarly attention. Scholarship on narcotrafficker tourism in other contexts may prove challenging to develop, as those involved in narco-business are presumably dis-inclined to draw attention to their leisure activities. Still, because of the strong heritage narcotrafficker tourism has in particular places like the Islas de Rosario, where it continues to influence tourism today (see emulatory narcotourism below), narcotrafficker tourism is important to distinguish from other forms of narcotourism outlined earlier.

Furthermore, through the types of embedded, ethnographic methodologies – such as used by those researching jihadi terrorists (Atran, 2010, 2020), intravenous drug users (Sandberg & Copes, 2013), homeless (Spradley, 1999), guerrilla movements (Fattal, 2019), and other hard-to-access populations, sensitive, or vulnerable populations (Ferrell & Ham, 1998; Liamputtong, 2007) – narcotrafficker research may still come to light. This initial characterization of narcotrafficker tourism could then be further fleshed out to understand better its overall influence within the tourism sector in particular destinations. Such knowledge could provide needed elaboration of the known impact of narco-finance and money laundering on destination development in places like Belize (e.g. Duffy, 2002), Brazil (Botterill et al., 2014), Colombia (González-Díaz et al., 2020) and the broader Caribbean (e.g. McElroy, 2006).

Distinguishing narcotrafficker tourism from other forms of narcotourism is essential for understanding the temporal aspects of its emergence, how it is reified through popular media, and how it has come to characterize the forms of tourist activity that occur in particular destinations, including the next form of narcotourism.

Emulatory narcotourism

A final type of narcotourism also involves the behavioral dimension of tourists taking part in consumption-oriented activities. However, rather than the consumption of drugs themselves, in emulatory narcotourism, tourists consume narco-glamour itself. *Emulatory narcotourism* allows travelers to temporarily act out and embody the narcotrafficker lifestyles depicted in popular culture by briefly engaging in excessive and conspicuous consumption via the contracting of yachts or high-speed boats, and by using Airbnb to rent some of the very same waterfront properties that former narcotraffickers used as their vacation properties. Unlike passive visitation to production facilities or other sites of narco-heritage, emulatory narcotourism brings the debauchery of the narcotrafficker lifestyle forward into lush, actively lived experiences (Naef, 2018a). Due to the history of narcotrafficker presence, emulatory narcotourism is noteworthy in the Islas de Rosario near Cartagena. However, this form of narcotourism likely manifests at other points along the ‘cocaine-lobster connection’ between

Cartagena and Miami, Florida, as elaborated by Nietschmann (1997), and in other destinations known to be frequented by narco-traffickers (Flores Gamboa & Sanchez Mendoza, 2018).

Furthermore, for visitors to the Rosario islands, it is not uncommon to encounter residents who previously served as caretakers to narco-trafficker properties and who are thus able to share first-hand accounts of iconic personalities represented in the Netflix *Narcos* series. Emulatory narcotourism is hence fueled by the same popular media that has helped perpetuate dark narcotourism. Yet, in emulatory narcotourism, the *narco-romanticization* and *narco-glamorization* of narco-trafficker lifestyles are forefronted over the darker elements of narco-heritage (Naef, 2018a). Though narcotourism is not reflected in official tourism policy in Colombia, where tourism promotion strategies focus on rebranding efforts far removed from narco-trafficking, the emulatory narco-heritage and narco-lifestyle tourism that characterizes the coasts and islands near Cartagena are openly embraced in local tourism policy, promotional materials and service provision (Durán Bernal, 2007).

The international proliferation of narco-glamorized media and the recent pacification of internal conflict in Colombia have stimulated global demand for tourism to Colombia. Interest in emulatory narcotourism now goes far beyond the market that existed among elite Colombians. Indeed, the growing demand for emulatory narcotourism activities is so high that the incidence of yacht-based, narco-party tourism in the *Rosario and San Bernardo Corals Natural National Park* has made it the most visited national park in Colombia (Zarza-González, 2011). Unfortunately, despite the protected coral reefs, the natural environment is the focus of few tourists to this area. Instead, a dozen or more yachts filled with emulatory narcotourists are regularly seen anchored directly over shallow reefs as loud music blares and beer cans float in the water. Locally operated boats circulate daily to offer pre-prepared lobster cocktails to the yacht-based day-trippers engaged in these floating parties. This form of emulatory narcotourism is now a primary driver of environmental change to the fragile coral reef and mangrove ecosystems in this national park (Castro Triana & Pereira Chaves, 2016; Durán Bernal, 2007; Zarza-González, 2011).

Much of the further planned development of coastal tourism in the Cartagena region appears poised to embrace elements of this form of emulatory, narco-romanticized tourism. As narco-glamorization continues to be perpetuated by popular media, television series, and films, emulatory forms of tourism continue to manifest in other sites of narco-heritage, including but not limited to Mexico (e.g. de la Torre & Escobedo, 2018), the Caribbean (McElroy, 2006) and beyond (Isaac et al., 2019). Given the social and environmental implications of emulatory narcotourism, further scholarly attention is needed to better inform policy in such locations.

Future directions

This conceptual framework outlines six distinct forms of tourism-related activities that fall under the umbrella term narcotourism. Reference to anthropologists, geographers, and other social scientists working in Latin America and the Caribbean has been essential to elaborate on this term. Anthropologists of tourism are likely to continue to advance our ethnographic understandings of tourism's impact on host communities;

the influence of travel on an individual; the power relationships in tourism developments; heritage and culture commodification; types of tourism and tourists; and the relationships between tourism and ethnicity, identity, material culture, nationalism, and the environment' (Guerrón-Montero, 2018, p. 251), including our understandings of these different manifestations of narcotourism.

Adapting the agenda of tourism anthropology (Guerrón-Montero, 2018), this paper concludes with a formal **narcotourism research agenda** to promote the analysis of the influence that the above-outlined forms of narco-tourism have on the interface between culture and the environment, particularly how narcotourism impacts host communities; the power relationships in narcotourism developments; narco-heritage and narco-cultural commodification; types of narco-tourism and narco-tourists; and the relationships between narco-tourism and ethnicity, identity, material culture, nationalism, and how people interact with, respond to and bring about changes in the physical and biotic environment.

The pursuit of this agenda need not be limited to anthropologists. As geographers have demonstrated, narcotrafficking capital has become woven into numerous economic sectors, including but not limited to fisheries (Belhabib et al., 2020), agriculture, and transportation sectors (Devine et al., 2020). Conservationists have also addressed narco-trafficking. It has simultaneously become a driver of environmental degradation in areas of Central America (McSweeney et al., 2014; Tellman et al., 2020) and a source of conservation finance (Wrathall et al., 2020). This investment of narco-capital into other industries provides a means of laundering money and consolidating political and economic control in other sectors (McElroy, 2006). Researchers have brought attention to narco-economic influences on the tourism industry (Botterill et al., 2014; Duffy, 2002; McElroy, 2006), yet the myriad ways that tourism enables laundering of narco-capital, and how narco-capital influences tourism development and governance, have received cursory attention that belies the magnitude of these connections. As noted here, tourism scholars can draw insights and inspiration from the critical work emerging in related disciplines.

Narcotourism may represent a peripheral concept at present, but its elaboration may help extend existing tourism scholarship into new frontiers. Movements in these directions will position the field well for addressing the coming shifts in narcotourism-related activities as controlled substances are increasingly legalized. As alluded to earlier, with legalization, consumption-oriented narcotourism could give way to culinary and gastronomy tourism, and production-oriented tourism could morph into variations of agritourism activities. With ensuing marijuana legalization, growing recognition of the therapeutic value of marijuana and hallucinogens may also result in a merging of these forms of narcotourism with both medical and health care tourism (e.g. Connell, 2013; Goodrich & Goodrich, 1987) and wellness travel (e.g. Voigt et al., 2011; Voigt & Pforr, 2014). Forms of narcotourism will nonetheless persist in areas where substances remain controlled, including both the northern (e.g. Korcok, 2000) and southern (e.g. Valdéz & Sifaneck, 1997) borders of the US.

Dark heritage narcotourism may intersect with existing writings on sites of opium poppy cultivation (e.g. Evrard & Leepreecha, 2009), with the phrase 'poppy trail' often invoked to describe drug-related commodity chains in Afghanistan (e.g. Knoth & de Jong, 2012) and Mexico (e.g. Murphy & Rossi, 2020). New sites of dark narco-heritage tourism are in the process of forming in the wake of the opioid epidemic occurring

in the US, particularly in the Appalachia region (e.g. Keyes et al., 2014; Moody et al., 2017). Less dark forms of narco-heritage tourism will continue to emerge from narco-glamorized media and writings (e.g. Banco, 2007) and as stigmas and taboos regarding drug use ease along with legalization. Finally, scholars will want to pay close attention to how emerging outbound drug tourist markets (i.e., China) could influence existing or new forms of narcotourism (Wen et al., 2018).

Conclusion

Numerous forms of narcotourism exist in practice, and the term narcotourism is in circulation in both scholarly and policy writings. Yet surprisingly, tourism scholars have directed very little attention to narcotourism, often lumping consumption and production together under a broad heading of drug tourism (e.g. Belhassen et al., 2007; Uriely & Belhassen, 2005, 2006) that does not capture the other four forms of narcotourism outlined here. The conceptual framing outlined in this paper more comprehensively addresses six distinct forms of narcotourism. It also outlines an agenda for research incorporating this phenomenon into existing tourism scholarship. Given a long history of association between tourism activities and drug consumption, shifting legal dynamics regarding drug use, the insights developed in related disciplines, and narcotourism's coexistence alongside myriad forms of tourism already being heavily explored by tourism scholars, this conceptual framework and research agenda provide a timely foundation for future research on narcotourism within tourism studies.

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