Glocal Tourism: Conflicts of Development in Grenada

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ABSTRACT

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A thesis presented to the Graduate Program in Global Studies

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Unlike many other Caribbean countries tourism in Grenada has remained on a relatively small scale over the passed ten years or so, with Grenadians controlling and owning the majority of the industry. However, recently Grenada has seen the introduction of a number of different foreign investors, and the development of the tourism industry has been increasing, thus changing the way in which power is distributed in the industry. Data for this thesis were collected using a qualitative method consisting of interviews and participant observation with Grenadians who work in the industry. The main findings of this study demonstrate that development of the tourism industry correlates with an increased international presence on the local level and that, as the industry becomes more connected to global institutions, decision-making power on the local level decreases. As a result, it is likely that international rather than local concerns will direct the industry.
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Introduction

The tourism industry in the Caribbean is the most important economic activity in the region and one of the only sources of foreign exchange for many Caribbean nations. Countries such as the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and the Bahamas are famous tourist destinations that attract millions of visitors every year. Also in the Caribbean are smaller islands that rely on tourism but which have historically been less exposed to such large numbers of tourists. One such country is the island of Grenada located in the southeastern Caribbean. Although like many other islands in the Caribbean, tourism in Grenada has become the leading economic activity, it still remains relatively unexposed to mass tourism when compared to other tourist destinations in the region. In fact, one of the alluring aspects of Grenada as a tourist destination is that it still remains relatively untouched by the tourism industry that has taken over many other islands in the region. Indeed, Grenada’s tourism industry has largely remained on a small scale with Grenadians owning the majority of hotels, approximately 90 percent (Nelson, 2005: 132). However, in recent times Grenada has begun to go through a transition in which it is becoming more of an attractive destination for international developers and tourists. In the past few years Grenada has seen the increased introduction of foreign developers and international organizations. One of the largest of these is “Sandals,” an all-inclusive resort that has chains throughout the Caribbean. In addition to this, there have been recent expansions in yachting services, cruise ship arrivals, and other developments. These changes have sparked much debate
in Grenada about the direction in which the tourism industry is heading and about the possible effects that may result.

During my research in Grenada I found that many people had conflicting views of the direction that the development of the industry should take. For instance, there were those who found that increasing cruise ship arrivals could be extremely harmful for tourism, especially for the hotel sector, while others were very dependent on money earned from cruise ship passengers and wanted to see their numbers rise. This conflict lead me to consider the different power structures that exist within and around tourism and how Grenadians who work in the tourism sector navigate their way through the industry.

Where opportunities are scarce, the tourism industry provides an avenue for Grenadians to engage in the global market and become integral to the workings of globalization. In fact, the tourism industry is a prime example of the interface between the local and the global. In Grenada the industry is massive, permeating into a number of different sectors and consisting of individuals and institutions that operate on both a local and global level. Throughout this thesis I will show how local economies and work within the industry intersect with larger global forces, which are constantly influencing decisions made by local power brokers such as government officials and private individuals and institutions.

The thesis is split into three sections. I begin by examining the historical development of tourism in the Caribbean, drawing from other research throughout the region. In this section I will also describe the current structure of the industry in Grenada as well as an overview of the economy as it relates to tourism. Next I examine the local conflicts and power struggles within the industry. In particular I will examine the conflict between institutions such as hotels, which strive to present a picturesque presentation of paradise, and lower class individuals who work
informally in the industry to gain economically but at times may contradict this idyllic image that the hotel sector and government work to create. In this section special attention is placed on the examination of beach workers and the role that gender plays in their work. I also look at some decisions made by the government that at times conflict with individual and group interests, specifically the recent rebranding of Grenada and other changes that have created some disturbance. In the final section I examine local decision-making as it intersects with global institutions and economies. In particular I look at government relationships with foreign direct investors and the role that foreign investment and transnational hotel companies have played recently.

My research findings demonstrate that government and private individuals and institutions have a stake in the tourism industry, and so the interests of individuals who have decision-making power often conflict, and in turn this hinders the success of an effective development strategy. In the past, tourism and Grenada itself have been small enough that individuals who work in the industry have a great deal of ability to influence the direction and perception of the industry; however, with increased development this is changing. Throughout these sections one of my main arguments is that as the industry becomes more connected to global institutions, decision-making power on the local level decreases.

The tourism industry is widely studied throughout the world in a variety of different disciplines. This interest originates from the rapid growth of tourism and the fact that it is an economic activity which intersects with so many areas of interest. In the Caribbean, however, studies of tourism have focused on larger islands that attract considerable numbers of tourists. For Grenada and other small islands with developing tourism industries, research has remained relatively low. As little ethnographic research has been conducted on the tourism industry of
smaller islands in the Caribbean, my hope is that this study will uncover some original data and extend the knowledge of the tourism industry in Grenada and the Caribbean as a whole.

**Methodology**

The research I conducted included two interconnected methodologies: open-ended interviews and participant observation. I made two research trips to Grenada in order to conduct this study. My first trip was during the “high season” between December 17<sup>th</sup> 2013 and January 12<sup>th</sup> 2014. I returned four months later during the “shoulder season” between April 12<sup>th</sup> and April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014. Although this is a relatively short period of time to conduct in-depth ethnographic research, it was not the first time that I visited Grenada. In fact I grew up there, so I had a working knowledge of the community and the ability to move within different spheres. This preexisting relationship allowed me to make contact with different individuals and organizations within Grenada that helped me gain access to various informants. For the most part, participants were recruited informally through word of mouth, primarily by being introduced to friends and relatives of friends and acquaintances.

I began my research by conducting community observations in Grand Anse, a coastal community outside of the capital town of St. George’s, which has become a central location for banking, shopping and other businesses. This emergence as an important business district is fueled by the fact that Grand Anse is the main tourist belt in Grenada, containing a number of hotels, restaurants and other tourist attractions. It is also close to the airport, and St. George’s University — an offshore American medical school — is located nearby. In addition to this, Grand Anse is quite flat in comparison to other parts of Grenada and there are a number of beaches and bays in the area, which makes it ideal for tourism development.
I conducted most of my observations on Grand Anse beach, the longest and most well-known beach on the island. Along the beach there are a number of hotels, restaurants and bars, along with a water sports and scuba diving center and a vendors market. It is one of the most important spaces for studying tourism and interactions between locals and tourists since it is easily accessible by both groups. Here I immersed myself in the different activities on the beach and met a number of beach workers, some of whom I later interviewed and observed.

Apart from the beach, I was also able to collect data at restaurants and hotels. Before conducting research I knew someone who managed a small restaurant on the beach so I was able to shadow him and spend a great deal of time in the space interacting with staff and visitors. Hotels were more difficult to gain access to since they are not generally open to the public; however, I came to know people in management and was able to conduct some observations and interviews at three different hotels. I also spent some time in the capital of St. George’s and visited other tourist attractions that were located outside of the Grand Anse area.

I interviewed a total of fifteen people. Five of the interviews were with three women and two men in hotel management at three different hotels; two interviews were conducted with housekeepers who were both women; one was with the Minister of Tourism; three were with two female and one male tourist; one was with a restaurateur who worked closely with beach workers; and four were with male beach workers. Interviews were recorded using hand-written notes and a digital recorder. Generally, each interview lasted for about thirty minutes to an hour and was conducted on the beach or in nearby restaurants and in offices at the hotel or ministry. Apart from interviews I also learned a great deal from informal conversations both with interview subjects and other individuals whom I interacted with throughout my trip. In addition

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to this, I was also able to ask a few participants if they would allow me to observe them during their daily activities and accompany them as they went about their workday.

As a member of the same ethnic group as most of my research subjects, I found myself treated as a cultural “insider.” However, I was also understood as being distinctly different from them and somewhat foreign. This was especially the case during my interactions with beach workers and hotel and restaurant staff. For them I was seen as upper class and recently returned after a long time abroad. They were not entirely wrong, since I had not lived in Grenada for about five years and in initial interactions I spoke with no Grenadian accent. As a result, although I was not interpreted as being a tourist, my Grenadian identity was questioned at times, and I would have to constantly reaffirm my Grenadianess. However, as my interactions progressed I was able to prove myself and this helped my research subjects become more comfortable with me.

My objective is to let the voices of my research subjects be heard and to accurately portray their lives. I will be using pseudonyms for all research participants to keep their identity confidential, with the exception of the Minister of Tourism. In addition to this, since Grenada is quite small I have modified some identifying features of main participants that would allow others to determine their identity.
Part I: Historical and Contemporary Background to Tourism in the Caribbean

Colonialism and the Development of Tourism in the Region

The Caribbean has a long colonial legacy that is deeply intertwined with its history of tourism. Not long after the voyages of Christopher Columbus to the Americas, both Portuguese and Spanish ships began claiming territories in Central and South America. These colonies brought in gold, and other European powers, most specifically England, the Netherlands, and France, hoped to establish profitable colonies of their own. Imperial rivalries made the Caribbean a contested area during European wars for centuries. During colonialism Europeans introduced crops to the Caribbean islands in an effort to profit from the rich soil and warm climate. Most notably, sugar, which was a luxury in Europe at the time, developed into an important cash crop that became reliant on slave labor. In fact, colonialism in the New World could be argued to have been the first round of the industrial revolution, as Abernathy points out: “Sugar plantations were in effect huge outdoor factories. They employed advanced techniques of mass production and processing, involved a landless labor force whose work patterns were monitored and controlled, and enabled plantation owners to amass great fortunes” (2000: 59). Colonialism also led to what are now modern day trade agreements and routes. During the colonial period Europeans found that they could profit by connecting Europe and non-European regions with each other. “Africa was linked to the Americas through the transatlantic slave trade. Slave ships also transferred staple crops from the New World to Africa, and peanuts and bananas in the reverse direction” (Abernathy 2000: 58). Essentially, colonialism built the foundations upon which modern
Caribbean economies lie today; however, it was an extremely exploitative regime and the remnants of this can also still be seen in some respects.

In the case of the tourism industry, the colonial discourse was a significant part of how the industry was initially established and what keeps it going today. As Kamala Kempadoo states: “The Caribbean has long been portrayed in the global imagination as an exotic, resource-filled region of the world” (2004: 1). Whereas in the past the Caribbean was once exploited by foreigners for its labor and land for agriculture, it is now used as an exotic destination for tourists. The region has also had a long history of sexual exploitation. Studies of slavery in the Caribbean show that it was a fundamental part of the history in the region. In the colonial and post-colonial era, the people in the region were presented in westerners’ imaginations in stereotypical roles such as ‘hyper sexual black male stud’ and the ‘hot mulatta or black woman’ (Kempadoo 2004:26). Today, sex continues to be held up as a selling point to attract tourists and the industry is founded on the idea of providing a relaxed and pleasure-seeking atmosphere free from normal social constraints. A number of writings on tourism in the Caribbean have pointed to the importance of this myth of a hypersexual Caribbean to the survival of the industry.

“Postcards, travel brochures, and airline and hotel advertisements make ample use of images of brown and black women and men to market the region to the rest of the world appropriating the image of Caribbean sexuality to seduce and entice potential clients” (Kempadoo 2004:134). Krista Thompson points out that the origins of how the English-speaking Caribbean was and is widely visually imagined can be traced in large part to the beginnings of tourism industries in the British West Indies in the late nineteenth century: “starting in the 1880s, British colonial administrators, local white elites, and American and British hoteliers in Jamaica and the Bahamas embarked on campaigns to refashion the islands as picturesque “tropical” paradieses, the
first concerted efforts of their kind in Britain’s Caribbean colonies” (2006: 4). To create new alluring representations of the islands that were separate from its labor intensive agricultural past, Thompson points out that the colonial administration turned to use of photography. She states: “The very process of representing and deeming parts of the landscape and inhabitants as picturesque marked their incorporation into a disciplinary society. That the island and their native populations were fit to be photographed offered an additional degree of assurance to travelers that ‘the natives’ and the landscape were tamed, safe, and framed for their visual consumption” (Thompson 2006: 17). In essence, the colonial administration found a new way to profit from the Caribbean as agriculture became less profitable, and in doing so they had to package the Caribbean and its inhabitants to fit into an image that was appealing to an American and European audience. This involved both perpetuating notions of hypersexuality and exoticism as well as creating an image of the people and the landscape as docile and ready to be consumed.

Indeed, colonial administrators and local elites were successful in creating this image since tourism is now an essential part of Caribbean economies today. As one writer points out, “Caribbean island histories have been described as going from ‘sugar plantation to tourist transplantation’ (Nair 1996: 72)” (Montero2011: 23). Tourist arrivals to the Caribbean increased from 4.2 million in 1970 to 21.8 million in 2004 (CTO 2004) and the service industry accounts for over 70% of most islands’ GDPs (CIA 2013). There are a number of interconnected explanations for the strong shift towards tourism in the Caribbean. Small islands of the Caribbean in particular are limited by their land availability for agriculture and natural resources and as economist H. Leo Theuns points out, this seriously restricts their development possibilities (2011: 124). The very “smallness” of Caribbean nations requires them to engage in trade. “This is because the narrow resource base, tiny domestic market, the often historically-
constituted dependence on primary products for export, along with the open nature of their economies precludes the development of indigenous industry in favour of a merchant society (Marshall 1996) (Bishop 2010: 100). In addition to this, as global trade in goods and services becomes increasingly open, the agricultural export industries on which many of these small island developing states were historically dependent in the past are in significant decline. Especially as Bishop points out, “the European Union (EU), in particular, phases out the preferential trade agreements by which the industries were maintained (Weis 2007: 151)” (Bishop 2010: 100). Yet, the Caribbean is perfectly suited for tourism and could easily be packaged into what tourists stereotypically look for, “sun, sea, sand and sex.” Hence, tourism has emerged as a profitable replacement for agriculture and one of the most important earners of foreign exchange for small islands.

Tourists come to the Caribbean to take advantage of a range of activities. The classical type of tourism in the Caribbean focuses on beach tourism in which most tourists stay in hotels, guesthouses or large resorts. A significant number of tourist arrivals are also accounted for through cruise ships, where a massive amount of tourists can be transported simultaneously. However, there are a number of issues associated with these various types of tourism. Cruise ships are owned by large multinational corporations and travel from island to island, so Caribbean countries do not get most of the benefits from cruise ship tourists. Although cruise ship tourists support local businesses and visit local sites while they are docked, a significant number of passengers do not leave the ship at every stop since everything they need is already aboard. Indeed, although the tourism industry has materialized as an important part of most Caribbean nations economies, locals are often unable to gain the full benefits of the tourism industry. For instance, according to research by Matthew Bishop, in St. Lucia all-inclusive hotels
make up between 65 and 80 percent of the island’s rooms. Bishop points out that as a result, aside from unskilled work and the eight percent government room tax, St. Lucian society is excluded from much of the economic benefits of the tourism industry since the “bulk of the financial transactions between producer and consumer take place in the metropolis and rarely touch the Caribbean shore” (2010: 107). The same can be said for most other islands in the Caribbean. In addition to this, much of the labor in the tourism industry is low skilled and low wage. The all-inclusive modeled hotel, where everything that the tourist needs is already paid for and at their hotel, prevents significant spending outside of the resort that can support locally owned businesses. Similarly, since multinational companies own most of the large hotels in many Caribbean nations a great deal of the profits flow out of the country and enter the pockets of foreign investors.

In addition to this, the tourism industry is highly vulnerable to foreign markets, which makes the Caribbean vulnerable to anything that happens in tourist home countries. In an empirical study conducted on the price competitiveness of Caribbean tourism that explores how well Caribbean tourism has performed, compared with global markets, the researchers tested for elasticities with respect to destinations’ tourism prices, competitors’ prices, travel costs and GDP growth in originating countries. For Caribbean countries as a whole, they find that the rate of income growth in tourists’ countries of origin has a much greater impact on their market share than do their own or competitors’ prices (Craigwell and Worrell, 2008). Caribbean tourism has seen a decline over the past few years as a result of economic crises in the United States in particular. According to a report of by the Caribbean Tourism Organization “the region’s performance in 2012 must be seen in context of the wider global situation. Debilitating effects of the world economic crisis, which led to caution and austerity on the part of governments and
consumers alike, still linger. These have manifested themselves in lower personal discretionary income and lower aggregate visitor spending” (Nicholson-Doty 2013: 2). Tourism is a luxury service, as a result when people can no longer afford to travel they will spend their disposable income on goods and services that they need. In addition to this, as there are a number of different tourist destinations, tourists have the choice to choose the cheapest destination.

Despite many of the negative aspects of the tourism industry, it still provides more opportunities for socio-economic mobility than careers in other industries such as the traditional agriculture which most of these countries were built on. In fact, Caribbean countries with more successful tourism industries tend to have a higher GDP. In Bishop’s comparison of the tourism industry in St. Lucia and St. Vincent he finds that St. Vincents’s GDP is significantly lower than St. Lucia, an island of comparable size and means: “the relative weakness of the Vincentian tourism industry goes some way to explaining the country’s weaker levels of economic growth, with GDP growing from $264 million in 1995 to $456.9 million in 2006. Even accounting for St Vincent’s somewhat smaller population, its GDP has remained significantly lower than that of its neighbour to the north, with GDP per capita increasing from $2,378 to $3,820 over the same period, still approximately a third less than the St Lucian equivalent” (2010: 104).

Still, it is apparent that many of the jobs in the tourism industry offer little social mobility, and this has in part lead to the increased prevalence of sex tourism in many Caribbean nations. Just as tourism is linked to economic growth in the Caribbean so is it to commercialized sex. Although sex tourism is harmful in many respects, given the limited options for some individuals to move upward economically, sex work is a viable way out of poverty. A study by Denise Brennan focuses on the rationale of sex workers, clients and others connected to the sex tourism industry in the Dominican Republic. Brennan makes use of extensive interviews and
finds that the sex trade is more than a means of survival; instead, she finds that it is an advancement tactic that centers on the workers’ successful “performance” of love. Her study reveals that many of the women in the sex tourism industry aim to turn commercialized sexual interactions into a long-term relationship that could lead to marriage, migration, and a way out of hardship (Brennan 2004). In addition to this, relationships between locals and tourists are diverse and may not be seen as the stereotypical commercialized sex. In the Caribbean the line between prostitution and other sexual-economic relationships is exceptionally unclear. Many of the foreigners themselves do not consider themselves as participating in sex work. For instance, Kempadoo notes a number of instances in which men did not consider the women they were with as prostitutes (2004: 123). Kempadoo attributes this view to Caribbean woman being seen as hypersexual and always available for sex. Given the fact that many Caribbean countries are focusing so heavily on tourism and the bulk of the jobs are low skilled with low earning power, commercialized sex is one way in which some men and women can profit from the growing tourism industry.

Despite this connection between tourism and commercialized sex, prostitution in smaller islands with less developed tourism industries such as Grenada still appears to be on a very small level. For instance, according to a report by the Protection Project, in Grenada instances of human trafficking remain minimal and are almost entirely internal (“Country Report: Grenada,” 2010). In addition to this, during my fieldwork in Grenada I found that although forms of commercialized sex existed, these individuals were not visible and not seen as “sex workers” or easily accessible. In contrast, countries with a larger tourism industry tend to have more problems with trafficking. For example, Jamaica is a destination country for people trafficked from Haiti for forced labor and men, women, and children are also trafficked internally,
especially in the sex trade. According to a report: “women and children are trafficked from rural areas for sexual exploitation in urban and tourist areas” (“Country Report: Jamaica,” 2010).

The Beginning of Tourism as an Industry In Grenada

Grenada shares a similar colonial history with most of the English speaking Caribbean. As a result, much of the early development of tourism as an industry in Grenada is similar to other countries in the West Indies. However, events that were experienced particularly by Grenada changed the trajectory slightly so the development of the industry in different countries in the Caribbean may vary. During the 18th century, Grenada’s economy went through an important transition. Like most of the Caribbean at that time, Grenada was originally used to cultivate sugarcane, which was grown on estates and produced into sugar using slave labor. However, natural disasters in the Far East paved the way for Grenada to be successful at growing other crops and nutmegs were introduced replacing sugar as the main economic earner. The collapse of the sugar industry and the introduction nutmeg in particular but also cocoa, bananas and other spices encouraged the development of smaller land holdings, and the island developed a land-owning yeoman farmer class. However, over the past twenty years or so the economy has shifted from an emphasis on agriculture to one that is service dominated, with tourism serving as the leading foreign exchange earner. Nutmeg still remains Grenada’s most important export crop although disasters caused by hurricanes in 2004 and 2005 severely damaged the industry. What is more, Grenada is known as the “Island of Spice,” and this has been used as the main slogan in Grenada’s marketing strategy for the tourism industry and has been accepted as an identity that many Grenadians have accepted and are proud of. However, recent changes in the structure of the tourism industry and new marketing strategies have lead many locals to be concerned about
the change in the marketing slogan from the “Isle of Spice” to “Pure Grenada.” This will be discussed more in section two.

Grenada began to be considered officially as a tourism destination sometime in the late 1800s. The island was included in many Victorian travel books, including Stark’s Guide and History of Trinidad including Tobago, Grenada and St. Vincent, etc. in 1897. Books were also written wholly on Grenada, with the goal of attracting visitors and foreign investors (Steele 2003: 144). In effect, the foundations of the tourist industry were present before the First World War; however, tourism as an economic strategy grew in importance during the time between the wars and after. A tourist committee was first appointed by Governor Seton-James in 1928 to encourage tourism in Grenada (Steele 2003: 103). Despite these early attempts, tourism became a core part of the Grenadian economy only after the introduction of air travel to Grenada in 1948, and the addition of Grenada to the itinerary of luxury cruise liners. According to a historical report on Grenada, the first luxury hotel, the Santa Maria Hotel (later to be named the Islander Hotel) was constructed in 1949, and “Tikal”, the first shop especially for tourists, was opened in December 1959 (Steele 2003: 144). The tourism industry in Grenada had a relatively stable increase up until 1979 when the government was overthrown in a revolution during an armed takeover conducted by the People’s Revolutionary Army (PRA) lead by the People’s Revolutionary Government (PRG). In a historical analysis of this period, Grenadian Historian Beverly Steele states:

United States citizens were warned of the dangers of coming to Grenada. Those who ignored the ban and came to Grenada, or tourists from other countries who chose Grenada as their tourist destination, were frightened by the common practice of the PRA practicing maneuvers in the hotel district, even between blocks of hotel rooms. Armed members of the PRA also held up buses taking tourists on sightseeing trips, to inspect the passengers … many of the tourist attractions … were taken over as camps for the PRG and were off-limits to tourists and locals alike. (2003: 190)
Even now in comparison to some other countries in the Caribbean, Grenada has a smaller tourism industry. In 2010 total tourist arrivals including flights and cruise ship arrivals in Grenada amounted to an estimate of 439,712. St. Lucia had a total of 975,980, and Barbados a total of 1,196,927. In comparison to St. Lucia and Barbados— islands of comparable size— Grenada has the smallest number of tourist arrivals by a significant amount.

Tourism in the Caribbean is highly competitive, since to the average tourist each island is very similar. As a result, each island has to distinguish itself from one another with its marketing strategy. Grenada has a number of geographic features that makes it ideal for many different types of tourism. In addition to the warm climate, white sand beaches surround the island, fulfilling one of the most important stereotypes of Caribbean islands that tourists seek. Grenada is also ideally suited for sea tourist attractions such as sailing and diving. In addition to this, the island is mountainous and possesses rainforests and waterfall attractions, which can foster new developments in ecotourism. As far as natural beauty and resources to nurture a successful tourism product, Grenada is an ideal location when compared to neighboring islands which may not possess all of these qualities. Grenada has enough natural beauty to develop a good tourism product and has enough diversity in attractions to be able to diversify its tourism product. It is surprising then that the industry remains much smaller compared to other islands. One reason for lower tourist arrivals is likely the smaller amount of foreign owned hotels chains which have a larger budget for marketing and are able to attracted larger numbers. Indeed, although Grenada possesses much of the natural beauty that a successful tourism product requires, it is also still lacking in infrastructure and marketing to attract the same volumes of tourist as other Caribbean countries. For instance, travel to Grenada compared to other countries in the Caribbean is difficult. Although Grenada has an international airport, flights from the United States, Canada
and Europe are limited when compared to a country like Barbados, which offers far more flights. As a result, logistically it is just easier to get to other countries. In addition to this, other islands such as St. Lucia and Barbados have been more successful at promoting their attractions than Grenada. As a result, other Caribbean countries have been able to reach a wider audience when promoting their island for tourism.

However, this is likely to change in Grenada as the government is attempting to do more to increase foreign investment to boost the tourism industry. For instance Grenada has an agency known as the GIDC, which is an investment promotion agency of the Government of Grenada. A Board of Directors appointed by the Minister with responsibility for Finance & Industry governs GIDC affairs. The primary goal of the GIDC is to increase private sector investments, specifically through “attracting new foreign direct investment, increasing the number of indigenous, innovative, efficient and profitable small businesses registered and operating throughout Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, and facilitating the growth and development of existing domestic and foreign businesses” (GIDC). Overall the government of Grenada seeks to attract foreign direct investment and, with limited exceptions, encourages investors to enter in and operate businesses in all fields of lawful economic activity. There appears to be no minimum entry requirement and no restriction on foreign ownership, repatriation of capital, dividends, interest or other distributions and gains. Foreign and local investors are given equal treatment. “Investors may purchase or lease privately owned land and dispose of or transfer their assets in the land, open bank account, access foreign currency, import skilled workers, freely distribute their profits or dividends, benefit from fiscal incentives and the GIDC facilitation services to establish their operation” (2010 Investment Climate Statement-Grenada). According to the GIDC, tourism is one of the main priority industries, which the
government believes will make substantial contribution to the socio-economic development of Grenada (GIDC). To further help foreign investors the GIDC provides potential investment opportunities, which includes joint venture opportunities, public-private partnerships and real-estate for sale.

The tourism industry in Grenada as well as in most other Caribbean countries is run both by private individuals and organizations as well as by the government. In Grenada the section of the government with responsibility over tourism is known as the “Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Culture” and is headed by the Honorable Alexandra Otway-Noel. The overall objective of the Ministry of Tourism is to “provide a range of administrative and technical services as well as policy leadership for the achievement of sustainable tourism development” (GOG). The ministry of Tourism is divided into three main categories: Tourism Management and Administration, Civil Aviation and National Parks. The main of objectives of Tourism Management and Administration is to facilitate sustainable development, to increase the contribution of the industry to the national economy, and to ensure that Grenada delivers quality experiences and maintains acceptable product and service standards. Civil Aviation relates to all matters that involve air travel and National Parks involves the development, maintenance and management of national parks and tourist sites. The ministry also oversees two main statutory bodies. The first is the Grenada Airport Authority, which is responsible for matters that relate to civil aviation, and the Maurice Bishop International Airport. The second was known as the “Grenada Board of Tourism” but has recently been changed to the “Grenada Tourism Authority” in January 2014. According to officials this transition was part of a strategic plan to create better marketing opportunities and partnerships with airlines and cruise lines. The former parliamentary secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport in Barbados, Rudy Grant was
appointed as the first Chief Executive Officer. The change from a Tourism Board to a Tourism Authority has sparked much debate and concern among locals about other changes and decisions being made.

Grenada has begun to see some results of its friendly policies towards foreign investors. The most recent is the opening of “Sandals,” an all-inclusive resort that has chains throughout the Caribbean. The opening of this new resort will both increase the island’s capacity to accommodate tourists and draw attention to the nation’s budding tourism industry ("Sandals Grenada Readies For Opening"). In addition to this, other real estate developers are planning developments which would require huge investments. This will be explored further in section three. Projects such as these are particularly targeted to high-end tourism, which the current government sees as a good development strategy for the tourism industry. This is especially true as there are potential detrimental consequences of “increasing visitor numbers to the point at which a place irretrievably becomes a ‘mass’ tourism destination and begins a downward cycle towards ever-cheaper prices, reduced occupancy rates, diminished financial returns and serious environmental implications” (Bishop, 2010: 106). According to this view, developments that focus on luxury tourism are likely to be better in the long run for tourism in Grenada on the whole than quick fixes that will attract a lower standard of tourist. Wealthier tourists are also likely to spend more money and help to keep other businesses afloat.

However, there is a growing concern that all-inclusive projects such as Sandals, which are owned by foreign investors, may do very little for the country as a whole since the bulk of jobs for locals will be low skilled and profits may go to foreign investors rather than staying local. However, there are arguments that challenge these ideas. The image of large hotels providing low skilled work can be somewhat deceptive since the tourism industry provides a
career with greater opportunity and social status than much of the work associated with agriculture or public service (Bishop, 2010: 107). In addition to this, foreign investment is necessary to initiate large developments in the entire region. Without them local entrepreneurs are not likely to be able to raise the necessary capital to pursue such large projects. In addition to this, wealthy investors and well-known hotels such as Sandals are expected to draw attention to Grenada and help market the island to a larger tourism market which can help other business that are locally owned.

Grenada and the Caribbean on a whole have gone through an important change from an economy driven by agriculture to one that is dominated by the tourism sector. Grenada is one of the few countries that has yet to be fully engulfed by the industry although it is still an essential part of the economy. It is also one of the only islands that has been able to maintain local ownership and control over the tourism sector. However, this is likely to change as the industry becomes more connected to global institutions. In the next two sections I will explore this transition and some of the conflicts and relationships that arise.
As a relative latecomer to the Caribbean tourism market, Grenada has been able to maintain local influence over the direction of the industry. Despite this, as development of the industry expands there are increased signs that local control is beginning to wane. There has always been some tension between the image of paradise that the industry is founded on and the on-the-ground reality; however, increased development seems to perpetuate these divides. As Grenadian tourism begins to go beyond its niche market to a more global scale, the ability of locals to make an impact is replaced by an increased international presence. Although this is important in an industry that requires an international scope and understanding of foreign markets, it also endangers the presence of a local perspective. This section will explore two different conflicts that exist within the tourism industry in Grenada and that are likely to be an issue for other tourism destinations as well. Firstly, I will explore some of the conflicts that beach workers are confronted with and how they have been able to deal with these. Next, I will explore a recent dispute that has arisen as a result of the latest rebranding campaign that was started in 2014. Both cases are tensions that have been exacerbated by increased development. These cases also expose some of the different ways in which power is distributed in the industry and to what extent local individuals have the ability to make an impact.

**Beach Hustling and Constructing Masculinity**

It is a beautiful sunny morning in Grenada in early January. I step out onto the beach and look up at two miles of white sand and calm crystal clear water. Today is going to be a busy day.
I can already see men placing hundreds of beach chairs side-by-side in preparation for the incoming cruise ship. It is said to be one of the largest cruise ships of the season with thousands of passengers looking for something to do during their brief stay of only a day in Grenada. I walk into a small restaurant at the end of the beach where they are also preparing by putting cases of beer into coolers of ice and mixing fresh batches of rum punch. Right now the beach is empty with only a few people swimming and walking and the men getting ready for the influx of visitors; but in just a few hours it will be crawling with cruise ship passengers and a potential payday for everyone who has a business on the beach. There are about forty-five beaches in Grenada, but this one, Grand Anse Beach, is the most famous and perhaps the most important for studying interactions between locals and tourists. Grand Anse itself is a relatively busy business district with banks, shopping centers and other business offices so it is easily accessible and well used by both locals and foreigners. Along the beach there are a number of hotels, restaurants, bars, a water sports and scuba diving center and a vendors market. Despite all of these activities on the beach, the most pervasive encounter that any cruise ship passenger will experience on Grand Anse Beach are the male beach workers who work informally along the beach renting beach chairs, selling food and drinks, running water taxis or other water sports, and giving massages.

Writings on the Caribbean express that contemporary working-class young men are a result of a colonial legacy, which has cultivated the nonconformity of the male, both socially and economically in society. According to Gutmann, “Questions of virility and definitions of manliness have often been played out in the cultural confrontations between colonizer and colonized” (1997: 389). Gutmann points to the demasculinization of the colonized man and the hyper-masculinity of European males as representative of a fundamental claim of white
superiority: “The result has been the dominance of Caribbean women in the family and in the marketplace” (Phillips 1999: 196). This is particularly evident in Grenada where although men maintain most of the prominent positions, women tend to hold more formalized positions than men and girls tend to outpace boys in schools. In particular, work in the tourism industry is often imagined as feminine, since it is an industry which produces leisure and requires someone to clean rooms, cook meals and even provide pleasure for visitors. In addition to this, the tourism industry constructs an image of the landscape and workers for the visual consumption of the tourist (Thompson 2006). However, many of the men who work informally in the industry as “beach hustlers” do not fit into the neat visual construction of the tourism industry. Yet, I would argue that they serve a necessary purpose in the industry and that the industry itself provides a means for them to validate their masculinity through performance and by earning money independently through informal structures. Unfortunately, for many of these beach workers, increased development of the tourism sector in Grenada also means that they will be subject to increased legal and social regulations, which impedes their ability to earn a living independently.

Most research conducted on male beach hustlers in the Caribbean has been done in the context of sex tourism. My research, however, does not focus on sex, although it certainly plays an important role and may change in the future as the tourism industry grows. It is important to acknowledge the importance of change and many scholars have discussed changing gender identities. I admit that my position as a female researcher may have compromised my ability to uncover more personal economic or sexual relationships between beach hustlers and female tourists. Still, in Grenada I found that the work of the beach hustler had to do more with actual tasks that they carried out rather than sexual relationships, although they would often “sweet talk” women, both tourists and locals.
Working on the Beach

The work that male beach workers tend to do differs greatly from the women who work as vendors. The female vendors are generally confined to the vendor’s market. They usually run little shops within the vendor’s market that sell food and drinks or they occupy a smaller space where they may do hair braiding or sell goods such as local spices, foreign-made beach wraps and bikinis, locally made crafts and other knick-knacks. Although there are a few women who walk along the beach to sell these goods, this can be very risky and they may be fined by authorities if discovered because certain licenses are required to do work along the beach. The vendors market was in fact built in an attempt to restrict the vendors to a specific area and to reduce their movement along the beach. The men, however, tend to move much more freely along the beach, and you can see them walking around interacting much more with tourists. Many of them have licenses to conduct business on the beach; however, some do not but can remain relatively unnoticed. To do the more visible things like renting beach chairs, selling food and drinks or running a water taxi licenses are an essential part of being successful; however, the men are still able to navigate their way around the system even without licenses.

Despite being a system aimed at controlling beach vending, the licensing system also gives the men who work along the beach some important advantages that gives them a sense of independence from larger corporations. In the case of the beach chairs, the hotels that are located along the beach are not permitted to put beach chairs on the beach, even if it is in front of their hotel. Any beach chairs that the hotels have are strategically placed on their property facing the beach, but they cannot be placed on the actual beach. This gives individual entrepreneurs the opportunity to get licenses to rent beach chairs on specific parts of the beach. As one of my informants put it, “it gives the little man a chance to make some money too.”
A similar example to this can be seen in the work of one of my key informants, Kevon. Kevon is what I would call a beach waiter. He got the majority of the food and drinks that he sold from a nearby restaurant along the beach. He would either take orders and serve tourists on the beach or bring them back to the restaurant where they could eat and drink in a more formal environment. Technically he worked for the restaurant; however, he still maintained a significant amount of independence and was not subject to the same rules and regulations as the waitresses who worked in the restaurant. An important part of the arrangement that Kevon had with the owner of the restaurant that gave him power was that Kevon was the one who possessed the license to sell food and drinks along the beach not the owner of the restaurant. Since the license is issued to an individual who has to carry out the work only Kevon was legally permitted to conduct sales on the beach. As a result, he occupied an interesting space both as an entrepreneur capable of his own independence and as an unofficial employee of the restaurant. Unlike the waitresses who earned wages and tips, Kevon shared in the profit of his sales and also took home any additional tips. The owner of the restaurant pointed out to me that on a good day Kevon could earn up to 100 USD for a few hours of intense work. Compared to the waitresses who might earn a little more than that in a month, this is a substantial amount of money. In effect, through this work Kevon and others like him are able to earn a significant amount of money in relatively short periods of time while maintaining their independence and flexibility.

The downside of this of course is that Grenada is not a prime cruise ship destination, since it is so far south and logistically more expensive to get to especially compared to northern islands. As a result, compared to other islands with a larger tourism industry, the regularity of cruise ships to Grenada is far less and the cruise ship season only lasts for about half of the year, usually from November to April. Since many of these beach worker’s moneymaking scheme
relies heavily on cruise ship passengers, they must find alternative employment out of season or remain unemployed. Kevon went to trade school after he finished secondary school and has some training in carpentry. As a result, out of season he looks for carpentry work; however, he looks forward to the return of the cruise ship season because he enjoys the work more and he can earn a larger amount of money. The valuable part of this is that many of these men tend to be skilled in other industries and professions. Given the flexibility and independence that they have working on the beach, during a slow period in the season they may be able to find little jobs elsewhere to make some extra cash. This flexibility and ability to learn new skills is not as common among female vendors, since they are confined to one space during work and may have other obligations such as family to take care of. The flexibility in working practices is one of the gender divisions that has been observed by scholars. “It is more common for men to have jobs which involve ‘functional flexibility’. The ‘operative positions’ of cooks, waiting and bar staff, kitchen hands, domestic staff and cleaners are overwhelmingly filled by women, majority of them as part-time employees” (Munshi 2006: 4462). In the case of the people who work along the beach, women are less likely to become functionally flexible and thus are not as likely to develop a wide range of skills.

Despite having other skills the male workers that I spoke to preferred working on the beach. In addition to Kevon, other informants provided similar responses about enjoying the work on the beach compared to other odd jobs that they might have to do in order to make ends meet. Other jobs tended to be irregular and may include hard manual labor such as construction and gardening or agriculture. Indeed, the tourism industry provides more opportunities for socio-economic mobility than careers in other industries such as the traditional agriculture and this is something that many people who work in the industry are keenly aware of. Apart from earning
more money in short periods of time, for the workers along the beach mobility can come from meeting new people and making friends with the tourists. Sherwin, one of my other informants who runs a water taxi, pointed out that he has made many friends from all over the world and that they keep in touch sometimes. “I have friends who come on the ship, go back and when they come on holiday again they’re still looking for me.” Although in reality many of these friendships will not do much to change the beach workers’ situations, the men maintain this idea of “you never know who you’re going to meet.” In one of our first conversations Kevon asked me “what kind of people do you like to hang out with? Big shots or little people? You look like you have a lot of big shot friends.” I responded that I had no preference and that I did not think I had many “big shot” friends and repeated the question to him. He explained that he preferred talking to people whom he could learn new things from and gain different perspectives. In a later interview he pointed out that this was what he enjoyed about working on the beach. He was able to interact with people and learn from them. In a way every tourist interaction is a possible opportunity to most importantly gain money but also to learn something new and make a possible contact that can be helpful in the future. In addition to this, given that Grenada is a postcolonial society in which race and class are deeply intertwined and one’s race can influence how others perceive their class, being seen with a white person can automatically increase one’s status. This is something that has been indicated in other studies on the Caribbean tourism (Phillips 1999). In effect, through the tourism industry locals can to some extent become entwined with foreign networks. They have the ability to both be influenced and influence individual tourists through their interactions. As a result, both men and women who work in the tourism sector have the capacity to impact the perception of the industry.
“Sweet Talk” and Bad Boys

Although the men who work along the beach are providing a service which places them in a lower position than the tourist who they are serving, they still tend to portray a hyper masculine persona. This is noteworthy because the lowly service status contrasts with the hyper masculine status since masculinity is usually considered a persona of “superiority.” Moreover, the beach worker’s hyper masculine persona is not what is expected from someone who is serving. This is especially the case since service is usually aligned with amiability, inferiority and femininity. One of the main ways in which these men would portray a hyper masculine persona is by “sweet talking” women and calling them out using various catcalls, whistling or “sipsing.”\(^1\) This is a very public form of showing an interest in a woman who is walking by or sitting on the beach nearby. Scholars who have done studies on masculinity point to public displays of sexuality as an important part of performing masculinity. In a study on manhood in Mexico and the Middle East it was found that men may fear that their status as men is threatened by the physical inability to sexually penetrate or reproduce. “These fears reveal ‘manhood’ to be fragile status achieved partly through public demonstrations of related forms of sexual/reproductive embodiment: having a penis, being able to sexually penetrate, and producing offspring” (Wentzell and Inhorn 2011: 307). In Grenada, men who work on the beach usually call out to women and try to engage in some sort of exchange from afar. They may shout out compliments admiring the woman’s body, but little attempt is made to actually engage the woman in any real conversation. Usually these interactions end in the woman walking away or ignoring the man and him moving on to something else. From my observations, the men tended to do this to women whom they could identify as being local. Many of the female tourists that I

\(^1\) Grenadian term for a hissing or psst noise used to call attention to someone.
observed tended to be traveling with male family members in which case the male workers did not overtly make advances.

However, when they actually interacted with the woman they tended to engage in “sweet talk” by making flattering remarks and speaking in a much softer voice than they would normally. In a study on beach boys and female tourists in Barbados this kind of interaction is described as a part of the initiation of an arrangement which usually involves “sex and money or goods in exchange for such services as tour guides and escort to clubs and restaurants” (Phillips 1999: 194). In the case of Barbados and other islands with large tourism industries such as Jamaica, beach hustlers, otherwise known as beach boys, beach bums and rent a dreads, are described as men who receive some sort of material compensation for the social and sexual services that they provide for female tourists (Phillips 1999). However, in the case of Grenada, given that the tourism industry is much smaller and cruise ships with which most beach workers are involved are only docked for a maximum of about fifteen hours, these types of social-sexual relationships are not as common. In addition to this, the Grenadian beach hustler differs from their counterparts in Barbados in that they do not appear to seek relationships with white female tourists over local women. In Barbados “hustlers speak of Bajan women as having too much ‘pride,’ too much ‘attitude.’ The impression given is that in their new role, Bajan women are viewed as lacking in some respects when compared to the white female tourists who are viewed as more sexy, more adventurous, friendlier” (Phillips 1999: 198). By contrast, the Grenadian beach workers do not appear to show a preference for tourist women over local women. In fact, they appear to put more effort into engaging with local women than foreign women. Again, this may be as a result of the fact that in Grenada there are more female tourist travelling with family or men rather than with other women or alone.
This is not to say that sex and tourism do not collide in Grenada. One of my informants mentioned that when the tourists come off the ship they ask for all kinds of things, which may include sex and drugs. People I spoke to seem to think of prostitution as not being very common, but one informant pointed out that some male beach workers have direct contact with women that they can call if a tourist wants sex. Since prostitution is illegal in Grenada and highly stigmatized socially, it is almost entirely invisible and gaining access to information is very difficult. It exists but it is not as pervasive or common in Grenada compared to other Caribbean islands or tourist destinations around the world. I was unable to ascertain the extent of male homosexual sex between beach workers and tourists. The subject never came up in interviews or conversations with informants who worked on the beach. This is not surprising especially since homosexuality is both illegal and socially unacceptable in Grenada. For the most part the male beach workers seem to act as middlemen between the cruise ship tourist and any activities that they want to do including sex and drugs.

Holding this position means that male beach workers must also be able to compete with other men who work on the beach. This involves the men putting on an aggressive bad boy persona. In his initial interaction with the tourist Kevon explains that he has to let the tourist know that he is the “bar man” and he “runs the beach.” This is a part of a process of making the tourist think that they are dealing with someone who can help them with all of their needs. Giving this kind of first impression helps to ensure that the tourist does not go to any of the other beach workers. It also means that the beach worker can guide the tourist to buy from particular vendors or to rent chairs from a particular person. This allows him to build connections with a variety of beach workers who provide different services. On a slow day the competitiveness is even more visible. One of my informants pointed out that on a slow day “nobody wants to see
anyone making money.” The beach workers can be seen arguing over tourists and can be quite aggressive towards one another. Kevon emphasizes, “You just have to hold your side.” The more respected or assertive the beach worker is makes it less likely that other workers will try to “steal” his customers. This is wrapped up in a set of locally defined notions of masculinity in which men who are more confident and aggressive are more respected by other men.

Essentially, the work that these men do along the beach constantly gives them a chance to reaffirm and perform masculinity. Firstly, they are able to publicly call out and “sweet talk” both local and foreign women thus demonstrating their sexual prowess. Secondly, they must compete with each other and give tourists the impression that they run things. As a result, at times they must be assertive even aggressive and put on a bad boy image to gain the respect of their peers.

*Packaging Paradise*

On my first visit to a small boutique hotel in Grenada, I could see the stark contrast between the environment at a hotel and the vendor’s market where beach workers congregate. I drove down a private road, entering through a gated entrance where a courteous security guard directed me to a parking lot surrounded by a beautiful garden filled with greenery and decoratively placed tropical flowers. I walked to the main entrance where I was welcomed by a friendly young woman dressed in a professional uniform. She led me to the restaurant where I waited on a comfortable chair overlooking the garden, which opened out to the beach. There were no guests in the restaurant at that time but I could see some waiters neatly dressed in pressed white dress shirts and black pants setting tables and doing small tasks around the bar. The restaurant itself was beautifully decorated with white linens covering the tables and chairs.
and pink ginger lily floral arrangements on all of the tables. It looked like a display put together perfectly for a picture in a travel magazine.

By contrast, walking into the setting of the beach workers was a completely different world. Many of the male beach workers lingered around the beach in different areas. For instance, some could be seen sitting in the shade near their beach chair rentals or in nearby rum shops or bars. The presentation of the male beach workers in particular was interesting in comparison to the hotel staff. They were always dressed very casually. For the most part they wore baggy jeans or shorts with a t-shirt or sleeveless shirt and often wore baseball caps. Some had short cleanly cut hairstyles while others had braided hair and dreadlocks. One of my informants always wore a big gold chain around his neck and diamond studs in both ears. Whereas I was met with a polite “good afternoon miss” by male hotel staff, male beach workers greeted me with a flirtatious “hey sweetheart.” The image of the professional hotel staffer and the casual beach worker differed almost entirely yet many of them grew up in the same area.

The “Spice and Craft Market” along Grand Anse Beach was the only official central location where many of the beach workers and vendors would come together. The building is an open layout style in the shape of a semicircle facing the beach. The shops and vendor booths are contained within the semicircle and in the center is a courtyard with benches and a lawn with some small palm trees. The buildings themselves were painted colorfully which brightened up the surroundings. Apart from when a cruise ship was in, most of the people in the market were the vendors themselves and other beach workers. The vendors generally sat in their booths waiting for customers, chatting among themselves while the beach workers sat around on the benches talking to one another. Managed by the Tourism Authority, the market was built in an attempt to give the vendors a place to go and with its bright cheerful colors and tropical scenery
it provides a friendly space for tourists to go shopping. However, instead it seems to be more of a place to keep vendors contained since they are not permitted to go onto the beach to sell their products.

The male beach workers in particular seem to contradict the representation of a picturesque tropical paradise, in part through their performance of masculinity, but also because the flexibility of work on the beach permits the display of certain aspects of the local social life. The image of the market specifically is threatened by the presence of beach workers and other “unsavory characters” who hangout around and inside the market. As a result some tour guides are unwilling to bring tourists to the market, essentially creating a situation in which the intentions behind the market has backfired. The image of the hotel and the “Spice and Craft Market” are examples of how the tourism industry in Grenada and throughout the Caribbean is constructed in very specific terms to provide an image of paradise that is appealing to visitors.

The tension between the visual imagination of the Caribbean landscape and people versus the actual reality is not a recent phenomenon. From the beginning of the industry in the late nineteenth century in islands such as Jamaica and the Bahamas, British colonial officials, local white elites and foreign hoteliers initiated campaigns to recreate the islands as “tropical paradises” (Thompson 2006: 4). Throughout the Caribbean early attempts were made to reconstruct the image of the islands’ intensive agricultural past into a picturesque tropical paradise. According to Thompson, on Jamaica and the Bahamas “they physically transformed areas of the islands through plating campaigns or cleanliness drives, in efforts to make the islands appear as they did in photographs—orderly, picturesque, and tropical” (2006: 10). Also a part of this creating an image for tourist consumption was presenting an amiable and “tamed” image of locals. “Colonial officials and local elites, by enforcing and institutionalizing
‘picturesqueness,’ could safely airbrush unwanted, threatening, and undesirable elements, including people, out of the social frame in the name of maintaining the islands’ place-image” (Thompson 2006: 17). This kind of colonial discourse in which the islands are constructed to fit into visual imagination of the tourist is also present in marketing. Echtner and Prasad examine third world marketing of tourism and find that there are distinct patterns of marketing throughout third world countries which replicate colonial forms of discourse emphasizing certain binaries between first and third world. For instance, for sea and sand destinations such as the Caribbean they find that:

The atmosphere created around the sea/sand country cluster is entirely different, consisting of natural, pristine, tropical, verdant, gentle, amiable, and best themes. The first five of these themes are used to describe natural attractions. They paint a picture of an untarnished natural environment characterized by tropical, gentle lushness. Complementing these soft natural surroundings are the hosts, who are described with gentle and amiable themes. The built attraction of resorts is the final element of the sea/sand atmosphere, typified as providing the best (finest, superb) amenities available (2003: 666).

These types of representations still persist today and can be seen in the marketing of Grenada as a tourism destination and in the hotels themselves. Whereas the hotels are built to signify luxury and relaxation and the employees are always professional and courteous, the workers on the beach are rough around the edges and can be seen as signifiers of poverty. The assertive and somewhat aggressive behavior that beach workers may have with tourists and among themselves does not fit into the image of the local people as “gentle and amiable.” This is something that the tourists themselves notice. In all of my interviews with tourists they mentioned that it was “annoying” at times to be “bothered” by the beach workers. Most tourists want to be left alone to relax and enjoy the destination. In a hotel the employees are there to serve them at their every convenience but they also give them space. By contrast the beach
workers have a better chance of earning more money by interacting with the tourist and hustling. As a result, the beach workers are less concerned with a pristine image and more concerned with being able to make money. For hotels and restaurant, the tourist comes to them and is attracted by the image of paradise and luxury. However, for the male beach worker they have to go to tourist and compete against other beach workers. Thus, the assertive hyper-masculine persona is essential.

The male beach workers who work along the beach hustling and providing services to the tourist contradict the neat construction of the tourism industry. Instead of fitting into the representation of the destination as a pristine paradise they represent the reality of how some people live on the island. They serve a necessary purpose in the industry by providing for the visitor who is not staying in a hotel or who may want to be served more informally. In return the industry presents them with a way of validating their masculinity through performance and by earning money independently through informal structures. For the most part many of these men have been marginalized both social and economically as a result of colonialism and the tourism industry itself has been constructed using an image that would also have them excluded, yet they manage to create a space where they can achieve their own independence by using the system through licensing. However, I would argue that the likelihood of them being able to continue work in this way is severely limited as a result of increased development, particularly by foreign investors who expect a picturesque image of the island. Government will be put under more pressure to regulate the behavior and activities of people working on the beach. As a result, as new hotel projects are constructed the ability for individual gains that are independent from larger organizations will be decreased.
Rebranding and Restructuring Grenadian Tourism

Tourism in Grenada like in much of the Caribbean is characterized by the involvement of both the private and public sector. The industry is made up of privately run businesses and individuals ranging from vendors who work for themselves in the Spice and Craft Market to huge all-inclusive resorts. The government, particularly the division in charge of tourism, regulates the industry by licensing businesses and individuals, regulating taxation, providing support to the private sector, maintaining local sites, and most importantly marketing Grenada as a destination on a whole. This leaves many areas where the public and private sector converge. However, the concerns of the private and public sector often conflict as a result of different interests and opinions. Recently, one of the major points of contention has been a recent restructuring of the statutory body in charge of tourism and its new marketing strategy. The changes have sparked a great deal of debate both within the tourism sector and among Grenadians outside of the industry. The upset is as a result of a feeling of a loss of identity incurred by the change in branding and the lack of decision-making power, which resulted from the use of a foreign marketing team.

One of the most memorable things that any traveler to Grenada should remember after their visit to the island is the symbol of the nutmeg and the significance of spices. In fact, Grenada is known as the “Island of Spice” in the Caribbean because it is one of the leading producers of nutmeg and mace in the world. Apart from its economic importance, the nutmeg is also a national symbol, represented both on the national flag and the coat of arms of Grenada. It is no surprise then that spices are an essential way in which Grenada has in the past been branded in the tourism industry. Locally grown spices are plentiful in all the vendor’s markets and other stores throughout the island. Tourists frequently buy neatly packed spice baskets filled with local
nutmeg and mace, cinnamon, cocoa, ginger, clove and saffron. In addition to this, tourist shops are filled with merchandise inscribed with “Island of Spice” or “Spice Isle” logos and local nutmeg products. Grenada embraces the brand as the “Island of Spice” in multiple ways, most importantly as an identity, which locals are proud of. Despite this recognition and acceptance of “Island of Spice,” the Government has chosen to rebrand tourism in Grenada using the new tagline “Pure Grenada” which has left many Grenadians feeling displeased.

The government initiated the rebranding campaign after the “Grenada Board of Tourism” was “upgraded” to the “Grenada Tourism Authority.” This change in itself confused many of my Grenadian informants who were unsure of any real difference between the new Tourism Authority and its predecessor. As one of my informants stated: “it’s the same thing just under a different name”. According to the Minister of Tourism, “the Authority was opened up to be a more focused, high-tech organization focusing on sales and marketing and public relations”. She explained that The Board of Tourism was around for many years and needed to be updated to a more modern organization that could run more efficiently. “The Grenada Board of Tourism was very administratively heavy and bureaucratic. We wanted more technical people who could get out there and sell Grenada because that’s what we really need to do.”

The first task of Tourism Authority was to lead a rebranding of Grenadian Tourism. The new brand logo and tagline, “Pure Grenada” was unveiled in February 2014 and instantly created a dispute among Grenadians who disliked the new brand. The upset can be broken down into two main reasons why some Grenadians rejected the new brand. Firstly, many people think that “Pure Grenada” is unoriginal and does not reflect the rich cultural and historical heritage of Grenada. In an explanation that explains this point of view one of my informants said:

I think pure Grenada is too generic. I respect that Grenada is trying to re-label or remarket itself, but pure Grenada sounds too generic and very impersonal. It doesn’t
really reflect Grenada’s heritage or culture. It is something I would expect more from a
generic tourist destination. Not something I would expect from an island that prides itself
as a secret gem.

What is more, many people interpreted “Pure Grenada” as a replacement for “Spice
Island,” leaving some people with the feeling that a part of their cultural identity was taken away
and replaced with a generic term. In an interview with the Minister of Tourism she commented
on the dispute saying:

We haven’t gotten rid of the “Spice Island”. We are the “Spice Island”. Just how
Barbados is the ‘land of flying fish’; St. Lucia is the ‘Helen of the Caribbean’; Trinidad is
the ‘Island of pan’. But that doesn’t bring Tourists. We are the ‘Spice Island’ like
Barbados is the ‘land of flying fish’, but we also have a marketing campaign to use in
tourism.

Some Grenadians seem to fall in with this line of thinking. Although not embracing the new
brand some locals are indifferent. One of my informants’ statements sums up this opinion:

“Honestly, I don’t care about the new brand. I’m not a tourist. It will always be Spice Isle to
me.”

The second reason that many Grenadians have rejected the new brand is a result of the
lack of communication between the Tourism Authority and members of the community about the
rebranding campaign. The Minister of Tourism stated that they had a number of well-known
professionals work on the rebranding process, many of whom appear to be outsiders. Leading the
brand development was Inglefield, Ogilvy & Mather, the Caribbean arm of the international
advertising, marketing and public relations agency based in the United States. Also supporting
the new campaign were Jonathan Tourtellot, Founder and Director of National Geographic’s
Centre for Sustainable Destinations and Editor of the National Geographic Traveler Magazine;
Martha Honey, Director of the Center for Responsible Travel; Laura Bombier, head of marketing
at Les Stroud Productions; and Wendy Turner, Vice President Productions & CFO , also of Les
Stroud Productions. In effect, many of the people who worked on the new brand and supported it were foreign-based and may have had a limited understanding of Grenadian culture. Moreover, although it is invaluable to have international expertise aid in the development of a tourism marketing campaign, it may also limit the input of local voices into the decision-making especially when the foreign input is from prestigious organizations such as National Geographic. The Minister of Tourism also partnered with the private sector through the Grenada Hotel and Tourism Association; however, I was unable to determine the actual extent of their involvement. The hotel management that I did speak to seemed disappointed with the decision to rebrand Grenada with the tagline “Pure Grenada,” which indicates that the government did not consult much with the private sector.

It is evident that there was very little discussion with Grenadians about the rebranding process. The Minister of Tourism blames some of the dispute on the lack of communication, which resulted in a limited understanding of the new brand. However, some of the local concerns need not go unwarranted. “The purpose of branding in international tourism is to identify services as belonging to a particular service provider's country and to enable differentiation of its services from those of its competitors” (Dosen, Vranesevic and Prebezac 1998: 112). This is particularly important for destinations in the Caribbean where islands can seem indistinguishable to a tourist who is unfamiliar with the region. A common complaint of the “Pure Grenada” brand is that it is too generic, leaving Grenada with no original trademarks. In addition to this, researchers have found that it is essential for local people to sustain ownership and control over brand development and cultural experiences. “If the relationship between tourism and culture is

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2 The Grenada Hotel and Tourism Association (GHTA) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that represents private sector in Grenada’s tourism sector.
to be sustainable, tourism will have to be developed in harmony with community interests. It will have to protect and preserve traditional cultures, fostering sensitivity to and appreciation for cultural practices” (McIntosh, Hinch and Ingram 2002, 39).

On the other side to this debate, “Pure Grenada” is a marketing strategy that is not meant for Grenadians; its purpose is to attract tourists. According to the Minister of Tourism unlike the “Island of Spice,” “Pure Grenada” can be applied to a range of activities and attractions and this is a large part of its appeal. In an interview that I conducted she made the following statement about the new brand:

It’s outward facing. It’s for the mom and pop sitting in Toronto. When they hear about ‘Pure Grenada’ their going to book a ticket because ‘Pure Grenada’ means the people, the culture, the beaches, the rainforest, the food, everything, the diving everything. It gives us a broader spectrum. If all we are is spices then we’re putting ourselves in a very small box. People don’t come here because we have spices. People spend thousands of dollars on a holiday because they want to unwind and relax and ‘Pure Grenada’ will bring them. The market loves it. Not only that, we’re also working on the preservation of the island. Where other countries are building and building thousands of hotel rooms we want to stop and take a look around and say how can we take what we have and make it better. Yes, we’re going to add some more but we need to be aware that soon an unspoiled tropical paradise is going to be a thing of the past. There are some islands that want to build ten thousand to fifteen thousand rooms. There are some islands that have forty thousand rooms already. Where are they going? What are you going to do when all these people get here? So we figured what we were going to focus on was quality rather than quantity. And a big part of our ‘Pure Grenada’ campaign is also the environment and the preservation of it. That we can capture that all in one brand is important… You can do anything you want but with ‘Spice Island’ we’re in a box. But ‘Pure Grenada’ that speaks volumes. What’s pure? Well everything.

It is evident that “Pure Grenada” was a well-thought out plan that could encompass the variety that characterizes the tourism industry in Grenada. Still, it raises the question of who should be considered when developing a marketing strategy for tourism. On one side are the tourists who are the reason behind the campaign and the subjects that the brand is trying to attract, and on the other are the locals who must eventually engage with visitors and who are in some way a part of the image being marketed. There is no easy answer to this question, but it is
clear that members of the Grenadian community want to be considered in decisions such as these. However, such an involvement is difficult to achieve especially since these changes are a part of Grenada’s tourism industry being intertwined with more global markets.

However, it appears that the public disapproval of the “Pure Grenada” marketing campaign has gained the attention of Tourism Authority. According to a recent article published in a Grenadian newspaper; public pressure has forced tourism officials to take a second look at the “Pure Grenada” concept. The article also indicated that the Tourism Authority is planning to a campaign to educate the public about the “Pure Grenada” brand (“Grant Reacts to ‘Pure Grenada’ issue”, 2014). The pressure put on the government appears to have resulted in the inclusion of spices to the phrase. The new brand tagline reads: “Pure Grenada: The Spice of the Caribbean.”

The case of rebranding Grenadian tourism clearly demonstrates that the global agenda at times conflicts with local desires for the sector. As an industry that thrives off of originality, and understanding both global and local attitudes, it is difficult to find a balance that satisfies everything. Although the local community has a voice in decision-making and can put pressure on the government, it is not the voice that is first considered. This is especially the case since the industry is becoming an increasingly attractive destination for the introduction of more international developers and foreign hotel chains. The result is a more outward approach to marketing and financing that limits the inclusion of the local perspective.
Part III: Global Connections

In general, tourism has become a truly global industry. It encompasses most countries around the world regardless of location and size and it includes multiple activities ranging from accommodation, transport and entertainment to construction, agriculture and telecommunications, forming a complex value chain that can operate across countries (ECLAC 2008: 136). In addition to this, tourism is both a significant agent in the globalization process and is strongly influence by its progression. “Globalisation is the new economic and social reality within which tourism has to operate. The tourism industry by its very nature is both vulnerable to the changing market realities that globalisation brings, but can also be a major beneficiary of globalisation given the right adaptation strategies” (OECD 2010: 53). The tourism industry in Grenada has remained on a relatively small scale with locals owning and operating the majority of tourism related businesses. However, over the past decade or so Grenada has become increasingly interconnected with international institutions as development of the tourism industry increases. Increased development and the need to continuously improve the product and services of the tourism sector in Grenada are essential in light of the fierce global competition and vulnerability to foreign markets. This section will explore some of the ways in which the local intersects with the global as it relates to the tourism industry. Firstly, I will examine the all-inclusive model hotel and the addition of Sandals to Grenada. I will also explore other developments that are in the planning stages of development and the role of foreign direct investment. This section will also expand on local tensions regarding the direction of the sector’s
development. My aim in this section is to demonstrate that increased development of the tourism sector in Grenada correlates with an increased international presence on the local level which disrupts local development in the industry.

**The Role of Foreign Direct Investment on the Ground**

The importance of the tourism industry lies in the fact that it connects to many other sectors in the economy. While I was doing fieldwork in Grenada I was able to observe the planning of a wedding at a small hotel, which demonstrates this aspect of the industry. The couple originated from the UK and decided on a wedding in Grenada because the groom had family on the island and they both wanted a destination wedding. The ceremony and reception was relatively small with only about ten guests. The wedding was held in a pavilion on the hotel grounds and was catered by a nearby restaurant, which was also on the same property but was managed separately from the hotel. The wedding cake was ordered from a local bakery. A minister was present to officiate the wedding, a local photographer was hired to take pictures, as was a young steelpan musician to play throughout the service and the dinner. The couple also had to pay a government fee and apply for a marriage license. This is one very small case, but it demonstrates how a couple planning a wedding at one small hotel can promote business for other local businesses and individuals. The ability of tourism to stimulate other sectors is an essential factor in the potential of the tourism industry.

However, certain features of increased international involvement in the local tourism industry can threaten this potential. The all-inclusive hotel is a critical example of this and is an
emerging subject in Grenada where “Sandals LaSource Grenada”\(^3\) has recently opened. Since an all-inclusive package includes most if not all of the activities that the visitor will engage in, it leaves little to no opportunity for expenditure outside of the resort. The result is that the tourist does not leave the resort and there is little trickle down to other local business that would ordinarily benefit from visitors staying in hotels. However, Sandals is not the first all-inclusive hotel to operate in Grenada. Sandals Resorts International bought over “LaSource” which was a Grenadian family owned all-inclusive resort that went bankrupt in 2012. The essential difference between the two all-inclusive resorts is that one was locally owned and the other is foreign owned. Based on a study on all-inclusive package tours, about 80% of travelers’ expenditures end up leaving the country. Often the majority of expenses go to the airlines, hotels and other international companies— which often have their headquarters outside of the tourist destination— and not to local businesses or workers. In addition to this, significant amounts of income actually retained at destination level can leave again through leakage (UNEP and UNCTAD, 2005). In the case of the Sandals in Grenada, one of my informants indicated that many products sold at the resort are produced overseas and then shipped to Grenada, whereas at any of the locally owned hotels that I visited everything was for the most part produced in Grenada. At Sandals for instance, all of the rum sold are Appleton Estate Rum, a Jamaican brand—this is not surprising since Sandals is a Jamaican company. By contrast, at any of the locally owned hotels Grenadian produced rums are sold. In effect, Sandals does little to support

\(^3\) Sandals Resorts International (SRI) is an operator of all-inclusive resorts in the Caribbean. It has expanded from one brand and one resort in Montego Bay, Jamaica to become one of the most well-known hospitality companies in the world. The company consists of five brands and 24 properties in seven countries including Antigua, The Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Turks and Caicos, and most recently Grenada (Sandals).
other local industries in the way that smaller locally owned hotels do, and this is a significant weakness of foreign investments.

However, the introduction of Sandals to the Grenadian landscape is not entirely unfavorable. In fact, it carries essential advantages for the Grenadian tourism industry and the local economy on a whole that should not be overlooked. Firstly, the construction and remodeling of the Sandals resort helped in an overall boost to the economy. In the annual Budget Report the Prime Minister reported growth in the overall Grenadian economy. The leading sector contributing to this growth performance was construction, which grew by 20 percent after six consecutive years of decline. The boost in the construction sector was as a result of major construction work that was done in a number of different projects, the largest of which was the Sandals LaSource project (Government of Grenada 2014: 15). The Prime Minister reported that the approximately US$80 million was spent to remodel 100 rooms and build 125 new rooms, employing a total of 1,500 workers throughout the construction. In addition to this, Sandals has employed approximately 500 Grenadians in the resort as staff at different levels (Government of Grenada 2014: 49). This makes Sandals one of the largest employers in Grenada and has become a beacon of hope for young Grenadians to become gainfully employed in the tourism industry.

Another benefit that many Grenadians have associated with the opening of Sandals is the increased recognition of Grenada as a major tourism destination. In the Budget Report the Prime Minister Stated: “We welcome the Sandals brand to Grenada and believe it is already propelling Grenada in the marketplace as a destination of choice” (Government of Grenada 2014: 49). Similarly, a representative from the Grenada Hotel and Tourism Association said: “Sandals is spending a lot of money on marketing. They’re spending far more money than the Grenada Tourism Authority will ever spend so from that aspect it’s good.” Indeed, Sandals Resorts
International is a massive company that is able to spend a great deal of money on advertising compared to smaller hotels and even the government. In addition to this, the Sandals brand in Grenada will likely boost Grenada’s worldwide recognition as a prime destination.

Essentially, there are many benefits to having a large multinational company such as Sandals in Grenada; however, the government must also provide a compelling arrangement that encourages companies such as Sandals to bring their business to the island. The deal with Sandals Resorts International was brokered by the previous Grenadian administration\(^4\) who offered substantial concessions to persuade Sandals to do business. According to the former Finance Minister, the government agreed to waive the company’s payment of corporate taxes and property taxes for 25 years. Other concessions include waiving all import duties on VAT\(^5\) and custom service charges on all capital inputs for 25 years and waiving the VAT for 15 years on consumer goods. In an interview with media about the concessions the former Finance Minister stated:

> That, of course, is not new. Other corporations that have come to Grenada have benefitted in that way… In taking these steps, we recognize that we were doing something that was special but we felt we had to do it. We did it because we recognize the enormous benefit that the presence of Sandals can have, and will have, for Grenada (Caribbean News Now, 2012).

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\(^4\) The National Democratic Congress (NDC) lead by the former Prime Minister Hon. Tillman Thomas was in power from 2008 to 2013. The current administration The New National Party (NNP) lead by the current Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Keith Mitchell took over power after winning elections in February 2013.

\(^5\) Value-added Tax (VAT) is a form of consumption tax on businesses. It is charged on the value of imports and on the value added on goods and services supplied by one business to another or to consumers. The VAT provides for a standard rate of 15% a reduced rate for hotel accommodation and dive activity of 10% and a rate of 0% for certain goods and services (Government of Grenada).
Considering the huge investment that Sandals made of over US80 million dollars and the competition for foreign investors, enormous tax concessions are to be expected. “If a country wants to attract investment, it has to provide an attractive environment. That generally implies having political stability and economic advantages such as cheap labor or exploitable natural resources. In the game of attracting investment, therefore, some countries are going to lose simply because they lack these attributes” (Bhagwati 2004: 162). In effect, Sandals like many other large corporations could go to any country and start a business; but it is the country that offers the most favorable package that will win the investment. As a result, small countries like Grenada are forced to provide huge tax concessions if they want to attract foreign investors.

For Small Island developing states such as Grenada that rely on tourism as a source of economic growth and foreign exchange, foreign direct investment (FDI) is essential especially as the industry is becoming increasingly globalized. Developing countries like Grenada lack the capital, technology and access to international networks for tourism marketing, therefore FDI as a way to counteract these drawbacks. In fact, tourism has become one of the main industries, which developing countries now use to attract FDI (ECLAC 2008: 141). Sandals is one of many projects that are going to be developed in Grenada by foreign investors over the next few years. In the Budget Report, the Prime Minister stated that they have definitive proposals for four new hotels and indicated plans to construct a set of five-star hotels along Grand Anse Beach and elsewhere. In addition to this, cabinet has endorsed a list of approved projects including the development of the Port Louis Marina project and Mt. Hartman and Hog Island Hotel Resort (Government of Grenada 2014: 36). According to preliminary reports the Port Louis project will surpass Sandals with an investment of $700 million and include two hotels, 18 townhouses and 25 villas. In addition, the marina will have 300 berths, including 12 for super yachts and
additional space for a yacht club, retail and restaurants. Parts of the Port Louis Marina are already operating and the key elements of the entire project are projected to be complete in 2015 (Babej, 2013). The Mt. Hartman and Hog Island project was planned to be a Four Seasons Resort developed by Cinnamon 88 and its parent company in the UK Capital 88. The proposed development first came to public attention in 2006 and was to encompass private villas and residences, a hotel, a championship class golf course, a marina, and other resort amenities on the Mt. Hartman Estate. Hog Island, an 85-acre offshore island was to accommodate a hotel and villas (Blyther and Rusk 2010: 3). These are all extensive projects that will create a great deal of employment for Grenadians and recognition on a global scale as a leading tourism destination.

Conclusive information about the concessions given to aid the development of these other projects is not yet available; however, to attract these investors the government likely provided a similar concession package given to Sandals Resorts International.

One of the major issues that exist as a result of these large concessions used to attract foreign investors is that it leaves little support for locally owned businesses. Indeed, many local business owners have complained about the government’s failure to support local businesses with the same enthusiasm as developments headed by foreign investors. In an interview with an owner and manager of a local hotel he stated:

One administration after the next doesn’t understand the importance of indigenously owned hotels. They’re quite happy for them to go bankrupt, and then the foreign investor comes in and because we get no concessions—Virtually no concessions at all. The foreign investor comes in, buys it from the bank at a fire sale price, and says we’re going to invest a million dollars or whatever it is. And the government gives them 25 years concessions. Now why do you give it to hotels in the first place? We don’t want 25 years of concessions. We’d be happy for 5 or 10.

The government recognizes these concerns, however they have not put a solution in place to address the issue. As a result, many locally owned hotels are in a state of economic vulnerability.
Some hotel workers blame this on the government’s failure to effectively market the country and the lack of international flights—interestingly, the opening of Sandals has helped to increase the number of flights to Grenada. For the government tourism is an essential industry that earns revenue for the country as a whole. As a result, providing too many concessions will reduce the amount of revenue that they can collect. The Minister of Tourism elaborated on this issue:

stating:

What we need to figure out is how to give a break to the hotel sector in general; but you also have to realize that tourism is how we pay our bills. Tourism is what earns the revenue to pay for the pills in the hospital and pay for the schoolbooks and the school uniforms that we give away. So if we give them concessions then we have no money to pay the bills; but at the same time, we can’t tax a sector that we want to see develop. How can he develop if he’s spending all his money on taxes? There has to be a balance. But really what we need to do in Grenada a little more is we need to diversify. Agriculture in particular is starting to make more money now.

Despite the recognition of a need to find a balance, the government appears to be doing more to tax the sector than previous years. The rate of overall property and building tax has increased, a tax that the foreign investor such as Sandals will not have to pay for the next 25 years. In addition to this, the government has chosen to introduce a Tourism Marketing Levy of US$5 per night for each stay-over visitor. According to the Prime Minister, “the funds collected from this Levy will be used exclusively for marketing Grenada and will be collected by government and channeled to the Grenada Tourism Authority for the sole purpose of marketing Grenada” (Government of Grenada 2014: 27). Many hotel operators are unhappy about this new tax because it will increase prices, which is concerning since tourism between countries is so competitive. Still, in the first year this Levy is projected to produce $2 million, which should positively impact Grenada’s overall marketing strategy.
In addition to this, the sheer size of these new projects means that a conflict with the local community is likely to be a major issue. In the case of the Four Seasons and Cinnamon 88 project, there was much controversy about environmental issues including the destruction of the endangered Grenada Dove\textsuperscript{6} habitat. The Mt. Hartman Estate and its surrounding areas support the largest remaining population of Grenada Doves. The majority of the population is on land that constitutes the Mt. Hartman National Park— which is a part of the Mt. Hartman Estate— where the development was planned. The Mt. Hartman National Park and Estate was owned by the Government of Grenada; however, an amendment to the National Parks Act, allowed it and other National Parks to be sold, with the approval of the National Park Advisory Council (Blyther and Rusk 2010: 3). As a result of the upset over this issue and pressure from national and international NGOs the government was forced to renegotiate with developers of the project. The amendment to the National Parks and Protected Areas Act allowing sale of national parks has been repealed and different boundaries for the National Park have been designated. However, the projected is still moving forward, therefore the possibility that the development will negatively impact the bird’s natural habitat still remains. Conflicts between development and environmental issues are a growing global issue. In the Caribbean and in many other places in the world these concerns are deeply intertwined with tourism development and international developers.

In addition to conflicts about environmental issues, developments of this size can also disrupt local communities and land use. The developers of the Mt. Hartman project have also

\textsuperscript{6} The Grenada Dove is endemic to Grenada and is the National Bird of the country. “The species is considered Critically Endangered because it has an extremely small and fragmented population which has declined owing to habitat loss and fragmentation caused by hurricanes, fire, clearance for residential housing, roads and other development, as well as grazing and predation by invasive species”(Bird Life International).
taken over Hog Island— an 85-acre offshore island. The island has always been accessible to Grenadians and has become a recreational area for both locals and the yachting community. In addition to this, over the past twenty years or so, a local entrepreneur has been running a small bar on the beach. The new development, which will take over the entire island, has created much conflicted because locals were not notified and no compensation has been given to the individuals who will essentially lose their business as a result of the development (“Local Voices,” 2008: 9). Moreover, the development of a hotel will likely mean that the island will no longer be accessible to locals. The ability of locals to access newly developed areas that were previously public is a major issue with many other tourism developments. The Port Louis Marina project, which has been subject to much less scrutiny than the Mt. Hartman project, will also result in the loss of some public access in developed areas. The Port Louis development map illustrates that the shoreline will be the site of “waterside cottages” (Port Louis). This is an area that has been used for years by local fishermen to store their boats; however the private accommodations will make it impossible for them to continue to use the area.

In addition to this, projects of this scale tend to dislocate some local populations who may live in these areas. This is particularly the case in situations in which individuals may not have legal rights to the land, an issue that is common in Grenada. According to a USAID report on Grenada land tenure, squatting is a large problem because of “government tolerance, public acceptance, and even ‘dignifying’ actions by the authorities, which encourage its growth. An argument can be made that a situation that is accepted, tolerated, and even encouraged could not be illegal but merely informal” (USAID 2005: 3). According to the report squatting is encouraged through a number of different factors. The report points out that there are large amounts of private land owned by absent landlords. This is especially the case since there is a
significant Grenadian community living abroad with no real interest in occupying the land. In addition to this, local government tends to not evict squatters from Crown Land for political reasons, especially during election periods. There is also a great deal of idle land in Grenada, both Crown and privately owned. This fact, go together with “high poverty levels, a local culture that highly values land ownership, the existence of Prescriptive Rights legislation, and a permissive law enforcement environment, are motivators for people to try to occupy apparent available land” (USAID 2005: 3). Although legislation and public behavior may encourage squatting little is done in practice to protect squatter rights. According to the USAID report, if an occupant is able to prove a minimum of years of uninterrupted unchallenged occupancy (12 years for occupation of Private Land, 30 years for Crown Land) and provide evidence of the occupant’s intention to disown the legal owner to establish occupancy permanently in such land, the occupant may be given title to the land occupied, but the occupancy is subject to due process” (2005: 3). However, in reality these rights may not be absolute. In fact, there have been cases in Grenada where squatters have been evicted even after years of occupying the land. The Port Louis project in particular has had to deal with the mass relocation of squatters. Reports indicate that approximately 80 low-income families had to be relocating to new areas, a process which was financed by Port Louis (Fraser,2007).

It is apparent that each project has its own set of issues with the local community depending on the type of development, location and engagement with community members. Regardless of these differences it is evident that most foreign led developments will result in less local control and access to those areas, although to different degrees. The Port Louis development for instance has plans to incorporate the local community by including a “craft
village” where locals will be able to come and do business. In an interview with the media Peter de Savary, the British developer behind the Port Louis project states:

Because we’re in no way setting ourselves apart, Port Louis is not a closed society, not something just for rich people, everybody is welcomed to come there and there will be something for everybody from all walks of life to enjoy (Fraser, 2008).

However, many foreign developers would prefer to maintain some separation from the local community. Like most resorts around the world, only guests have access to the grounds and facilities, however, locals have often used these areas for economic and recreational purposes long before development occurred. Interestingly, Grenadian law prohibits the privatization of beaches. All beaches including those on offshore islands must be accessible by locals. However, when hotels are constructed on the beachfront, they can limit or discourage locals in different ways particularly through security precautions. This is also likely to affect beach workers a great deal since they’re presence could be discouraged by hotels.

Foreign direct investment is an essential aspect of developing a competitive tourism product in developing countries. In Grenada foreign investors have brought important benefits to the tourism industry and the country on a whole such as employment, more frequent flights and increased international marketing and recognition. However, there are also many drawbacks to foreign investment depending on the project, including issues related to the environment and local community land rights. Concessions provided by the government are an inevitability that many developing countries that seek to attract foreign direct investment must succumb to as a result of the strong competition among countries. Many governments of developing countries around the world are to some extent at the mercy of the investment and technology that large corporations can bring. Greater support for foreign developments means that there is less support for locally owned business, which is resulting in more local hotels closing and being taken over
by foreign investors—as was the case with LaSource being taken over by Sandals. Locally owned businesses are critical for a successful tourism industry that benefits the Grenadian economy as a whole, as research indicates that a significant amount of leakage occurs in foreign-owned hotels. The main purpose of all of these companies is to make a profit, not to necessarily include the issues of the host country into their development plan. However, local voices have been able to encourage some developers to take responsibility of their actions and this is essential moving forward.
Conclusion

The tourism sector in the Caribbean has been an international industry from its inception. Colonial elites and foreign hoteliers owned and operated a large part of the initial tourism sector, a trend that continues today. Indeed, the very construction of the notion of paradise, which is a foundation of Caribbean tourism, is a result of early developments in the industry’s image. In essence, many of the contemporary features of the tourism industry can be closely linked to its foundations. However the world is a very different place than it was over a hundred years ago. The ease of travel and communication brought by developments in technology has changed the world and the tourism industry along with it—thus allowing the sector to flourish while becoming less localized and increasingly global.

Grenada is an interesting case because unlike many other countries in the Caribbean, it has been able to maintain a significant amount of local control and ownership over of the industry. However, the number and size of tourism developments in Grenada are increasing, and there are growing signs suggesting that this local control is beginning to fade. Grenada has seen an increasing number of foreign investors planning developments with the full support of the government. My findings demonstrate that increased development is related to an increased international presence on the local level, which disrupts local developments in the industry. For instance, many foreign developers have taken over local hotels that went out of business and receive competitive concessions from government, which local investors do not receive. On the one hand foreign direct investment is essential since it provides employment and Grenada lacks
the money and resources to construct hotels that can be competitive on the global market; however, on the other hand, it takes away from the opportunity of the local investor to receive benefits and a great deal of profits are lost locally due to leakage.

In addition to this, my findings demonstrate that as the industry becomes more connected to global institutions, decision-making power on the local level decreases, and it is likely that international concerns rather than local ones will drive the industry. Increased development appears to discourage independent beach workers since they are interpreted as unsavory annoyances to tourism. This is an example of how local realities are hidden in an attempt to maintain a picturesque image of paradise. In addition, the case of rebranding Grenadian tourism using the tagline “Pure Grenada” seemingly replacing the old identity as the “Spice Isle”—which was widely accepted as an important part of the island’s identity—demonstrates that what may work globally can still conflict with local desires.

Although they may be marginalized, local voices can still be heard and the ultimate success of a development project depends largely on its acceptance by local people. Despite these development plans being permitted by the government, the collective voice of locals still has the power to impact changes in developments. This is evident in environmental concerns raised about the Mt. Hartman project, which led to changes in the development plan. Another example of how locals can impact the tourism sector is the inclusion of “Spice of the Caribbean” to the “Pure Grenada” tagline. Although these examples demonstrate a relatively limited ability of local actors to affect tourism decisions, they reveal that local influences are an important part of the industry despite being increasingly globalized.
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