

# TOURISM AND CRIME IN THE CARIBBEAN

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## Abstract:

This study reviews the general literature on tourism and crime and the recent history of violent and property crime in several Caribbean destinations. It highlights the failure of most previous research to discriminate crimes against visitors versus residents. Annual crime data for Barbados for 1989-1993 are analyzed and reveal that overall visitor victimization rates are higher than resident rates. Residents are significantly more likely to be victimized by violent crime while visitors are significantly more likely to experience property crime and robbery. Monthly data on tourist victimization for 1990-1993 show similar patterns. The paper concludes with a number of measures to enhance visitor safety. Key Words: tourism, Caribbean, islands, property crime, violent crime.

## Biographical Note

Klaus de Albuquerque (Department of Sociology and Anthropology, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29424, USA) and Jerome McElroy have had extensive teaching, research, and policy experience in the Caribbean. Their research has focussed on small-scale agriculture, inter-island migration, the implications of political status change, measuring tourism development, sustainable tourism strategies and, more recently, longitudinal patterns of serious crime in the region.

## INTRODUCTION

As tourism has emerged as the major global industry concerns over visitor safety have become paramount. European and North American states routinely issue travel advisories warning their citizens to avoid countries (Algeria, Egypt, Chiapas, Mexico, Peru) and airports where tourists have been targeted by terrorists or where there is ongoing political instability (Israel, Northern Ireland, Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina).

Tourists, however, are much more likely to be victimized by crime than by terrorist activity. In the Caribbean, terrorism is negligible, and with the

exception of the recent (August-September, 1997) spate of bombings of tourist hotels in Cuba, the major safety concern is crime against visitors, particularly violent crime.

This paper has four objectives. It reviews the literature on tourism and crime and highlights the recent history of violent and property crime in several Caribbean mass tourism destinations. Using annual and monthly data for Barbados from 1989-1993, it tests three hypotheses commonly stressed in the literature concerning resident versus visitor crime levels and crime patterns and the influence of seasonality on visitor victimization. The study concludes with commonsense suggestions to improve visitor safety and enhance tourism's sustainability.

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOURISM AND CRIME

The study of the relationship between tourism and crime is of relatively recent origin, beginning with the pioneering work of Jud (1975) and Pizam (1982). Jud (1975:328) in examining this relationship in 32 Mexican states found that property related offenses were more strongly related to tourism, while violent offenses were only marginally related to tourism. Pizam (1982), however, found very little linkage between tourism and crime in a nationwide survey of the United States, although a later cross-cultural study he conducted (Pizam and Telisman-Kosuta 1989) revealed that tourism was perceived to lead to an increase in organized crime. Fujii and Mak (1980) in a study of Hawaii found increasing numbers of tourists in the population produced significantly higher levels of burglary and rape.

Turning to the Caribbean, de Albuquerque (1981) found a strong relationship between increases in tourist arrivals and expenditures in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) and property crime. He concluded that it was the larger modernization effects, of which tourism was a major one, that were responsible for the increases in property crime rates. McElroy and de Albuquerque (1982;1983) in an expanded study attempted to apportion out the relative contribution of various modernizing influences, tourism being one of them, on the increased incidence of crime. The results were mixed but did suggest some increase in property related offenses (including robbery) during the peak tourist season and declines in the off season.

#### Theoretical Explanations

Despite all the publicity given to crime against tourists, there has been little theoretical attempt to understand the relationship between tourism and crime (Tarlow and Muehsam 1996). Is crime simply another negative externality of tourism or are there other explanations for this relationship? Most currently accepted explanations have been borrowed from the sociological literature on crime.

Scheibler et. al. (1996) and Crotts (1996) have identified two theories drawn from human ecology that help us better understand this relationship--routine activities theory and hot spot theory. Routine activities theory sees criminal acts as a routine activity for those persons pursuing a criminal life-style.

This kind of predatory crime requires three basic elements: a suitable victim or target, a motivated offender, usually someone who has adopted a criminal

lifestyle, and a relative absence of "capable guardians"--law enforcement officers, security guards, etc, to police tourist areas.

Hot spot theory on the other hand looks at locations which "provide convergent opportunities in which predatory crimes can occur" (Crotts 1996:4). Hot spots are what Ryan and Kinder (1996) describe as "crimogenic" places where there are lots of bars, nightclubs and strip joints catering to tourists and providing ancillary services such as prostitution and drugs. Tourists frequenting these areas, whether looking for these activities or not, are much more likely to be victimized by crime. Some of the crime these areas generate is of course victimless crime since tourists themselves often engage in deviant behavior (drugs) that has criminal consequences. Ryan and Kinder (1996) recognize that there are many tourists capable of criminal behavior (drug trafficking, paedophilia), but by and large the tourist as perpetrator of crime is insignificant in the relationship between tourism and crime.

Ryan (1993:173) offers a useful tourism-crime typology that identifies five types of scenarios. The first is the tourist as accidental victim who just happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time and is specifically targeted because he/she is seen as an easy mark. The second is the tourist location as crimogenic venue, with its night life, hedonistic culture and myriad potential victims--some inebriated, others high on drugs. The third is tourism as a provider of victims. This occurs because tourists are much more prone to taking risks on vacation and less likely to observe security measures they routinely adopt at home. As the number of tourists increase so does local hostility to tourism, thereby increasing the willingness to cheat, rob or even assault the visitor (Pearce 1982). The fourth sees tourists as an imported demand for deviant activities. Visitors escape for two weeks and indulge in anti-social and self-destructive behavior that could lead to crime--binges and rowdyism ("lager louts"), drug taking and soliciting prostitutes. The fifth identifies tourists and tourist resources as specific targets for criminal action. This involves the singling out of tourists for hostage taking/murder since they are considered legitimate targets as symbols of global capitalism and are engaged in a sponsored activity of the state, the avowed enemy of terrorist groups.

Cohen (1996) in his examination of tourist-oriented crime attempts to proffer another explanation based on how the structural traits of the host society encourage the practice of certain types of crimes against tourists. In his analysis of Thai society he concludes that such Thai traits as "ambiguity", "opacity" and "duality" contribute to confidence tricks--selling low quality gems at exorbitant prices, peddling fake antiques, and so on.

All of these explanations offer useful insights into the relationship between tourism and crime in the Caribbean. In many islands crime has become a kind of routine activity of marginalised youth, and in the relative absence of heavy policing of tourist areas, these youths prey on tourists particularly in those crimogenic areas/hot spots often located in larger Caribbean resort destinations (e.g. St. Lawrence Gap in Barbados).

Ryan's (1993) scenarios are especially germane to understanding why tourists are being victimized by crime in the Caribbean. The last thing visitors to the region expect is to be victims of a theft or robbery. They have come for

relaxation and entertainment and issues of personal safety are secondary. Despite friendly warnings from hotel staff, taxi drivers, and assorted locals, visitors are less likely to observe the normal precautions they would at home. So valuables are left in clear view in locked or unlocked motor vehicles or unattended on a beach. Hotel rooms and visitor apartments are not properly secured, and cameras, money, and jewelry left temptingly lying around. Furthermore, being unfamiliar with their new environment, visitors sometimes end up on deserted beaches or in certain neighborhoods that most local residents avoid. They are also much more likely to be politely accommodating to hustlers, drug peddlers and assorted miscreants, thus opening themselves up to possible victimization. In short, they are easy and preferred targets viewed as having lots of "portable wealth" on their persons or in their rooms. They are also viewed as less likely to report a crime because of the hassle/time involved. If they do report a crime they are probably less able to identify their assailant(s) (unfamiliarity, racial differences), or to return as a witness if the assailant(s) is/are apprehended and brought to trial. (In serious cases, like rape or murder, some Caribbean destinations like the USVI have actually flown victims back for the trial).

The sub-culture of violence thesis (de Albuquerque 1984; Wolfgang and Ferracuti 1967) also offers some insight into the escalation of predatory crime against both tourists and residents in places like Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua, St. Kitts, St. Maarten/St. Martin, St. Lucia, Puerto Rico, and the USVI. Here the emergence of criminal sub-cultures (posses, gangs) is rooted in high levels of unemployment, low levels of educational attainment, coupled with few opportunities for meaningful employment. Add to this a desire for conspicuous consumption--the latest clothes fashion, expensive jewelry and shoes, TVs and VCRs, and widespread drug use and trafficking, and the meteoric increases in serious crimes are easily comprehensible (de Albuquerque 1995; 1996a).

#### Tourism and Crime in the Caribbean

While crime against tourists is not new in the region, even self-policing somnolent communities like Jost van Dyke and Virgin Gorda (the British Virgin Islands), Carriacou (Grenada), and St. Barths are now recording the odd crime against a visitor. Likewise islands like St. Kitts, St. Maarten/St. Martin, Antigua, and St. Lucia which had comparatively little crime in the 1960s and 1970s (de Albuquerque 1984) have seen an escalation in their serious crime rates, much of it due to drug trafficking and local drug use (de Albuquerque, 1996a; 1996b). Drug related crime (robbery, burglary, larceny) has also spilled over into the visitor industry.

#### The victimization of visitors as a major regional problem

afflicting the tourist industry first emerged in Jamaica in the early 1980s. Although crimes (larceny, burglary, rape, robbery and the isolated murder) against visitors were confined to the major resort areas--Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, Discovery Bay/Runaway Bay, and Negril--the international media created the impression that no part of the island and no resort was safe. To protect visitors from harassment by vendors, verbal abuse from assorted miscreants, and from crime, Jamaica became the leader in the drive to establish enclave tourism--epitomized by the Sandals, Couples, and Hedonism chains--self contained

resorts where the visitor never has to set foot outside the gates. Although the visitor is definitely safer surrounded by fences and security guards, enclave tourism has had the effect of diluting the tourist experience and denying many vendors, water sports operators, boutiques, and local restaurants substantial revenues, thereby increasing the level of ambivalence towards visitors and exacerbating host-guest resentment.

The late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a stream of adverse stories in the metropolitan press of tourists in Jamaica being robbed, raped, assaulted, and even murdered. The rising tide of crime against tourists climaxed on July 1, 1992, with the murder of a Dutch tourist in Ocho Rios. The story was carried extensively by the media in Holland with the advice that Dutch visitors to Jamaica should not leave their hotels. The U.S. and Great Britain issued travel advisories to their citizens planning on vacationing in Jamaica (The Jamaica Herald, August 21, 1992:1). The Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association, which had long been concerned that crime was driving away tourists, used this latest incident to appeal to the Prime Minister for army patrols of tourist areas (Morris, 1992). This proved to be a controversial move with some arguing that the presence of army patrols was disquieting to visitors and was sending the wrong message that they were quite unsafe and had to be cordoned off and protected at all times. But tour operators, hoteliers, tourism officials, and the tourists themselves welcomed the patrols. Of course such extraordinary measures may only be effective in the short run. Any destination with permanent army patrols of tourists areas may soon find itself without visitors.

One of the most widely publicized murders of tourists in the Caribbean occurred at the Fountain Valley Golf Course in St. Croix, the USVI, on the afternoon of September 6, 1972. There were 16 persons gathered at the clubhouse--two vacationing couples from the U.S. mainland and 12 white and black employees. Six masked gunmen suddenly burst into the clubhouse and ordered the vacationing couples to stand at the bar and the five white employees to lie face down. The gunmen proceeded to rob the tourists and the cash register and then casually began to fire killing seven whites and one black and wounding four others (Boyer 1983:314-315). The killings made instant news in the U.S. TV and print media and prompted several reports on crime and racial violence in the "American Paradise". It took St. Croix's tourism industry more than ten years to rebound from what has been called the Fountain Valley Massacre.

Meanwhile in the more tourist developed sister island of St. Thomas, crimes against tourists were also escalating. Although most of these crimes were property related, there was a noticeable increase in the incidence of gratuitous violence that appeared to be racially motivated. In 1992, the USVI had the dubious distinction of having higher violent crime rates (2,776 reported violent crimes per 100,000 population) than New York City (2,162) (Flanagan and Gutner 1994). Following 12 violent attacks (robberies, assaults, one murder) against U.S. Navy sailors in 1993, the U.S. Navy Atlantic Fleet canceled all shore leave on St. Thomas (Rohter 1994). There was also a series of highly publicized rapes and murders of tourists, including the slaying of an internationally prominent California swimming coach, Murray Callan (Rohter 1994). The crime spree against tourists peaked in 1996 with the shooting of three tourists in St. Thomas on

January 27 (The New York Times, January 28, 1996a), followed by the execution style slaying of two visitors from South Carolina on March 9 (The New York Times, March 10, 1996b).

Governor Roy Schneider was finally driven to act. He ordered roadblocks and imposed a night time curfew on youths. However, much of the local reaction to escalating tourist victimization was defensive: victim blaming (erroneously blaming swimming coach Callan for walking through a housing project and refusing to give up his wallet), secretive (refusing to release crime figures) and protectionist of the tourist industry with the Police Chief, Raymond Hyndman, stating emphatically to Forbes magazine that "crime is not a major problem on our island" (Flanagan and Gutner 1994). However, the slump in hotel bookings, particularly during the 1995-96 season, prompted tourism officials to meet with a major U.S. public relations firm to counter the negative impact from the publicity fallout (The New York Times, March 10, 1996b).

Elsewhere in the region, the advent of mass tourism also brought about an escalation in crimes against tourists. These were initially minor--larceny of unattended valuables at a beach or in an open rental car, burglary of hotel rooms, with the occasional robbery at knife or gun point. But with growing animosity towards tourists in the region on the part of marginalised youth with little hope for gainful employment, and with the increase in drug use, the level of violence directed against tourists has increased visibly in the 1990s--from verbal harassment, to incidences of stone throwing (Soufriere, St. Lucia), physical assaults, robbery, rape, and even murder.

The relatively crime free island of Barbuda was rocked with the discovery on January 29, 1994, of four American yachtsmen who had been tortured and murdered aboard their yacht (The Daily Observer, February 1, 1994). The murders sent the yachting fraternity in the Eastern Caribbean into a panic. Scotland Yard was called in to investigate and eventually some locals were charged. In neighboring Antigua, on February 24, 1995, a 26 year old Canadian woman was shot and killed in broad daylight while picnicking on a quiet beach (The Daily Observer, February 25, 1995). Her assailant attempted to steal her handbag and when she resisted shot her in the chest. The Canadian press covered the story extensively, warning Canadians not to visit Antigua. The ripple effect of this murder on the twin-island state was most visible in terms of cancellation of hotel bookings by Canadians.

The problem seems to be escalating as well in St. Maarten/St. Martin. This tourism-dominated society has witnessed a very significant increase in burglaries of tourist apartments and condominiums and hotel rooms. Larceny of valuables from beaches and rental cars is on the rise. (Most rental cars carry warnings to tourists advising them not to leave anything valuable locked in the car). Many tourist establishments are now patrolled by private security guards, some with attack dogs. The security guard business has become a major industry in the region.

One of the most consistent relationships identified in aggregative research is the link between tourist arrivals and tourist-related crime. As tourist arrivals increase so do victimization rates of tourists. It is not surprising that emerging destinations like Tobago, St. Lucia, Grenada, and Guyana are witnessing

a growing number of crimes against tourists. For example, the number of robberies of tourists in St. Lucia and Grenada (along Grand Anse beach at night) and in Georgetown, Guyana, has increased substantially. Despite the region's dependence on tourism, tourism officials and the police have not focussed enough attention on tourist-related crime. In fact, there has not been a single systematic published study of crimes against tourists in the region showing victimization rates of tourists for various crimes, and where and when they are most likely to be targeted. This lacuna is not peculiar to the Caribbean. Most tourist destinations do not as a rule separate out crimes against visitors and residents.

## METHODOLOGY

This section identifies three hypotheses that will be tested, establishes the methodology for measuring tourism victimization, and describes the data. The hypotheses that have commonly surfaced in the literature are:

1. Whether tourists in mass tourism destinations (i.e. Barbados, Jamaica, St. Maarten, USVI, South Florida, Honolulu) are more likely to be victims of crime than residents. Chesney-Lind and Lind (1986) found that serious crime rates against tourists in Honolulu were substantially higher than against residents and slightly lower in less visited Lauai.
2. Whether tourists are more likely to be victimized by property crime and residents by violent crime as the authors' previous research on the USVI (1982; 1983) indicated was the case. Chesney-Lind and Lind (1986) found that in Honolulu tourists were much more likely to be victims of rape, robbery, burglary and larceny. The same was true of Kauai with the exception of burglary. Residents, however, were much more likely to be victims of murder and aggravated assault.
3. Whether tourist victimization rates are influenced by visitor density levels. The authors' earlier work on the USVI identified higher overall crime rates during peak tourism months, a seasonality effect on crime in mass tourist destinations that has been observed elsewhere (Walmsley, Boskovic and Pigram 1983). It is hypothesized that once tourism densities surpass certain threshold levels and tourists become omnipresent in the landscape, they are much more likely to be careless with their valuables, to visit dangerous areas, and hence are much more likely to be targeted by criminals. In addition, large densities of tourists during peak season often become a social irritant, and the host community's response to the increasing victimization of tourists becomes more blase.

Measuring Tourist Victimization. Most of the earlier studies on the relationship between tourism and crime were severely hampered by the lack of data on tourists as victims of crime. Police departments regularly lump all crime together irrespective of the resident status of the victim. In other words, crime in most jurisdictions is reported only by occurrence and type. Some tourist destinations have begun to break out and analyze resident status but there is a general reluctance to release the data for fear of adverse publicity (Ambinder 1992). In the absence of victimization rates the first generation of studies on the

relationship between tourism and crime had to make inferences from indirect evidence. McPheters and Strange (1974) found a seasonal relationship between tourism and crime, with property related offenses rising during the peak tourist season. Jud (1975) in his study of 32 states in Mexico found fraud, larceny and robbery rates were higher in tourist areas than non-tourist areas. Walmsley, Boskovic and Pigram (1983:154) in examining crime rates in selected Australian tourist and non-tourist areas noted that the types of crimes in these two areas varied (more theft in tourist areas) and that in coastal resorts "the peaks and troughs in the occurrence of crime coincided with highs and lows in tourist activity." In the authors' study of the USVI (McElroy and de Albuquerque 1982; 1983), the link between increasing arrivals, increasing crime rates and increasing property crime was established. However, this line of research failed in three important respects: (1) to discriminate between visitor versus resident victimization rates; (2) to separate out the specific influence of tourism as opposed to other modernizing agents; and (3) to reveal in some plausible way(s) the transmission mechanism(s) between the presence and pace of tourism development and rising crime rates. The first shortcoming in particular provided the impetus for the present analysis.

Data. The Royal Barbados Police Force prepares monthly summary reports on crimes against tourists. These reports are quite detailed and include the nature of the offense, the location where it was committed, the time of day, the number of victims by age, gender and nationality, the number of assailants, weapons used if any, estimated dollar value of what was stolen, and mode of entry into an apartment or hotel room. With the use of these data it is possible to compile annual and monthly statistics on crimes against tourists.

To compare visitor and resident victimization rates, it is necessary to convert the transient visitor population into a resident equivalent. To arrive at this on an annual basis, it is required to estimate a visitor population with as much on-island exposure as the resident population, namely for 365 days. To accomplish this, the total number of stayover visitors in a year was multiplied by the average length of stay (ALOS) for that year. To this figure was added the total number of cruise ship arrivals for that year multiplied by one day. The resulting figure, the total annual number of visitor days, was divided by 365 to yield the resident equivalent visitor population.

For example, according to the formula below, the resident equivalent visitor population for Barbados for 1989 was estimated to be 9,896 visitors.

Stayovers x ALOS + Cruise x 1.0

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365

461,259 x 7.1 337,100 x 1.0

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365

= 9,896

This is identical to the method used by the Hawaii Visitors Bureau to calculate the visitor population figures that appear in Fujii and Mak (1980:28) as "the average daily census of tourists," and in Chesney-Lind and Lind (1986:172) as "the average daily tourist population." Finally, to determine the resident



equivalent visitor population on a monthly basis, monthly ALOS was employed along with a divisor of 30 or 31 days.

#### Study Results

Table 1 shows serious offenses committed against visitors and residents (crimes against residents are in brackets) for the period 1989-1993 and provides the basic data for estimating visitor versus resident victimization rates. It is clear from the standpoint of personal safety, visitors are relatively safe in Barbados with perhaps the exception of being victims of robbery. In the five-year period between 1989 and 1993, no visitor was murdered, and there were only a few rapes and major woundings (aggravated assaults) of tourists. Although few trends are sharply discernible from these raw data, visitor victimization follows roughly the same yearly fluctuations as resident crime. Overall there is a tendency for violent crime (except murder) to increase and for property crime (except burglary and larceny against persons) to decline.

Table 2 reports these same offenses for 1989-1993 in the form of rates (per 100,000 persons) so that it is possible to compare levels of victimization among visitors and residents. As hypothesized, local residents are much more likely to be victimized by violent crime, i.e. over six times for murder and aggravated assault but less so for rape. (In 1991 and 1992 rape rates were higher for visitors). Visitors, however, are disproportionately victimized by property crime and robbery. Robbery, although listed as a violent crime because it involves the use of violence or threat of violence, is much more of a property offense; and visitors are between four to six times as likely to be robbed than residents. They are also much more likely to have valuables stolen from their persons (wallets, handbags, etc.) or rooms, or from their rented vehicles. It also seems plausible that tourists are also more likely to have things stolen at the beach. Although there are no counterpart figures reported for residents, locals are assumed to be more cautious, experienced and knowledgeable to avoid such victimization in familiar surroundings.

In terms of overall serious crimes, visitors are two to four times as likely to be victimized than residents of Barbados. This finding tends to support results of Chesney-Lind and Lind (1986) in Honolulu. The reasons for this have been well articulated in the literature (Fujii and Mak 1980; Ryan 1993), namely that criminals are much more likely to target relatively affluent tourists than residents because the benefits are greater and costs (likelihood of reporting, detection, etc.) lower.

Table 3 presents monthly data from 1990 through 1993 on the resident equivalent visitor population and tourist victimization rates for both violent and property crime. (Data for 1989 were unavailable). These figures demonstrate the characteristic pattern of property versus violent crime in tourist victimization. In all 48 months covered, the monthly property crime rate against tourists is usually several multiples greater than the violent crime rate. Had robbery been included as a property crime (rather than in its conventional designation as a violent crime), these multiples would have been greater. There seems to be no discernible seasonal influence in the data. For example, based on average six-month victimization rates (not shown), violent crime against

tourists is just as likely to be lower on average during the high season (December through May) as in the off season (June through November). Results are the same for average six-month property crime rates against tourists.

The findings concerning the impact of monthly visitor flows on the overall level of tourist victimization do not conform to what the literature suggests--namely, crime rates against tourists escalate during peak seasons. The relationship between the monthly resident equivalent visitor population and violent and property crime rates was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients. The results indicate, contrary to the hypothesis, that both violent ( $r_p = -0.270$ ) and property ( $r_p = -0.249$ ) crime rates against tourists are negatively related to visitor flows and statistically significant at the .05 level ( $t = 1.90$  and  $1.74$  respectively).

There may be several possible explanations for this unexpected finding. Three are suggested. First, the assumed link between seasonality and crime may have been distorted by the impact of the 1991 recession and its aftermath. Although cruise visitors to Barbados increased between 1989 and 1993, stayovers fell steadily and in 1993 were still 14 percent below the 1989 level. Similarly, visitor expenditure in real terms fell over 10 percent over the period (CTO, 1993:90). The second explanation focuses on the influence of seasonal unemployment. Wide swings in visitor flows cause off-season hotel layoffs and marked declines in employment among related restaurant, vendor and transport suppliers in both the formal and informal sectors. This loss of income among the affected youth population may lead to increased larceny, burglary and robbery. Most observers believe, however, that most serious crimes are committed by the hard-core unemployed who have adopted a criminal lifestyle. Although a more definitive interpretation must await further study, overall the results suggest that hypothesis three does not hold between 1989-1993 in Barbados.

#### Other Findings

The Monthly Reports of crimes against visitors to Barbados also provide interesting detail regarding which hotels and visitor apartments/condominiums are more often burglarized, which beaches are less safe (Crane Beach, Silver Sands Beach) and where tourists are more likely to get robbed--St. John's (Bath Beach, Bathsheba), Maxwell Coast Road, Dover Road and Silver Sands Beach.

The Barbados Hotel Association (BHA) through its Crime Committee has worked indefatigably to provide safety hints for visitors and publicize crimes against visitors and incidences of harassment. In 1994, the BHA commissioned a "Survey on Crime Against Tourists" by Applied Marketing Consultants. The survey interviewed management and staff at tourist establishments, law enforcement officials, and 200 visitors. The results of the survey indicate that management and staff of tourist establishments and law enforcement officials are much more concerned about crime against visitors to Barbados than the visitors themselves, a not unsurprising finding. Over 90 percent of the tourist establishments interviewed indicated that they report crimes against their guests that are brought to their attention to the police, management and in-house security. Of the tourists surveyed, four percent

indicated that they had been victimized by a crime, the most common location being a beach or a street. However, 92 percent of the tourists rated Barbados very safe/safe. When asked to compare Barbados to other Caribbean destinations, the tourists surveyed gave Barbados higher marks for safety.

Barbados Police Officials and some members of the tourist establishments surveyed tended to believe that reporting of crime against tourists by the local media was too sensational.

Fortunately, Barbados has been spared the kind of violent crime against tourists that has occurred elsewhere in the region. As noted earlier such incidences, particularly murders of tourists, are quickly picked up by the regional and international press and can have both an immediate impact in terms of a flurry of cancellations and the issuance of travel advisories and a long-term impact as in the case of the Fountain Valley Massacre in St. Croix. It takes both a sufficient time lapse and a significant promotional effort to convince tourists to return to destinations that are widely seen as unsafe, as both Jamaica and South Florida have also discovered.

If crime against visitors goes unchecked in other destinations such as St. Maarten/St. Martin, St. Lucia, Grenada, and in Trinidad and Tobago's and Guyana's fledgling tourist industry, it will have adverse effects on the visitor experience and will encourage the type of enclave tourism Jamaican hoteliers were forced to adopt in the 1980s and which they have successfully exported throughout the region. However, this tourism style may not be socially and environmentally sustainable in the long run.

#### Policy Proscriptions

Most Caribbean destinations would do well to strengthen ongoing communication between the police, tourism officials, the various private sector organizations representing the tourist industry, as well as the hoteliers and other business owners so that together they can put into place a number of effective measures to enhance visitor safety and thereby improve destination attractiveness. On their part, police should be armed with up-to-date crime statistics by resident status to determine the intensity and pattern of visitor victimization and to identify the times and places where various types of crimes against tourists are most likely to occur. Such information should facilitate more efficient patrolling of criminogenic "hot spots" particularly at night and even provide direction for the deployment of uniformed unarmed tourist wardens or guides strategically stationed in those public areas where there is a large tourist presence during the day. These persons, usually employees of Government Tourist Departments, are trained to provide information and assistance to tourists as well as to informally police their areas. In several instances known to the authors, the deployment of wardens at popular beaches significantly reduced the level of harassment of tourists and of larceny and drug pushing.

Information from informal author interviews conducted with victimized tourists, as well as from a review of newspaper reports, indicates that the police in several Caribbean destinations sometimes express a rather cavalier attitude towards property crimes against tourists and tend to respond in lackluster fashion to purse snatchings and larceny. It is quite normal for the average police officer to perceive a victimized tourist as incredibly naive ("Why would

you leave your valuables unattended at a beach?"). Blaming the victim is a common response, even in the case of a violent crime (e.g. the murder of swimming coach Callan in St. Thomas). Popular destinations would do well to specially train a handful of officers to investigate and report crimes against tourists since sympathetic handling by the police goes a long way toward softening the impact of being victimized while on holiday.

Perhaps the most effective measure to ensure visitor safety is public education--of both the tourist and the local community.

The former can be accomplished through safety tips distributed to visitors on arrival or posted prominently in hotel rooms. Such brochures should contain the usual commonsense caveats about locking doors and windows of unattended rooms and vehicles, being discrete with cash, and keeping valuables out of sight and attended at the beach and elsewhere. Hotel management and staff are also an important routine source of safety advice along with taxi drivers, vendors and other locals who come into frequent contact with tourists. In addition, insofar as is feasible, the former can provide guests with security devices and practices shown elsewhere to reduce visitor victimization (Bach and Pizam 1996).

These include the use of electronic room locks, front office safety deposit boxes, surveillance cameras and the presence of full-time security officers.

Public education of the local community can also play a role through billboard and other campaigns in the media and schools.

However, such initiatives can only be effective in crowded, fast-paced mass tourist destinations when combined with a strong comprehensive tourism policy that reflects community control over the size and direction of tourism and that emphasizes widespread local participation in industry benefits. This is certainly the case in Bermuda where tourist victimization is negligible.

## CONCLUSION

This study tested three hypotheses regarding the link between tourism and crime using data from Barbados. The results indicated that, in conformity with Chesney-Lind and Lind's (1986) findings, tourists in mass tourism destinations are more likely to be victims of serious crimes than residents. Likewise this analysis revealed the familiar pattern of tourist versus resident victimization, namely that tourists are much more likely to be victimized by property crime and robbery whereas residents are more likely to be victims of murder and aggravated assault. On the other hand, the Barbados data did not confirm a positive link between tourist victimization rates and visitor density levels.

The study also highlighted the increasing significance of crime against tourists in mass-market and emerging Caribbean destinations and emphasized the dangers this poses for sustainable tourism. It also underscored the importance of recording crimes against tourists separately to improve a destination's understanding of patterns of tourist victimization so that local police departments can act proactively to protect tourists. Further comparative analysis will be necessary to explore whether rising overall crime rates and visitor victimization are inevitable with mass tourism development, or whether crime rates are more influenced by island-specific determinants.

The USVI and Jamaica experiences show that as tourist arrivals increase and a

resort area evolves into a mass market destination, crime rates increase in tandem, especially property related offenses and robbery; and tourists are increasingly targeted by criminal elements. But this progression need not be the case as high-density destinations like Aruba and Bermuda suggest. Their low rates of visitor victimization are partly due to low overall crime rates and the proactive measures taken to protect visitors as well as greater community involvement in ensuring an overall positive vacation experience. As former Barbados Police Commissioner, Orville Durant(1993), has suggested, while understanding crime patterns and deploying security personnel are promising short-run safeguards, longer-run strategies require social programs actively involving youth and significantly improving local community participation in the control of tourism costs and the capturing of tourism benefits. Such an approach is at variance with the current trend towards super exclusive resorts for the rich and all-inclusives for the mass market. Making local communities greater beneficiaries of visitor spending is the major challenge facing Caribbean tourism as the 21st century begins. Otherwise, the cycle of resentment and hostility engendered by large-scale enclave and strip resort tourism, often controlled by foreign interests, will continue to provide an environment potentially conducive to criminal activity against visitors.

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