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Gender, Advertising and Ethics: Marketing Cuba

Forthcoming in Tourism Planning & Development

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Abstract

Online advertisements are representations of ethnographic knowledge and sites of cultural production, social interaction and individual experience. Based on a critical discourse analysis of an online Iberia Airlines advertisement and a series of blogs, this paper reveals how the myths and fantasies privileged within the discourses of the advertising and travel industries entwine to exoticise and eroticise Cuba. The paper analyses how constructions of Cuba are framed by its colonial past, merging the feminine and the exotic in a soft primitivism. Tourism is Cuba's largest foreign exchange earner and a significant link between the island and the global capitalist system. These colonial descriptions of Cuba create a rhetoric of desire that entangles Cuba and its women in a discourse of beauty, conquest and domination and have actual consequences for tourism workers and dream economies, in this case reinforcing the oppression of Afro-Cuban women by stereotyping and objectifying them.

Keywords: advertising; ethics; social responsibility; airlines; race.

INTRODUCTION

Advertising has been described as having a profound influence on societies because of its sheer pervasiveness, tendency to equate human happiness with material gain, manipulative and persuasive inclination and its stereotypical portrayals (Cohan, 2001). At the same time, there is now a sizeable literature, which has established that marketing and promotional campaigns are simultaneously cultural productions and instruments of cultural pedagogy, creating desire and dream economies (Gronow, 1997). Tourism advertising as a specialized area of marketing has also been the subject of similar sociological scrutiny and is recognized as 'loaded and freighted with much hidden [and not so hidden] ideological baggage' (Tribe, 2009 p. 8). For example, Pritchard and Morgan (2000 and 2007) are two of several explorations of how tourism language, representation and meaning ceaselessly connect in a continuous circle to form a set of discourses so powerful that they constitute a self-perpetuating way of seeing people and places.

Despite such critique, the advertising industry as a whole is still routinely accused of unethical practice, much of the criticism levelled at its apparent lack of social responsibility (Kolk, 2015), whilst the tourism industry also stands accused of low ethical standards and of shoring up exploitative practices (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006; Fennell 2006, 2009), especially in how its marketing objectifies indigenous women and female employees as part of the tourism 'package' (Pritchard, 2014). The United Nations Earth Summit 2002 Report (UNED-UK, 2002) recognized this problem and recommended that the tourism industry should abolish advertising, which stereotypes women and ought to more realistically portray female workers. At the same time, government ministers recognize that such advertising feeds exploitative practices (e.g. sex tourism, human trafficking and sexual harassment of female employees) and the International Labour Office (2003) has argued that tourists should be educated about women's rights and how to respect them in intercultural contexts.

Through its critical discourse analysis of an online Iberia Airlines advertisement and a series of blogs, this paper reveals how the myths and fantasies privileged within the discourses of both the travel and the advertising industries

entwine and how in one advertisement, racist and sexist representations of women exoticise and eroticize the tourist destination of Cuba. In 2007 the Spanish airline Iberia became embroiled in controversy over an advertisement they used to promote a contest for a trip to Cuba on Iberia.com to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the airline's website. The advertisement was part of a campaign of animated commercials and others included advertisements for free trips to New York and Buenos Aires. The one for Cuba depicted a white baby on a trip to the island, where two scantily clad mixed-race Cuban women with exaggerated full lips and wide hips squeezed into hot pants feed, massage, fan and dance with the infant as he sings, in an adult voice, 'Mulattas, feed me. Come on mulattas, take me to the crib' (weblink: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QveHpauz5m0&feature=related>).

The paper examines the Iberian Airways promotional campaign as a product of cultural discourses and inscriptions, arguing that such online campaigns are 'discursive domains which set parameters around the presentation of particular social and cultural bodies' (Pritchard and Morgan, 2007 p. 158). Building on Meethan's (2002) and Hollinshead's (2007) analyses of the role of tourism in culture, consumption and worldmaking, the paper explores tourism's role in conjuring visions of the world and, unlike much of the extant discussion, which focuses on English language media, it switches the focus to a Spanish campaign. Critical studies of online tourism marketing remain in their infancy and whilst the internet is a crucial element of contemporary tourism management, online advertisements are also cultural texts, representations of ethnographic knowledge and sites of cultural production, social interaction and individual experience (Pink, 2001). Yet tourism enquiry's investigation of the online world has so far attempted to generate technical, instrumental understandings of how the web is utilized by tourism marketers (see Buhalis and Law, 2008), rather than exploring how it communicates identity and 'cultural difference in the contemporary globalized habitus of the world' (Favero, 2007, p. 59).

The internet, in much the same way as tourism, 'proceeds in an essentially unplanned and barely controllable way' (Tribe, 2009 p. 4) and in the coming together of these two runaway realms (see Giddens, 2002) we witness the full force

of uncontrolled neo-liberal market forces and philosophies. The internet has no centralized governance in policies for usage or access and it has become the global platform for dialogue and interaction (through posting and blogging) and action (activism and campaigning) (Hoffman, 2011; Miloevi-orevi, 2017). This paper analyses online consumer reaction to the Iberia Airlines advertisement, firstly to validate the authors' reading and secondly to examine the power of the 'blogosphere' in shaping perceptions of organizations' marketing activities. Whilst these blogs are now quite dated, at the time personal blogs were popular and had not yet been overtaken by social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Moreover, despite being written a decade ago, they remain reflective of continued ethical issues with online marketing in Cuba (Vicari, 2014). The paper concludes by arguing that tourism educators need to do more to embed ethics and values in their programmes so that graduates are equipped to engage in constructive dialogue and critique. In this, we argue that tourism academics have to foster socially responsible and reflexive practice in tourism marketing and encourage '...a move towards tourism stewardship ... and a fuller responsibility to the contexts within which tourism is practiced' (Tribe, 2002a, p. 322).

CUBA, TOURISM AND SEX TOURISM

There has been a steady analysis of Cuba's tourism industry (e.g. Kirk, 2007; Padilla, 2007; Sanchez and Adams, 2007; Bailey, 2008; Wilkinson, 2008; Daigle, 2015; Hingtgen, Kline, Fernandes, & McGehee, 2015), much of it focusing on its relationships with the USA. In this section of the paper however, we are concerned with how Cuba has been and continues to be constructed in the Western cultural imaginary. Tourist space is 'invented, extracted and reactive' (McDonald, 2005, p. 191) and one of its major shapers is marketing. 'Images have as much to do with an area's tourism development success as ... tourism resources ... the myth anchors resistance to ... knowing the political economic power dimensions that underlie these socially constructed tourist images' (d'Hauterres, 2005 p. 202). Just like many Caribbean islands, contemporary constructions of Cuba and particularly Afro-Cubans are framed by a colonial past of slavery and coffee and sugar plantations

(Singleton, 2001; Carr, 2003). Indeed Cartier (2005, p. 15) has described islands such as Cuba as “colonial window boxes”, past and present, ... crucibles of historic world political economy, places that remind us how the era of exploration and discovery turned into long-term territorial imperialism’.

Cuba was a Spanish possession for almost 400 hundred years (1511-1898), the official relationship beginning in 1511 with the founding of the first Spanish settlement by Diego Velazquez at Baracoa (Franklin, 1997). Thomas (1994) argues that all instances of colonialism are unique although they may share common characteristics and Western constructions of Cuba (just like those of other ‘paradise’ islands such as Hawaii, Bali, Tahiti and Jamaica) promise a non-threatening, alluring encounter with a land, which merges the feminine and the exotic in a soft primitivism (Smith, 1984; Desmond, 1999; Pritchard and Morgan, 2007). Colonial descriptions of Cuba conjure a longing for the land, through rhetoric of desire that entangles ‘the Indies’ in a discourse of beauty, conquest and domination. These began in 1492 when Christopher Columbus wrote to his patron King Ferdinand of Spain that Cuba and its neighbours ‘far surpass all the rest of the world in beauty’ (Watts 1987: 1 in Henshall Momsen, 2005, p. 209).

Such colonial imaginaries are augmented by a range of intertextual framings of Cuba, which continually draw on history, art, literature, music, cinema etc. to portray the island as a sexually permissive, pleasurable, seductive and sensuous destination (Rivera, 2017). This imaginary continues today in ‘a colonial discourse framed through many of the images and literature created of the Caribbean mulatta woman as a way to sell the region’ (Rivera, 2017, p. ix). One of the most enduring cultural referents is Cuba’s more recent political trajectory and most travel writings and advertisements today contain references to Cuba before the 1959 Castro revolution (Franklin, 1997; Daigle, 2015). During the 1940s and 1950s Cuba’s capital Havana acquired a reputation as a hedonistic haven for American tourists, who stayed in luxury mob-owned hotels, gambled at casinos, danced the mambo at nightclubs and indulged their fantasies at bordellos (English, 2009). These referents frame contemporary travel writings about the city; for example, John Graham’s article ‘Remains of the Revolution’ for the travel magazine *Conde Nast Traveller*

comments that 'Old Havana is a living, breathing movie set, a soundstage for a Spanish-language film noir.' He frames his descriptions of Havana by reference to twentieth century icons such as Ernest Hemingway, a regular visitor to Cuba where he 'famously drank up to twelve Papa Dobles (giant daiquiris) a day while amusing visiting Hollywood hotshots like Spencer Tracy and Ava Gardner.... You have it all here—art, music, literature, architecture . . . and rum. Welcome to Havana' (Graham, 2008).

This travel article suggests that Havana at night is peopled by frenzied dancing local inhabitants, predatory foreign male tourists and prostitutes, as it 'is a reasonably safe assumption [that] any smoldering young woman in the company of a gringo with a paunch and a silly smile [is a prostitute]':

...the steamy night... is heaving with Havana hookers ... pawing and cajoling every Western male who arrives, hoping to be paid in forex for their services. The muscle-bound bouncers ask if we want girls, and before we can answer, two highly perfumed women are at our side. We politely demur and slip inside unscathed. The audience is split between locals and foreigners, and ... half the foreign men have hookers with them (Graham, 2008).

In such articles Cuba is framed as a seductive, essentialised and liminal place, because it is a revolutionary state and an island. 'If the beachscape is the ultimately seductive natural environment, then the island, is that essence reduced, concentrated in mythic form. Here seduction lies in a kind of tension, in inaccessibility, the island as refuge combined with its distance from metropolitan centres' (Cartier, 2005 p. 15). Again, this is clearly communicated by Graham (2008):

... isolation has bequeathed Cuba a fascinating otherworldliness.... Havana [is] the best-preserved colonial city in the hemisphere.... In its people, in the sounds and smells of Havana, you sense the intrigue, the

mystery, the untrammelled exoticism of a city that has moved to its own beat for centuries. Occasionally the stench of raw sewage wafts by, reminding you that this really is a dilapidated Third World city, not a film set.

Tourism is Cuba's largest foreign exchange earner and a significant link between the island and the global capitalist system. Tourism has attracted a quarter of all recent investment in the country, making it one of its most dynamic economic sectors and today around four million visitors travel there a year, most of them from Canada and Europe (Cuba Business Report, 2017). Because of this dependence, Cuba has once again become a playground for those in search of cheap cigars, rum and prostitutes, just as it was before the 1959 revolution (Karsseboom, 2003; English, 2009). In a country with few employment opportunities and sub-standard living conditions, women and girls flock to the densely-populated capital Havana in search of sexual employment and although illegal, sex tourism has become a major component of Cuba's successful tourism industry (Koppell, 2000; Karsseboom, 2003). Whilst it is difficult to obtain statistics on the number of sex tourists and sex workers Cuba, like other Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries, has seen female and child prostitution become a major income generator (Henshall-Momsen, 2005). Tourists from all over the world can book what are thinly disguised weekend sex tours to Havana where '...foreign men can command Cuban women and girls with the same ease used to order cocktails' (Karsseboom, 2003).

It has been argued that 'the first link between tourism and prostitution occurs at a symbolic level through sexual images used by the tourism industry' (Ryan and Hall, 2001: 28). Certainly, Caribbean vacations are often marketed with the promise of sexual pleasure and for many Western male tourists are intimately entwined with notions of eroticised and sexually available local women (Kempadoo, 1999; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000; Pritchard, 2014). Ryan and Hall (2001, p. 39-40) comment that 'Sex tourism ... permits an exhilaration usually only open to the wealthy, that of having access to many women of youth and beauty [and] ... to the

fantasy of being powerful'. O'Connell Davidson's interviews with sex tourists in Cuba are illuminating, as this tourist says:

It's funny, but in England, the girls I fancy don't fancy me and the ones that do fancy me, I don't fancy. They tend to be fatter and older, you know, thirty-five, but their faces, they look forty. But in Cuba, really beautiful girls fancy me. They're all over me. They treat me like a star. My girlfriend's jet black, she's beautiful (O'Connell Davidson, 1998, p. 169).

In a relationship where one is powerful, another is under-powered and in Cuba, Western men can leave 'old rules behind to celebrate only themselves ... they use the margin ... as [a] dark grove of ... initiation' (McDonald, 2005, p. 172) in their relationships with Cuba's 'jiniteras' or 'Cuban girlfriends.' These women are largely young, well-educated Cubans of West African descent and these relationships reinforce historical racial constructions of Afro-Cuban women as exotic, erotic and sexually available (Fernandez, 1999).

METHOD

The runaway worlds of tourism and the internet (Giddens, 2002) provide fertile ground for qualitative social researchers endeavouring to enhance our understandings of the social world. In both realms, we can see the production, practice and performance of social knowledge. Indeed, it is difficult to underestimate the significance of the relationship between tourism and the internet as it has become the industry's most important customer relationship management vehicle. Yet, whilst there is now a substantial literature which examines the use of information communication technologies from a tourism management perspective (e.g. Buhalis, 2003; Mills and Law, 2004; Hitz, Sigala and Murphy, 2006; Buhalis and Law, 2008), critical analyses of the internet (and its main protocol, the world-wide web (www)) are in their infancy in tourism enquiry

(Munar, Gyimóthy & Cai, 2013). Just like any other form of media, online communication occurs within complex matrices of shifting power relationships, ongoing struggles to establish, confirm or resist power relationships and in these online cultural texts we can see 'synthes[es] not only of existing relations, but of the history of these relations ... a précis of the past' (Gramsci, 1988 cited in Rutherford 1990, p. 20).

As any cultural artifact, the online Iberia Airlines advertisement under scrutiny here is a representation of ethnographic knowledge and a site of cultural production (Pink, 2001). The series of scenes in the advertisement are dynamic, context-sensitive narratives, which establish parameters around the presentation of social and cultural bodies. Just like any cultural artifact, however, the advertisement is not merely a medium for the 'neutral' retention of images but a value-laden text which defines space and location and maps position and situation, immediately suggesting social and spatial hierarchies and homologies. The advertisement is scrutinized using critical discourse analysis, a method which has been applied to a range of tourism texts (Jaworski and Pritchard, 2005). The method has integrated the study of a range of modalities such as visual imagery (e.g. Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001), music (Van Leeuwen, 1999) and non-verbal communication and body image (Coupland and Gwyn, 2003) – all of which reflect the multimodal nature of the www. Evaluations of the adequacy of discourse analysis are pragmatic and are ultimately judged on the extent to which they make 'possible new and meaningful interpretations of the social and political phenomenon it investigates' (Howarth, 2000, p. 130). However, as Louw (2001, p. 20) cautions: 'Meaning[s] emerge out of relationships rooted in a particular place and time ... [they] cannot be understood outside the power relationships and struggles of a specific context.' In this study, the key contextualizing power associations are: the historical Spanish-Cuban colonial relationship; the importance of sex tourism in Cuba; and the continued oppression and exploitation of Afro-Cuban women based on their poverty, gender and colour (Welch, 1999; Koppell, 2000).

In addition to this critical discourse analysis of the advertisement, the paper also analyzes readings of the text by individuals who contributed to the following blogs: racialicious.com ('a blog about the intersection of race and pop culture'); whataboutourdaughters.com (a blog founded to encourage black women 'to impose economic sanctions on those who are producing destructive images of Black women and girls'), bloggersforcubanliberty.com (a blog for those 'looking for a way to *do* something about Cuban liberty instead of just talking about it'); latin-know.com ('a blog offering comments and insights on marketing and communications campaigns targeting the U.S. Latino-Hispanic market'); mattersofrace.blogspot.com ('where race meets reading between the lines'). These blogs were returned in the top ten 'hits' identified via an internet search for the words 'Cuba, Iberia Airlines, FACUA' on the Google search engine during April 2009. At that time personal blogs were popular and had not been superseded by social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. and, whilst they are now quite dated, they remain reflective of contemporary ethical concerns with the online marketing of Cuba and similar Caribbean destinations (Rivera, 2017).

The online world has become 'a new medium for social exchange' (Kozinets, 2002, p. 63), within which the blogosphere is 'a classic social network with special qualities that make it ideal for research' (Tremayne, 2007, p.x), although critical studies of blogging are still nascent (Fuchs, 2013). The blogosphere has been characterized as a transformational zone, a 'revitalizer of social relations' (Papacharissi, 2007, p. 21), a facilitator of active and engaged citizenship through highly interactive social media platforms (Vromen, Xenos, & Loader, 2015). Bloggers demonstrate collective influence and as the phenomenon grows enormous power is devolving. Although such networks cannot be said to be representative of the opinions of the wider population (Land, 2009), the blogosphere does offer an unregulated insight into popular attitudes and companies are ever more concerned about its impact on their products and brand reputations. Indeed, they increasingly track web-based discussions to guide more effective marketing practice. A greater than ever number of companies are turning to 'collaborative sites, blogs and forums

where essentially anyone can post comments that may influence perceptions and purchase behavior of ...buyers' (Melville, et al. 2009, p. 1275). Research scrutinizing weblogs has used a range of methods, including: content analysis (Herring, Scheidt, Kouper and Wright, 2007); rhetorical analysis (Miller and Shepherd, 2004); ethnographic interviews (Nardi, Schiano and Gumbrecht, 2004); sentiment analysis (Melville et al. 2009; Thelwall, 2016). Here we employ critical discourse analysis (Howarth, 2000) and discuss the tone of the web postings and opinions, to analyze how meanings emerge out of relationships rooted in place and time, within specific contexts.

THE IBERIA ADVERTISEMENT: READINGS AND REACTIONS

Analyzing the Iberia Advertisement

There are three central characters in the advertisement, a white male baby and two Afro-Cuban women (www.youtube.com/watch?v=QveHpauz5m0&feature=related). The commercial opens with a baby crawling towards an open laptop. A banner ad on the Iberia Airlines' home page can be clearly seen. It says 'Sometimes flying can be easier than walking. Already registered for the travel sweepstakes for the 10th. Anniversary of Iberia.com?' The baby then taps on the keys, a message pops up 'You have won a trip!' and the baby is beamed to Cuba through the www. The next sequence is set to a reggaeton music beat and shows him with two mixed race women in the front seats of a vintage pink convertible. One woman wears a pair of blue cut-off jeans and a yellow crop-top and the other a yellow bikini. As they drive through Havana (references are made to the Malecon, a stretch of coastline along the north shore in Havana), the baby sings 'mulatto [woman of black/Spanish mixed race] give me something to eat and drink.' The woman in the yellow crop-top then feeds him milk from a bottle as she cradles him in her arms. Set to a Caribbean rhythm and the women's chorus of 'está chupao, está chupao' (it's easy, it's easy), the baby proceeds to recount his journey after having won the contest. He sings: 'me marche huyendo de panales y papillas (I'm fleeing nappies and baby food) /volando, llegue hasta estas calidas orillas (after flying, I arrived on these warm beaches) he

venido aqui por la cara (slang: I've come here for fun) ... mulatas dan me de comer y dan me de beber (the mulatas feed me and give me things to drink)/ ingrese Iberia.com, ya no quiero volver! (I typed in "Iberia.com" and I don't ever want to go back!).'

The next sequence switches to the beach where the baby dances with his two companions as they shake maracas and a Cuban trio plays next to a beachfront cafe. At dusk, the baby sings: 'venga mamitas, llévenme a la cuna' (come here, mamitas/ take me to my crib) whilst they continue their chorus of 'Esta chupao, esta chupao!' (It's easy! It's easy!). The next scenes follow in quick succession. The first depicts the baby sitting on the beach boardwalk in a wooden over-sized rocking chair wearing a large pair of sunglasses flanked on either side by the two dancing women. Then he appears lying on his back atop the bar, again wearing sunglasses and a large white nappy. With one hand propping up his head, he moves his other in time to the music as he sings. Behind him is a large cocktail glass with a green umbrella stick and his milk bottle from earlier, now with a red umbrella stick poking out from it. Then he appears on a sun lounger as one of the women rubs sunscreen onto his back and the other fans him as he sings 'Esta chupao, esta chupao!' (It's easy! It's easy!) and 'go to iberia.com and come here with me, 'cause it's wonderful to do nothing lying in hammocks without spending money.' The advert then cuts back to the scene of the baby in the rocking chair, followed by a scene where all three of them are dancing a conga with the baby in the middle with a large blue dummy in his mouth. Several of these beach scenes are then repeated once more as the music repeats and the advertisement fades out to the message 'Free trips that even a baby can win.'

At one level Iberia's online campaign can be dismissed as harmless humour, yet if we consider Louw's (2001) contextualizing power relationships (here Cuba's colonial past, reputation for sex tourism and the under-powered position of Afro-Cuban women), it becomes an example of the 'astounding persistence of the basic racial grammar of representation' (Hall, 1997, p. 251). Humour is a powerful carrier of cultural norms and ideologies. It has the power to include and exclude, to draw a line between us and them, to delineate who is inside and outside and to foster 'group identity by widening the gap of those within and those outside the circle of

laughter' (Levine, 1977, p. 359 in Abernathy-Lear, 1995). Whilst it undoubtedly uses humour, this advertisement references Spain's colonial relationship with Cuba, made explicit in the encounter between the Afro-Cuban women and the white baby tourist, itself an echo of the interactions between Western male sex tourists and their 'Cuban girlfriends'. In its depiction of the baby and two Cuban women the advert encapsulates 'the over-determined conjuncture of cultural and sexual difference, and their mutual interface: sex and race at the heart of capitalism's imperial process' (Pollock, 1992, p. 72).

The tourist is represented as a white baby boy, traditionally powerless and dependent yet transformed here through his experience into a powerful central figure. Indeed, during the advert, the baby changes from a wide-eyed innocent baby into a gravel-voiced, macho 'gangster'; dark glasses hiding his eyes he rocks back and forth in his rocking chair with a knowing smile; as much as you watch him, he watches you. He is in control; he invites you (the viewer) to share what he is experiencing in this adult playground – the complete attention of these two Afro-Cuban women. Significantly, this is one of the most frequent stereotypes of white infants used in advertising: 'the go getter', aggressive, demanding with women, intelligent and adventurous (Seiter, 1995). The baby commands the women to give him 'something to eat and drink' and to take him 'to the crib'. The message is explicit - you too may have whatever you want in this liminal place where sensual pleasures and the fulfillment of bodily desires are central to the text (Wang, 2000). In conveying this, the online advert parodies what Seiter characterizes as the 'Dreams of a great and inevitable destiny [which] begin at infancy for whites', a destiny which is fulfilled by 'fanciful "exotic" adults' (1995, p. 102).

The whole tone of the advertisement conveys sexual innuendo; for instance, the baby repeatedly refers to the women as 'mamitas' and asks them to 'take me to my crib'. These lines are framed by the ambiguous lyrics 'esta chupao,' a colloquial phrase meaning something is easy. In English, as in Spanish, the adjective 'easy,' when used to refer to women and girls, connotes sexual availability and promiscuity. Again, set against the context of the growth of prostitution in Cuban with many of its customers being foreign tourists and many of the women being

Afro-Cubans, the advertisement takes on several value-laden meanings. Although the two women in the advert are cartoon characters, they are hyper-sexualized. Both have large eyes, voluptuous breasts, tiny waists, wide hips, exaggerated red lips, flowing hair adorned with a flower and rotund bottoms squeezed into tight shorts. They are incarnations of the well-established 'racist/sexist sexual myth that black women are not innocent and never can be' (hooks, 1995, p. 29). This is a stereotype found across numerous media forms, of black women defined by their sexual parts (Hill Collins, 1995; Hall, 1995), here given an added dimension as they are sexually attractive women of mixed race, often seen as women whose 'partly white blood makes ... [them] "acceptable even attractive to white men but whose indelible "stain" of black blood condemns ... [them]'

 (Hall, 1997, p. 251).

This myth of the sexual mulata is common across societies in Latin American. For example they are 'the middle component of the Brazilian three-part puzzle expressed in the popular saying "branca para casar, preta para cozinhar, e mulata para fazer amor" - "White woman to marry, black woman to cook and mulata to make love"' (Bennett, 1998, p. 228). Although still in use, in recent years the term mulatto has fallen out of favour among some people and may be considered offensive by others. Today the preferred terms are bi-racial, multi-racial or mixed race. The myth of the mulata is, in some ways, like the myth of the 'dumb blonde' as both serve to impede women from participating in society as full human beings. They evoke 'images of voluptuous bodies, sensuality and the ability to dance *samba* ... the mulata has become a central and problematic figure of desire in the... Western imaginaries' (Pravaz, 2003, pp. 116-117). In Latin America, '...the collective illusion is that mulatas, to use the term for a moment, are better suited to sex than for anything else. Black and brown women are readily employed in the tourist industry (as samba dancers, showgirls, etc.) but those who attempt to pursue professional careers to any extent are not taken seriously' (Bennett, 1999, p. 232). In many countries like Cuba and Brazil there has developed the 'ideology of the mulata' by which women of mixed race are mythologized as being both less than human and overly sexual. The myth also stipulates that it is always the mulatas who tempt the

otherwise perfectly pure men (Bennett, 1999), echoed here in the transformation of the innocent baby into knowing 'tourist'.

Analyzing the Blogosphere

The advertisement provoked criticism in Spain for which the airline was unprepared and a spokesperson for Iberia Airlines initially defended it, saying 'It was completely trivial' (Muse, 2007). However, a Spanish consumer rights group, the Consumers in Action Federation (FACUA) (<https://www.facua.org/es/english.php>) demanded its immediate removal, citing that it denigrated Cuban women, encouraged sex tourism to the island and, given that it promoted women as objects, was actually illegal under a Spanish law passed in 1988. FACUA argued that: it presented 'denigrating stereotypes of Cuban women, showing them as mulattas in bikinis who are at the service of tourists around the clock to dance for them, give them massages, fan them and give them food and drink.' As a result of the furore provoked by the FACUA Iberia Airlines eventually apologized, saying that the advert was not meant to offend anyone, and removed it four days later on May 16th 2007 (Muse, 2007). Reactions to the online campaign were not confined to Spain however, demonstrating the global reach of the www and its capacity for social networking and network activism. Wherever the advert received online media coverage (e.g. at <http://www.miamiherald.com>) and individuals had the capacity to post comments, message boards received largely negative posts.

Analysis of several blogs over a six-month period following the running of the advertisement (racialicious.com; whataboutourdaughters.com; bloggersforcubanliberty.com; latin-know.com; mattersofrace.blogspot.com) revealed that some contributors felt that the tone of the advertisement was unintelligent and uninformed in its presentation of Afro-Cuban women but not consciously racist:

Its not that they deliberately went out to create a "happy darky" type situation, but that they thought exotic Cuban girls just happen to be

mulatas.... It's typical bizarre, poorly-thought-out advertisement "creativity...." To be honest, I thought of the Snoop Dogg and Pharrell music video for the song "Beautiful...." I can see the same in the Iberia ad - mulatas with big lips, hair, hips and boobs are exotic and sexual fantasies of the type of ladies they think are in Cuba, and everyone wants to have a good time wherever they go, so these are the "types" of women who'll show them a good time (racialicious.com, contributor 1).

Most postings directly challenged this view and emphasized the advertisement's sexist and racist iconography. Contributor 2 at racialicious.com said: 'You don't get much more "happy darky" than mouths twice the size of their heads' and another poster commented: 'Lord Have Mercy, Jesus! This is one of the biggest live in living color examples of a definition of What is Male Privilege, or at least the thought you should have it' (contributor 3, racialicious.com). Contributor 4 (racialicious.com) highlighted 'the power dynamic of white skin privilege'. Demonstrating the role of bloggers as engaged, citizen journalists (Vromen, et al. 2015) and public intellectuals, posters on this blog later probed conscious, subconscious or institutional racism:

If whoever came up with the ad thinks being of mixed race means you're EXOTIC (NOT a compliment, implicating foreignness and otherness, with a layer of subhuman/unequality to boot), then YES, it's RACIST.... Sheesh. And mixed =/ beautiful.... I should add that "conscious" thought is not a criteria for racism. Really, that's the main facet of INSTITUTIONAL RACISM - the embedded, subconscious [sic] racial stereotypes [sic] and biases that motivate actions and reactions.... Most racists don't think they're racist. Because of insitutional [sic] racism and the society we live in, we all have been exposed to racial, ethnic, gender, etc. stereotypes and to some degree we all have some of that running in our head about SOME group or another. Awareness lets us not act on it, or to realize when we or others do.... The pathetic part of this is that NOONE along the line

thought this might be a problem. That's insitutional [sic] racism right there... (contributor 5, racialicious.com).

Reflecting on the responsibilities of the advertisers and the advertising agencies, a poster on latin-know.com (contributor 1) commented:

I've poked around but I haven't been able to find out what genius ad agency came up with this concept. But as with all cases of terribly offensive marketing, you can only blame the agency so much. Iberia signed off on this. I can just imagine a board room of stuffed shirts clapping their hands to the reggaeton beat, seeing themselves reflected in the character of the baby, and remembering their last trip to La Habana.

Many posters also highlighted how they felt the advertisement 'condoned/promoted the patronage of prostitution in Cuba' (racialicious.com contributor 6) and discussed the complex interconnections between colonialism, sexual exploitation and tourism. One poster (racialicious.com, contributor 7) commented:

The ad is blatantly racist and sexist. The fact is that Spaniards have been using Cuba [as] a destination for sex tourism since the early 90s... [and] this Iberia ad belies the fact that the Spanish are simply looking at Cuba as a sexual playground.... It's not that they used Mulattas. It's how they portrayed them. Every time you look at that video you see more to make you nauseated. Take a look at them driving down el malecon in the convertible. The one woman is bottle feeding the baby. Now take a real close look at the feeding, it's definitely insinuating breast suckling. Then take a look at how the baby is being massaged by the one woman while the other one fans him with a palm frond. The point is that Cuba is great place to "follar". The word is out, buy a girl a panty or a t-shirt and she'll give you the entire GFE (Girlfriend Experience).

Whilst we cannot (and would not) argue that such blogs and posts are representative of consumer opinion, online activism can support and strengthen efforts to hold organizations accountable for their actions (Land, 2009). In these blogs individuals were very conscious of the need to act and highlight the issues, one said: 'Thank you so much for commenting Tomas! Yeah this blog is about letting people know how black women from around the world are being attacked in the media' (whataboutourdaughters.com, contributor 1) and another posted, 'I was like "What in the World?" when I saw this thing. It is ridiculous completely ridiculous. This is what happens when we stand by and DO NOTHING!' (whataboutourdaughters.com, contributor 2). A third commented: 'I watched the video on youtube, there is a series of offensive vid's on Cubans period — reflecting them as ignorant black rappers & those were the nicer of words on the post of comments. If it wasn't so sad and pathetic it could really make me angry, ignorant fools... [My] Grandma ... said let it go baby...retaliate in a broader and more positive outlook & way' (whataboutourdaughters.com, contributor 3).

TOURISM MARKETING AND ETHICS - IMPLICATIONS

Our analysis of the Iberia advertisement and the subsequent online discussions demonstrates the ways in which advertising raises complex ethical questions as a significant and undervalued vehicle of socialization. Perhaps because the advertising industry has claimed a predominantly informative function, much less weight has been given to the notion that advertising sells 'a worldview, a lifestyle, and value system congruent with the imperatives of consumer capitalism' (Kellner, 1995, p. 126). In advertising we can explore public discourse, social norms and values, however, as Hackley (2005, p. 185) comments, '[a]dvertising has only become a topic of public discourse in very recent times'. Yet advertising ethics and the use of imagery which might offend, insult or promote racist and sexist views should be scrutinized as advertising is the central ideological force of late capitalism. This super-ideology, because of its semiotic richness, rhetorical form and reiteration influences the consumers' 'assumptive worlds' (Elliott and Ritson, 1997,

p. 202). This is not to suggest that advertising consumers lack agency or that texts are uni-dimensional. Rather they are polysemic, consumers form an interpretive community and advertisers may attempt to guide them towards a preferred meaning or interpretation but this is an uncertain undertaking. The emergence of the runaway online world with its opportunities for communication, critique, action and reaction make such endeavours even more complicated as responses to the Iberia campaign reveal.

Ethical practice involves responding to situations that deal with principles concerning human behavior in respect to the appropriateness and inappropriateness of certain communication. Advertisers and agencies are ethically responsible for what is marketed and the image that a product portrays. Advertising agencies have codes of conduct dealing with a range of issues including, deception and advertising products such as alcohol, tobacco and gambling services or advertising 'junk' food to children (Van Heekeren and Spence, 2004). In addition, most countries have consumer protection legislation, which ensures that advertisements wherever they appear, 'remain legal, decent, honest and truthful' (ASA, 2017). Notwithstanding this, advertising agencies and clients need to understand ethical practice and how to incorporate ethics into various promotional campaigns to better reach a targeted audience and to gain trust from customers. The American Marketing Association, the professional association for marketers in the USA, recognizes the dangers of stereotyping and its statement of ethics includes an obligation to show respect and 'acknowledge the basic human dignity of all stakeholders'. Specifically, its statement commits to 'Value individual differences and avoid stereotyping ... or depicting demographic groups (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation) in a negative or dehumanizing way' (American Marketing Association, 2017).

The adoption of sound marketing ethics, regardless of the product offered or the market targeted, sets the benchmark for good marketing practice and resonates with consumers (Harrison, Newholm and Shaw, 2005). We need to ask why have academic critiques of tourism marketing's low ethical standards and lack of social responsibility failed to impact on industry practice. Tourism educators must

shoulder some responsibility for this absence of reflexive praxis through their failure to give due weight to concepts of stewardship and ethics in their teaching and learning practices, for 'stewardship is a potent idea where philosophic practitioners assume the responsibility for promoting the well being of tourism's society and world and not just the profitability of individual firms' (Tribe, 2002b, p.351). This failure has continued despite the emergence of critical management studies, which emphasize critique and encourage ethical business practices (Fulop, 2000). Significantly, research elsewhere confirms that critical reflections on the market economy are rare as leading business and management researchers eschew key social, political and ethical questions in favour of technical, problem-solving research (Dunne and Harney, 2008).

Given that much tourism scholarship occurs in such business and management academic collectives this has considerable consequences for the field and it is not surprising that students tend to reject deep reflection in vocational subjects, especially those rooted in consumer culture, such as public relations, marketing or advertising (Molesworth, Nixon and Scullion, 2009). In a study of 2,300 leading research papers, Dunne and Harney conclude that business academics have failed to engage with fundamental social and political questions (such as wealth distribution, the environment, workers' rights, equality issues and business ethics) which could help provide answers to the very real and pressing problems facing our world. As Harney (2008) comments: 'We have failed to teach our students the kind of social conscience and ethics and concern for the world and the environment and the poor that might have influenced the selfish exuberance of the finance markets' (cited in Corbyn, 2008, p. 5).

CONCLUSION

Our analysis of the 2007 Iberia Airlines advertisement and the subsequent online discussions, which it provoked, raise issues that remain current and require serious attention by tourism practitioners and educators. The paper has explored how advertisers, advertising agencies and consumers create meanings through the dialogues between individuals and the images and symbols they perceive. Whatever

the response of Iberia Airlines, their advertisement emphasized the link between race, the exotic and the erotic and in it we can see the overt 'symbolism of the body as caricature' (Ryan and Hall, 2001, p. 176). Its depictions of the Afro-Cuban women parallel tourism advertising's continued constructions of Caribbean and Asian women as 'without desire for emancipation ... [and] full of warm sensuality and the softness of velvet' (Davidson, 1985, p. 18, cited in Ryan and Hall, 2001, p. 142). In the context of Spanish-Cuban historical relations, the then (in 2007) and current significance of sex tourism on the island and the under-powered position of Afro-Cuban women, it is hard to deny the colonial, racist and sexist overtones of the campaign, despite the airline's statements to the contrary. Adverts such as these reinforce dominant configurations of gender and race and there remains an urgent need to foreground and critically explore 'the relationship between tourism, (post)colonialism and globalization precisely because global tourism rides on colonialism and travel ...hegemonically circulate[s] the latter's discourses' (Pritchard and Morgan, 2007, p. 177).

Our paper does have several limitations, which open avenues for future research. Most notably, we have not included the voices of Cuban sex workers, tourism employees or foreign tourists. Neither have we analyzed blogs written in Cuba or by Cubans, who witness first-hand how women are sexualized on the island (Vicari, 2014). We were unable to gain access to Iberian Airlines for comment, nor were we able to establish whether the advertisement increased sales to Cuba or how many tourists are specifically drawn to Cuba based on such sexualized advertisements. Our primary data is quite now dated; however, such racialized and sexist media and marketing representations of Cuban and Caribbean women remain prevalent, relevant and influential (Rivera, 2017). Our analysis also highlights the divergent views of tourism marketing imagery: some regard it as mere ephemera and others as an agent of cultural pedagogy. But those who work in the industry cannot have it both ways, 'either marketing works and it is a powerful tool for change, in which case it must admit responsibility ... or it is nothing' (Anholt, 2006, p. 19).

Here, our analysis has demonstrated tourism's worldmaking power and revealed its role as a hugely 'important catalytic "deviser" of the ideological identifications of populations and "designer" of the iconographic identification of places' (Hollinshead, 2007, p. 189). Advertising dreams are also some people's realities and as such, they can have a significant impact on the lives of people who live in these 'colonial window boxes' (Cartier, 2005). Tourism executives make choices, which can and do have real consequences for travel industry workers and dream economies, in this case reinforcing the oppression of Afro-Cuban women by stereotyping and objectifying them in a rhetoric of desire that entangles Cuba and its women in a discourse of beauty, conquest and domination. Whilst stakeholders involved in tourism planning and development in Cuba such as the Tourist Board, hold no sway over the globalized media, they can and are attempting to confront and negate this discourse through alternative marketing messages, which emphasize the island's architectural and cultural attributes (<http://www.travel2cuba.co.uk/>).

We have also discussed the power of social networking communities and blogs and yet barely scratched the surface of what is required here to understand the multi-faceted connections between social media, tourism's worldmaking power, tourism marketing and development and activism (Munar, et al., 2013). Social networking sites are global platforms for citizen journalists and activists that can promote resistance and alternative discourses of women and indigenous peoples; they are potentially powerful spaces for debate, critique, mobilization and change (Hoffman, 2011). Whilst in this case the Iberia advert was removed following legal pressure from a Spanish consumer rights group, the airline was subject to considerable online and offline criticism because of its advertising, which could so easily have been avoided by a more ethical approach by marketing executives. Whilst such instances are a concern for managers, tourism educators must shoulder responsibility for educating graduates to be responsible, far-sighted practitioners and policy-makers. Commenting on the recent economic crisis, the prominent historian Skidelsky (2009, p. 1) contends that the root of the problem is one of values and ethics: '[a]t the heart of the moral failure is the worship of growth for its

own sake, rather than to achieve the “good life”. Perhaps in a time of environmental, social and fiscal crisis caused by unethical and irresponsible management, we need a realignment of our approach to educating students for the tourism world as many programmes fail to embrace anything other than a narrow business approach.

It has been claimed that tourism teaching in universities is maturing (Airey, 2008) and that the critical turn in tourism enquiry is reshaping the field’s teaching (Tribe, 2002a, 2002b; Stergiou, Airey and Riley, 2008, Sheldon, Fesenmaier and Tribe, 2009). If we are truly to challenge notions that ‘the employment of individuals with ethical training in tourism seems almost counter-intuitive’ (Fennell, 2009 p. 213) then we need tourism graduates who combine knowledge of tourism management with integrity. Tourism collectives in business and management schools must therefore play their part in the role of educators in every sense of the word, moral as well as academic and practical. Students on tourism programmes must learn the technical skills, which will arm them for their careers but also acquire them along with strong values. Critical thinking and stakeholder consultation should be encouraged as well as intellectual rigour in teaching and learning practice. Words such as humanism, intelligence, professionalism, stewardship and responsibility must become actions carried into the classroom and thence into the world of practice (Pritchard, Morgan and Ateljevic, 2012). In an increasingly complex tourism environment, management decision-making requires an understanding that executive choices have ramifications for the well-being of society as well as individual organizations and corporations.

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