Overview

‘No passion so effectively robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear’

Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*

Most books are structured to be read from beginning to end. Each chapter connects and flows. This book, however, does not need to be read from beginning to end, it does not need to be read in sequence. Some readers may only be interested in one chapter that is relevant to their interests or needs. While this is an educative book that is technical in nature and aimed primarily at an academic readership, it is hoped that the readership may be broader.

This book employs autoethnography as its method and includes ‘storytelling’. The style is deliberately set in a manner to be relevant to a readership of academic researchers, but also, beyond this, includes stories to make it more relatable and readable. This book discusses problematic behaviour and some confusing and poorly understood legislative aspects. While discussed in the context of tourism industries, the key message is generalisable to anybody (not just tourists), and to any workplace (not just those that serve tourists).

This book discusses control, abuse, bullying and family violence. It discusses these matters as they are, as well as how they impact the tourism system. Family violence can be especially difficult to understand as it tends to happen behind closed doors, and some of the problems with family violence relate to the judicial system, which is also behind closed doors. Thus, this book explains the various aspects of legislation and presents stories about what family violence is like. Such knowledge is important for those working in tourism industries, as well as for anyone considering separating from a perpetrator of family violence. Decisions made without important legislative knowledge will impact many aspects, of which mobility and undertaking travel will, potentially, be among those most impacted.
Uniquely, this book presents an inside account of a number of events including the Family Law Court. These occurrences are behind closed doors and present a mystery to the outside world. Family law legislation tends to work similarly in many countries, where people are prevented from disseminating what occurred in a proceeding. Some people have tried to work around this by sharing their events anonymously through the media or blogs. However, this book provides the reader with the inside experience. While this is banned in most cases, there are a few exceptions. As this book is an educational work that is of a technical character primarily intended for professionals, it presents an opportunity to share a perspective of proceedings normally hidden from the world.

Such knowledge is important for understanding what might evolve through the justice system. People can end up having ‘blind faith’ in a form of justice that they expect but do not receive. It is not uncommon for victims of family violence to regret leaving their abusive partner (not for emotional reasons but because of the orders made by the courts). Victims may leave a perpetrator of family violence and be seduced into thinking they will be free, only to learn that their abusive ex-partner is likely to have equal responsibility on the major decisions for their dependent children, which can impact employment, mobility, and even travel plans.

For those living with a perpetrator of family violence, tourism conceptual frameworks describe touristic activities as being a time for escape and relaxation. None of these models takes into account what holidaying away from home with a perpetrator is like. The holiday, which is meant to be about escape and relaxation, is not escaping a primary source of stress. Tourism models omit family violence and, as such, are a type of Trojan Horse where the dark hidden secret comes along for the journey but people outside the Trojan Horse only see the illusion, not what is going on inside. Therefore, this book explains family violence so that readers have some context of how tourism (and other things) are impacted by family violence.

An Overture is included. This presents my story of family violence, which I tell for the reader who may be looking for context. Various legislative aspects within the book link to ‘journeys’ in the Overture. The reader can duck in and out of various sections to provide context if they desire. Sometimes it is difficult to understand how tourism (and other things) can be affected by family violence and court outcomes after separation. Therefore, the Overture aims to provide some authenticity and context for the reader. Depending on decisions made and outcomes from family law courts, the ability of an individual to even undertake touristic experiences can be reduced. To understand why holidaying away from home with a perpetrator of family violence is not necessarily relaxing (and in fact may be worse), it is important to know what living with family violence might be like: the Overture attempts to present this. Therefore, the Overture may serve to assist some readers. In some
cases, as is shown in this book, mobility can be negatively impacted post-separation from family violence.

Finally, the book attempts to be a standalone book, so that readers have no need to undertake other reading (e.g. reading about family violence or bullying in the workplace) in order to understand these matters. As a whole, the book takes a tourism systems approach, explaining the impacts of control, abuse, bullying and family violence within various elements of the tourism system. It explains the partial industrialisation in tourism, as the dimensions of tourism are extremely broad. At its centre, there are obvious examples of businesses that serve tourists, such as motels and theme parks. However, as the often-used expression ‘Tourism is everyone’s business’ tries to explain, there are few businesses that do not serve any tourists. Looking at some fringe beneficiaries, even dentists will correct teeth for tourists, and medical doctors will have tourists as patients. Some people have said to me that a funeral parlour is a good example of a business that does not benefit from tourism: on the contrary, many friends and relatives will travel (often great distances) for a funeral and, as such, the celebration of a life that has ended through a funeral is part of what is known as Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) travel.

I draw attention to the quote at the beginning of this section: ‘No passion so effectively robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.’ The employee who lives with family violence, also lives with fear. This will impact them. We need to understand that as employers. For the victim sitting in court trying to articulate their story while overwhelmed with fear, their ability to explain the situation clearly may be affected, while the perpetrator, devoid of fear, can play the game much better. If this was better understood, we might see better decisions in our judicial systems.

This book provides three unique aspects for the reader. Firstly, it explains how control, abuse, bullying, and in particular family violence, impact the tourism system. Family violence does not go on a holiday. Secondly, the book focuses on post-separation aspects to reveal that separation from family violence is not necessarily ‘freedom’. Escape is more complex than is understood and the control and abuse often continue but simply outside the house instead of within it. Thirdly, the book offers a rare glimpse of several types of cases to help guide interested readers through those processes. Uniquely, experiences from family court proceedings are presented, to share events that are normally hidden from view. I hope the readers find this helpful and interesting and also hope that some of what is shared will lead to further change. A world with less abuse, less controlling behaviour, less bullying and less family violence would be a better world. Education about what happens may assist in generating micro steps towards a better world. My hope is that readers will find this book beneficial.