

RELEVANCE: *MAKING IT HAPPEN*



13th National Outdoor Education Conference
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13TH NATIONAL OUTDOOR EDUCATION CONFERENCE



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Thankyou to all those that made a contribution but did not receive a mention here.

Opening Address

Scott Polley

Welcome to Adelaide for the 13th National Outdoor Education Conference. I trust your time here is stimulating, develops your body of knowledge in outdoor education and impacts on your practice of the discipline. I would like to acknowledge that this conference takes place on Kaurna land.

The previous conference in Bendigo, Victoria was described as a summit. It sought to ask questions about the direction of outdoor education and its relevance in the Australian social context. The intention of this conference is to reflect on the history of Outdoor Education in Australia, hold the vision of the Summit in Bendigo, examine how to ensure that this vision is made relevant and then ask how to make it happen. The question in my mind is: How do we practice 'profound simplicity'?

There is a deliberate flow to the keynote presenters. Jackie Kiewa will reflect on something of the history of outdoor education, and in particular the two years since the summit and ask the difficult question of what has been achieved. Christian Itin will explore how the sub-disciplines within outdoor education need not compete with each other, but can instead inform and help each other to grow. Andrew Brookes reminds us not automatically believe our own rhetoric and to continue to critically examine outdoor education curriculum and claimed outcomes. Finally Peter Martin will ask us to look forward to the next stage beyond this conference. He continues his motive of service theme and asks what our contribution to the 21st century might be.

The facilitated workshops at the end of the first and second day are intended to allow opportunities for participants to provide their views to the new national organization. The first workshop, in randomly allocated groups, asks participants to identify what they want for outdoor education, and how best to proceed to make this happen. The second workshop asks participants to associate themselves with others from the same 'discipline' and clarify what the disciplines contribution to the field of outdoor education could be and how to ensure that this potential is realized. The final facilitated workshop on Wednesday morning will be in your random groups again. Each group is asked to outline SMART goals for outdoor education by 2005. That is: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and on Time.

This event is a 'waste-watch' event, for which we the Environment Protection Authority has kindly given us money to assist with the things that we wanted to do to minimize the ecological footprint of the conference. Details are in your proceedings and we thank you for your support of these initiatives. I would like to thank in advance our other major sponsors Perception Kayaks Australia, Wilderness Escape Adventures, Venture Corporate Recharge. In addition, our sponsors in University of South Australia, Accompany Outdoors and Westminster school. Without their involvement and cooperation this event would have much less.

I would like to thank presenters, volunteers, organizers and participants in advance for your contribution to the conference, to individual peoples lives, as well as society and our environment.

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Referencing is either Harvard or APA according to the preference of the author.

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Keynote no. 1

Have We Made It Happen? Reflections on the Summit of 2001

Jackie Kiewa

Abstract

This paper revisits the priorities established at the previous Summit of 2001, and describes some initiatives that have been undertaken to achieve these priorities in the intervening period. A major initiative undertaken since 2001 has been the establishment of a united voice amongst outdoor educators and outdoor recreators through the establishment of the Outdoor Council of Australia. Potential conflict amongst these two groups exists through perceived differences in philosophical outlook, but an examination of the underlying philosophy of recreational experiences reveals a complementarity of thought rather than opposition.

Introduction

In this presentation I want to review some of the ideas that emerged from our last conference in early 2001. I want to revisit these ideas and reflect on the progress that has been made. A starting point will be the “green paper” that summarised the “issues, directions, and priorities from the Summit 2001” (Twelfth National Outdoor Education Conference 2001).

This green paper listed the following issues/priorities:

1. Clarify and interpret the motive of service of the Outdoor Education profession
2. Improve the industry/profession's profile within the wider community
3. Accreditation of programs and/or certification of leaders
4. Develop Indigenous involvement, recognition, relationships
5. Governing body of the profession: form an alliance with the Outdoor Recreation Council of Australia (ORCA)
6. Research in Outdoor Education
7. Code of Ethics: identify existing codes and synthesise to form a draft code
8. Promote the expansion of Outdoor Education to encourage social justice
9. Risk management development: Collection of incident/accident data

Given the breadth and scope of these issues and priorities identified, I am unable to cover each of these topics at length. What I propose to do is to briefly acknowledge some of the initiatives that I know about, many of which are being presented in the workshops that make up this conference. However, given the limited nature of my knowledge, this brief coverage will mean that many exciting programs will be ignored. For this reason, I would also like to post up some large sheets and invite all delegates to add other initiatives within the relevant area. In this way we can share with each other what we have been doing.

In addition to this very practical discussion of initiatives, I also want to revisit some philosophical issues. A major initiative (discussed below) that has occurred over the past two years has been the amalgamation of the AOEC with ORCA. Whilst the many similarities that exist between the objectives of the two organizations have facilitated this amalgamation, some concern exists about differences in philosophy. Through a discussion of the philosophical foundations of recreation, I

hope to demonstrate that, as an ideal, outdoor recreation and outdoor education should be in harmony.

This paper is therefore divided into two parts. The first deals with practical initiatives that have been undertaken during the past two years, based on the priorities identified in the Summit of 2001. The second part moves to a philosophical consideration of the recreational experience.

Part A: Some Initiatives

1. Motive of service

As a result of the previous summit, a description of outdoor education was developed, which included a strong motive of service. This description was as follows:

Through interaction with the natural world, outdoor education aims to develop an understanding of our relationships with the environment, others and ourselves. The ultimate goal of outdoor education is to contribute towards a sustainable community (Outdoor Educator's Association of Queensland, Inc., 2001).

A vigorous email discussion that followed the summit focussed on the ambiguity of the term 'sustainable community'. The intent of the description was to focus on environmental sustainability as well as a sense of community, but, as was pointed out, many communities are repressive and unjust. To aim for a sustainable community is not sufficient – it is also necessary to describe the type of community that is sought.

In response to this criticism, an amended description has been proposed by Innes Larkin:

Outdoor Education is the process of applying learning models in, about and for the outdoors. The goal of Outdoor Education is to develop profound and comprehensive understandings of ourselves, and our relationships with the diverse biophysical, social and cultural environments we live in.¹

This description should not be assumed to be the end of the discussion – which has to be ongoing. Outdoor education is a dynamic process, and insights into its nature are developing with research and experience. I think it would be a backward step to assume that we can ever arrive at the definitive description of outdoor education, but I would be interested in your responses to this one and invite you to post them up on the sheet.

2. Amalgamation with ORCA: The Outdoor Council of Australia

I am introducing this initiative as the second issue in this paper, because it incorporates other major issues such as improving our profile and introducing an accreditation/certification scheme. The amalgamation of the Australian Outdoor Education Council with ORCA has been the major initiative that has been undertaken by the AOEC during the past two years, and has certainly taken up most of our energy. As part of this process, we have needed to find out what the two organizations have in common, what differences may exist, and how we can combine resources without losing touch with values that we hold dear. A major difference, of course, is that the AOEC is about outdoor education, whilst ORCA is about outdoor recreation – with consequent differences in philosophy – and I will return to this later in this paper. Now I wish to describe the organization that has been developed to replace the AOEC and ORCA.

¹ Innes Larkin has been responsible for the synthesis of ideas that has led to this statement, and is using this description as the basis for a code of ethics that is being discussed in a workshop scheduled during this conference.

The Outdoor Council of Australia (OCA) is, like the AOEC, a council made up of organisational members. All its members are organizations, rather than individuals. The members of OCA are, first of all, the state based outdoor education and outdoor recreation organizations, which are as follows:

- Western Australia: Outdoors Western Australia
- South Australia: Outdoor Education Association of South Australia; Recreation South Australia
- Victoria: Victorian Outdoor Education Association; Outdoor Recreation Council
- Tasmania: Tasmanian Outdoor Recreation Council
- New South Wales: Outdoor Recreation Industry Council
- Queensland: Outdoor Education Association of Queensland; Queensland Outdoor Recreation Council
- ACT: Outdoor Education Association (ACT); ACT Outdoor Recreation Forum
- Northern Territory: Northern Territory Outdoor Recreation Council

Other members of OCA are national outdoor education or outdoor recreation organizations, such as the Australian Canoe Federation, or Guides Australia.

The OCA will be governed by a Board of elected individuals. Whilst voting will be carried out by members (that is, by the state or national organizations), nominees will be nominated by individuals – that is, the individual members of the state or national organizations. For example, any individual member of the Outdoor Education Association of Queensland can nominate any other individual member to stand for election on the Board. Once elected, however, this individual will not be a delegate for the OEAQ – individuals will not represent their organization or their state.

Individual members of the Board will take on responsibility for a portfolio. It is proposed that a number of portfolios be created – one of which is likely to be Outdoor Education. One member of the Board will become chair of the Portfolio of Outdoor Education, and will gather a committee to help him or her in this position. It is likely that this outdoor education committee will consist of the state delegates of each of the state outdoor education associations. In other words, the Outdoor Education Portfolio will look very similar to the present AOEC. In this way, it is hoped that outdoor education will retain its identity within the larger picture of the Outdoor Council of Australia.

3. Accreditation and certification

Most people would be familiar with the terminology “accreditation” which is of programs, and “certification” which is of individuals. Programs of accreditation and certification have been developed and are in the process of being implemented. This initiative has been largely developed, and therefore shaped, by outdoor recreation state and national associations. Whilst almost everyone would agree that formal accreditation and certification is useful and becoming increasingly necessary, and tremendous progress has been made, this progress has been marked with controversy, and is still not smooth sailing.

In program accreditation, two options now exist – slightly different but with many areas of overlap. These are the long-existing Campsite Accreditation Program, originally designed for Victoria by the Victorian Camping Association, but now extended nationally by the Australian Camping Association; and the National Organisation Accreditation Scheme that has been developed by ORCA, based on a model designed by the Outdoor Recreation Industry Council of

NSW. Whilst these schemes are slightly different in scope and intent, there is much overlap, with possible confusion and competition between the two schemes. It is hoped that some resolution will be reached in this area.

ORCA has also been responsible for the development of a national instructor registration program. This program certifies instructors within specific activity areas (rather than as a generalist outdoor educator). It also accepts multiple paths towards registration – including Vocational Education Training (VET) courses, tertiary courses, industry courses and personal experience. The difficulty for many outdoor educators lies in the fact that the VET (or Technical and Further Education) outdoor recreation competencies are being used as the standard against which other courses/experiences are measured – but most outdoor educators have followed other routes to receive their formal qualifications. This means they are now required to engage in a time consuming and costly process of mapping their training against the VET competencies for each activity for which they require registration. This may not be a problem in the future, if all industry and tertiary training programs align themselves with the VET framework, but it is a problem for current outdoor educators and has not yet been resolved.

Despite this major hiccup, the registration process promises a major advance in the professionalism of outdoor education, with consequent recognition from the insurance industry as well as improvements in work conditions.

With reference to the insurance crisis, I notice that Sandy Allen-Craig is presenting a workshop focussed on this issue on Wednesday.

4. Research in Outdoor Education

The Australian Journal of Outdoor Education continues to be the main focus of the AOEC research profile. As editor until mid 2002, Tonia Gray was responsible for the increased professionalism of this journal. Upon her resignation, James Neil was appointed editor of the Journal, which will continue, within the new Outdoor Council of Australia, to provide high quality research-based papers.

Research in outdoor education is absolutely necessary if our practice is to remain critical and continue to improve. That research is alive and well is further evidenced by this conference, which is bringing together many active researchers as well as practitioners eager to listen to their insights. A number of workshops are dedicated exclusively to research – for example I notice that today we have a workshop focussed on the relevance of research, as well as one that describes how to get published in the AJOE. Other workshops are focussed on the application of research and how this can improve our practice.

At the close of the conference, Peter Martin will be presenting a paper that summarises some of the findings that have resulted from research, and what these findings mean for outdoor education in the 21st century.

5. Links with indigenous groups

On a formal level, this is an area that needs much more development, and I would recommend that it become a priority area for the new Outdoor Council of Australia. On an informal level, a number of programs are being developed with an indigenous focus, and existing programs are beginning to develop links with local indigenous peoples.

6. Code of ethics

I believe that a number of people have been working independently on codes of ethics, and, for this reason, I sincerely apologise if I am ignoring some hard work and I would ask you to describe your initiative on the posters that will be put up. The work that I know about has been

done by Innes Larkin, based in South-East Queensland. He has consulted widely throughout Queensland in developing a proposed code. Innes is hoping to further develop this code in a presentation and workshop on Tuesday, and is hoping to thereby develop something that is representative of the outdoor education profession at a national level. In doing this, we need to be also mindful of the fact that ORCA has already developed their own code of ethics. We need to decide whether we want a single code of ethics for the Outdoor Council of Australia, or whether we want our own outdoor education code to exist within the Outdoor Education Portfolio.

As part of the constitution of the Outdoor Council of Australia, we did adopt a number of values, previously developed by the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation. These appear on the front cover of the Constitution and read as follows:

The Outdoor Council of Australia Inc. values:

- outdoor experiences
- the intrinsic worth and fragility of all natural environments;
- equity
- diversity of:
 - environments
 - groups/individuals
 - activities
 - experiences

It is likely that these values may need further clarification, perhaps as part of our code of ethics.

7. Risk management development

This conference is evidence of the work of many people in developing a stronger understanding of risk in outdoor education. The inherent riskiness of our activities is also part of their worth, and we face the continual dilemma of balancing this risk with the need to keep our students and clients safe. The current insurance crisis may be an indication that society at large does not believe that the balance is being kept. Whether this is true or not might emerge through the workshops conducted this week by Andrew Brookes, Rob Hogan and Ian Boyle, which are all focussed on the learnings that we might glean from tragic misadventures in the outdoors.

Part B: Some Philosophy

The first part of this paper focussed on the issues that were identified as priorities at the Summit of 2001. As mentioned above, a major achievement arising from these issues has been the establishment of the Outdoor Council of Australia, representing a merging of the two organizations: the Australian Outdoor Education Council and the Outdoor Recreation Council of Australia. This merger has occurred because of the many similarities that exist between the two associations. Whilst the two organizations share much in common, they also appear to differ in key areas. It is this difference that I wish to address in this part of my presentation.

The perceived major difference is signalled by the names of the organizations. The AOEC is about education, whilst ORCA is about recreation. Educators might understand the difference to be that outdoor education uses outdoor activities to bring about positive change in groups and individuals – either in enhanced self-awareness/esteem or in environmental sensitivity and improved practices – whilst outdoor recreation uses outdoor activities for their inherent pleasure – a more hedonistic viewpoint encouraging a short-term stimulation of the senses that lends itself to commercial exploitation, and might, in fact, be damaging to the natural environment. It is this

point of view that often leads to distrust between outdoor recreators and outdoor educators. In an effort to dispel this distrust, I would like to spend a short time discussing the nature of recreation.

I would like to begin by making the point that this short term emphasis on sensory stimulation is not a bad thing in itself. We call it fun. And we need it. The exhilaration that follows a speedy descent of a mountain, or the icy cold of a creek on a hot day, is in marked contrast to much of our lives, and leads to what we call “high spirits” and a general sense of well-being. However, such sensory stimulation is not necessarily good for the environment – in fact it is often downright damaging (for example, sliding down steep sand dunes on sheets of cardboard, flattening any plants in our path) – and when fun is our only aim, outdoor recreation can be quite devastating to the natural environment. Yet I would suggest that this view of outdoor recreation is limited and distorted, just as the “sausage-factory” approach represents a distortion of outdoor education.

Recreation, which was originally (and obviously) derived from the word “re-creation”, or “to create again or anew” is what we do in our leisure time. Leisure is often defined as the opposite of work – that is, we divide our time up neatly into work-time and leisure-time. In this sense, leisure could also be seen as the opposite of education, particularly for those of us who are students and see leisure as what we do when we are not attending lectures, studying or writing assignments. It is therefore rather disconcerting to find that the ancient Greek word for leisure is “scole” – the origin of our words “school” and “scholar”. I will return to this point presently, but for now I’d like to simply observe that in a society that has a high rate of unemployment, to define leisure as non-work time is problematic. It also makes little sense to others not involved in paid work, such as full-time mothers or older people who have retired from paid employment.

Another way of defining leisure is through activity. Certain activities are recreational activities – such as sport, or watching television. This definition is also useful, but limited, with many areas of ambiguity. Does sport remain recreation for professional players? And what about activities that might not normally be thought of as recreational, but have become so due to particular circumstances – for example some surveys have indicated that “taking a bath” is a primary leisure activity for many mothers, due to the rare opportunity that this activity offers for sensory pleasure and privacy.

A more useful way of defining leisure, and one that is now generally adopted by leisure researchers, is as a state of mind. A number of researchers have attempted to develop an understanding of the essence of leisure – the factors that create a sense that one is “at leisure”.

In 1981 Neulinger developed a two-category definition of leisure, which is still commonly used by contemporary researchers. The two categories were firstly, how much freedom the participant perceived he or she was experiencing in engaging in an activity; and secondly, whether his or her motivation for engagement was intrinsic or extrinsic. Pure leisure involved a sense of freedom (I have chosen to do this and I am doing it my way) and intrinsic motivation (I am doing this activity because it is inherently enjoyable – not to achieve any other purpose). Using freedom (even perceived freedom) as a category is problematic, however, in that our choices are always constrained by our context, and our choices immediately imply the acceptance of new constraints. For example, the choice of a holiday venue is constrained by our economic circumstances, as well as our knowledge of possible venues, and once the choice has been made (for example, to go climbing in New Zealand), we are immediately constrained by a host of other circumstances (we must now take clothing suitable for such a holiday; we must engage in a vigorous training regime; we can no longer contemplate relaxing in a tropical paradise and so on). These problems were resolved to some extent by Samdahl (1988), who suggested that our sense of freedom in leisure arises because leisure offers opportunities to break out of our normal roles in life. If our normal role in life is to be an accountant, the opportunity to become a

mountain climber for a short period of time represents a sense of breaking free from this role, despite the constraints it also imposes. Freedom from role restraint therefore became the first category that Samdahl used to define leisure. She also suggested a second category, which is a strong degree of self expression – the new role must provide us with the opportunity to express some aspect of ourselves that is usually repressed or dormant. In other words, leisure becomes a state of mind experienced through a sense of self-enhancement. This sense of fulfillment could well be experienced at work or through study. Wearing (1998) further developed this idea through her description of leisure as “personal space” (where space might be physical or metaphorical) and conceptualised leisure as resistance to domination, “where there is room for the self to expand beyond what it is told it should be” (Wearing, 1998, p.146).

It is this understanding of leisure and the recreational experience that offers most promise for success in the merger of outdoor education and outdoor recreation. Understood in this fashion, outdoor recreation becomes an opportunity for a participant to move beyond the constraints of a technologically advanced and materialistic lifestyle and develop a relationship with the natural world. Resistance to the demands of a consumer-oriented economy involves the acceptance of the constraints of simplicity, but such constraints are part of this enhanced sense of self.

Educational programs could also benefit from this understanding of leisure and recreation. With a return to the Greek understanding of the scholar as an individual at leisure to move beyond the constraints imposed by mainstream society, we might visualise our outdoor educational programs as opportunities for students to experience space from such constraints. Personal space is a commodity often ignored by educators, who are usually at pains to fill up every spare moment with activity. An example of this in an educational setting is documented in research conducted by Mike Brown (2002), where he illustrates how debriefing and facilitation sessions can be directed and controlled by the facilitator.

Ideally, outdoor education programs should provide opportunities for students to try out new roles and develop new relationships. If they achieve this then we might reach a position of synthesis with the ideals expressed by contemporary outdoor recreation theorists. I would suggest that the major perceived difference between education and recreation is just that, a perception. When we examine the underlying philosophical positions of these two approaches to outdoor experiences we find a deep level of commonality that provides a sound foundation for further dialogue.

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Biography

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Keynote no. 3

Character building. Why it doesn't happen, why it can't be made to happen, and why the myth of character building is hurting the field of outdoor education.

Andrew Brookes

Abstract

Character building, and its close relative personal development, are central to many of the claims made for outdoor education. Outdoor educators sometimes speak as if they are privy to a great truth that the world has yet to recognize. But the fact is that the notion of 'character building' is one area where research evidence outside the outdoor education field allows a quite categorical statement: character building is a myth. What are the implications for the field as outdoor education researchers increasingly recognize the weaknesses in some long cherished outdoor education beliefs, and develop new approaches to understanding outdoor education?

Introduction

In this paper I consider some implications of a research project that reviewed evidence, mostly from outside the outdoor education (OE) field, that compels a surprisingly strong conclusion: it is a myth that OE or outdoor adventure education (OAE) 'builds character'. The reason is simple. While individuals observed in one situation *can* be ranked according to character traits (such as honesty, persistence, loyalty, and so on), the resultant ranking is almost useless for predicting how the same group of people will be ranked on same traits when observed in a different situation. Character building is a myth because it is based on a widely held wrong assumption about the nature of character traits.

Character traits, by definition, are supposed to be consistent across situations. By the end of the 1980's a major review of decades of social psychology research, much of it attempting to prove the existence of consistent personal traits, compelled a surprising conclusion: individuals are different, but differences in their behaviour in new situations cannot be defined by, or cannot be predicted by context-free 'character traits' (Ross & Nisbett, 1991; Shoda & Mischel, 2000). 'Character *building*' must be re-considered in the light of the fact that 'character', in the sense it is often used in OAE research and philosophy, is almost entirely illusory.

My research (Brookes, In press-a) drew on historical studies of some OAE antecedents for insights into how 'character building' has been construed, and on an emerging convergence between social psychology and personality research (Shoda & Mischel, 2000) to provide a critique of 'character building' as a researchable claim, especially Ross' & Nisbett's (1991) seminal review. Here I will briefly summarize the research, in order to frame the discussion about some implications. I refer readers to (Brookes, In press-a, In press-b) for a more complete discussion and references.

'Character building' in OAE – 'Neo-Hahnian' OAE

The origins of the term 'character building' go back at least to Edwardian England, when Baden Powell envisaged scouting as a 'character factory' (Rosenthal, 1986). To ask whether scouting actually built character might be less useful than to ask how adoption of the term helped build *the scouting movement* (MacDonald, 1993; Macleod, 1983; Rosenthal, 1986). The idea of character building proved persuasive, regardless of whether character building could be proven.

Although ‘character building’ can be seen as a successful catchphrase rather than something that was necessarily intended to be taken literally, personal trait development is an explicit educational aim for many contemporary programs, and seems to be an uncontested assumption in some OAE research. The fact that cross-situational consistency in behaviour (i.e. character traits) cannot be empirically demonstrated may have created “years of debates and crises regarding the nature of personality consistency” (Shoda & Mischel, 2000: 407) within the fields of social psychology and personality research, but within the OAE field even research that finds no evidence of personal trait development has tended not to dispute the *possibility* of such outcomes.

‘Character building’ is not necessarily an explicit claim. Terms such as ‘personal development’ or ‘self actualisation’ will be familiar to most readers, and often seem to include character (personality) building (development). The idea of ‘character building’ may be implied, as it is in ‘adventure’, which can be read as the *personal transformation* of a central figure (character) in the course of a testing journey (Zweig, 1981).

The literature I drew on provided support for the notion that individuals become ‘different persons’ in the outdoors, but where these difference relate to traits (rather than, say, skills or knowledge) they do not indicate changed traits so much as evidence *that personal traits always emerge in response to particular situations*. So far as personal traits are concerned, when Chris-of-the-office goes to Mt. Arapiles, Chris-the-rockclimber emerges. Later, back at the office, Chris-of-the-office re-emerges. Table one summarises the difference between ‘character’-based theories of outdoor education (‘Neo-Hahnian’ (NH) OAE) and a more defensible ‘situationist’ theory.

The Neo Hahnian OAE position:		
Individuals exhibit ‘character traits’ i.e. behavioural consistencies	NH OAE programs can change or develop ‘character traits’	These changed ‘character traits’ are relatively persistent
What the research summarised by Ross & Nisbett (1991) supports:		
Individuals exhibit a range of trait-related behaviour, according to the situation. How an individual behaves in one situation is not a good predictor for how they will behave in a different situation.	So-called character traits change in OAE programs because individuals respond to the OAE situation. These responses <i>can</i> be changed <i>within</i> the program. Over the years OAE practice has been refined to achieve this.	Neither the traits evident in the OAE situation, nor trait changes observed over the course of the OAE program, are strongly predictive of future behaviour in situations other than OAE.

Table 1. NHOE and the alternative position based on situationist social psychology research

If character building is a myth, why hasn’t anybody noticed?

There is, in fact, a considerable literature that examines the roots of character building in various youth movements, and that examines claims about OAE, especially outdoor management training). However, the existence of those studies makes the persistence of ‘character building’ claims all the more interesting; here I will briefly summarise why this should be the case (see Brookes (In press-a; In press-b)).

The first reason why ‘character building’ has persisted has already been alluded to. It is not always used as a literal, researchable claim, but it has succeeded in recruiting adherents to OE, especially OAE.

The second reason is that although personal traits are not helpful in predicting behaviour in new situations, *certain* situations shape behaviour. OAE programs may have, over the years, refined

ways to reliably but temporarily shape behaviour. Impressive changes in trait related behaviour may be observed when individuals are taken from one situation and placed in an OAE situation.

The third reason is that research examining what individuals *believe* about the causes of behaviour has revealed a striking and persistent bias towards attributing behaviour to character traits rather than circumstances. Belief in ‘character building’ in OAE simply reflects this broader tendency to place too much emphasis on ‘character’ when interpreting the behaviour of others (and to some extent the self). In experimental situations this bias is referred to as ‘the fundamental attribution error’ (Ross & Nisbett, 1991), because individuals will claim that behaviour is caused by personal traits even when faced with evidence that the observed behaviour is situational.

Attribution bias helps explain how NH OAE may seem convincing. OAE situations *can* change behaviour. Facilitation may have the effect of *exaggerating* belief that changed behaviour implies changed personal traits (attribution bias). Because trait attributions once made tend to be robust, participants continue to believe ‘they’ have changed after leaving the OAE situation. Confirmation bias (Schacter, 2001) (a tendency to filter observations to fit existing beliefs) and consistency bias (Schacter, 2001) (a tendency to attribute false consistency to one’s own beliefs over time) may amplify this persistency –participants may become *increasingly* convinced that the OAE program changed them (Hattie, Marsh, Neill, and Richards, 1997). This explanation of NH OAE is summarised in table two.

The Neo Hahnian OAE position:		
OAE programs change personal traits in specific directions	Facilitation assists participants to maintain their new traits after the program has finished	Participants report that their new traits persist
The alternative situationist position, allowing for attribution bias:		
OAE programs change behaviour in specific ways. Certain situations can change behaviour quite reliably	Facilitation amplifies existing tendencies to attribute behaviour to traits. Participants and facilitators convince themselves behaviour changes indicate trait changes	Belief that traits have changed persists because: (a) trait attributions tend to be stable (made quickly, revised reluctantly) (b) confirmation and consistency biases reinforce beliefs formed during OAE

Table 2. NH OAE ‘success’ explained, and the alternative position based on social psychology research

Why ‘character building’ hurts the field of OE

It may be a fact that ‘character building’ is a myth; but that does not mean programs based on ‘character building’ are harmful; the opposite may be true. That must be assessed on a case by case basis. There is certainly the *potential* for harm if interventions are made in individuals’ lives based on fallacious assumptions.

Considering the overall development of OE as an academic field of study, ‘character building’ is unambiguously harmful. In academic research, ‘garbage in, garbage out’ applies. At best

uncritical faith in ‘character building’ is a research bias, at worst a fallacy with the potential to lead research in circles or up blind alleys.

One particularly unhelpful legacy of the ‘character building’ model of OE is its capacity to universalise OE at the expense of attention to cultural, social, historical, and geographical contexts, and its marginalisation of the OE experiences themselves. NH OE seems to focus on the autonomous individual and the effects of programs, rather than considering the individual-and-environment as the basic unit of research. This over-simplification has at least been a distraction from accounts of OE that pay more attention to the details of the OE experience, the importance of the location, and what that experience means in the context of students’ lives.

These points require more discussion perhaps, and may need some qualification, but rather than dwelling on them I prefer to look ahead to how OE research and practice can develop when freed from its Neo-Hahnian heritage.

All of the following points take it as given that OE (and OAE) programs may achieve all kinds of educational outcomes simply because they are good programs. Here I am not focussing on good education that *happens* to take place in outdoor settings, but on aspects of education that *depend* on education in outdoor settings. The latter is, of course, the distinctive focus of OE theory and research.

Some implications of the development of ‘situationist’ OE

1. Situations for learning

While personal traits may not transfer from one situation to another, skills and knowledge learned on an OE program can, of course, persist. One consequence of being a ‘different person’ in an OE situation is that one may become a better learner. One may also become a worse learner. What the field needs here is research and practitioner insights that help determine what kinds of situations help which learners in what ways. Some of this research may support current practices – but it may not.

2. Insights into the self in relation to settings or contexts

Undoubtedly OE programs can effectively change individuals’ beliefs about themselves. OE has much to gain if these changed beliefs are based on sounder understandings of personality than that which underlies ‘character building’. If the personality is a complex mix of responses to different situations, then education *in* different situations may be quite important, especially if it helps individuals to understand themselves in relation to different situations, and may help them to make better choices in life. At the risk of being glib, if I find I like Brookes-of-the-bush more than Brookes-of-the-office I might arrange things so that I spend more time being the former.

3. Changed beliefs about self

The survey and the interview are, of course, two of the easiest ways to generate research data. It is hardly surprising they are so popular. However, my research underlined how important it is to distinguish between what individuals *believe* about themselves and others, and what can be *verified* by observation or other evidence. Beliefs about personal traits will almost certainly be biased by attribution error.

It is possible that changing individual’s beliefs about themselves may be a benefit, and may even be self-fulfilling. That however, is something that must be considered on a case by case basis, and verified by careful research. There can be no general defence for instilling false beliefs. Facilitation practices in particular must be examined in the light of the potential criticism that they fuel attribution bias. (Brown’s (2002) critical review of facilitation is relevant here.)

Conformity effects

Although behaviour in a new situation cannot be predicted on the basis of behaviour of a different situation, certain situations make behaviour quite predictable. There have been numerous experimental demonstrations of how certain situations elicit strong conformity effects (Ross & Nisbett, 1991). Conformity has been linked to the origins of ‘character building’ in the youth movements (Rosenthal, 1986).

Conformist effects are educationally neutral, of course. There may be good reasons to construct situations that reliably elicit certain behaviours. Teachers are expected to exert some control over students. However conformity effects, which are temporary, must not be confused with educational change. My research suggests that there is good reason to audit OE practice to identify the extent to which situations that elicit conformity are used, perhaps unwittingly, and to consider whether their use is justified (For a discussion of some particular aspects of situations that elicit conformity, see (Brookes, In press-a).

On-going experiences and place-centred relationships

All of the above points could be taken as referring to OE based around ‘one-off’ experiences. The idea that relatively permanent changes in personal traits could be made, in a kind of ‘big bang’ fashion, helped support the ‘one-off’ approach. Research on OAE programs conducted by outside researchers suggests that OAE programs do not have effects that are disproportionate to the time involved (Roberts, White, & Parker, 1974); and others have pointed out that even very strong events such as concentration camp incarceration do not necessarily have enduring negative effects (Kagan, 1998).

Not all OE is based on the effects of particular experiences; other approaches conceive OE as a deliberate process of initiating or reshaping relationships between communities and places. In these approaches, the settings for OE are chosen not simply to provide novelty or difference, nor because they permit certain activities, but for reasons that emerge from a careful study of communities, regions, and their problems. In such an approach, the kind of outdoor education developed for rural inhabitants of Norway (Dahle, 2000) will be different to a program developed for the descendants of those affected by the Highland Clearances in Scotland (Nicol & Higgins, 1998). (For a discussion of the Australian context, especially Victoria, see (Brookes, 2002a, 2002b).

Concluding remarks

It would be rash to predict the demise of NH OAE, or vestigial ‘character building’ in many OE programs or texts. ‘Character building’ will continue to be an appealing claim that people will believe. The truth may not be particularly relevant.

However, I am optimistic about the direction of OE research over the next few years, especially in areas that look specifically at the relationships between participants and the experiences they have, that place those experiences thoughtfully in the landscape, and that consider them in the context of in the metaphorical landscape of individual lives. The loss of ‘character building’ is in fact, a gain for OE research and theory.

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Biography

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Section 1: Part 2
Peer Reviewed
Conference Presentations

Insurance, Risk Management Development and New Initiatives in the Outdoor Profession

Sandy Allen-Craig

Abstract

The present insurance crisis is affecting the viability of many businesses. The Outdoor Recreation Industry is no exception. Many Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Tourism companies have been forced to close their doors. Much soul searching by the industry has led to a number of possible solutions including the formal training of operators in risk management planning and reducing exposure of risk, both for the operators and their incumbents. A number of legislative changes to our laws have been put forward to try and address some of these issues. The Outdoor Recreation industry has already come a long way in its development of a number of Standards and Risk Management tools. We need to ensure these tools are adequately meeting the industry's needs and work on their further development rather than reinventing the wheel in the rush to try to obtain insurance.

Introduction

In our civilised society many people are drawn to the pursuit of adventure and challenge. Many individuals still deliberately pursue discomfort, possible danger and risk in the form of outdoor adventure pursuits. It seems our desire to be challenged, to seek adventure and to embark upon activities that may have an uncertain outcome and elements of risk have not diminished over the years. On the other hand the desire to be protected from injury and death and to have the right to compensation for some sort of loss has increased considerably as our society becomes more litigious. "The standard of care of professionals has increased with the passage of time in step with society's expectation" (Abrams, 2001, p.2). Latter day adventurers still want a sense of adventure and challenge in outdoor activities, but have no intention of being injured. Most people want the appearance but not the essence of risk so participants expect outdoor leaders and providers to protect them from any real harm (Haddock, 1993).

Since October 2001 over 44 adventure based tourism companies in Victoria have gone out of business due to, in nearly all cases, the inability to find an Insurer (Butler, & Ferguson, 2002). The crisis of small businesses, sporting groups, community groups and even doctors trying to obtain insurance is very much in the forefront of the current news. Many businesses across all sectors of the market place are having the same difficulty finding insurers.

The adventure based tourism industry, the outdoor recreation industry as well as sporting and community groups have been severely affected by this current crisis. Is this because traditionally these are considered areas of 'high risk'? Areas where the chance of injury or death is higher? Are there other areas that are perceived to be safer that actually may have a higher risk for the participant?

Collard (2000) examined the safety record of challenge ropes courses and found that challenge ropes courses were safer than many of the activities our society undertakes without hesitation everyday.

Referring to the "*Twenty Year Safety Study*", research has indicated that Challenge Course programs recorded 4.33 injuries per million hours of use, roughly equivalent exposure to risk as working the finance, insurance and real estate sector. To put this data in its proper perspective, injuries from driving a motor vehicle rate at approximately 60 injuries per million hours of use (Collard, p.69, 2000).

Collard (2000) also looked at safety comparisons between challenge ropes courses and school Physical Education classes which found that the safety record of Challenge (Ropes) Course programs to be much safer than standard high school Physical Education classes.

Hurrell, Chapman and Dickson (2000) also found that students were twice as likely in a six month period to be injured playing Rugby Union than Rock Climbing and twice as likely to be injured playing Netball than participating in Snow Skiing. They conclude that outdoor programs are relatively risk free (physically) but that the public's perception is influenced by other factors.

The public perception of Outdoor Recreation and Adventure Tourism is one of high risk. Many adventure-based outdoor educational programs offer risk as a medium for personal growth, development and team building. Adventure based programs which have elements of risk are a popular component of many school, recreation and community programs, however society still expects outdoor leaders to keep risks at 'acceptable levels' (Haddock 1993).

The legal world acknowledges gains that can be made from participating in Outdoor Adventure activities but it is clear that leaders in this field have definite responsibilities. The State Coroner Graeme Johnstone in the Lal Lal Falls case where two students died due to a rock fall accepted that:

A rounded education was meant to include outdoor adventure sports such as rock climbing and abseiling. There are certain risks in these personal development sports. Therefore, they require the right balance of risk management to minimise the dangers (Abrams, 2001, p. 26).

The Insurance Crisis and New Initiatives

The current crisis in insurance is having far reaching effects on all sectors of industry. On July 1st 2002 the Victorian State Government announced a bail out of Victoria's 250 million dollar Adventure Tourism industry by providing short term insurance support for approximately 30 Adventure Tourism companies that planned to close after failing to get public liability policies (Buttler & Ferguson, 2002).

The Insurance Council of Australia reported that in recent years for every \$1.00 paid in premiums there have been claims costs of \$1.34 (McArthur, 2001). Public liability insurance appears to becoming a lot more difficult to obtain yet the viability of many companies to continue to operate depends on their ability to obtain insurance.

Sport and Recreation Victoria and the Australian Sports Commission in 2002 led a national review of insurance issues facing sport on behalf of the Commonwealth-State Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport (SCORS, 2002). The review recommended a range of measures to improve insurance outcomes.

Firstly, that a comprehensive risk-management system be instituted nationally for the sport and recreation industry. Secondly, the development of a national insurance education program with detailed plans to facilitate group purchasing of insurance by sport and recreation organisations (Active State, 2002).

A National Summit on Public Liability Insurance held on 27th March 2002, also raised a number of issues these included:

- volunteer protection and protection of organisations from liability for minor claims when the organisation meets specified safeguards;
- protection of land managers and owners from liability where they meet specified standards and

- amendment of the Trade Practices Act to enable participants to legally and confidently assume personal responsibility for high-risk activities (Active State, 2002, p.16).

In December 2001, a number of key stakeholders and government agencies called an Outdoor Recreation forum to look at the problem of insurance, litigation and risk management.

This forum highlighted the need for operators to review the risks in their businesses and to consider how to reduce and manage their risk better. Jamvold, (2001) proposed that the industry look at a structural change. Options suggested included, risk transfer, formal risk management, direct claims cost reduction and deliberately contesting selected public liability claims.

Risk Transfer allows operators of inherently risky activities to require participants to assume the inherent risk:

Risk transfer has been a key element of the strategy employed by the white water rafting industry in British Columbia in Canada to reduce claims costs and induce insurers back into their market. Specific indemnities are in place in some jurisdictions under what are called “Good Samaritan” legislation where specific activities, such as emergency medical assistance, is permitted to perform its tasks free from the threat of professional or public indemnity claims. There is always an overriding understanding, of course, that such legislation does not protect operators from claims of gross negligence. (Jamvold, 2001, p.2).

Formal risk management involves the formal training in risk management through a university, TAFE college or specialist educator. The educator would be accredited for the task. Operators would be licensed as being competent in risk management. Formal codes of conduct, or minimum activity standards, would be established to set the yardstick for operator performance and for assessment of negligence. This would help eliminate negligence, reduce claims costs and improve the community’s approach to risk management (Jamvold, 2001).

Direct claims cost reduction would include such things as claims capping and the establishment of minimum hurdle values and structured settlements.

Deliberately contesting selected public liability claims can be undertaken by insurers and by industry. The objective is to develop a case history of claims being successfully defended. With such a case history, plaintiff lawyers can be induced to recommend to clients that they not proceed with weak cases (Jamvold, 2001).

This strategy of contesting claims has been successfully applied in the white water rafting situation in British Columbia, in protecting claims against snowfields operators in Victoria and NSW and in the Victorian Work Cover environment. (Jamvold, 2001, p.3).

The solution to the insurance crisis needs to be a combined consultative process between the insurance industry, the government and the Outdoor Recreation industry. A combination of the ideas suggested above should be designed specifically to meet the needs of the each individual customers to be insured, taking into account their claims profiles and the circumstances at the time. (Jamvold, 2001).

Political Initiatives

In May 2000 a group of private outdoor recreation providers, through the Liberal Party, put a Private Member’s Bill forward which in essence tried to transfer the risk for adventure activity providers.

Initiated in Council 14th May 2002 by the Hon. W. Forwood., the bill aimed to provide for the approval of operators of certain adventure activities, to restrict the circumstances in which

damages may be recovered in respect of the injury or death of a participant in certain adventure activities and for other purposes:

The purpose of this Act is to regulate the compensation of persons who die or suffer injury arising out of, or in the course of, their voluntary participation in adventure activities which by their nature involve inherent risk of injury to participants, particularly where the physical or environmental challenge of the element of risk form part of the participant's enjoyment of the activity (Adventure Activities Protection Act, 2002, p.1).

This Act was read, moved and passed on the 29/5/2002 in the Upper House of the Victorian parliament but subsequently thrown out by the Victorian government in the Lower House. No further action has been taken with this bill. In June 2002 Senator Helen Coonan, the Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer introduced legislation to allow individuals to assume their own risk when undertaking risky activities to the Parliament. This was after the last Ministerial Meeting on Public Liability insurance where the Commonwealth had agreed to amendments to the Trade Practices Act so that individuals are able waive their right to sue when undertaking risky recreational activities (Lambert, 2002). Senator Coonan said that the amendments would still allow injured consumers to sue if they are victims of gross negligence. Senator Coonan also emphasised that Adventure Tourism and sport business will still need to run safe and responsible business but these measures would assist them in the use of waivers and help reduce the cost of negligence claims and take pressure off insurance claims (Lambert, 2002).

On the 23rd of October 2002 Legislative reforms in Victoria addressing the issue of Tort Law reform was introduced in light of the public liability crisis. These reforms became operational as in October 2002 as amendments to the Wrongs Act 1958 introduced through the passing of the Wrongs and Other Acts (Public Liability Insurance Reform) Act 2002 (Rowe, 2002).

This act covered a number of areas.

Section 5 – issues of intoxication and illegal activity must be taken into consideration in certain claims in respect to death or personal injury.

Section 6 - providing an apology does not constitute an admission of liability in civil proceedings where the death or injury of a person is in issue.

Section 7 - limits the amounts that maybe recovered as damages for death or personal injury caused by the fault of a person.

Section 8 - provides for the use of structured settlements as an alternative method of payment of personal injury compensation.

Section 9 - protects good samaritans providing assistance, advice or care at emergencies or accidents from civil liability for their good faith actions.

Section 11 – protects volunteers from civil liability for their good faith “community work” for a “community organisation”. “Community work” includes work for the purpose of sport and recreation.(Rowe, p.3-4, 2002).

Other Initiatives

At the December 2001 Outdoor Recreation forum to examine the problem of insurance, litigation and risk management a number of other strategies were put forward to help address the needs of the industry. The forum proposed the use of and further development of Safety Network /Outward Bound “Outdoor Medical Database” to collect data and participation rates in outdoor recreation for use in working with government and insurance agencies regarding risk management practices, program accreditation and insurance premiums (McArthur, 2001).

The forum also recommended the continued development Adventure Activity Standards in Victoria. The aim of this Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) project is to develop industry endorsed, documented standards for the outdoor recreation industry. The Outdoor Recreation Centre are undertaking the project working in conjunction with a consortium which includes Sport and Recreation Victoria, Tourism Victoria, Department of Sustainability and Environment and Parks Victoria who are providing funding and support. (Outdoor Recreation Centre, 2003).

A number of the AAS have already been written and put out in draft format for comment. The Outdoor Recreation Council (ORC) maintain that the standards will benefit activity providers, leaders and external stakeholders by providing a benchmark for competency, group size and other environmental issues. ORC also maintains that these standards will be attainable, practical and easily understood by the community, ensuring activity programs reflect participants needs and competency levels. (Outdoor Recreation Centre, 2003).

There have been concerns from some areas of the Outdoor Recreation sector in Victoria about the AAS project and the development of these standards. This initiative will be the topic of much debate in the immediate future.

Risk Management

One of the major points raised at each forum was the need for organisations and operators to have a clearly defined set of risk management policies and guidelines as well as formal training in this area. Within the outdoor recreation, outdoor education and adventure based tourism industry the concepts of risk management plans, emergency plans, organisational protocol and guidelines have generally been accepted as standard professional practice for many years. Even before the term 'Risk management' became accepted as a common tool to describe such protocol, leaders in the field were expected to complete the itinerary plans and trip plans. There was an expectation, for trips into the outdoors with students to follow such things as the staff: student ratios recommended, and staff qualifications and experience and equipment requirements according to safety guidelines put out by their governing educational body.

These basic principles have evolved and developed over the past ten years. There are now a variety of different approaches to risk management within the Outdoor field as well as outside this specific field, which offer detailed models and modes of applications of a variety of risk management plans and strategies.

The Australian and New Zealand standards (1999) outlines risk management as a process. It defines it as having well defined steps that support better decision-making by contributing a greater insight into risks and their impact. Risk management is a process that includes identification, analysis, assessment, treatment, and monitoring risk in a proactive manner as well reviewing, communicating and consulting.

The risk management process can be applied to any situation where an undesired or unexpected outcome could be significant or where opportunities are identified. Risk management is recognised as an integral part of good management practice (Australian/New Zealand Standards, 1999, p.3).

In the outdoor context it is about reducing the risks to acceptable levels (Haddock, 1993). There are many resources and books, which focus risk management for the outdoor leader or activity provider. (Priest and Gass, 1997; Brown, 1998; Safety Guidelines, State Government of Victoria, 1998). Haddock's (1993) *Managing Risk's in Outdoor Activities* gives a straight forward and easy to use approach for the outdoor leader and is widely used in the outdoor educational sector. Jack's (no publication year cited), *Strategies for Risk Management in Outdoor and Experiential Learning*, is very useable in terms of it's step by step approach to developing risk management

strategies and protocol and is particularly pertinent to the small business operator. *The Australian and New Zealand Standard on Risk Management* (1999) is applicable and across many professions and industries including, with some modifications, the Outdoor Recreation industry.

Refocussing Risk Management

The expectation for documentation of every aspect of an outdoor program continues to increase. So too does the complexity of risk management plans. Many have become unwieldy and do not effectively address the needs for which they were originally designed.

Hogan (2002) argues that most risk management plans are far more complicated than they need to be. He argues that they require listing all possible risks, and to make judgements about the likelihood of risk and the severity of the consequences. Some require quantitative assessments of the risks and whether these risks are acceptable, based on qualitative judgements that may be flawed. Hogan also argues that we have lost sight of the crux of risk management, which is to minimise death and disabling injuries. Dickson (2001) supports Hogan's concerns. She puts forward Fines 1971 (cited in Dickson, 2001) model of risk calculation for the outdoor and experiential learning environments but cautions that the risk identification and assessment is not a objective one but a subjective process based on human judgement, determined by previous experience and knowledge. The Australian/New Zealand Standard (1999) also provides a qualitative risk analysis matrix where levels of risk are to be calculated and prioritised, but makes no allowance for the subjective nature of these types of judgements.

Hogan (2002) suggests we need to refocus our attention on what the initial development of risk management plans were for. They were developed for the minimising the possibility of death and disabling injury in outdoor programs. Hogan refocusses our attention and asks us to look not just at the broad view of all the risks that can occur on an outdoor activity or trip but to address the less frequent but more harmful situations that can cause death or serious injury. Hogan argues that in a number of incidents in the outdoors where a death or serious injury has occurred the leaders had completed detailed risk management plans yet these had failed to address the real risk that could occur and that what had taken place in their preparation was not proper risk management.

Hogan (2002) asks the planner to define risks identifying the events that will directly lead to death or serious injury. He puts forward a model based on Ballie's (1996) concept that there are only three things that cause death or disabling injury. Drowning, impact with something solid and exposure or hypothermia.

Hogan (2002) adds five of his own possible causes of death or disabling injury, heatstroke, severe burns, electrocution, poisonous bite, and pre-existing medical condition. In implementing his risk management Hogan asks the planner to identify the real risks that may fall into one or more of these 7 categories. The planner is then asked to consider the relevant organisation guidelines/rules and other relevant standards/policies. Lastly the planner is asked to identify the dangers that might lead to those risks eventuating, using the categories outlined in Haddock's (1993) Risk Analysis Management System (See Figure 1).

Figure 1:

Risk management Planner for outdoor activities (based on RAMS, Haddock, 1993)

Activity		
Activity description		
Risks which could lead to death or disabling injury (disabling injury could be defined as any injury needing ambulance transport or outside rescue authority assistance)		
Relevant organisation guidelines/rules		
Other relevant standards/policies		
Risks Covered (it is recommended that one page be used for each identified risk or class of risk)		
	Dangers Factors which could lead to each inherent risk eventuating	Risk management Strategies Strategies to reduce dangers
People Attributes people bring (or don't bring) to the activity e.g. skills physical fitness, health, age, fears.		
Equipment Resources that impact on the activity e.g. clothing, vehicles, craft, ropes.		
Environment Factors that impact on the activity. e.g. weather, terrain.		
Critical Incident management (Emergency procedures should the risk management strategies be adopted)		

Hogan (2002)

Conclusion

With a different approach Hogan adds to the development of risk management plans and strategies by asking the planner to focus on preventing death and disabling injury and to insure that effective planning takes place to reduce the possibility of these occurring.

As the outdoor industry and profession come under greater scrutiny, we must look at what we have already achieved and acknowledge the work that has already been done to address minimising the risks we subject our participants to. The Outdoor Recreation profession has made many positive contributions to the development of risk management protocols. We must also look at the protocols and operational procedures already developed and decide what is effective and workable for our industry and identify problems that need to be improved like those suggested by Hogan (2002), Dickson (2001), Hunt (1984) and others.

Much work has already been done by other stakeholders in the Outdoor industry in areas such as, Campsite Accreditation, Program Accreditation, National Competencies, Safety Guidelines and Adventure Activity Standards. New legislation has been announced to try and curb an ever-increasing litigious society. Let us not ignore what has already been achieved. Let us continue to work on and develop further many of the initiatives already being developed. In the rush to renew insurance policies and survive in this litigious society we may be tempted to reinvent the wheel rather than working to further develop what we already have begun.

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The concept of adventure: An inquiry into model cases of adventure

David Badenoch

Abstract

In an attempt to clarify our ideas about adventure, this paper discusses characteristics of this concept identified from analysing a broad range of reported model cases of adventure. It reveals enormous variety between the cases in terms of observable behaviour, inferred social acceptability and legality. It identifies the notions of risk, challenge and uncertainty of outcome as the only features common to all model cases. It concludes with a proposed definition of adventure and a classification system that is consistent with the analysis of the cases. Consequently, it has the potential to inform related professional activities.

Introduction: A challenge to the profession

Leaders of outdoor education associations have identified the need for greater clarity about the concept of adventure. In the keynote address to the Outdoor Forum 99, Shirley Payne, Chair of the UK Association for Outdoor Learning (formerly The National Association for Outdoor Education), claimed that our ideas about adventure and what constituted adventure were one of the “*major issues facing [the] world of outdoor education/learning, training [and] recreation*” (1999, p. 42). In her address, Payne questioned commonly held ideas and definitions of adventure even to the extent of asking delegates: “*Is not the very definition of adventure one of our challenges for the new millennium?*” (Payne, 1999, p. 42).

There are good reasons why such a challenge ought not surprise the outdoor education profession. Firstly, it has been recognised by others before that defining adventure “*is not an easy task*” (Leroy, 1995, p. 446). For example, Mortlock (1987) reveals that it took him 20 years “*of putting people of all ages in ... adventure situations, in a wide variety of activities, and noting their reactions and comments*” (p. 22) before he proposed his four staged notion of adventure. Secondly, while the literature contains many varied definitions of adventure (Bonington, 1981; Darst and Armstrong, 1980; Ewert, 1989; Hayllar, 1990; Hunt, 1990; Miles and Priest, 1990 and 1999), “*there are few universally accepted definitions in this field*” (Itin, 2003, p. 1).

A possible way forward?

If we accept that being clear about the concept of adventure is both valuable yet challenging, is there nevertheless a way forward which may help clarify our ideas about adventure? Perhaps there is.

When we are puzzled or confused about a concept, such as adventure, Wilson (1963) suggests that one of the more helpful analytical methods to employ is to select model cases of the concept in question and examine them for the possibility of common features. For example, a model case of adventure would be an example which we were absolutely sure was an example of adventure. It would be an example of which we could say: “If that is not an example of adventure then nothing is”.

Once we had these examples of adventure we could then examine the features of each case to see if they possessed any feature(s) in common. This method has the benefit of narrowing the search for the possibility of features common to all cases of adventure by eliminating those features which are not common to all examples of adventure.

Method used to collect model cases of adventure

In order to analyse the model cases of adventure, 39 adult university students were asked to respond to a questionnaire designed to obtain information about what they perceived as significant and clear cases of adventure, to recall and describe them as vividly and as accurately as possible and also to state the reasons why the event described counted as an adventure for them.

The specific questions were:

- (1) *Describe* the, or one of the, most *significant* and *clear cases of adventure* you have had at anytime in your life. Please recall and describe it as *vividly*, as *accurately*, and in *as much detail* as you can. Try to relive and recapture the adventurous moment in your description.
- (2) State as clearly as possible the *reasons why* the event you have described counted as an adventure for you. That is, what precise things, perceptions, conditions or criteria made it an adventure for you?

Analysis of the model cases

The model cases were analysed in terms of the following characteristics:

- (1) Observable behaviour of the participants.
- (2) Inferred social acceptability and legality of the behaviour.
- (3) Type and frequency of words (concepts) used to describe the example and the reasons stated for counting the actions as a model case of adventure.

Observable behaviour

The analysis of the stated and inferred behaviour associated with the model case of adventure did not show any common features. In fact, there was an enormous variation in terms of what one would observe the participant doing while they were engaged in what they stated was a clear case of adventure for them.

For example, behaviours exhibited during the model cases of adventure ranged from sitting, talking and walking while participating in a three day religious retreat, walking through a cemetery at midnight, rock climbing, bushwalking, snow skiing, receiving open-heart surgery, delivering one's child, horse riding, performing at a martial arts tournament and sleeping overnight in a tree cubby house.

It was clear from the reported cases that the activity's observable features were not common nor are they necessarily helpful in determining whether the activity counted as an adventure for the participant.

Inferred social acceptability and legality of the acts

The reported model cases did not show any consistency with regards to their social, ethical or legal status. Instead, and similar to the feature of observable behaviour, the reported cases showed remarkable variance and extremes in terms of their social acceptance and legality.

For example, responses ranged from describing involvement in religious acts which involved a strong connection with the environment, stealing milk money left out at night, mid-night dormitory raids, exploring someone else's home without their permission, travelling to a foreign country, driving a car while drunk with the passenger operating the gears, to leaving home for the first time to live in an unfamiliar setting.

This diversity suggests that an activity could be regarded as a model case of adventure irrespective of its social, ethical or legal status or consequences. This result challenges a commonly held view that adventures are necessarily worthwhile activities.

Type and frequency of concepts used to describe the model case and the reasons it counted as an adventure

This analysis revealed a broad range of concepts (words and phrases) to describe the event and the reasons why the participants regarded the activities as a model case of adventure. The list included the following words and phrases: risk, arousing, satisfying, exploring new areas, learning new knowledge, accomplishment, developing greater appreciation, developing new relationships, excitement, challenge, feeling proud, requiring effort, first time to attempt some act, novel, dangerous, tested limits, required courage, determination, responsibility, achievement, independence, uncertainty, scary, fun, fear, exploration, discovery, nervous, “we got away with it” and “I did something I didn’t think I could do”. However, of these only three responses were evident in a majority of cases, namely: excitement, first time attempted and novelty. But only three featured in all model cases. They were risk, challenge and uncertainty of outcome.

Summary of analysis

While this analysis is limited to 39 reported model cases of adventure, it does nevertheless suggest some interesting ideas about adventure. For example, the analysis suggest that we cannot tell whether an activity is an adventure or not for the individual from identifying the observable behaviour nor by the social or ethical consequences of the activity concerned, since examples reported varied enormously in terms of their observable nature, their social acceptability and legal status. For example, while a significant proportion described traditional physical adventures like rock climbing, snow skiing and bushwalking, others described a midnight dormitory raid and cemetery walk, drunken driving, open-heart surgery, stealing, an over-night sleep over in a tree cubby house, and a father delivering his own child.

On the other hand, the analysis revealed some common features in all of the cases examined. In all cases, the participants reported that they valued the perceived challenge and risk involved and acknowledged that the outcome of their actions were uncertain.

Some ideas about the concept of adventure

The results of this study suggest a number of interesting ideas about adventure, some of which may help to clarify and broaden our views about what might count as an adventure.

Firstly, the characteristics of risk, challenge, and uncertainty, the only features common to all model cases, are in at least one sense, logically related concepts (Badenoch, 1991). For example, while an outcome of any activity can be uncertain for a range of reasons, one of these would include the possibility that the outcome was uncertain because the risks and challenges involved in successfully negotiating the activity were sufficiently high enough to ensure there was a degree of uncertainty in predicting the outcome. In this sense, the feature of “uncertainty of outcome” is logically implied when the features of the risk and challenge are also present. From this perspective it seems reasonable to suggest that the features of risk and challenge therefore necessarily also imply “uncertainty of outcome” and consequently we are left with only two separate features common to all model cases of adventure, that is the perceived risk and challenge associated with the given activity.

Secondly, the common features of perceived risk and challenge are valued by the participant. That is, the individual considers the perceived risk or challenge involved in the activity is worth taking and that is the prime reason for doing the activity. This feature implies that an adventure

therefore appears to be determined by the person's state of mind (associated thoughts, feelings, values and reasons for doing the activity) while engaging in the activity (Badenoch, 1991).

At a previous forum I have argued that "*an adventure may be defined as any human activity that is valued and engaged in by the participant for the perceived risk or challenge involved*" (Badenoch, 1991). This definition is derived from, and consistent with, the argument that different human activities can be distinguished on the basis of the *reason* for doing them (Dearden, 1968, 1970; Paddick, 1975; Badenoch, 1980, 1991, 1993). It is also logically consistent with what has been revealed from the analysis of the model cases of adventure described in this paper.

From this viewpoint, any activity undertaken because we choose to place some aspect of ourselves at risk, or to challenge that aspect of ourselves, would be considered an adventure (Badenoch, 1991). Furthermore, it would remain an adventure even if the social, ethical or legal consequences were questionable or unacceptable (Badenoch, 1991).

Thirdly, while a number of authors have confined their discussions to physical adventure (Darst and Armstrong, 1980; Bonington, 1981; Meier, et. al., 1987; Mortlock, 1987; Ewert, 1989; Hayllar, 1990; Miles and Priest, 1990 and Hunt, 1990), an examination of the model cases reveals a broader perspective. The scope of the model cases shows adventure to be a more encompassing concept in our lives and can take many different forms.

Fourthly, the model cases and the proposed definition suggest a way to categorise different forms of adventure. That is different forms (types) of adventure may be distinguished on the basis of what aspect(s) of a person an individual considers they are putting at risk while engaging in an activity and which abilities are used in an attempt to overcome the challenges inherent in the activity concerned. On this basis it is suggested that adventure may be classified according to which aspect(s) (abilities) a person perceives is predominantly challenged, threatened or put at risk while they engage in that activity. This classification system therefore allows for examples of adventure which challenge only one aspect (ability) of a person as well as situations which challenge individuals in several ways in the one activity at the same time. The latter I have suggested could be described as mixed or multi-dimensional adventures. They would occur when more than one aspect of a person is perceived to be challenged or put at risk when engaging in the same activity (Badenoch, 1991).

According to this classification, humans can participate in various forms of adventure depending on what aspect of themselves they were risking or challenging. Therefore the abilities the individual predominantly uses to negotiate these risks and challenges gives an indication of the form of adventure undertaken. On this basis, humans could be seen as participating in at least seven forms of adventure. These are physical, intellectual, social, psychological (emotional), sexual, economic or spiritual. Other forms of adventure could be seen as sub-categories of these main forms. For example, a challenging balancing activity might be regarded as a sub-category of a physical adventure, whereas an artistic challenge or difficult verbal comprehension task may be regarded as different sub-categories of an intellectual adventure, and so on.

Conclusion

There is a need for greater clarity about the concept of adventure as long as scholars, educators, therapists, recreation programmers and planners continue to debate, research, utilise, program, evaluate and carry out professional practices related to the notion of adventure.

The arguments put forward in this paper for the proposed definition of adventure and the related classification system have the potential to contribute to our understanding of adventure and

subsequently facilitate related discussion, policy development, program implementation, teaching methodology, evaluation and future research about adventure.

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The impact of adventure-based training on team cohesion and psychological skills development in elite sporting teams

Ian Boyle



Abstract

Meyer & Wenger (1998) and Meyer (2000) were instrumental in pioneering research into the efficacy of adventure-based training with sporting teams. This investigation adds to the growing body of knowledge in this area by demonstrating the positive effects an adventure training intervention has on athletes' ability to learn new team and psychological skills.

Quantitative measures investigated the development of team cohesion among elite netball players during their national season. In three of four team-cohesion sub-scales ATG-T, ATG-S, and GI-T significant differences were noted between the treatment and control groups. These significant results were supported by the athletes' qualitative accounts of the intervention.

In qualitative terms, focus group and one-on-one phenomenological interviews were triangulated against observational and statistical data to help build a picture of the athletes' experience. In the phenomenological tradition, obtaining the athletes' perspective of the intervention was most important. With this in mind, both the outcomes and the process that led to the outcomes were documented.

Introduction

Through my own personal experience in whitewater and marathon kayaking, caving, rogaining, rock climbing and mountaineering, I have found myself in many challenging situations that had taken me to the edge of my perceived ability and self imposed comfort zone. In order to perform well under these stresses I had to learn to focus on the task and block out the natural fears that have the potential to paralyse optimal performance. After the psychological growth I had personally gained from participation in adventurous activities, I pondered whether athletes and sporting teams could enhance their performance from participating in similar organised adventure training programs in the outdoors. I therefore wanted to set about conducting a research project that could question this assumption and gather evidence to support or refute my beliefs.

Statement of the problem

Little research has been conducted into the efficacy of adventure-based training interventions with elite sporting teams. Meyer & Wenger (1998) and Meyer (2000) contributed to the literature showing how adventure-based training can enhance team cohesion and psychological skills development within sporting teams. They did not however take that extra step to investigate how team members may be utilising their new skills in their actual sporting performance in real competition. Knowing whether athletes can take skills learnt during their adventure-based experience back into their real-life sporting environment is a key unanswered question. While the above studies have contributed valuable information to the research line of sporting team development, the shortfall in these previous studies needed to be addressed to further the adventure-based training / sport psychology field. Addressing this problem provided focus to this study.

Statement of major hypothesis/questions

- Athletes who received an adventure-based training program intervention, would show increased team cohesion when compared to a control group.
- From an athletes' or coaches' perspective, what were the major outcomes of the adventure-based training program; and how did they impact most upon the team in the following areas: 1) Personally; 2) In developing teamwork and team cohesion; and 3) Transferability to specific netball competition situations?
- From an athletes' or coaches' perspective, what processes during the adventure-based training weekend had the most impact on the team? What was it about these situations that made them so beneficial?

Review of related literature

This review gives a brief account of the key areas that underpin the investigation.

Allain (1996) researched the effectiveness of an adventure-based training program on the team cohesion of a nineteen member Canadian university women's soccer team. The intervention incorporated the use of four initiative or team build activities. Understanding the intervention from the athletes' perspective was a goal of the intervention, and qualitative data was collected from both journals and focus group interviews. Results displayed strong support for changes in the teams cohesion, as well as improved communication, trust, and the ability to block out unwanted distractions.

The study that impacted most on this present project was conducted by Meyer and Wenger (1998), who have been leading researchers in the area of adventure training and sport psychology.

Meyer and Wenger's (1998) investigation described the outcome-oriented effects of ropes course participation on a girls high school tennis team, and the processes through which these outcomes were achieved. Qualitative analysis of data demonstrated increased team cohesion, especially around social issues within the team. The breaking down of cliques increased support for team members on and off the court, and social relations improved because of improved communication. These findings were supported in later follow up studies (Meyer & Grochowski, 1998; Kilty & Meyer, 1999).

It is interesting to note that this and the follow up interventions only had an impact on the social side of the multidimensional construct of cohesion, with no impact on task factors. While there are many interacting variables that could have led to this, it appears that the facilitation and design of the ropes course experience may have affected the outcome.

Priest and Gass (1992) give an overview of the stages of adventure facilitation. Facilitation in any of the first three stages can lead to a "reactive" facilitation process (Priest, 1995). This is where the facilitator lets the events of the experience unfold and then debriefs the activity based on the participants' interaction. The facilitation is after the fact. This appears to be the style used in Meyer's study.

This teaching method is an effective and acceptable style of facilitating a program, however, it is a 'hit and miss' affair where the desired outcomes of the program may or may not result. Operating in one of the later facilitation methods of front loading or metaphoric framing (reference) however, allows the facilitator to structure the activity to mirror either task or social aspects of the athletes' sport or problems concerning these areas. This present study plans to address this issue and monitor the effect of facilitation on athletes' learning.

Meyer attempted to explain the athletes' learning and change through Lewin's change theory model (Lewin, 1965 cited in Meyer, 1998, p.245). The model is a three-stage approach that is used to explain change in a variety of disciplines. These stages are outlined below:

Stage 1: Unfreezing: involves a motivation or desire to change which is typically prompted by feelings of inadequacy or failure, threats to self-esteem, or general feelings of turmoil. The individual believes that through change, these feelings of inadequacy and failure will cease to exist, therefore they are ready and motivated to change.

Stage 2: Moving: requires new behaviours, responses, and problem solving approaches to be developed in an attempt to replace those that are causing the above mentioned stress. Through identification with knowledgeable and respected others (ie: change agents), an individual cognitively redefines the situation and continues the process of assimilating new ego-enhancing, equilibrium-producing beliefs and behaviours

Stage 3: Refreezing: in this stage new behaviours, responses and approaches are stabilised, and integrated into the individual's repertoire and ultimately their world. Change agents continue to be important in this stage, providing support and reinforcement, and helping to identify forces that inhibit or facilitate change, so change can be maintained.

While Meyer systematically explained the changes to athletes through Lewin's model, much of the change she described was directed around relationships, trust, and social issues within the team, which in itself, greatly benefited the athletes. While changes in these areas can impact on sporting performance (Weinberg & Gould, 1995), there was very little indication in their results as to how athletes might have benefited from these changes when actually out playing tennis in real competition situations. Did the intervention impact on performance? Did players learn skills that directly helped their tennis game or the mental process of competition? (The investigation of these questions were outside the exploratory nature of Meyer's research). These questions are very important for coaches, administrators, and athletes who are spending valuable time away from their usual training routines in pursuit of something that will enhance performance.

This present study attempted to build on Meyer's work by investigating these questions. It will also determine whether Lewin's model of change is appropriate in explaining the changes within a netball team situation, and compare and contrast Meyer's findings to the results of this study.

Group Cohesion

Group cohesion is related to group development and group dynamics and has been defined as "a dynamic process, which is reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives" (Carron, 1982, p.124). Cohesion is described as a multidimensional construct that includes task and social aspects, each of which reflects both an individual and a group orientation. Group cohesion was measured by "The Group Environment Questionnaire" (GEQ) (Carron, et al, 1985).

The GEQ has 18 items presented on a 9-point scale anchored at the extremes by *Strongly agree* (9) and *Strongly disagree* (1); scoring was treated as interval data. Four subscales of cohesion are contained in the GEQ, these included:

- Individual Attractions to the Group-Task (ATG-T) consists of four questions, which measured the individual group member's perception about her personal involvement with the group task productivity, goals and objectives; (Internal consistency, .75)
- Individual Attractions to the Group-Social (ATG-S) consists of five questions, which measured the individual group member's perception about her personal involvement, acceptance, and social interaction with the group; (Internal consistency, .64)

- Group Integration-Task (GI-T) consists of five questions, which measured the individual group member's perception about the similarity, closeness, and bonding within the group as a whole around its task; (Internal consistency, .70)
- Group Integration-Social (GI-S) consists of four questions, which measured the individual group member's perception about the similarity, closeness, and bonding within the group as a whole around social aspects. (Internal consistency, .76)

Scales were calculated so that larger scores indicated greater cohesion. Previous research has indicated that the GEQ possessed sound content, construct, concurrent and predictive validity (Carron et al., 1985).

Research design

A multi-method approach, using both qualitative and quantitative methods along with multiple data sources, were the tools used in this study to assess the impact of the adventure-based training on elite netball players. It was assumed that both methodologies complement and counterbalance each other and enable a thorough analysis of the available data (Henderson, 1993). This multi-method approach is a form of triangulation, which allows one to learn about phenomena while attempting to guard against biases in the process. Combining these methods is a successful approach because a diversity of needs raised by the nature of the research questions can be addressed by a variety of methods (Henderson, 1991).

Participants and Site

Thirty-six members of state age netball teams provided informed consent to participate in the study. The athletes were either members of an under 19 or under 17 state female netball team in either NSW or Victoria, Australia. As part of the coaching strategy to prepare the NSW teams for the national championships, both teams partook in the adventure-training intervention concurrently. Participants traveled two and a half hours south of Sydney, to The Scots College, Outdoor Pursuits Centre in Kangaroo Valley, NSW. The centre is situated on a Lake in a rural setting surrounded by the rugged Morton National Park, both sites were utilised during the intervention.

Intervention Procedure

The thesis version of this paper has a comprehensive account of the intervention totaling 40 pages. Activity selection, and facilitation processes are described in detail so replication can be achieved. This section is also a valuable teaching resource for those teaching facilitation classes to future outdoor education leaders. Issues of isomorphic metaphor development are discussed throughout the chapter. Electronic copies can be obtained from the author.

Bisson (1997) tested the efficacy of sequencing experiential challenge activities in a specific order. He found his model was effective in developing team cohesion among participants. This model for sequencing adventure activities was utilised during this investigation. For the purpose of this paper, the following outlines activities included in the intervention:

Group Formation Activities

- Toss a name game (Rohnke, 1995)
- Categories (Rohnke, 1995)
- Have you ever (Rohnke, 1995)

Group Challenge Activities

- Two in a row (Rohnke, 1995)
- Balloon Trolley (Rohnke, 1995)

Group Support Activities

- Climbing on indoor climbing wall
- Abseiling
- Giant Swing

Group Achievement Activities

- Early morning run and swim at sun rise
- 10 hour bush walk in very difficult terrain
- Surprise unexpected overnight campout
- Being awoken by bagpipes at sunrise
- Technical caving day

Results

Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis examined all four sub-scales of Carron's (1985) Group Environment Questionnaire with an attempt to identify the emerging and consistent threads; the sub-scales will form the foci for analysis of results. These sub-scales and abbreviated names are outlined below. (Abbreviations will be used in the presentation of results).

- Individual Attractions to the Group-Task (ATG-T)
- Individual Attractions to the Group-Social (ATG-S)
- Group Integration-Task (GI-T)
- Group Integration-Social (GI-S)

Several analytical stages were used to examine the data; they will be presented in the following order:

- Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations).
- Repeated-measures analysis: Multivariate and univariate testing.
- Analysis of variance results.
- Effect size results.

Limitations and Delimitations of Analysis

Several important trends were seen across most sub-scales in the results. These trends will be discussed collectively at this point, to avoid repeating the same information when analysing each sub-scale.

As will be seen in the coming pages, the initial repeated measures analysis indicated results that, at a most conservative view, were approaching significance; as was the case with the ATG-T and ATG-S subscales. The GI-T subscale displayed strong significance, while the GI-S showed no significance. This is contrary to observations and interviews that were analysed in the qualitative data, which clearly demonstrated increased team cohesion in all sub-scales. Because of this

triangulation of data, one can more confidently conclude that the interaction within the first three sub-scales warranted further investigation to determine the degree of difference between groups.

Three of the sub-scales ATG-T, ATG-S, and GI-T all demonstrated a negative skew in the data, indicating a major ceiling effect; this being where participants scored very high during their initial data collection times, leaving very little room for recording any change that might result from the intervention. Because of this trend, any significant results in these variables can be considered a strong indication that an effect has occurred (Neill, in press).

The lack of a researcher presence during the four control group data collection points, may have led to validity concerns. When a researcher attends a data collection session, it is possible to “sell” the importance of the repetitious data collection procedure to subjects. Informal conversational interviews at the national championships suggested that control group players lacked motivation and interest in completing questionnaires during the latter two data collection points. Burns (1994, p.364) suggested that, “we can assume more valid responses from individuals who are interested in the topic and/or are informed about it”. While the coach of the control group was trained and provided with information for administering the questionnaires, questions remain as to how effectively this was completed.

When reviewing the quantitative data, the reader should be aware that the researcher was unable to personally check on issues affecting the control groups’ cohesiveness as a team.

Individual Attractions To The Group-Task Subscale Results

A summary of descriptive statistics for the ATG-T sub-scale appears in Table 1. This sub-scale was calculated with the highest possible score being 36.

Table 1:

Means and standard deviations for 4 time measures of ATG-T sub-scale × 3 groups.

GROUP		ATGT_1	ATGT_2	ATGT_3	ATGT_4
Control Group	Mean	33.30	31.70	31.50	31.10
	Std. Deviation	4.03	5.17	6.52	4.75
U/19 Team	Mean	32.56	31.89	34.11	34.56
	Std. Deviation	4.61	3.41	2.93	2.65
U/17 Team	Mean	34.45	33.91	35.18	35.36
	Std. Deviation	1.86	2.26	1.40	1.03

Using a most conservative interpretation of the of the ATG-T repeated measures data analysis, it can be concluded that the test was approaching significance. With this result the lines in Figure 1 were treated as not being parallel; meaning that some kind of interaction had taken place between groups over time, in other words, some kind of change had taken place.

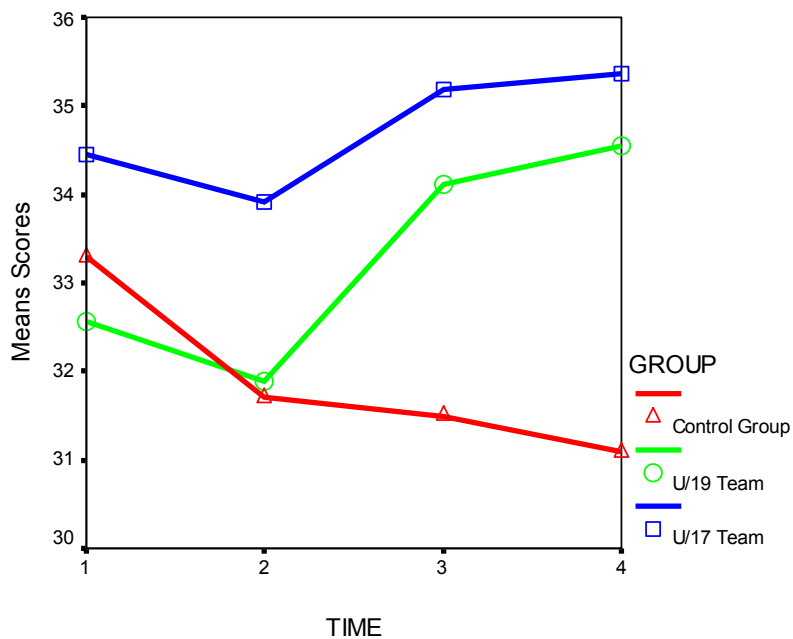


Figure 1: Repeated measures analysis showing interaction between groups and time on the ATG-T sub-scale.

These trends were examined by analysis of variance across each measure of time for group differences. No significant differences were noted across the first three time measures, however, significant group differences were recorded at time 4 [F(2, 27)=5.238; p=.012] (See Table 2).

Table 2: Analysis of Variance for ATG-T sub-scale across 4 time measures

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ATGT_1	Between Groups	18.451	2	9.225	.710	.501
	Within Groups	351.049	27	13.002		
	Total	369.500	29			
ATGT_2	Between Groups	31.469	2	15.734	1.107	.345
	Within Groups	383.898	27	14.218		
	Total	415.367	29			
ATGT_3	Between Groups	73.941	2	36.971	2.119	.140
	Within Groups	471.025	27	17.445		
	Total	544.967	29			
ATGT_4	Between Groups	104.632	2	52.316	5.238	.012 ^a
	Within Groups	269.668	27	9.988		
	Total	374.300	29			

a. Denotes a significant result

Post hoc Bonferroni analysis found that there was a significant difference between the Control group and the Under 17 team (p=.014) (See Table 3).

Table 3:

Post Hoc analysis showing multiple comparison of ATG-T sub-scale at time 4.

Dependent Variable: ATGT_4
Bonferroni

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean			95% Confidence Interval	
		Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control Group	U/19 Team	-3.4556	1.4521	.074	-7.1619	.2508
	U/17 Team	-4.2636*	1.3808	.014	-7.7882	-.7391
U/19 Team	Control Group	3.4556	1.4521	.074	-.2508	7.1619
	U/17 Team	-.8081	1.4205	1.000	-4.4338	2.8176
U/17 Team	Control Group	4.2636*	1.3808	.014	.7391	7.7882
	U/19 Team	.8081	1.4205	1.000	-2.8176	4.4338

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Effect size analysis was used to measure the longitudinal effects of the intervention. These were calculated for each group to determine the degree of any change between each testing time. Figure 2 shows the effect sizes for each group on the ATG-T subscale. Results showed the amount of change that occurred between: time 1-2; time 2-3; and time 3-4. Positive effects for the treatment groups between Time 2-3 support the hypothesis that teams receiving the adventure intervention would increase scores on all the GEQ subscales. These results were maintained between Time 3-4 data collection.

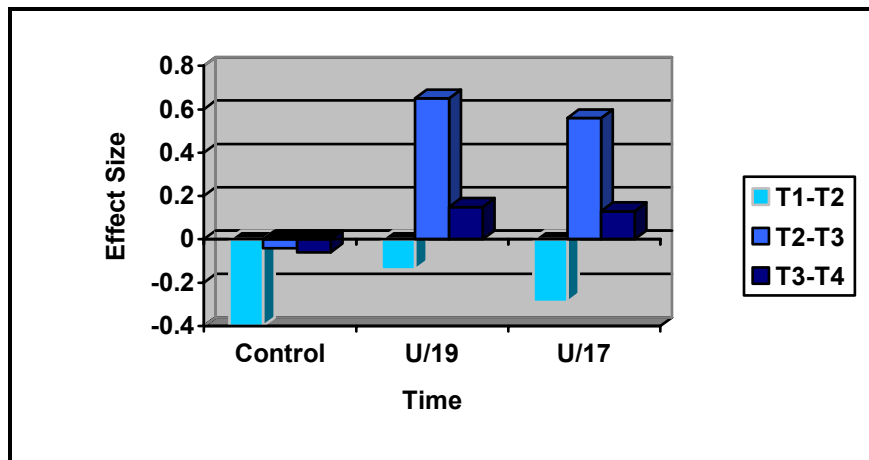


Figure 2: Comparison of effect size change for three groups across time for ATG-T subscale.

Individual Attraction To The Group-Social Sub-Scale Results

A summary of descriptive statistics for the ATG-S sub-scale appears in Table 4. This sub-scale was calculated with the highest possible score being 45.

Table 4:

Means and standard deviations for 4 time measures of ATG-S sub-scale × 3 groups.

GROUP		ATG_S1	ATG_S2	ATG_S3	ATG_S4
Control Group	Mean	40.90	37.70	37.20	36.50
	Std. Deviation	4.01	6.63	6.61	6.19
U/19 Team	Mean	40.89	41.67	42.11	41.89
	Std. Deviation	7.25	3.32	3.66	3.59
U/17 Team	Mean	40.45	39.64	42.18	42.36
	Std. Deviation	3.24	4.97	3.19	2.91

Using a most conservative interpretation of the ATG-S repeated measures data analysis, it can be concluded that the test was also approaching significance. With this result, the lines in Figure 3 were treated as not being parallel; meaning that some kind of interaction had taken place between groups over time, in other words, some kind of change had taken place.

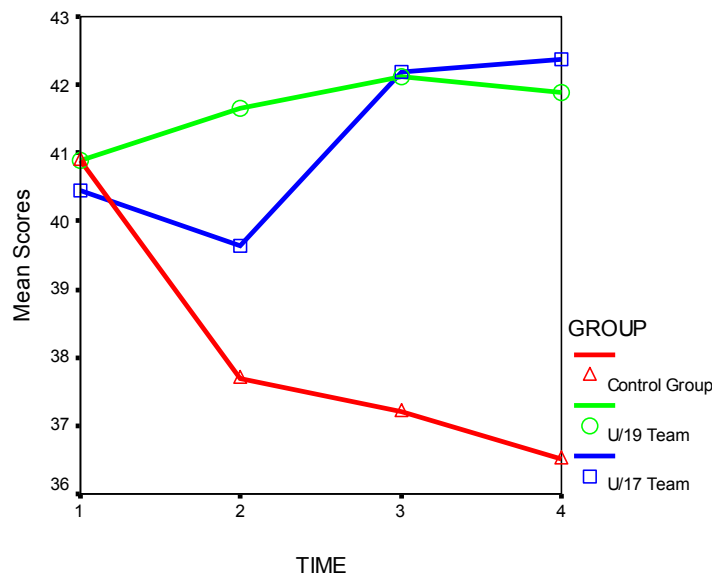


Figure 3: Repeated measures analysis showing interaction between groups and time on the ATG-S sub-scale.

These diverging trends were examined by analysis of variance across each measure of time for group differences. No significant differences were noted across the first two time measures, however, significant group differences were recorded at time 3 [$F(2, 27)=3.663$; $p=.039$], and time 4 [$F(2, 27)=5.429$; $p=.010$] (See Table 5). Post hoc Bonferroni analysis however, did not discern any significant differences at time 3. Further post hoc analysis at time 4 identified significant difference between the Control group and the Under 17 team ($p=.016$), and the Control group and Under 19 team ($p=.041$) (See Table 6).

Figure 4 shows the effect sizes for each group on the ATG-S sub-scale. A particularly large negative effect was seen between times 1-2 for the control group. A large positive change occurred for the Under 17 team between times 2-3. The same improvement was not seen in the Under 19 team; this could be a result of the ceiling effect of their data.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance for ATG_S sub-scale across 4 time measures

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ATG_S1	Between Groups	1.351	2	.675	.027	.973
	Within Groups	670.516	27	24.834		
	Total	671.867	29			
ATG_S2	Between Groups	74.555	2	37.277	1.378	.269
	Within Groups	730.645	27	27.061		
	Total	805.200	29			
ATG_S3	Between Groups	163.375	2	81.687	3.663	.039 ^a
	Within Groups	602.125	27	22.301		
	Total	765.500	29			
ATG_S4	Between Groups	213.932	2	106.966	5.429	.010 ^b
	Within Groups	531.934	27	19.701		
	Total	745.867	29			

a. Not significant in post hoc bonferroni testing

b. Denotes a significant result

Table 6:

Post Hoc analysis showing multiple comparison of ATG-S sub-scale at time 4

Dependent Variable: ATG_S4

Bonferroni

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control Group	U/19 Team	-5.3889*	2.0394	.041	-10.5944	-.1834
	U/17 Team	-5.8636*	1.9394	.016	-10.8138	-.9135
U/19 Team	Control Group	5.3889*	2.0394	.041	.1834	10.5944
	U/17 Team	-.4747	1.9950	1.000	-5.5669	4.6174
U/17 Team	Control Group	5.8636*	1.9394	.016	.9135	10.8138
	U/19 Team	.4747	1.9950	1.000	-4.6174	5.5669

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

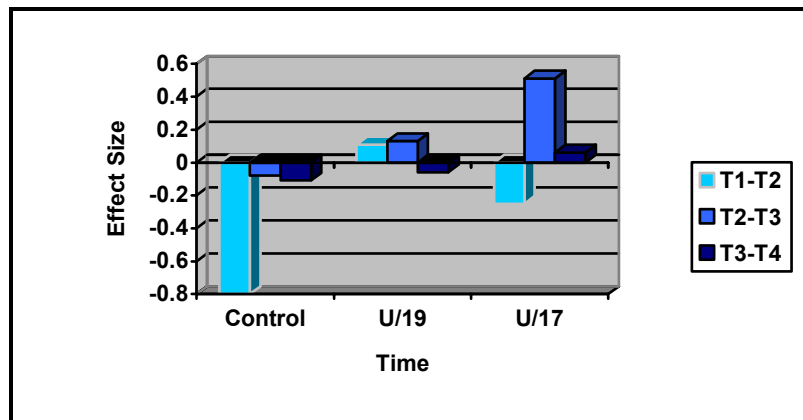


Figure 4: Comparison of effect size change for three groups across time for ATG-S subscale.

Group Integration-Task Sub-Scale Results

A summary of descriptive statistics for the GI-T sub-scale appears in Table 7. This sub-scale was calculated with the highest possible score being 45.

Table 7:

Means and standard deviations for 4 time measures of GI-T sub-scale × 3 groups.

GROUP		GIT_1	GIT_2	GIT_3	GIT_4
Control Group	Mean	37.10	36.90	38.40	37.00
	Std. Deviation	7.62	7.58	7.78	7.92
U/19 Team	Mean	38.56	36.78	37.56	41.33
	Std. Deviation	4.75	3.99	4.00	2.83
U/17 Team	Mean	39.36	40.91	43.91	44.09
	Std. Deviation	4.37	3.65	1.64	1.30

Analysis of the GI-T data indicated a significant result. Interaction between the independent variables time and teams was again measured using both multivariate and univariate analysis (See Figure 5). These diverging trend were examined by analysis of variance across each measure of time for group differences. No significant differences were noted across the first two time measures, however, significant group differences were recorded at time 3 [$F(2, 27)=4.760$; $p=.017$], and time 4 [$F(2, 27)=5.564$; $p=.009$] (See Table 8). Post hoc Bonferroni analysis at time 3 indicated a significant difference between the Under 19 and Under 17 groups ($p=.030$) (See Table 9). While, analysis of time 4 revealed a significant divergence between the Control group and the Under 17 team ($p=.008$) (See Table 10).

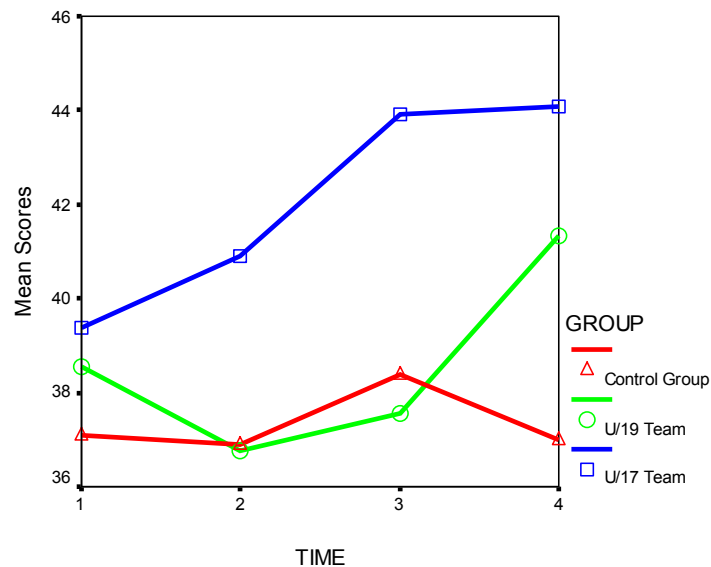


Figure 5: Repeated measures analysis showing interaction between groups and time on the GI-T sub-scale.

Table 8: Analysis of Variance for GI-T sub-scale across 4 time measures.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
GIT_1	Between Groups	27.299	2	13.649	.412	.666
	Within Groups	893.668	27	33.099		
	Total	920.967	29			
GIT_2	Between Groups	115.302	2	57.651	2.002	.155
	Within Groups	777.365	27	28.791		
	Total	892.667	29			
GIT_3	Between Groups	246.635	2	123.318	4.760	.017 ^a
	Within Groups	699.531	27	25.909		
	Total	946.167	29			
GIT_4	Between Groups	265.791	2	132.895	5.564	.009 ^b
	Within Groups	644.909	27	23.886		
	Total	910.700	29			

a. Denotes a significant result

b. Denotes a significant result

Table 9: Post Hoc analysis showing multiple comparison of GI-T at time 3.

Dependent Variable: GIT_3

Bonferroni

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control Group	U/19 Team	.8444	2.3387	1.000	-5.1250	6.8139
	U/17 Team	-5.5091	2.2240	.059	-11.1858	.1676
U/19 Team	Control Group	-.8444	2.3387	1.000	-6.8139	5.1250
	U/17 Team	-6.3535*	2.2878	.030	-12.1931	-.5140
U/17 Team	Control Group	5.5091	2.2240	.059	-.1676	11.1858
	U/19 Team	6.3535*	2.2878	.030	.5140	12.1931

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 10: Post Hoc analysis showing multiple comparison of GI-T at time 4.

Dependent Variable: GIT_4

Bonferroni

(I) GROUP	(J) GROUP	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control Group	U/19 Team	-4.3333	2.2456	.193	-10.0650	1.3983
	U/17 Team	-7.0909*	2.1354	.008	-12.5414	-1.6404
U/19 Team	Control Group	4.3333	2.2456	.193	-1.3983	10.0650
	U/17 Team	-2.7576	2.1967	.660	-8.3645	2.8493
U/17 Team	Control Group	7.0909*	2.1354	.008	1.6404	12.5414
	U/19 Team	2.7576	2.1967	.660	-2.8493	8.3645

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Figure 6 shows the effect sizes for each group on the GI-T sub-scale. A positive change occurred for the Under 17 team between times 2-3. Similar indications of a large and notable effect can be

seen for the Under 19 team between times 3-4. Increases of this size indicate that a very large degree of change occurred within these two groups after the intervention.

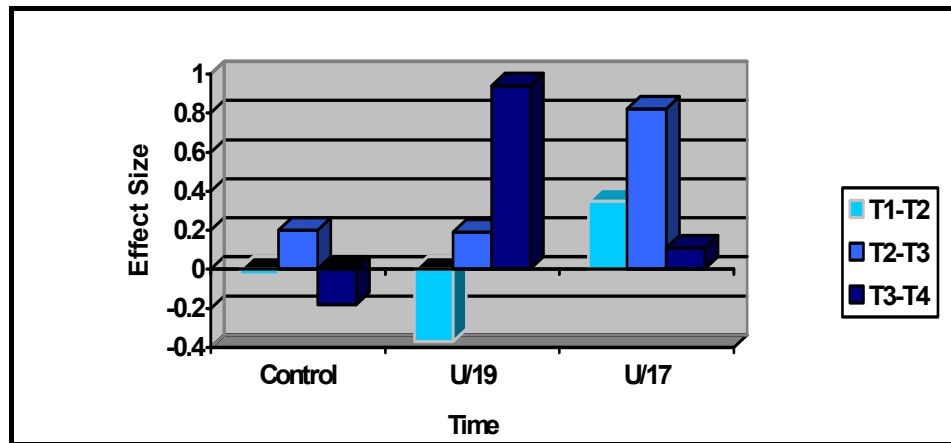


Figure 6: Comparison of effect size change for three groups across time for GI-T subscale.

Group Integration-Social Sub-Scale Results

A summary of descriptive statistics for the GI-S sub-scale appears in Table 11. This sub-scale was calculated with the highest possible score being 36. Means for all groups in this sub-scale were notably lower than the previous three sub-scales.

Table 11:

Means and standard deviations for 4 time measures of GI-S sub-scale × 3 groups.

GROUP		GIS_1	GIS_2	GIS_3	GIS_4
Control Group	Mean	26.40	23.10	22.40	23.10
	Std. Deviation	8.46	10.90	10.21	11.69
U/19 Team	Mean	26.78	25.22	26.00	26.44
	Std. Deviation	6.94	6.16	6.50	7.76
U/17 Team	Mean	24.18	22.36	21.55	22.73
	Std. Deviation	5.08	3.98	4.39	3.66

Analysis of the GI-S data indicated no significant interaction between the independent variables time and teams (See Figure 7). With these results, one can conclude that the lines in Figure 7 can be considered close to parallel, meaning that no interaction had taken place between groups over time. As this initial examination of the data indicated no significant interaction between groups with respect to the team members social integration.

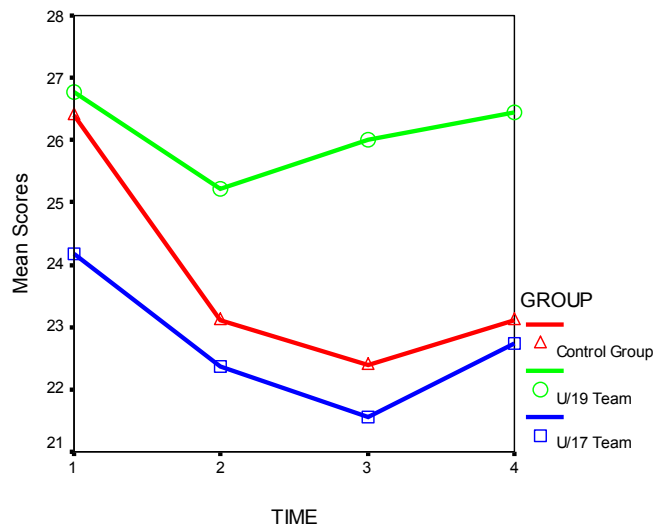


Figure 7: Repeated measures analysis showing interaction between groups and time on the GI-S sub-scale

Summary

Collectively these quantitative results indicated that the Under 17 and Under 19 teams underwent some kind of group cohesion change during the adventure-based intervention. Also of note is the steady decrease in control group scores across time in the ATG-T and ATG-S scores. These quantitative results will later be integrated with the qualitative data in the discussion in an attempt to gain an understanding of the athletes' perspective as to the efficacy of the intervention.

Qualitative Results

Neill (1998) called for future research in adventure programming to clearly outline the process involved in adventure-based programming. The qualitative approach was most appropriate to address these process questions. In addition, the qualitative data can add validity to the outcome variables that were studied through quantitative analysis (Hardy, Jones, & Gould, 1996).

A variety of methods were used to obtain qualitative data during the investigation, these included: observations, several types of interviews including: focus group interviews, activity debriefing, individual phenomenological interviews, informal conversational interviews, photography, and video. Observations occurred during all aspects of the weekend intervention as well as netball training and competitions up to and including the national championships. The qualitative results were reported using the "outcome" and "process" nature of the research questions as a guiding structure. The research questions were:

From an athletes' or coaches' perspective, what were the major outcomes of the adventure-based training program; and how did they impact most upon the team in the following areas:

- 1) Personally, 2) In developing teamwork and team cohesion, and 3) Transferability to specific netball competition situations?
 - What new skills or knowledge about themselves or other teammates did individuals take away with them from the adventure-based training camp?
 - How did the team or individuals within the team change because of their adventure experience? What new skills were developed that helped the team?
 - Was there any direct evidence that psychological skills learnt during the adventure training camp were directly transferable to netball training or competition?

- From an athletes' or coaches' perspective, what processes during the adventure-based training weekend had the most impact on the team? What was it about these situations that made them so beneficial?
- What elements of the adventure-based training intervention had the most impact on athletes? Why was this significant for these athletes?
- How did this camp differ (if at all), from previous adventure-based training camps, which the athletes had been on in the past?
- How did the outdoor bush environment impact on the program? Was it an advantage or a disadvantage traveling away from their usual training venues?

Outcome results

The qualitative interviews conducted during the research project were rich in athlete testimony as to the efficacy of the intervention and its transferability back to netball. Figure 8 summarises the key findings of the qualitative interviews that contributed to the outcomes of the adventure-based training intervention. Three general dimensions of categories were identified; group-cohesion, improved on court performance, and changes outside of netball.

Process results

Meyer and Wenger (1998) identified a theoretical perspective, "Lewin's change theory", to explain the process that underpinned their adventure training intervention with athletes. While their study identified several implications for practice, they state that, "continued questioning and further study are clearly necessary in order to better understand the processes through which adventure education outcomes are achieved (with sporting teams), and to ensure that this knowledge is translated into improved practice" (p. 263). This present investigation set about examining in detail, the processes of the adventure-based intervention.

After the outcomes of the adventure-based intervention were identified, the data was re-examined in an effort to explain the processes through which the outcomes were achieved. This being part of the recommendations to future researchers by Neil (1998) and Anderson (1994). The raw data, along with several theoretical paradigms were examined to identify the theoretical perspective, which best fit or explained the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Kurt Lewin's change theory was utilised by Meyer & Wenger (1998) to explain the results of their investigation. This present study replicated this approach in order to determine whether Lewin's theory was appropriate in explaining changes within an interacting netball team, as opposed to a co-acting tennis team, as was the case with Meyer & Wenger work. While Lewin's model will be used as a framework for explaining the processes of the intervention, other existing constructs that align with Lewin's model will be woven into this framework to give greater understanding of why the outcomes occurred.

Figure 9 summarises factors contributing to the process through which the adventure-based training outcomes were achieved.

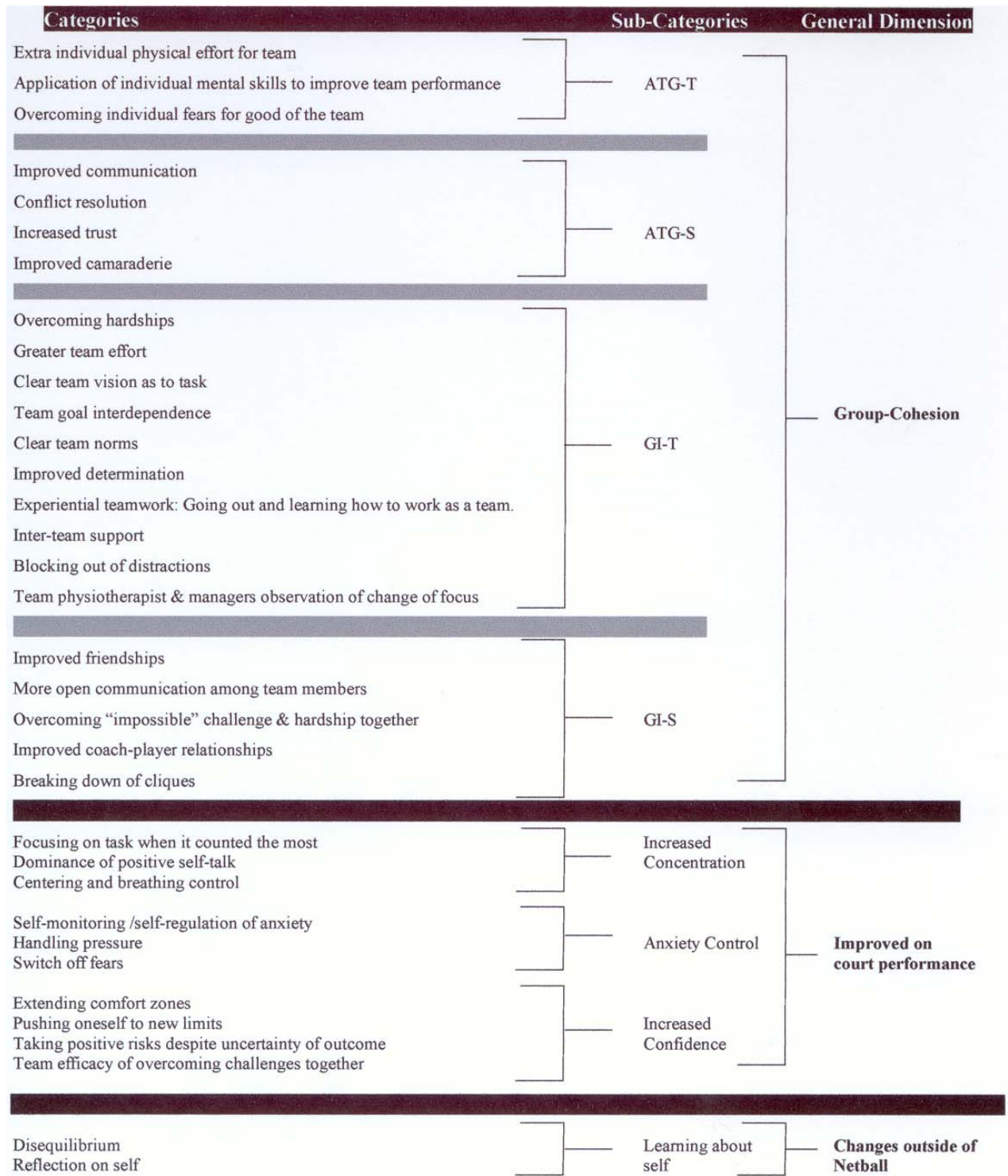


Figure 8: Factors contributing to the outcomes of the adventure-based training intervention

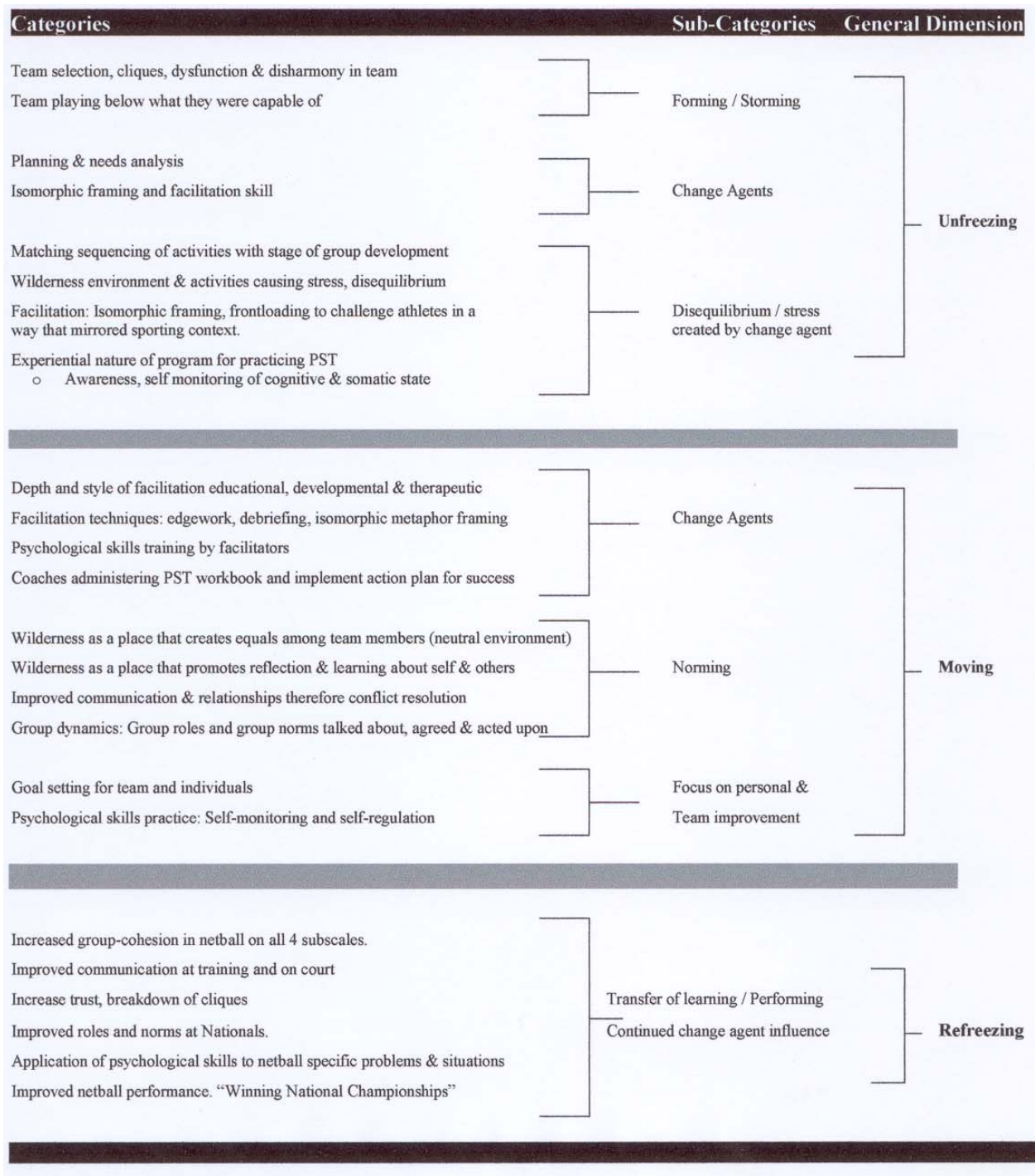


Figure 9: Factors contributing to the process through which the adventure-based outcomes were achieved

Discussion

This summary section is included in order to synthesise the key findings from the results section of this research project in a context that corresponds with the research questions. Each research question will lead a brief overview of the findings pertinent to that area of the investigation.

Quantitative findings

Research questions

Athletes who received an adventure-based training program intervention, would show increased team cohesion when compared to a control group.

The duration of the intervention will see longitudinal improvements in all four sub-scales of team cohesion, when compared to a control group.

Results of the quantitative analysis on these two questions clearly demonstrated that athletes in both treatment groups increased cohesion and that these improvements were increased and maintained throughout the duration of the investigation. This however, was only evident from a statistical point of view, in three of the four subscales. One subscale GI-S, returned non-significant results.

These results reflected strong but only partial support for the original research hypotheses. Results did not reflect improvement of all subscales as was hypothesised. Given this shortcoming, however, the results can be considered extremely significant due to the ceiling effect in the data. One wonders if significance would have been further improved if groups had room to score higher on subsequent GEQ data collections. Of special note were the very large and significant effect size scores for both treatment groups on the task related subscales. These statistical gains were also effectively triangulated by the qualitative data. Given this, the reader should feel confident that the findings are supported by strong validity.

The longitudinal element of the hypotheses are again not fully supported, however the improvements in cohesion that were made early in the intervention were maintained through to the time just before the national championships. This would indicate that the learning from the intervention and the support infrastructure to maintain these gains was very effective. The quantitative data results were strongly supported by the qualitative data. The following summarises the findings from the qualitative research questions:

Qualitative outcome findings

Team cohesion

It can be concluded from the rich accounts of athletes' and coaches' experiences, that the adventure-based training program had a major impact on the team cohesion of both the Under 17 and Under 19 netball teams. The following summarises the major trends in the team cohesion qualitative results.

As a result of the intervention and the learning sequence the athletes were exposed to, relationships within both teams improved. This was especially evident within the under 19 team. Players improved their communication, trust and camaraderie, dysfunctional cliques dissolved, and players were able to resolve conflict that had led to dysfunctional behaviour and below par performances in the past. Being involved in a shared experience that required teammates and coaching staff to work together to overcome adversity was instrumental in improving social relations within the team.

Individual players had self-doubt as to their ability to perform many of the challenging adventure training tasks under adverse conditions. They developed however, awareness of their inefficiency and worked at applying skills that would improve their performance as a team. With these improved social and task skills, came a new determination to succeed. There was tremendous team interdependence around performing at the nationals, athletes believed they could win and set about taking a confident and focused attitude into all team performances.

Improved group-cohesion among the NSW netball players created an atmosphere of intense social and task bonding around the goal of winning a national championship, this attitude was supported by psychological skills to help athletes cope with the stresses of competition.

Increased ability to maintain concentration and control anxiety levels

The adventure based training intervention was designed to continually test and challenge the athletes ability to maintain their focus on a set task despite the intentional distractions and twists that would appear when the athletes least expected it. These distractions included:

- Ending up at an 80 metre cliff and having to abseil off it during “a bush walk”.
- Having to cook dinner and clean up after 12 hours of hiking.
- Expecting to have hot showers in cabins, only to find a cold bucket of water waiting behind a clump of bushes.
- Expecting to sleep in tents but the tents were forgotten.
- Being woken at sunrise by bagpipes and having to complete a team swim.
- Being confronted with a claustrophobic caving experience, then having your lights taken from you, and then being required to work as a team to find your way out in the dark.

These twists in the adventure component of the intervention were designed to metaphor the distractions and pressures of elite sporting competition, deliberately creating anxiety levels that would mirror or exceed those of athletic competition. Players were challenged to monitor their thoughts and behaviours during these testing times. When distracted or overwhelmed they had to refocus their concentration, or use new mental skills to regain their composure so the team task that had been set for them could be completed. Athletes and coaches during this time experienced first hand the application of sport psychology techniques that eventually would be used on the netball court.

Increased individual and team confidence

The adventure training intervention challenged athletes’ perceptions of what was possible. The structure of the intervention and the way it continually increased in challenge tested existing beliefs of what was possible and had athletes and coaches extending their self imposed comfort zones into realms of new possibilities. A strong metaphor within the treatment teams developed around what had been achieved during the adventure challenges where they learnt to work as a team. This success and accompanying feelings of confidence, and the attitude to work as one around a common goal, transferred back to netball training and competition.

Transfer of learning from the adventure experience to netball

The real test of this intervention’s success was whether the learning that took place during the adventure-training weekend would be transferred and benefit the athletes’ sporting endeavours on the netball court at the national championships. Athlete’s accounts of the implementation of skills learnt during the adventure training intervention, gave clear and unequivocal support for the notion of transfer from the adventure setting to netball.

Rich athlete testimony gave accounts of the team being present for one another in the heat of competition, never giving up even when on the ropes, fighting their way out of trouble through a strong belief that ‘they could do it’, were common team themes. Individual athletes gave strong testimony of how the metaphor for caving helped them control anxiety levels in the pressure of goal shooting. Coaches described the use of centering and breathing control to maintain composure when under stress. All participants in the intervention believed that the adventure based training intervention had a major part in the teams success at netball nationals.

Qualitative process findings

It was an important goal of this investigation to attempt to identify the processes that enhanced and were beneficial in helping participants change and pull together as a team. Several key factors were identified as being instrumental in the success of the intervention.

The adventure environment: A place for change!

Taking athletes away from their normal training venues into the outdoor environment was a great success; this initiative provided several benefits. The new and novel setting, with its ability to create stress and disequilibrium were a catalyst for growth and change. Through appropriate sequencing of activities, the level of stress was continually adjusted to meet the goals of the athletes. This allowed for experimentation with new psychological skills designed to help “self-monitor” and “self-regulate” an optimal performance state. These skills were then utilised by athletes as a team, both in the adventure setting and back at netball.

There is a paradoxical side to the above physical and psychological challenges the outdoor environment offers. The bush also provides a neutral ground where equals are created among those who venture into her depths; this was very evident in resolving deep negative team issues during the bush walk. During the hike, reflection and thinking about self and others led to open and honest communication that the teams had not previously experienced. This resulted in debilitating clique issues and poor communication practices being resolved. Players and coaches believed that these team improvements would not have occurred if they had remained back at their normal training venue.

The role of the facilitator as change agent

This investigation had its starting point at a national coaching conference where the coach of one of the NSW teams took the researcher to task over the negative experiences her team had had the previous year while attending a different adventure training program. From analysis and comparison of the teams adventure experiences, clear recommendations emerged. Any program must ensure the matching of client’s goals and preferred learning styles with the skills of the facilitator. During previous adventure based training camps the NSW netball team required a developmental style of program but received a recreational one instead; players and coaches were left disillusioned.

From this learning, the facilitation process in this investigation took a high priority in matching the teams needs, with an intervention that had strong isomorphic and metaphoric links to netball. Players and coaches felt that this intervention provided these strong links through the way activities were presented and framed. Facilitators whether they are from an educational or sport psychology background, can learn from these lessons. The facilitator can be the real catalyst for change or recipe for disaster!

In addition to the above, this study adds to Lewin’s Change Theory (reference) where a change agent (facilitator) was seen as being critically important in all phases of the change process; Unfreezing, moving and refreezing, not just moving and refreezing as the previous theory had suggested.

Concluding comments

This study produced a substantial body of evidence supporting the efficacy of adventure-based training as a valid and viable methodology for enhancing the team cohesion and psychological skills development of elite athletes. In addition, an unexpected, but more significant outcome of the intervention was the positive and powerful impact the adventure experience had on the athletes’ performances in sporting competition. The evidence presented by those who participated

in the intervention painted a vivid picture of a unique life changing experience that clearly played a major part in both NSW team's success, in winning their respective national championships.

The outcomes and benefits for the athletes and coaches that underwent the intervention cannot be simply dismissed as a fringe teaching methodology for sport. Unmistakably, adventure-based training can make a difference to sporting team's and their performance. Coaches and sport psychologists that are searching for a training method that could give players the edge should consider incorporating adventure-based training into their yearly training programs.

As well as implications for practice, this study made a strong contribution to research in the field of adventure-based training by demonstrating the transferability of learned skills from the adventure environment to the athletes' lives on the sporting field and beyond. In the past adventure-based training had received much criticism for its inability to produce research that demonstrated the efficacy of its methodologies. This study helps to reverse this trend by adding to the growing body of knowledge supporting the power of adventure-based training to impact on and change participants' lives.

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Biography

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Some implications for outdoor educator training and accreditation from a study of fatal accidents in Australia since 1960.

Andrew Brookes

Abstract

This paper presents some insights that emerged from a study of fatal incidents on school and youth group camps and excursions since 1960. I provide a brief outline of the incidents studied, grouped by immediate circumstances, and provide some examples of how the research identified particular circumstances that could guide fatality prevention. Drawing on research literature from outside the outdoor education field, I indicate some areas where organizational responses to fatality prevention must be tempered by an understanding of both human error and ‘system’ accidents.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to present some insights that emerged from a study of fatalities associated with school or youth group camps and excursions in Australia since 1960. The research aimed to contribute to fatality prevention. Its main outcomes were (a) compilation of a set of case studies, using information on the public record, for teaching purposes and (b) a series of papers that provide a detailed analysis of the patterns that are evident when the fatal incidents are considered as a set. At the time of writing four papers are at various stages of preparation, intended for publication in the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education (AJOE) in 2003 (1). I hope the material presented here will assist planning for fatality prevention, but refer readers to the full papers for a more complete account. I recommend that those concerned with fatality prevention also study at least some cases in depth.

Readers should remind themselves that I have tried to understand how fatalities may be avoided, and have not tried to draw conclusions about the causes of past accidents. To say that certain incidents are preventable in the future is not to say that any particular incident in the past could have been prevented by any individual or organization, given the circumstances.

In the summary below I provide only an approximate place name and the year (for example Lake Hume 1963). I refer readers to AJOE for a detailed summary of the incidents, including the dates, location, institution, and brief description of the incident. (Researchers who require the names of the deceased should contact me directly). The first AJOE article contains a discussion of the limitations of the study, of the common biases that are likely to influence how cases are interpreted, and of the reasons why determination to learn how to prevent future tragedies must be accompanied by recognition that there are good reasons to be cautious making judgements about what *caused* particular tragedies in the past.

Incidents studied

Table 1. summarises the incidents studied, grouped by immediate circumstances and cause of death. The incidents provide a reliable basis on which to draw conclusions about some circumstances in which many, but not all, fatal incidents *have* occurred, but caution should be exercised in attempting to quantify fatality risks. I found no deaths associated with bush fires, hyperthermia, or animal attack, but that should not encourage complacency about those possibilities. I suspect the relative proportions of drownings, gravity-related deaths, and motor vehicle-related deaths are about right, but it is not possible to precisely separate *extent of exposure* to certain circumstances from the *level of risk* associated with those circumstances. Small numbers of incidents of a particular kind may indicate a relatively safe circumstance to

which many are exposed (supervised pool swimming, perhaps), or a relatively dangerous circumstance to which few are exposed (open water crossings on cold water in open canoes, perhaps).

Incident	Deaths	Incident	Deaths
<i>Open water</i>		<i>Falls</i>	
Lake Hume 1963	M21 M19 M19 M19 M22 M29* M25*	Tatachilla 1976	M11
Lake Alexandrina 1987	M40* M12 M36* M16	Barkly River 1979	M16
<i>Drowning - moving water</i>		Grampians 1979	M15
Stony Creek 1974	F18	Cathedrals 1983	M15
Thomson R. 1976	M16	Hawkesbury River 1986	M15
Anglesea 1976	M28*	Bungonia 1991	M16
Crooked R. 1978	M15	Bungonia 1994	M15
Anglesea 1979	M13	Thredbo 2000	M16
Stokes Bay 1980	F15	<i>Falling objects</i>	
Growling Swallet 1990	F14 F14 F23*	Steavenson Falls 1968	M19 M18 F15 F13
Shoalhaven R. 1990	M15	Two Scouts Track 1975	M16 M16
Logan R. 1990	F16	Lal Lal Falls 1990	F12 F13
Barrington R. 1995	M19*	Serpentine Gorge 1990	M16
Conto Springs 1998	M15	Mt Edwards 1993	F13
Forth R. 1998	M15	Cowaramup Bay 1996	F12 M47* M41* M49* F41* F35* M13 F12 F11
Sandbar Beach 1998	F14 M16 M25*	Bremmer Bay 1997	F15
Yarrunga Ck 1999	M15	Rowallan 1998	M12
<i>Drowning – dams, lakes, pools</i>		Crosslands Reserve 2001	F15 F15
Falls Creek 1961	M15	Carnarvon Gorge 2002	F?*
Moogerah Dam 1976	M17	<i>Hypothermia</i>	

Woorabinda 1980 (?)	M?	Cradle Mountain 1964	M15
Lake Eppalock 1980	M14	Cradle Mountain 1965	M25* M14
Maroon 1981	M?	Kanangra Walls 1981	M16
Crystal Lake 1990	M11	Cradle Mountain 1971	M15
Galston 1991	M6	<i>Fire, lightning</i>	
Bibra Lake 1994	M14	Noojee 1984	M12
Avon Valley 1997	F15	Sutton 1994	M11
Murgon 2000	M13	Lamington 1992	F12 F12
Morley 2000	M12	<i>Motor vehicle</i>	
Bayswater 2000	M10	Christmas Creek 1979	F? F? F?* M?*
		Anglesea 1980	M14, M15, F43
<i>Natural causes</i>		Cathedrals 1982	Unknown
Bogong High Plains 1979	M?*	Gordonvale 1987	F16 F16 F16 M15 M16 F17 F16 F17
Coastal NSW 1991	??	Morgan 1988	M17
Renmark 1991	F14	Catherine Hill 1990	M14
Coastal NSW 1992	?16	Flinders 1992	M14
Howitt 1996	M?	Cooper Pedy 1993	F16
Sam Hill 1999	F14	Chillagoe 1997	F18
<i>Homicide</i>		Omeo 2000	F17 F16
Loftia park 1977	M7		
Coogee Beach 1993	M21*	*Adult supervisor	

Table 1. Brief summary of incidents included in the study

Fatality prevention

Common sense and relevant personal experience on the part of outdoor education teachers are necessary, but not sufficient, to prevent fatalities. In many of these cases, individuals were following the dictates of common sense and were sufficiently experienced. In some instances, supervisors or teachers were, with hindsight, 'out of their depths', and levels of care appeared, with hindsight, to be insufficient, but what struck me, in attempting to understand what it was like prior to tragedy striking, was how ordinary things must have seemed in most cases.

Because fatalities are rare, individuals (and most institutions) do not accumulate sufficient experience (person-days) to draw reliable conclusions about fatality risks. Experience of near-misses and non-fatal incidents will teach some, *but not all*, of what must be learned.

Undoubtedly, considering all outdoor education activity, near-misses and incidents with less serious consequences are far more common than fatal incidents (see (Brown, 1997)), *on average*. However it is *not* true that:

- (a) fatalities are always, (or often), accompanied by ‘warnings’ in the form of near misses or less serious incidents in that particular program, and
- (b) if you look after the pennies (minor safety issues) the pounds (fatalities) will look after themselves. (Wharton (1995, p.9), for example, is mistaken when he asserts: ‘[I]f we can prevent the near misses from occurring then we can also prevent the minor of major injuries from occurring’).

Considering (a), while many incidents were, with hindsight, preventable, *for those involved* often there may have been little or no warning in the form of near misses or minor incidents related to the tragedy that ensued. Considering (b), fatalities are *not necessarily* linked to *generally* poor preparation or operation. It is quite possible to run a ‘tight ship’, in which every aspect of the program seems well-planned and executed, except for some *specific* failures in fatality prevention. These failures may exist for years with no consequence, until circumstances occur that reveal them.

The fact a program has been running for years without incident is *not* evidence of low fatality risk. One needs to study millions of participant-days to understand fatality risks, not the tens of thousands of participant days that a particular program’s corporate memory may draw on. This study is an attempt to harvest the collective experience of the outdoor education field in Australia over four decades; only by casting the net widely do certain patterns become evident. While common practices (or ‘industry standards’) *may* contain wisdom accumulated from past tragedies, this cannot be taken for granted. Common practices may have been influenced by widely held but false beliefs, may have been shaped by considerations other than fatality prevention, and may have incompletely or imperfectly absorbed the lessons from past tragedies.

As Hogan (2002) has pointed out, fatality prevention should be a first priority of safety planning, not something that can be assumed to follow naturally from taking care of less serious possibilities. Fatality prevention should not be confused with risk management. ‘Risk management’ originated in financial circles, and includes considerations such as protection of reputations, keeping down insurance premiums, and limiting payments to injured parties. Not only can these other considerations be distractions, but in certain respects may work against fatality prevention (for example, after the Sandbar Beach 1998 tragedy, it was reported that the local council had not erected a sign warning of the known hazards because it was believed that to erect a sign would exposed the council to litigation). Fatality prevention is about doing everything possible to avoid tragedy. It is not about ‘covering yourself’.

Some selected patterns emerging from this research

Supervision and local knowledge

It would be difficult to overemphasise the importance *supervision* in outdoor education. I mean by ‘supervision’ specific professional skills, structures, and practices. Although one might tend to think that the core requirement for outdoor education teachers is competence in instructing and leading particular recreational activities, my research supports a view that two key areas of knowledge and expertise, with respect to fatality prevention, are (a) supervision of young people and (b) specific knowledge of the environments in which outdoor education occurs. What follows is a partial account of some of the patterns that emerged from the study.

Supervisor fatality

Planning must take into account the possibility that key supervisors may be victims of an incident. Eighteen of the fatalities were adult supervisors or accompanying adults. At Lake Hume 1963 both instructors died attempting to rescue participants already in the water; at Lake Alexandrina 1987 the leader's canoe overturned after attempting to tow a swamped canoe and failed attempts by others to untie it. He was last heard to say that he could swim better without his life jacket. Another accompanying adult also died in that incident. A student teacher died at Cradle Mountain 1965 apparently attempting to evacuate a hypothermic student who also died. At Anglesea 1976 a teacher successfully rescued two students who had been carried out of their depth by the current, but was himself drowned. At Growling Swallet 1990 and Coogee Beach 1993 supervisors drowned attempting to rescue participants who had been swept away by a current. At Barrington River 1995 the leader of a kayaking group died attempting a rapid. At Coogee Beach 1993 a supervising teacher intervening in a dispute between a man fishing and a student was fatally stabbed by the man, who had accused the student of theft. At Carnarvon Gorge 2002 and Cowaramup Bay 1996 supervisors died when a tree and a cliff collapsed respectively. At Christmas Creek 1979 a teacher driving a 22 seater bus and another adult, together with two students, were killed when the bus left the road and rolled. At the Bogong High Plains 1979 an adult accompanying a group died of natural causes.

In this study the overall ratio of accompanying adult fatalities to participant fatalities is about 1:6, broadly comparable to the overall ratio of teachers to students in outdoor education. If the Cowaramup Bay 1996 incident is excluded the ratio is about 1:8.

The pattern of fatalities for supervisors is not the same as for participants. In about half of the incidents the act of exercising supervisory responsibilities was itself relevant factor.

Supervision of teenage boys around moving water or steep ground

The number of instances of teenage boys, not closely or directly supervised, making a fatal error on steep ground or around moving water is one of the most striking patterns to emerge from this study, accounting for about one in six of the non-motor vehicle related fatalities. In some instances the boys were unsupervised as part of a deliberate program aim. At Crooked River 1978 and Yarrunga Creek 1999, unsupervised teenagers were attempting to cross a river or creek after heavy rain. Shoalhaven River 1990 was a similar incident, although I had insufficient access to detail to be certain that teachers were not present. At Bungonia 1994 adult supervisors permitted boys to navigate and route-find down an unfamiliar creek. The adults were apparently intentionally not with the boys at the front of the group when one fell to his death attempting to find a route down a cliff. At Tatachilla 1976 boys were playing unsupervised in an area at the back of a stage, where it was possible to climb from one room to another via a windowsill, past a room divider; an 11 year-old apparently doing so fell to his death. At the Barkly River 1979 the leader permitted a 16 year-old boy to take a different route back to the camp, which could be seen on the river flats below. He apparently attempted to descend a cliff he encountered, and fell to his death. At Falls Creek 1961 the deceased had apparently tobogganed over a drop during a period of unsupervised tobogganing and hit his head on a large vertical pipe buried to its lip in the snow; he was knocked out, fell in, and drowned. At Anglesea in 1979 scouts who entered the water were at best loosely supervised; the group was spread out, some instructions had been disregarded or not passed on, and supervising adults were not all clear on supervision arrangements for swimming. On Barrington River 1995 a 19 year old ex-student leading a kayaking group was pinned in a rapid. Hawkesbury River 1986 also involved an unsupervised teenager, although, like the Cathedrals 1983 incident, the deceased fell only a short distance; it is not clear there was danger a supervisor could have seen.

In some cases boys escaped supervision, or supervision lapsed, briefly. At Bungonia 1991 one of four participants fell or was pushed during a lunch break when the two supervisors were momentarily not looking. He was seen falling, but he was not seen to fall. On the Thomson River 1976, canoeing had finished for the day and gear was being carried back to the vehicles when two students decided to put a canoe in and paddle a grade one rapid without life jackets. A teacher noticed them attempting to ferry glide incorrectly, called advice, and seeing one let go of the canoe after it capsized swam after him, getting to within a metre or so of him before he disappeared. On the Forth River 1998 a student attempted to cross a section of river to join another spectator on a rock; canoeing supervisors came to his aid after he became entrapped, but the partial river crossing was apparently neither a planned part of the program nor supervised directly. Similarly, at the Grampians 1979 an abseiling activity had ceased due to rain when a student attempted to climb a cliff unroped to obtain better radio reception, without the knowledge of the teacher. On the Cathedrals 1983 a boy fell a short distance, receiving a fatal blow to the head, while teachers attended to a student who had fallen a metre or so.

- (1) 'Indirectly supervised' (i.e. not directly supervised) expeditions for teenagers present a clear fatality risk if there is a possibility of the group encountering moving water or steep ground.
- (2) The tight supervision that organised instruction necessitates (in activities such as abseiling or canoeing) should be in place while students are near steep ground or moving water, i.e. not only while the activity is in progress. The fact that students may actively escape supervision or take advantage of a supervisor's inattention should be considered.

Environmental and local knowledge

Fatal incidents other than from homicide, motor vehicles, or natural causes, cluster around certain environmental circumstances – broadly water, gravity, and weather. These groupings, when elaborated, may explain the incidents better than grouping them around recreational activities (rock-climbing, canoeing, bushwalking, and so on). For example, although a lay person might guess that 'rock-climbing falls' would figure prominently in an analysis such as this (as is indeed the case when recreational rock climbing fatalities are analysed (Brown, 1997)), I found no such fatalities. However there were seven fatalities, all teenage males, resulting from falls on steep ground (Barkly River 1979; Grampians 1979; Cathedrals 1983; Hawkesbury River 1986; Bungonia 1991; Bungonia 1994; Moogerah Dam 1976), and another two, also teenage males, on steep snow (Falls Creek 1961; Thredbo 2000). (Two of these incidents appear as drownings in the summary, because the deceased fell into water). In two cases the students were near steep ground because they had just been (roped) climbing or abseiling, in other cases the deceased encountered steep ground as part of a bushwalk or other activity. Risk of a fatal fall based on the incidents I found was linked not with actual roped rock-climbing (presumably because school programs use top ropes, which effectively prevent serious falls), but with any *other* circumstances (including having just completed a climbing activity) that places students on or near steep ground.

The case of canoeing is more complex. I found 14 canoeing fatalities, involving three distinct kinds of incidents. Eleven of the deaths arose from catastrophic incidents on open water, involving squalls and low water temperature (Lake Hume 1963, Lake Alexandrina 1967. The fact that canoes were used was significant in these cases, although environmental circumstances were critical). The remaining three canoeing deaths involved river currents: two were entrapments (Logan River 1990, Barrington River 1995) and one a drowning involving a weak swimmer not wearing a flotation device (Thomson River 1976). There is case for considering the entrapments as 'canoeing-related' fatalities. However, a fuller picture of the fatalities emerges if 'river

currents' is considered as a risk category. Once a person is in the grip of a river current it may be largely immaterial whether they had been paddling a canoe or trying to cross a river. I found eight other moving water (river) fatalities, including two (Shoalhaven River 1990, Forth River 1998) in which the deceased had been canoeing, but was actually trying to cross a river before becoming trapped, and another six in which the deceased were attempting to cross a river in the course of a bushwalk (Stony Creek 1974; Crooked River 1978; Yarrunga Creek 1999) or caving expedition (Growling Swallet 1990). All of the latter incidents involved heavy rain and elevated water levels. (How to respond to river current incidents is another matter – canoeing parties have different options to walking parties).

What this discussion, albeit abbreviated, is intended to show is that distinctive risks (for example falling or being overwhelmed by a current) occur in quite specific environmental circumstances, and are relatively independent, although they may combine. (In the Moogerah Dam 1976 incident the deceased had canoed to a rock-face, where he began climbing. However, rain had made the face slippery. He fell, and to avoid a person climbing below pushed out from the wall. The rain had also swollen a nearby waterfall, and instead of landing in still water he landed in turbulent water and did not surface). It is the specific association of certain kinds of incidents with particular environmental circumstances that makes many outdoor education fatalities preventable. The level of underlying or residual risk, simply from being in the outdoors, appears very low.

The residual risk is not zero, as the instances of death from falling objects, namely rocks and trees or branches illustrate. At Stevenson Falls 1968, on a still day a group of seven teenagers were ascending a popular walking track. Without warning the top of an old dead tree, some distance upslope, broke off, rolling down the hill and killing four. Since every tree falls down eventually, the only way to eliminate such incidents would be to avoid all large trees. There have been a number of other incidents related to falling trees and branches (Two Scouts Track 1975, Rowallan 1998, Crosslands Reserve 2000, Carnarvon Gorge 2002); while none of these incidents may have been avoidable, the risk from falling branches or trees can be reduced. For example, in snow gum woodland, where the risk of falling branches is multiplied by high winds and the build up of ice in the leaves, it is nearly always possible to place tents where trees cannot fall – the trees tend not to be tall, and clearings can usually be found. Along rivers it is usually possible to avoid lingering under red gums, whose propensity to drop branches is well known. In Alpine Ash forests observation of fallen trees suggests to me that it is possible to judge which trees are more likely to fall than others; warning signs include trunks with a pronounced lean, forked trunks (these tend to split), trees whose roots have been disturbed by road works, and trees adjacent to clearings or roads. In the case of the latter, the canopy tends to grow out over the cleared space, both unbalancing the tree and exposing the tree to a twisting force when wind drives through the cleared area. In some locations it might be possible to ascend a slope to camp in Snow Gums rather than Alpine Ash. Preventing fatalities from falling trees and branches is therefore, on one level, a matter of being aware that there have been quite a number of deaths, and of avoiding large trees, within reason. On another level, avoiding large trees will often be impractical, and reducing the risk of fatalities will depend on local knowledge.

Consideration of fatalities due to falling rocks raises similar issues, although cliffs may be more avoidable than trees. Apart from one death due to hypothermia on an abseil (Kanangra Walls 1981), there were two incidents involving roped climbing or abseiling - in both cases the deceased were at the base of a climb or abseil when struck by falling rocks (Lal Lal Falls 1990, Bremmer Bay 1997). As in the case of falling trees, there is some capacity for outdoor education teachers to develop expert knowledge of the propensity for rocks to fall at particular sites, and therefore to be selective about which sites to avoid. At Cowaramup Bay 1996 a large group sheltering under an overhang at a surf carnival were buried when the cliff collapsed; there was

considerable discussion in the aftermath about the stability of the cliffs in that area. Nevertheless, there is some risk from falling material on all steep ground, and fatalities will be reduced if the bases of cliffs are avoided as much as possible. On steep slopes, walkers or scramblers should ascend one at a time, while others wait where falling or ricocheting material cannot strike them, or failing that, move diagonally and stay very close so that dislodged material has less time to develop momentum. Deaths at Serpentine Gorge 1990 and Mt Edwards 1993 involved students walking or scrambling on steep ground, with the deceased being struck by material dislodged by those above. Instances involving individuals moving on steep ground directly above others (Lal Lal Falls 1990 is another example) is an example of a specific situation with a high fatality risk.

The importance of local environmental knowledge is reinforced if the discussion is extended to include surf-beach incidents, and to rescue considerations. Local knowledge not only includes understanding the location of particular hazards, knowing the possibilities and consequences of extreme weather, and understanding local environmental conditions (such as rock stability, propensity for trees to drop limbs, and so on), but also knowledge embedded in a relationship with the local community. The chance of successful rescue may hinge on the level of mutual understanding already established between an outdoor education group and those called upon to assist. It can be a very tough call for a local police officer (or someone else) to receive an emergency request 'out of the blue' for a situation he or she may have never encountered before from a group about which, and about whose activities, he or she knows nothing (examples include Cathedrals 1983, Lake Alexandrina 1987). I have discussed rescue considerations in more length in the AJOE articles referred to above.

My analysis of the environmental circumstances associated with fatal incidents suggests that while there is some residual, or unavoidable risk associated simply with being in a forest, or being near water (for example), most mortal danger is associated with particular risks attached to specific circumstances. Moreover, the better the understanding of the dangers, the more precisely they can be located. Danger in the outdoors is 'lumpy'; fatalities are preventable to the extent that the lumps can be recognised and avoided. Expert fatality prevention does not entail 'wrapping in cotton wool', but it does entail extreme caution in a relatively small number of specific circumstances, some of which can be identified by fatality analysis.

Human error, system failures, and 'normal accidents'; some cautionary notes about fatality prevention

I drew on material on the public record for this research, which for the most part concentrated on (a) the medical cause of a death and (b) the immediate circumstances surrounding a death. When I began the project, I had in mind that what could be learned from previous fatal incidents should be passed on to the future outdoor education teachers in my classes. I remain persuaded that this is a worthwhile aim, and perhaps a sufficient aim for this paper. However, it would be wrong to assume that preventable fatalities necessarily occur because (a) teachers lacked knowledge or (b) teachers failed to apply knowledge. I will draw on the wider safety literature to outline why.

That all humans will make mistakes, and will from time to time deliberately behave imprudently is a certainty. Reason (2001) makes the following distinctions:

It can be helpful to distinguish slips or lapses (execution failures, due to inattention, not recognising danger, choosing a wrong strategy) from mistakes (planning failures, due to lack of knowledge, misconceptions, lack of information).

It can be helpful to distinguish *errors* (slips, lapses, and mistakes), which are unintentional, from *violations*, which are intentional. Violations may be more or less forced by circumstances, may

arise from optimising something other than fatality prevention, may arise from non-task related reasons, or from routine corner cutting.

Some fatal incidents may indeed be linked to lack of knowledge (sometimes as simple as not knowing a beach is hazardous – Anglesea 1976 and 1979, Sandbar Beach 1998). Many are not. The psychological causes of an incident are often the least understood part of an incident (Reason, 2001); in the incidents I examined there was often very little basis on which to base inferences about what individuals were thinking. However, the outdoor education field has paid little attention to the recent literature on human error, and on the basis of that absence (rather than from evidence directly arising from my research) I suggest: (1) Fatigue deserves more attention; there is an extensive literature of fatigue and human performance. Organizations should have an active policy of fatigue management; a reactive policy is insufficient because evidence of fatigue may not be forthcoming. (2) Production pressures lead to errors and violations. Most people can be induced to make mistakes or cut corners if they are overloaded or distracted. In my view a specific set of practices designed to identify and reduce excessive production pressure is required.

In industries that involve highly trained professionals, exhortations and sanctions ('try harder' theories of risk management) tend to fail (Reason, 2001). Understanding that lapses of attention are unavoidable, and that things like fatigue or stress cannot be overcome by 'trying harder' help explain why. Fatality prevention requires approaches to organization and practice that allow for human frailty. However, it should not be assumed that while individuals are fallible, organizations or systems are not. All incidents occur in the context of wider circumstances, including educational systems and practices, regional geography, legal considerations, networks of expertise and local knowledge, training and accreditation, and so on. In the material I reviewed (public documents), these broader considerations tended to be investigated, or commented on, only in a small number of cases that had become 'high profile'. Usually this was because there had been multiple fatalities, or a series of similar incidents. When 'system' aspects of an incident are not explicitly examined, biased tendencies to attribute accidents to human error, component failure, or bad luck are exacerbated (Perrow, 1999).

Too determined a focus on luck or human frailty may leave wider 'system' considerations unexamined. Although some of these considerations are national, it is important to recognise out that most are state, regional, or local. Educational curriculum and safety guidelines, land management requirements, rescue services, and legal frameworks are state or regional-based, and vary considerably, between states, sometimes for historical and geographical reasons. Community knowledge and experience of particular regions tends to be in regional communities or situated in organizations located in state capitals. Geographical differences are one reason why this should be so – while there may be some similarities between outdoor education in Queensland and Tasmania, for example, there will be important differences not only due to different climate and terrain, but also due to different historical and social conditions. It is likely, of course that some state level organizations or local organizations such as schools have done a better job than others at fatality prevention. I suspect that potential fatalities have been averted by changes to practices, guidelines, or training that specifically resulted from particular tragedies. In S.E. Australia I would nominate efforts to educate outdoor leaders about hypothermia in the 1970's (Hamilton-Smith & Trowbridge, 1973) and 1980's (Victorian Bushwalking and Mountaineering Training Advisory Board, 1986), the work of the Victorian Ministry of Education Camps Branch in the 1970's (Brookes, 2002), and the efforts of the Victorian Canoe Board of Education (following nearly 20 canoeing-related deaths in the 1970's) (R. Farrance pers. com.).

In this research I did not attempt to compare systems in different states or organizations, and there is, of course, no way to be certain that deaths have been prevented by any particular action – it is possible there would have been no deaths in any case. The test I would propose for fatality

prevention is a logical one, not an empirical one, namely how convincingly can it be argued that a measure under consideration would have prevented certain past tragedies. Here I must add another caution. Not only may systems (for example ways of organising programs and rescue, training schemes, guidelines, regulations, and so on) be based on wrong assumptions or be implemented imperfectly — systems may contain inherent tendencies to fail. While it is possible to find management theories that maintain that one can build a perfect system from imperfect parts, research in areas as diverse as nuclear power, the chemical industry, and international air transport suggests that such claims must be treated as dogma, not fact (Perrow, 1999; Sagan, 1993).

Accidents resulting from the *nature of the system itself* are referred to in the literature as ‘normal’ or ‘system’ accidents (Perrow, 1999). System accidents tend to be function of: system complexity, ‘tight coupling’ (requirements that leave little room for error), and involve the unexpected and sometimes incomprehensible interaction of multiple failures in different parts of a system. System related problems only emerge when something (usually more than one thing) goes wrong. In this study, many of the incidents involving changed weather conditions can be considered as at least partly ‘system accidents’. The changed weather introduced a degree of incomprehensibility (unseen hazards, or group members separated) tight coupling (due to cold or the danger of drowning) complexity (instead of a single group there is often a spread of individuals each facing problems) and unexpected interactions (various conditions that on their own may have been innocuous combine overwhelmingly). ‘System accidents’ require detailed discussion, so I will not identify any incidents here that may fit this category. However, understanding the extent to which ‘system accidents’ are latent in an organization or set of practices is important, because neither attempts to exhort individuals to ‘try harder’, nor attempts to exert tighter managerial control are likely to be successful in reducing system related incidents; they may even increase the propensity for them.

Final comments

I hope that this abbreviated discussion will be helpful to those who want to better understand how to reduce the possibility of a fatal incident in their programs. Failure to learn everything that could be learned from past tragedies would, in a way, compound the tragedy. At the same time I hope I have made it clear why simply learning some lessons about circumstances will not prevent all fatalities, and that there is room for considerably more discussion and research in the outdoor education field about human error, and system related failures.

Endnotes

- (1) Brookes, A. (In review). Outdoor education fatalities in Australia 1960-2002. Summary of incidents and introduction to fatality analysis. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education*.
- (2) Brookes, A. (In review). Circumstances contributing to outdoor education fatalities in Australia 1960-2002. Part 1. Supervision, first aid, and rescue. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education*.
- (3) Brookes, A. (In preparation). Circumstances contributing to outdoor education fatalities in Australia 1960-2002. Part 2. Environmental factors. *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education*.
- (4) I do not have a title for the fourth paper at the time of writing.

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Biography

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So what? A different way to conduct Outdoor Education research to build alternate knowledge(s)

Mike Brown

Abstract

This paper focuses on one of the central concepts of this conference; Outdoor Education knowledge. The paper explores how the pre-occupation with 'outcome based' studies, typified by pre- and post-treatment questionnaires has produced particular, and possibly limited, conceptions of what constitutes valid/valued knowledge in outdoor education. The value of this 'knowledge' and how, or whether, it advances our knowledge base and our practice is discussed prior to positing an alternate way to approach research in our field. Drawing on the methodological position adopted in my doctoral thesis, which examined social relations in facilitation sessions, I argue that research conducted from a different epistemological foundation to that which has been predominant, provides a new lens through which to re-examine some of the commonly held assumptions which presently guide our field. The paper presents some findings that were made visible through the use of a 'Talk-in-interaction' approach to analysis which is drawn from the academic traditions of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis. This paper seeks to promote dialogue that will both encourage practitioners/researchers to explore new avenues of research and to critically reflect on the status of the knowledge that forms the basis of practice.

The paper urges educators and researchers to reflect on their choices in producing, consuming and perpetuating outdoor education 'knowledge' as how this knowledge is applied has consequences for our practice and ultimately our students.

Introduction

In this paper I argue that the predominance of outcome-based research in outdoor education restricts the construction of 'knowledge' in outdoor education to phenomena and subject matter that can be 'captured' through measurement. The knowledge derived from studies with a focus on outcomes rather than process may not be perceived as being of relevance to practitioners. Many of the studies conducted on outcomes in outdoor education are problematic, not only from a methodological perspective but also from their practical application for educators. It is not my intention to dismiss a particular investigative paradigm or methodological position, rather I maintain that there are alternate ways to study outdoor education practices and processes that open up new ways of understanding what we know about our field. This is not an either-or nor qualitative vs. quantitative debate, both of which are flawed and fruitless arguments. What I wish to show is that different ways of conducting research provide different lenses through which to view the world and in doing so create a rich tapestry which is capable of capturing details that might not otherwise be observable.

The paper opens with an overview of research in adventure education that reveals some of the difficulties faced by researchers who have used research methodologies which have sought to quantify and measure outcomes of outdoor education programs. I follow this by a brief overview of the possibilities of using a sociological approach, based on the analysis of social interaction through the use of transcripts of audio tapes, which enables researchers to examine knowledge and power relations in facilitation sessions. The presentation of an 'alternate' approach is used to illustrate how we can expand the knowledge base in the field and make research findings relevant to current practice.

A view of research in adventure education

Adventure education professionals may well agree with comments by Gass (1993) that like adventure therapy, the field lacks a strong research base (see Ewert, 1989; Richards, 1997; Warner, 1990). Richards (1997) claims that much of the research and evaluation in outdoor education has been of dubious value. Warner (1990) also maintains that too much time and effort has been devoted to poorly controlled outcome studies on psychological variables. Early research in the field was limited to and typified by ‘one-time’ outcome studies (Bocarro & Richards, 1998) conducted using pre- and post-treatment questionnaires in order to record changes in designated personality traits and attitudes, traits that are themselves the source of ongoing debate. Ibbott (1997) states that research in adventure education has tended to concentrate on the dependent variable that could commonly be referred to as ‘personal development outcomes’; self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, self-worth and self-confidence. Ibbott (1997) also notes that not only are these constructs conceptually difficult to define, but the measurement instruments and the effects of adventure programs do not necessarily translate readily into measurable differences.

Research on Outward Bound programs, for example, is weak with most studies focusing on outcome issues such as changes in self-concept and self-esteem, to the virtual exclusion of programmatic issues such as nature of instruction and the duration of the course (Bocarro & Richards, 1998 p. 102).

The rationale behind these outcome-based studies was to determine if outdoor education ‘worked’ (Allison & Pomeroy, 2000; Richards, 1997) and whether the program had an effect on the participants. The two main methodologies in the outcome-based approach were: a) interviewing the participants at the end of the experience to determine what they thought of the program and had gained from it; and b) giving participants some form of questionnaire at the start of the program and again at the end (a pre-post test design) and comparing the results (Richards, 1997). This research has received criticism for its “over reliance on self-selected samples and measures using a self-report format” (Ewert, 1989, p. 17), resulting in claims that such studies are often methodologically flawed (Miles, 1995). While the outcome-based approach to research may have been of some use in supporting educators’ claims about the benefits of adventure education programs and provided external funding agencies with a justification for continuing their support, it did little to improve practice or the understanding of the experiences of program participants (Allison & Pomeroy, 2000). Or as Ewert (1987, p. 5) states “All too often research in experiential education becomes an exercise in data generation rather than the production of meaningful findings”.

The predominance of outcome-based research coupled with the lengthy and protracted debate in adventure education literature concerning appropriate methodological approaches to capturing the ‘uniqueness’ of experiential learning (Ewert, 1987; Kolb, 1991; Richards, 1997; Rowley, 1987), has meant that little research has been conducted concentrating on how adventure education programs are conducted. It is possible that this relative lack of research on ‘process’ reflects the prevailing dominance of researchers and graduate students from psychology departments who bring with them a set of research methods determined by the epistemological perspective in which they operate. This is not to cast doubt on the value of psychological approaches but to indicate that this approach can be complemented by the differing perspectives offered by sociology, linguistics or cultural studies researchers.

Researchers (Allison & Pomeroy, 2000; Richards, 1997) note that while process-oriented studies have not been as prevalent as outcome-based approaches, there is a growing recognition that these studies offer important insights not afforded by outcome-based approaches. There is “the increasing recognition that better outcomes will come from better processes and that therefore

understanding processes is the primary route to gaining better outcomes” (Richards, 1997, p. 245).

The increasing acceptance of process-oriented studies has been the result of a debate within experiential and adventure education circles which centres on the argument that research that is outcome-based and seeks to treat the program or the individual in neatly packaged discrete portions is “philosophically out of tune with experiential theory and practice” (Warner, 1990 p. 310). In a similar vein Allison and Pomeroy (2000) advocate for a shift in the epistemological basis of existing research and the embracing of a new set of research questions. Like Warner (1990) they argue that an “incongruent epistemology is often employed in research in this field” (Allison & Pomeroy, 2000 p. 97). They maintain that the experiential approach to learning is based on a constructivist epistemological vision that is not reflected in the outcome-focused objectivist epistemology on which most research in the field is based. Allison and Pomeroy (2000) argue that in the field of experiential and adventure education there is the need to move away from proving that these programs work to develop an understanding of the processes that are involved through the use of ethnography, case studies, phenomenology and biographies. Bocarro and Richards (1998) also assert that there is the continual need to develop new research techniques and measures in order to better understand and deal with the uniqueness of adventure-based experiential learning programs. “This may require a paradigm shift away from what has traditionally been considered the ‘correct’ way to conduct research” (Bocarro & Richards, 1998 p. 107). Kolb (1991) asserts that as an educational endeavour that is devoted to exploring alternatives to ‘conventional’ approaches to education it is odd that as a discipline it relies so “heavily upon conventional methods of inquiry when evaluating its work” (p. 40). Miles and Priest (1990) assert that

Practitioners are only beginning to explore the theoretical underpinnings of their work. They are only beginning to ask why they do things in a certain way, what the outcomes of their approaches are, what alternatives to their approaches might be. They have little idea which parts of the processes they use result in which effects. ... Questioning and probing and theorizing about adventure education may well confirm practitioners’ intuitive beliefs about what they do, while suggesting strengths and weaknesses in their approaches, and pointing in fruitful new directions (p. 2).

In providing this review of approaches to research in adventure education and the various paradigmatic positions adopted I do not want to construct or re-enact the unproductive debate surrounding qualitative versus quantitative research methods. The intention has been to provide a background to the type of research that has been traditionally conducted in adventure education and to foreshadow the changing nature of research in the area and acknowledge that there is a call for, and a valued place, for process-oriented studies in this field.

As Warner (1984) states,

It is paradoxical that an educational movement which places so much emphasis on learning as a process focuses its research efforts on documenting products. It is both of practical and theoretical interest to begin to explore which components of the programs produce particularly valuable learning experiences (p. 41).

It was with these concerns in mind and an interest in “what it is that we are doing when we facilitate experiences through verbal discussions” that I sought an alternative approach to investigating the ‘process’ of facilitation. What became apparent from my review of literature was that while there were many articles and books on how to plan and conduct activities, and considerable research on outcomes (see Cason & Gillis, 1994; Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards, 1997), there appeared to be no published studies investigating the process of facilitation as it is enacted or on patterns of power and knowledge in verbal facilitation sessions.

Ethnomethodology- what is it and what does it offer?

Ethnomethodology (EM)

Ethnomethodological studies focus on the methods that participants use to produce and make sense of their social world through interaction. The term ethnomethodology was coined by Garfinkel (1967) and refers to the study of:

the body of common-sense knowledge and the range of procedures and considerations by means of which the ordinary members of society make sense of, find their way about in, and act on the circumstances in which they find themselves (Heritage, 1984 p. 4).

What marks ethnomethodological studies as distinct from conventional sociological approaches to phenomena is its insistence on the examination of the common-sense and routine knowledge(s) employed by social actors during the course of their ongoing interaction in social activities. In EM the term common-sense is used not to support nor advocate particular localised beliefs that are relevant to one social group but not to another. Rather the term indicates that any course of action depends on what people take for granted as being obvious and apparently known to all participants without need for further explanation (Cuff, Sharrock, & Francis, 1998). This common-sense knowledge refers to the knowledge that participants have as a result of operating in an orderly and accountable 'everyday' world.

Ethnomethodology addresses the problem of order with a phenomenological sensibility (Maynard & Clayman, 1991) and in so doing explains 'social facts' as accomplishments of participants' interpretive work by which everyday life is made accountable (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994). In contrast to treating sociological inquiries' prime objective to be 'discovering' the objective reality of social facts, Garfinkel viewed the objective reality of social facts as an ongoing accomplishment of daily life constructed from and consisting in members' understandings and actions. Social settings are not 'out there' independent of the actions of participants, but are rather the ongoing accomplishment of the interactional work in which participants in a social setting are engaged (Cuff, Sharrock, & Francis, 1990).

For Garfinkel the central question for ethnomethodologically motivated research was "how do social actors come to know, and know in common, what they are doing and the circumstances in which they are doing it?" (Heritage, 1984 p. 76).

Ethnomethodological analysis focuses on the interactionally unfolding features of social settings, treating talk and interaction as topics for analysis rather than as mere communications about more sociologically important underlying phenomena (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994 p. 265).

In order to determine the stable organisation of social activities, an ethnomethodological approach requires the analyst to give careful consideration to the participants' understandings of their empirical circumstances (Heritage, 1984). The approach to analysis based on the adoption of the participants' orientation to the interaction has been labelled the situated perspective (Heap, 1990). This distinctive methodological position, of explicating the participants' orientation, is based on EM's intertwining of phenomenology, interpretive sociology and ordinary language philosophy (Heap, 1990).

The situated perspective

Analysis from an EM perspective seeks to answer the question, "what does this action mean to the participant?" Analysis must be based on the participant's observable orientation to ongoing interaction, an orientation that is not 'interior' but is audible and visible to all, rather than "what does this mean to me the analyst, as my understanding of the event?" (Heap, 1990; 1991).

Therefore an ethnomethodologist's purpose is not to attempt to interpret the intentions or motivations of the participants, but to look for what participants are visibly orienting to. Using talk as a resource (discussed in more detail below), ethnomethodological analysis focuses on how the participants in facilitation sessions use talk-in-interaction to accomplish what is a recognisable social order.

From the situated perspective, examination of the participant's orientation to an event means working “with the visible (and audible) structures of talk and action: what the actors do and say as speakers and what the actors who are listening do and say in response” (Danby, 1998 p. 60). This ongoing interpretative work by participants is inextricably linked to the reflexive nature of interaction whereby actions reflexively and accountably determine and redetermine the features of the social setting in which they occur (Heritage, 1984). In other words, regardless of what one person may or may not do in response to an initiation by another person, the scene has been reconstituted or transformed. For example, the response or lack of response to a greeting may be treated by the recipient as routine or problematic, but in either case the issuing of the greeting has reconstituted the setting. It is via the reflexive properties of actions that the participants find themselves in a world whose characteristics they are both engaged in producing and reproducing (Heritage, 1984).

A central point proposed by Garfinkel was that there was no value in making a distinction between 'actions/events' on the one hand and 'talk about actions/events' on the other, for talking is action (Cuff et al., 1990). Understanding language is therefore not a matter of understanding sentences but of understanding utterances, as actions, which are interpreted in relation to their contexts (Heritage, 1984). The focus of ethnomethodological analysis is on how people use language in the ongoing process of social interaction, and what they do with words rather than a concern with what words they use (Baker, 1997). The emphasis on talk-in-interaction (rather than talk and interaction) has developed into what has perhaps become the most influential form of ethnomethodological study, conversation analysis, to which attention will now be directed (Heritage, 1984; Holstein & Gubrium, 1994; Maynard & Clayman, 1991).

Conversation analysis

Conversation analysis (CA) is one of a variety of distinctive sub-fields of the ethnomethodological program. The term ‘conversation analysis’ is credited to Sacks who sought to use conversation, as an interactional activity, to examine the local and methodical construction of accountable and analysable social action (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994). Sacks regarded conversation as a practically organised social activity where participants ongoingly engage in sense making procedures that are analysable. Given that ethnomethodological analysis is grounded in empirical investigations rather than the application of a theory 'from above', the detailed examination of conversational interaction provides a rich source of data that resists simplification. Based on transcriptions of audio (and more recently video) recordings, CA avoids idealisations of interaction by focusing on the local, embodied, and accountable organisation of social interaction evidenced in talk (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994). Analysis focuses on the competencies that are employed in the production and recognition of actions by participants.

Focussing on the competencies that underlie ordinary social activities, conversation analysis attempts to describe and explicate the collaborative practices speakers use and rely upon when they engage in intelligible interaction (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994 p. 265).

Heritage (1984) states that conversation analysis is based on three fundamental premises:

1). Interaction is structurally organised to exhibit patterns of stable, identifiable structural features that stand independently of the psychological or other characteristics of particular speakers.

"There is a strong bias against a priori speculation about the orientations and motives of speakers

and in favour of detailed examination of conversationalists' actual actions" (Heritage, 1984 p. 243). Knowledge of this structural organisation is a competence which speakers bring to interaction and this knowledge influences their conduct and their interpretation of the conduct of others. Interaction can be analysed to identify the patterns to which participants orient.

2). Contributions to interaction are contextually oriented.

From a CA perspective a speaker's action is doubly contextual, it is both context-shaped and context-renewing.

A speaker's action is *context-shaped* in that its contribution to an on-going sequence of actions cannot adequately be understood except by reference to the context - including, especially, the immediately preceding configuration of actions - in which it participates. The *context-renewing* character of conversational actions is directly related to the fact that they are context shaped. Since every 'current' action will itself form the immediate context for some 'next' action in a sequence, it will inevitably contribute to the framework in terms of which the next action will be understood (Heritage, 1984 p. 242).

3). No detail in interaction can be dismissed, *a priori*, as disorderly, accidental or irrelevant. Heritage (1984) argues that this premise is based on ethnomethodology's strong preference and grounding in empirical investigations of social interaction. This "general retreat from premature theory construction" (p. 242) is reflected in the ethnomethodological interest in the details of the mundane organisation of everyday life. The detailed and careful analysis of social interaction avoids the idealisations of earlier, more abstract sociological accounts of interaction (Heritage, 1984).

Significance of an ethnomethodologically inspired study

As a paradigm that advocates the primacy of the learner's experience as the basis for valid knowledge an examination of how participants interact to build and sustain social relations is of paramount importance to adventure education theory and practice. An examination of leader-student interaction in facilitation sessions is necessary if outdoor educators are to understand how students are enabled and constrained in 'learning from their experiences'.

By analysing how participants collaboratively built, sustained and oriented to features of a setting, I was able to explicate the social order that was talked into being in verbal facilitation sessions and explain how power and knowledge were produced. The issues of power and knowledge are not peripheral issues for adventure educators. They are central to adventure education's conceptualisation of learning that is based on the premise that the learner's experience, and their reflection on that experience, is the basis of valid knowledge.

The effectiveness of experiential learning is derived from the maxim that nothing is more relevant to us than ourselves. One's own reactions to, observations about, and understanding of something are more important than someone else's opinion about it (University Associates, 1990 p. 2).

Using an EM/CA approach I was able to detail the interactional procedures that participants used as they 'did' what they understand to be facilitation. In this way I was able to "question the taken-for-grantedness, the essentialisms, and the naturalisations that are deeply embedded in educational theories and practices" (Baker, 1997, p.50).

A detailed study of the way that power is exercised and knowledge is constructed in facilitation sessions may assist adventure educators to gain an understanding of their role in potentially 'opening up' or 'closing down' options for student contributions in these sessions. The data gathered for EM/CA analysis is not idealised or presented as an exemplar of what talk in these

sessions should or could be like. Rather it is a record of how one practitioner conducted sessions with students. It does not postulate about what should or should not occur. It examines what did occur.

In adopting this methodological approach it is possible to make visible concerns that have been voiced by some researchers but have not been articulated from an empirical perspective. Boud (1997) argues that the problem of leader power is “compounded by the fact that many practitioners are simply not conscious of what they are doing and would be quite offended if it were suggested to them that they were even exercising power over students” (p. 5). While Boud acknowledged that the influence of power and knowledge can never be avoided, he was unable to demonstrate how they operated in particular settings. Likewise Bell (1993) provided a thoughtful and theoretically important critical analysis of how experience was constituted in adventure education when she questioned whose memories were privileged in the facilitation of experience and how as a practitioner she may have been complicit in this practice. The detailed examination of talk from facilitation sessions provided a window to view a social order that to date has been neglected in adventure education research. As Silverman and Gubrium (1994) note, “the work of everyday life needs less a priori analytic elaboration than it requires fine-grained documentation and understanding” (p.194).

The types of findings made available from an EM/CA study.

In several recent publications (Brown 2002a, 2002b) I have argued that the leader’s ability to determine the topic for discussion, allocate the student turns at talk and to evaluate student contributions are evidence of asymmetric distributions of power and knowledge. In particular I have argued that in the verbal facilitation sessions analysed, the use of the three part initiation-response-evaluation (I-R-E) format (see Mehan 1979) demonstrates how the leader engages in direct instruction. Furthermore, the common practice of paraphrasing student responses allows the leader to articulate a ‘preferred’ version of events, in this case the student’s account of his experiences, in such a way as to favour the construction of officially sanctioned knowledge for which all participants are held accountable. By making ‘visible’ the unseen and unintended consequences of leader-student interactions we have cause to reflect on our practice and develop alternate strategies that may better serve the needs and authentic learning of our students.

By using an ethnomethodological approach and the tools of conversational analysis I was able to detail how social order was collaboratively built and sustained in these settings. As a consequence outdoor educators may have cause to reflect on, and generate ideas on, how to do things differently (Heap, 1990). By making the consequences of the leaders’ actions more transparent it is hoped that practitioners will critically reflect on their practice with a view to exploring other avenues for facilitating learning. An understanding of “what is occurring here” is a useful precursor to asking “what should be occurring?” An examination of the consequences of current practices, many of which may be unintended, may raise questions in regard to the current theorisation of facilitators’ work and practice.

Conclusion

My aim has been to highlight that there are alternate ways of conducted research in adventure education, ways that enable new insights to be gained that expand our knowledge base. In this particular study this knowledge relates to the process of facilitation. There is no ‘right’ way to conduct outdoor education research, (although there are undoubtedly examples of poor practice within a particular methodological approach), but there are different ways of examining the phenomena under investigation. What I have tried to show is that there are alternate approaches, as exemplified by ethnomethodology, that provide a news lens through which to examine practice. The findings of such research may add to, or create new knowledge which will in turn

inform future practice. Based in empirical data and rigorous analysis EM/CA provides the possibility of providing feedback to educators that is of value to practice. The use of an alternate method of investigation may in part answer the criticism leveled at the field of educational research.

For years educational evaluation and research has been perceived as number crunching. Indeed, the power of statistical analysis has in many cases led to a tyranny of method. The crunch of numbers has unfortunately produced a crunch in thinking about evaluation and its role as a feedback mechanism for practitioners (Kolb, 1991, p. 44).

I would encourage existing researchers and those embarking on a research career to investigate alternate approaches to the 'traditional' pre and post-test method of investigation that focuses on the outcomes of outdoor education programs. The findings of research informed from feminist, post-colonial, post-structuralist theories for example, can create new knowledge(s) that will open up further avenues for reflection and research in the hope of improving the quality of the learning experiences for students on our programs.

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Exploring the Role of 'Space' and 'Place' on Learning and People's Experience

Tracey Dickson

Abstract

This paper explores the notions of space and place as discussed in urban planning and human geography, as well as delving into the world of aesthetics in organisations and art, in order to raise questions about how facilitators of outdoor and experiential learning may better approach and benefit from the locations in which they choose to work.

Introduction

In using the outdoors as a place of learning there seems to be an assumption that the outdoors must be a good place to be given that in much of the literature on facilitation of outdoor and experiential learning the emphasis is upon 'what' to do, with little consideration for 'where' to do it (Wattchow, 2001). In many programs the emphasis is not upon the 'place' but upon the activity in that place, with little regard for how that place will impact upon the activity and the experience of the participants. Even though the outdoors may be a good place to be, people in outdoor programs are often protected from that very environment with tents, ground sheets, seats, gloves, rain coats, hats, sunglasses, insect repellent and sunscreens. There seems to be a concerted effort to 'do' in that 'place' but not 'be' in and with that 'space'. Space and place represent the 'where?' of programming, but often there is little discussion about how the 'where?' impacts upon the 'what?' the 'how?' and the 'who?'. The terms space and place are key topics of consideration in areas outside of outdoor and experiential learning, such as urban planning and human geography. What follows is an exploration of those terms from these perspectives as well as insights from art and organisational studies on the creation of an 'aesthetic' experience. Finally, based upon these insights, I will pose questions and ideas that may be considered by the facilitator of outdoor and experiential learning.

Connecting to Nature

Cornell, in suggesting the use of a silent walk as a way of connecting to nature, says that "through watching nature in silence, we discover within ourselves feelings of relatedness with whatever we see – plants, animals, stones, earth and sky" (Cornell, 1979, p.123). For Cornell the use of times alone in nature can lead to great calmness and joy in the lives of busy people. Neumann, in recalling a woman's intense experience of sitting alone on a rock overlooking a canyon at sunset, suggests "this experience of solitude reflects the desires of many who look to nature seeking some primary and natural relationship with the world" (Neumann, 1992, p. 187). Cornell and Neumann's quotes aptly reflect the essence of Thoreau's endeavour to reconnect with nature when he wrote: "I went to the woods that I may live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived" (Thoreau, 1854/1986, p.135). For these authors the place in which they were impacted and formed an integral part of their experience. If they were to sit and reflect in a different location, the experience may have been different. This impact of 'place' upon people is of great concern to urban planners and human geographers.

'Space' and 'Place' in Human Geography and Urban Planning

Human geographers and urban planners are interested in people in places, often public places. They form part of a collection of disciplines referred to as the "spatial disciplines (Geography, Architecture, Urban and Regional Studies, and City Planning)" (Soja, 1996, p.10). They look at

the impact and interactions of place and people. Following is an overview of key writers (Harvey, 1989; Lefebvre, 1991; Sandercock, 1998; Soja, 1996) in their fields and the views they have about people and place and the connection to the themes of 'space' and 'place'.

Place and Space

In my own talk about outdoor and experiential learning I make frequent reference to the terms 'place' and 'space'. I do not have articulated definitions of these terms, but an intuitive understanding or knowledge of what they mean in terms of my own experience. Human geography uses these words in particular ways that may be of use to other disciplines such as experiential learning. Massey (1994), a feminist geographer, who seeks to 'rescue' space from being coded feminine, and thus devalued in contrast to the masculine category of time, offers the following definitions of space and place:

If *space* is conceptualised in terms of a four-dimensional 'space-time' and ... as taking the form of some abstract dimension but of the simultaneous co-existence of social interactions at all geographical scales, from the intimacy of the household to the wide space of the transglobal connections, then *place*, can be reconceptualized too. ... a 'place' is formed out of a particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location. And the singularity of any individual place is formed in part out of the specificity of the interactions which occur at that location ... and in part out of the fact that the meeting of those social relations at that location ... will in turn produce new social effects (Massey, 1994, p. 168).

For the human geographer place is created through social relations, but it is not clear from Massey whether a place may exist if there is only one person, or whether, that individual may create a 'place' due to their previous social interactions. A second thought about Massey's definitions of space and place is the dynamic nature. A place is determined by social interactions, yet those social interactions influence change and thus the place must change creating a further and continuous opportunity for change of the interaction, the people in the interactions and ultimately that place and space, a theme that is taken up later with the work of Wearing (1998). A third observation of the human geographers' perspective is the apparent lack of consideration of the impact of the location upon those social interactions. Will those social interactions be different, and thus the 'place', if the interactions occur on a veranda over a glass of champagne, sitting by a campfire in the mountains, walking by the beach or locked away in a room without windows sitting on hard chairs and with the air conditioning cranked up?

Massey explores the language of space and place and the potential connections with gender:

In the pair space/place it is place which represents Being, and to it are attached a range of epithets and connotations: local, specific, concrete, descriptive. ... The contrary to these classically designated characteristics of place are terms such as: general, universal, theoretical/abstract/conceptual. ... It is interesting in that context to ponder the gender connections of these pairings. The universal, the theoretical, the conceptual are, in current Western ways of thinking, coded masculine. They are the terms of a disembodied, free-floating, generalizing science (Massey 1994, p.9).

Massey's observations can be seen to apply to the pursuit of grand narratives or mega theories, in experiential learning, where the creation of a universal 'theory' seeks to explain the experience of all, yet amongst the many there are the few, the individuals and often time, the 'Others' who may not fit easily within these grand narratives.

Delving further into the world of human geography opens up another perspective, that of seeing from other perspectives. Does how we see the world influence how we experience or know the

world? If we look at the world from above do we see and experience the world differently than if we viewed it from below. Do women view and experience the world differently from men? And what of the 'Others', those who are excluded, marginalised and often not considered in mainstream theory and practice?

Perspectives: Above and Within

Several times I have visited New York. The first couple of times I avoided going up the Empire State Building or World Trade Centre – I wanted to experience New York at ground level, I didn't even want to go on the subway. It was the life on the streets that I wanted to experience, the smells, the people, the pace. It was not until about the third time that I was there that I ascended the Empire State Building for that classic view – but it did not provide the satisfaction of walking the streets. Now, since September, 11, 2001, I will never know what the experience of standing atop the World Trade Centre would be like, but then I have no regrets, as I prefer the sensation of feeling that I get on the streets.

Soja, a geographer, suggests that we may learn about a city from experiencing the microgeographies of the city streets and also by looking at the big picture, standing atop sky scrappers and viewing the macrospace. From the perspective of a geographer, Soja suggests that "no city – indeed, not lived space – is ever completely knowable no matter what perspective we take, just as one's life is ever completely knowable no matter how artful or rigorous the biographer" (Soja 1996, p.310). Soja quotes the work of de Certeau (de Certeau, 1984) about the view from the top of the World Trade Centre de Certeau suggests "His elevation [for this is inherently a male gaze] transfigures him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world by which one was 'possessed' into a text that lies before one's eye. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god" (Soja 1996, p.314). While de Certeau may be encouraging an either/or dichotomy between the micro and the macro Soja warns that "we must realize that both the views from above and from below can be restrictive and revealing, deceptive and determinative, indulgent and insightful, necessary but wholly insufficient" (Soja 1996, p.314). For the person working in experiential learning, and particularly in outdoor locations, questions may arise as to what difference the location will have upon the experience, the place and the space. Whether that location be sitting atop a mountain, in a small natural 'hide', in a valley or even within a hut. Are people 'experiencing' the environment, not just having an experience *in* the environment? The theme of voyeur is expanded by Wearing (1998) when discussing the contrast between the *Flâneur* who is observing the world and Plato's *chora* within which people exist and create meaning.

***Flâneurs* and *Chora*: Seeing and being**

Wearing, writing about leisure from a feminist perspective makes reference to public and private leisure spaces and the contrast between masculine constructed space and feminine constructed space. Quoting Wilson (1995):

...the *Flâneur* as a man of pleasure, as a man who takes visual possession of the city, who has emerged in postmodern feminism discourse as the embodiment of the 'male gaze'. He presents the men's visual and voyeuristic mastery over women. According to this view, the *Flâneur's* freedom to wander at will through the city is essentially a masculine freedom (Wilson, 1995 cited in Wearing 1998, p.132)

While the *Flâneur* is standing back observing the world maintaining an objective, scientific perspective, the 'chora' is accepting many of the elements rejected by the masculine view of the world, the 'chora' is the "space between being and becoming or the 'space in which place is possible' ... the concept of 'chora' suggests a space to be occupied and given meaning by the people who make use of the space. The space gives birth to the living experiences of human

beings – it is open to many possibilities” (Wearing, 1998, p.132-133). Wearing distinguishes between ‘place’ and ‘space’ as follows:

Place has a distinct location which it defines, place is fixed and implies stability. Space, in contrast, is composed of intersections of mobile elements with shifting often indeterminate borders ... ‘Chora’ in this sense, is a space whose meaning can be constantly defined by its inhabitants. Space allows for people to construct their own meaning in relation to the self, identity and subjectivity in a leisure process (Wearing, 1998, p.133)

Rather than continuing the use of the phrase ‘sense of place’ maybe we should be placing more focus upon the ‘sense of space’, that dynamic, ever changing environment. But focus upon the meaning and role of space and place is not limited to human geographers, aesthetics has considered the issue and impact of beauty in nature and art for centuries.

Aesthetics

...aesthetics: The study of beauty in nature and the arts (Murfin and Ray 1997, p.5)

Organisations: Human Creations

Strati, a researcher of organizational studies and an art photographer, seeks to describe the role of aesthetics as an alternate approach to organizational studies (Strati, 2000a; b). For Strati the aesthetic approach has three themes which have potential significance for a broader perspective on the facilitation of experiential learning. To see the connection to experiential learning it is possible to read the following about the aesthetic approach and replace ‘organization’ with ‘experiential learning’:

1. shifts the focus of organizational analysis from dynamics for which explanation can be given ... to dynamics more closely bound up with forms of tacit knowledge. The network of the sensory and perceptive faculties ... produces knowledge that is not entirely verbal, nor entirely sayable. Other languages intervene from the visual to gestural, and other knowledge-creating processes, from intuitive to evocative
2. ... the aesthetic approach takes account of their (scholar’s) ability to see, hear, smell, touch and taste and their aesthetic judgement, which is otherwise implicit and hidden by abstractive capacities ...
3. highlights the heuristic shortcomings of those studies and theories of organization which rely on causal explanation of organization phenomena which rely on the myth of the rationality of organizations; and which propound an objective universal interpretive key to organizational life (Strati 2000a, p.13-14)

Aesthetics acknowledges and supports an experience of the world whereby it is not just the behaviours and words that are ‘seen’ but also the impact and influence of smells, actions and sounds, all of which occur within a context, a location, that also impacts upon the experience, whether it be the smells, the light, the colours, or the textures. This influence of the ‘location’ is not well explored in the literature of human geography in its description of ‘place’, as discussed previously, nor in the literature on facilitation of experiential learning. An aesthetic approach to facilitation of experiential learning would consider the influence on individual experiences of the aesthetic categories of: beauty; the sublime; the ugly; the comic; the gracious; the picturesque; the tragic and the sacred (Strati, 2000a, p.20-25). While an exploration of these categories would be of value, in this context an example may suffice at this stage: the experience of camping-out in a remote and wild area may, for one participant, be a beautiful and sublime experience, but

for another, it could be an ugly and potentially tragic experience. The differences in how their experiences may be viewed by the aesthetic categories may provide a greater understanding of the ‘how?’, ‘what?’ and ‘when?’ they may learn from such an experience and as such how?, when? and where? one may facilitate reflection upon those experiences to fully take into account the individual’s experience of that environment.

Seeing Art: An aesthetic experience

Csikszentmihalyi is possibly better known for his work on flow and optimal experiences (e.g.: Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; 1997), however Csikszentmihalyi, in conjunction with Robinson, has also conducted research into the aesthetic experience of viewing art (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990). Based upon their research with fifty-two museum professionals of their aesthetic experiences with art, Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson define the aesthetic experience as:

“an intense involvement of attention in response to a visual stimulus .. The experiential consequences of such a deep and autotelic involvement are an intense enjoyment characterized by feelings of personal wholeness, a sense of discovery, and a sense of human connectedness” (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990, p.178)

Based on their research, Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson suggest that the two preconditions for such an aesthetic experience are: i) art that contains challenges and ii) a viewer with skills to take on those challenges. Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson’s research highlights the similarities between art as an aesthetic experience and Csikszentmihalyi’s previous work on flow. The similarities between the two are demonstrated in Table 12 where the criteria for the aesthetic experience are drawn from the work of Beardsley (1982).

Table 12:

Comparison of Criteria Defining the Aesthetic Experience and the Flow Experience (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990, p.8)

Criteria for the Aesthetic Experience	Criteria for the Flow Experience
Object Focus: Attention fixed on intentional field	Merging of Action and Awareness: Attention centred on activity
Felt Freedom: Release from concerns about past and future	Limitation of Stimulus Field: No awareness of past and future
Detached Affect: Objects of interest set at a distance emotionally	Loss of Ego: Loss of self-consciousness and transcendence of ego boundaries
Active Discovery: Active exercise of powers to meet environmental challenges	Control of Actions: Skills adequate to overcome challenges
Wholeness: A sense of personal integration and self-expansion	Clear Goals, Clear Feedback
	Autotelic Nature: Doe not need external rewards, intrinsically satisfying

To facilitate the aesthetic experience it is suggested that there are several key factors. They include: the place, that is the “environment in which it occurs is perhaps the most basic condition for the aesthetic experience” (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson 1990, p.141) and the time for the individual to really *see* the art as opposed to merely *viewing* it. Together place and time enable

the individual to be able to focus their attention. Another aspect that is important to facilitate the aesthetic experience is the juxtaposition of different works of art that assists in highlighting similarities, contrasts, details etc.. Possibly the most obvious part of facilitating the aesthetic experience is to have art that has qualities of form and beauty that challenges the viewer, where the viewer has to bring to bare their skills to appreciate, to interpret and to continue to *see* new and different aspects.

Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson do not suggest that there is a 'one size fits all' approach to facilitating the aesthetic experience as they acknowledge that the skills one has, the culture one comes from, aspects such as age, gender and life experiences will all influence how you experience art.

What has the aesthetic experience of an organisation or of seeing art, have to do with outdoor and experiential learning? If we look to the literature that refers to the impact of wilderness and nature upon the individual, we can begin to see that what these authors write about often relates to their own aesthetic experience of the natural world.

Wilderness and Nature

As noted above, the impact of 'location', of the environment, is not given much consideration in the human geography literature, it is as if it is an inanimate, insignificant 'thing'. The experience of wilderness of a range of people such as Thoreau, Wordsworth and Muir is documented in a wide variety of experiential learning literature (e.g.: Knowles, 1992; Miles, 1995; Thoreau, 1854/1986; White, 1999). Muir eloquently wrote in 1911 about our need for nature and beauty when he said:

Everybody needs Beauty as well as Bread, place to play in and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike. Keep close to Nature's heart ... and break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean (cited in: White 1999, p.15).

Writers such as Thoreau, Wordsworth and Muir had a deep appreciation of their environments. Thoreau, when he went to Walden Pond, sought the teachings of the woods, not as a layman, but as a naturalist and as a transcendentalist. He, as with the museum professionals studied by Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990), was a viewer who came to his Walden experience with skills that enabled him to experience that place very differently than one who may have been a banker or teacher. He did not go to Walden as a *tabula rasa*, there was already written a draft script through which his new experiences would be filtered. This script has added to and influenced the experiences he had and the understandings he gained.

Predominantly the stories related in the outdoor and experiential literature refer to the experience of males, mostly white, North American males (or significantly influenced by North America). For example, John Muir, while born in Scotland in 1838 migrated to Wisconsin in 1849 (White, 1999). Thoreau was born and bred in Massachusetts. What has been the experience of women? Of minorities? Of people for whom the 'wilderness' is their spiritual home? Where are the voices of the 'Others'? Maybe the words of Australian poet Judith Wright may help us connect with another perspective through her exploration of connecting through her five senses to her surrounds (Wright, 1963, p.136):

Five Senses

Now my five senses
gather into a meaning
all acts, all presences;
and as a lily gathers
the elements together,
in me this dark and shining,
that stillness and that moving,
these shapes that spring from nothing,
become a rhythm that dances,
a pure design.

While I'm in my five senses
they send me spinning
all sounds and silences,
all shape and colour
as thread for that weaver,
whose web within me growing
follows beyond my knowing
some pattern sprung from nothing –
a rhythm that dances
and is not mine.

There are many nations that have different experiences and expectations of the world around them, such as the Australian aborigines who have much to teach us about connection with the land and how identity can be constructed in relation to place (Veal and Lynch, 2001). Yet much of our theory and practice on outdoor and experiential learning continues to come from a white man's perspective (e.g.: Bacon, 1983; Gass, 1993; Greenaway, 1996; Knapp, 1985; Priest and Gass, 1997; Rohnke, 1984; Schoel et al., 1988). A perspective that often draws upon the perspective of the *Flâneur* when in fact what we may need to be looking for is more of the *chora*, a place that is occupied and within which people create meaning.

Questions and Considerations for the Facilitator of Outdoor and Experiential Learning

Rather than just focusing upon how the activities will achieve particular program outcomes, a facilitator, given the discussion to date, may need to consider how the environment in which the activities are taking place is adding to the experience. Some questions that may be considered include:

- Is the environment used as it is by the *Flâneur* who is standing back watching, or is it a place where people co-exist, participate and create meaning, as in the *chora*?
- Do you treat the location in which you work as a 'place' or a 'space' that is co-created by those who are there?
- How will the aesthetics of the location influence the experience?
- What will the following add to the individual's experience and learning?:
 - Time of day
 - Temperature
 - Colour

- Texture
 - Light
 - Wind
 - Smells
 - Sounds
 - Openness
 - Height
 - Views
- What can people learn from just *being* in the environment in which the program occurs?
 - How do the activities add or detract from the experience of the environment?
 - How can you help the participants to develop skills to enable them to better appreciate their environment?

Conclusion

Outdoor and experiential learning programs often draw upon natural environments. What this paper has attempted to do is to introduce insights from other traditions on the role of space and place and how the aesthetics of a place or an experience may be achieved in much the same way as flow may be achieved in activities as diverse as climbing or chess. The role of the facilitator, as one who is seeking to help the participants achieve their goal, is to put as much emphasis upon the choice of location as they do upon the activities within that location or the mechanisms used to encourage reflection upon the experience. In the end, doing less may be doing more. The location as ‘place’ or ‘space’ has as much, if not more, to offer the individual as does another abseiling experience, if only we allow the time and opportunity for that space to teach us what it knows.

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Biography

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Action Research: An Inquiry into Extended Stay Outdoor Education School Programs (ESOESP's) for Adolescent Boys Education.

Dale Hobbs

Abstract

The origins of this paper have evolved from the need to examine the issues and challenges associated with postgraduate research whilst working full time in the outdoor education profession. This paper will provide an overview of my postgraduate research at Monash University and explain what it is really like to inquire in detail about a significant part of the outdoor education profession.

Introduction

The initial catalyst for me to undertake postgraduate research emanated from the need to justify my claim that an extended stay outdoor education school program is needed and worthwhile for year nine students at Prince Alfred College. Gathering support for the idea has been the easy part. Many staff, parents, administrators and students are excited about the proposal. Though as I probed a little further a number of concerns about the proposal began to surface. The area of most concern centred on curriculum. How will curriculum be integrated into the program? Will student learning be enhanced through this type of experience? How will learning outcomes be achieved? I soon realised that without substantiated answers to these and many more questions the likelihood of a new outdoor program seemed only a remote possibility. After further discussions with peers and outdoor professionals I began to understand the 'relevance' of postgraduate research. Linking further education has the potential to enhance the professional nature of the venture, give credibility to my proposal and most important of all, the reality of 'making it happen'. So here I am, 18 months later, knee deep in outdoor education literature!

Research overview

In broad terms, my research study aims to identify the important criteria needed to integrate mainstream curriculum into an alternative experiential education framework (Extended Stay Outdoor Education School Program). The study is currently researching Prince Alfred College, a prominent independent boys school based in Adelaide, South Australia. Frameworks for the model will be developed from investigating two independent boys' schools that currently operate an Extended Stay Outdoor Education School Program (ESOESP) within Australia.

Research techniques have been developed to consult sections of the school community who will be affected by the implementation of an ESOESP. Headmasters, Heads of Department, Subject Coordinators, Teachers, Parents, Students, College Council and School Administration are classic stakeholders in the process of curriculum change and development. When considering change to curriculum it is important that the proposed model of education involve key stakeholders in a collaborative process because these stakeholders may know the subtle characteristics that might influence the implementation of the plan. Conducted professionally, research results can increase staff understanding and be used to improve curriculum and student learning. As stated by Neill (1997, p.197), 'with staff on side, the culture of evaluation can become self perpetuating and set program development on an upward spiral'. The research of a conceptual model for an ESOESP presented in this study is a crucial first-step in this significant process of curriculum change.

The broad aims of my Masters Research project are to:

- (1) Review relevant literature associated with the philosophical, curriculum and practical implications of an ESOESP.

- (2) Through reviewing related literature and case histories, analyse and identify the benefits and limitations associated with the establishment of an ESOESP.
- (3) Explore key stakeholders philosophical and educational opinions on the integration of mainstream curriculum into an ESOESP?
- (4) Explore key stakeholders recommendations for applying an alternative model of education (ESOESP) within the context of traditional mainstream curriculum.

What is an extended stay outdoor education school program?

According to Gray and Patterson (1994), ESOESP's are Australian off-campus residential programs conducted in outdoor settings for at least 20 weeks and are incorporated into the school experience. To my knowledge, within Australia, there are only three schools that conduct ESOESP's under this definition. These include Geelong Grammar - Timbertop (40 weeks), Lauriston Girls - Howqua (40 weeks) and The Scots College - Glengarry (20 weeks). There are however, a number of organizations and schools who, by definition, fit into the description of Gray and Patterson's, with the exception of their duration. These include, but are not limited to, The Alpine School – Department of Education Victoria (9 weeks), Ballarat and Clarendon College – Grassy Campus (9 weeks), Methodist Ladies College - Marshmead (8 weeks), Wesley College – Clunes (8 weeks), Trinity Grammar – Pine Bluff (5 weeks), St. Peters Lutheran College – Ironbark (5 weeks) and the Youth Opportunity Program - Typo Station (5 weeks). Neill (2001, p.10) describes ESOESP' as 'residential rural living schools developed by private high schools for students to attend for a term (ten weeks), a semester (20 weeks) or a year (40 weeks).

For the purposes of this research and incorporating, in part, the definition of Gray and Patterson (1994) and Neill (2001) ESOESP's will be defined as:

Off-campus residential programs, incorporated into the school experience, conducted in outdoor settings and extending from 5 weeks (half a term) to 40 weeks (full academic year).

Research Methodology

Action Research

The rationale for using action research in this study has been influenced by the need to involve all key stakeholders in the process of planning for curriculum change. Dickens and Watkins (1999, p.132) state that 'by collecting data around a problem and then feeding it back to the organisation, it will be possible to identify the need for change and the direction that change might take.' Key stakeholders have the potential to be the catalyst for determining whether an extended stay outdoor education school program (ESOESP) is needed and worthwhile. Collaboration, according to Lewin, as cited in Dickens and Watkins (1999, p.132) is considered vital to action research. It is one critical element that distinguishes action research from other forms of social research.

Grounded Theory

Grounded Theory will be used as the framework for this study. Grounded theory, as stated by Martin and Turner (1986, p.144) is a systematic way of dealing with non-standard data that can produce accounts of an organisation that are recognisable to its members. It is suited to dealing with large amounts of qualitative data that accumulate in irregular and unpredictable formats. Through employing the process of "grounded theory" early data collection may suggest a developing theory.

Action research and grounded theory are a suitable combination for this research project because of their close association with organisational structure. Action research will guide the process of data collection and grounded theory will produce accurate and useful results that will produce a theoretical account that is understandable to those within the school community.

Coding Process

Conceptual categories in this study will emerge as the study progresses. My approach to coding the data was influenced by the work of Kock (2002). By implementing what Kock (2002, p.10) calls the “coding process” large amounts of unstructured data will be objectively analysed. There are three stages to the coding process: (1) open coding (2) axial coding, and (3) selective coding. Open coding will identify emerging categories in textual data, axial coding will identify relationships between categories and selective coding will group together interrelated categories into theoretical models

Understanding outdoor education research, its relevance and significance within broader education, and a well-developed understanding of educational research methodology is critical to the value of this project. This is a phase of the project that should not be rushed.

Data Collection

Timeline

I’ll be collecting data in late 2003 and throughout the first 6 months of 2004. The collection of data will be divided into three main categories:

a) Process of Education

Part (a) of the research project will involve a process of education. It has been determined that all key stakeholders within the school community be provided with a review paper and presentation of ESOESP’s detailing their potential relevance to boys education and curriculum development. It is important to establish a minimum level of understanding so that informed opinions can be given during the focus group interviews.

b) Critical New Data

A focus group interview format to determine whether or not an extended stay outdoor education school program ESOESP is needed and worthwhile will be conducted in late spring (November) 2003. One goal of the focus group interview is to canvas opinions of key stakeholders within the Prince Alfred College school community to determine how mainstream school curriculum could be integrated into an ESOESP. A second goal is to obtain recommendations to its implementation.

c) Case Histories

A Multi-Case study of two independent schools that offer an extended stay outdoor education school program will be conducted. These schools have been selected because they are similar to Prince Alfred College. They, like Prince Alfred College, are independent K-12 boys schools, located within a capital city, run by a college council who are responsible for the general policy decisions and financial administration of the college, offer boarding to rural and international students and each claim to offer a unique curriculum within in its Extended Stay Outdoor Education School Program (ESOESP).

Background information about the ESOESP’s is important in that it identifies the programs in terms of classifying variables for the analysis. Selected staff will take part in an independent interview of open questions relating to the research problem. Background data relating to the

history, challenges, positives outcomes and any other advice will be sought. School reports, articles and newsletters of each ESOESP will be requested to help supplement the interview data.

Undertaking Postgraduate Research

Personally, the decision to undertake postgraduate research was influenced by the need of establishing a new and exciting outdoor education centre for Prince Alfred College. The decision to remove students from their normal pattern of living and educating them under the framework of an extended stay outdoor education school program requires extensive research. Key decision makers within the school want to be sure that any organisational change has been fully explored and has the support from all sections of the school community. Teachers, parents and administrators are primarily concerned about the impact on student learning.

One of the most interesting parts of my research to date is the opportunity to inquire, in detail, about a significant part of the outdoor education profession. As a student of postgraduate research for the past 18 months, I have managed to develop a very broad understanding of outdoor education literature. This knowledge has enabled me to analyse literature critically as well as learning the importance of justifying opinions and claims made.

The need for quality research in the outdoor profession is important. Firstly, I believe that research gives credibility to our profession and secondly, helps contribute to the decision making process of new programs, curriculum and teaching strategies.

Some of the issues and challenges faced during the research include:

- Defining the topic to be studied
- Selecting a problem/topic that will keep you interested
- Integrating full-time work and part-time study
- Learning how to use the university database and library resources effectively
- Planning ahead – borrowing of books articles and having to wait for their arrival.
- Working alone
- Ability to analyse critically
- Ability to justify your claims

Some of the rewards for undertaking postgraduate research include:

- Professional networking
- Developing a broad knowledge of outdoor education and experiential education.
- Developing a specific knowledge of your chosen topic
- Outstanding support from university supervisors
- Contribution to the field of outdoor education literature

A 'glimpse' into the future

Taking an active role in the emerging research community of outdoor education in Australia will help contribute to the broad field of outdoor education and education in general. Specifically, research will help generate a deeper understanding of extended stay outdoor education school programs and their importance within the curriculum framework of secondary schooling. Continual collaboration with other ESOESP's will be needed to further improve significant learning outcomes for students.

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Biography

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Listen up! Here is a good story.

Outdoor Education and Narrative Inquiry;

A Critical Methodological Examination and Construction.

Tony Keeble

Abstract

Outdoor education lends itself very well to the employment of narrative inquiry. This paper aims to help outdoor educators understand some of the strengths and weaknesses in narrative inquiry. This paper endeavors to critically examine current literature surrounding narrative inquiry within education discourse. It looks at useful definitions of narrative by scholars and briefly overviews the historical rise of narrative inquiry within education. Furthermore it briefly looks and focuses methodologically on identifying the distinctive principles and characteristics of narrative inquiry, its attributes, strengths and weaknesses advocated by various scholars. The paper momentarily introduces examples of Environmental and Outdoor Education narrative as case examples. At conclusion a construction of narrative is discussed.

Purpose

The methodological purpose of this paper is to highlight the differing views about narrative, its historical rise and to raise questions about narrative inquiry. It also looks briefly at the different strategies of constructing narrative inquiry developed and practiced by researchers. Furthermore, the paper aims to help in the ongoing development of constructing and establishing solid practices in narrative inquiry, especially in regards to research in outdoor education. A limitation of this paper is that it provides only a brief overview of aspects of narrative inquiry. It is my intention to write subsequent papers that further strengthen individual aspects of this paper.

Background

Barone (1995, p.64) concedes "a story never tells the absolute truth...since the onset of deconstructivism, who can believe any text does?" Given Barone's declaration about using the written language to tell a *story*, it is important that the reader understands where it is that I have come from to arrive at such a point as to write about narrative inquiry. Many scholars (Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995; Casey, 1995; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1986; Convery, 1999; Goodson, 1995; Hart, 1996; Kamler, 2001; Payne, 1994) argue that understanding where the researcher has come from, what theoretical lens they look through, and their own social disposition, greatly helps the reader in understanding the researcher's writings, especially in narrative qualitative research. Therefore the following is a brief though factual background to my life.

I am a male in my thirties working as a lecturer. I have lived a very nomadic life up until the past few years. I spent the majority of my teenage life living in North East Victoria. I have never lived in a metropolitan city. I spent ten years traveling around the world working in a variety of vocations and experiencing many environments. I completed a Masters in Education in 2002, have a degree in Outdoor Education and a Graduate Diploma in Education. I have been a teacher for many different institutions and have always employed the use of storytelling in my pedagogy. Some of my favorite stories include, Fulghum's (1990) '*All I really need to know I learnt in Kindergarten*', Bach's (1972) '*Johnathan Livingston Seagull*', Leopold's (1949) '*A Sand County Almanac*', Van Matre's (1983) '*The Earth Speaks*' and my personal favorite, Bill Neidjie's (1983) '*Kakadu Man*'. Over my ten years of teaching experiences, I have come to the conclusion that

stories can and have played a significant role in developing students' understanding themselves and the world around them. It has been this recognition of learning from my own pedagogy practices that has influenced me to look more critically at narrative and the stories people tell, or I may tell, and the possibilities that narrative research may harbor within outdoor education research.

Paul Hart and Kathleen Nolan state that "Environmental education research continues to grow as an active area of inquiry within the field of education" (1999,p.1). Their extensive work on the types of environmental education research conducted in the 1990s, suggest that narrative certainly is an emerging form of outdoor and environmental educational research.

Hart and Nolan (1999) surmise:

While these studies have yielded some interesting linkages between people, culture and environment as well as the importance of childhood experiences, key mentors, and transformative programmes, perhaps the most intriguing new area of qualitative inquiry involves the use of narrative (p.10).

Given the increasing popularity of narrative in both outdoor education and environmental education (Hart and Nolan, 1999; Stolz, 2000), and in education in general (Casey 1995; Polkinghorne 1995), a critical look at the strengths and weaknesses of narrative is not only warranted, but also necessary if researchers are to critically establish clear and definite epistemological, ontological and methodological positions. Furthermore, Casey (1995, p.212) points out that "... however much we may be convinced of the compelling nature of narrative, we must move ... to explain the extraordinary self-conscious fascination with story telling that prevails at present". Larson (1997) also argues that narrative inquiry requires close scrutiny. Larson points out that "... narrative knowing is far more complex than many assume ... we know 'precious little' about how narrative works" (1997, p.455). Given these sincere and warranted concerns, I will now look critically at narrative inquiry.

What is narrative?

In her paper titled '*The New Narrative Research in Education*', Casey (1995) uses the term *narrative research* as an overarching category for a variety of contemporary research practices. These include; collections of autobiographies and biographies, life writing, personal accounts, personal narratives, narrative interviews, personal documents, documents of life, life stories, life histories, oral history, ethnohistory, ethnobiographies, autoethnographies, ethnopsychology, person-centred ethnography, and popular memory. Casey then explains that "what links together all of these lines of inquiry is an interest in the ways that *human beings make meaning through language*" (italics added) (1995, p.212).

Narrative inquiry is a primarily interpretive and qualitative in style (Hart, 1996; Convery, 1999; Goodson, 1995; Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995; Casey, 1995; Connelly & Clandinin, 1986). Hart (1996) describes narrative as "...the making of meaning from personal experience via a process of reflection in which story telling is a key element and in which metaphors and folk knowledge take their place" (p.68). Hart further suggests that in teacher education, teachers are able to understand "... their lives in their classroom" (p.68). Interpretation of people's stories and indeed interpretations of narrative research is veiled in subjectivity (Barone, 1995). Thus the test for researchers in interpretive research is as Pinar (et al, 1995) points out, "... to learn how to listen ... how to hear ... how to 'see' beyond the superficial" (Pinar cited in Hart 1996, p.69). The notion of subjectivity and truth will be covered later in this paper, however, it is worth noting now that narrative research has its skeptics and critics, hence it is imperative that narrative researchers explore and understand how to conduct narrative research that has solid grounding.

Goodson (1995) describes narrative as "... approaches that offer a serious opportunity to question many of the implicit racial, class, or gender biases which existing models of inquiry mystify whilst reproducing. Storytelling and narratology are genres that move researchers beyond – or to the side, of the main paradigms of inquiry – with their numbers, variables, psychometrics, psychologisms and decontextualized theories" (p.89). Not only is narrative interpretive and qualitative, it has according to Goodson (1995) the ability to be postmodern and deconstructive. Indeed, with the continual rhetoric in environmental education research (Rickinson 2001), it seems that research continues to evolve as we (humans) evolve as a society/race and require different forms of understanding other than mathematical formulas, diagrams, charts and impersonalized and dehumanized data. There is no doubt that narrative inquiry is more humanistic and holistic in its approach to research. And my feeling is that narrative inquiry lends itself very well to outdoor education, especially when outdoor education is concerned with the relationships people have with themselves, other humans and the environment (Keeble, 1995).

Another useful definition of narrative inquiry comes from the work of Connelly and Clandinin (1990). They state that narrative inquirers "describe ... lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives as experience" (p.2). Even with this broad definition we can see two distinct types of narrative inquiry. In the above definition we can divide the 'collect and tell stories' and 'write narratives as experiences' as being two distinctly different types of narrative research. Indeed, Blumenfeld-Jones (1995) and Polkinghorne (1995) both point out that there exist 'analysis of narratives' and 'narrative analysis'. Where analysis of narratives is primarily concerned with analysing the narratives in order to generate themes for further analysis and narrative analysis is concerned with researchers who focus upon the stories of individuals as a story with meaning. Later in this paper I will follow these ideas on narrative inquiry compiled by Blumenfeld-Jones (1995).

There is no doubt that narrative inquiry has become a widely accepted method within the research discourse. Even though proponents (Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995; Casey, 1995; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1986; Convery, 1999; Goodson, 1995; Hart, 1996; Kamler, 2001; Payne, 1994) of narrative paint a positive picture, they all believe there is still need for clarification and validation of the methodology employed by researchers using narrative inquiry. Perhaps Goodson (1995) sums this up best in his article titled '*The story so far: personal knowledge and the political*':

Because of their (narratives) potential, the new genres of research inquiry requires close scrutiny. Whilst they have obvious strengths, they also have weaknesses which may prove incapacitating. If this is so, we may be advocating genres of inquiry in the name of empowerment, whilst at the same time effectively disempowering the very people and causes we seek to serve. (p. 89)

The remainder of this paper focuses briefly on where narrative research has come from, its strengths and weaknesses and a construction of academically valid narrative inquiry.

A brief historical look at narrative

"Major shifts [in methodology] are ... likely to arise from changes in political or theoretical preoccupations induced by social events" (Popular Memory Group 1982 – cited in Casey 1995, p.213). Casey (1995) explores the historical rise and popularity in narrative inquiry and argues that its rise in popularity is in parallel with social developments and social events. Casey refers to Cushman's (1990) work where Cushman describes the *empty self* in regards to World War II (Cushman 1990, cited in Casey 1995, p.213-214). Cushman argues:

Since the end of World War II the configuration of an empty self has emerged in the middle classes. It is empty because of the loss of family, community and tradition. It is a

self that seeks the experience of being continually filled up by consuming goods, calories, experiences, politicians, romantic partners, and empathetic therapists in an attempt to combat the growing alienation and fragmentation of its era. This response has been implicitly prescribed by post World War II economy that is dependent on the continual consumption of nonessential and quickly obsolete items and experiences. (p.213-214)

Casey (1995), however, argues that the *empty self* notion offered by Cushman (1990) after World War II was actually the beginning of humans wanting to understand themselves in postmodern rhetoric. Questions like why did we do that? And who are we now? resonate from such catastrophes. Casey argues "...one cannot seriously consider 20th century concepts of the self ... without making reference to World War II. The massive material destruction of families, communities, traditions and psychological effects of being overwhelmed by authoritarianism and encircled by annihilation are integral components in succeeding understandings of the individual" (Casey 1995, p.214).

Casey (1995, p.215) thus challenges Cushman's notion of the *empty self* thesis further by contesting:

For many Americans, family, community and tradition were not lost but actually remade in the years following World War II. Throughout the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, working as members of existing and ad hoc social groups, these people actively engaged in the demolition and reconstruction of existing social arrangements on a massive scale.

Casey's point is strong. Postmodern thought was born out of the ashes of World War II as people and communities endeavoured to make sense of the world they lived in. The World as they knew it had changed and here was a chance to look at themselves and their communities critically and to seize the chance to develop and employ processes where such destruction was never repeated. (It is interesting to note that after World War II, Kurt Hahn started up the training of young men in response to the seemingly lack of leadership skills shown by young men during World War II, and thus Outward Bound was born – the question needs to be asked, would we have outdoor education at schools now, if it were not for World War II and its social ramifications?). As Casey points out "It is easy to forget how physically dangerous and psychologically disturbing these activities were" (1995, p.215). Casey is of course talking about the different *movements* that were born after World War II. Movements such as the Civil Rights Movement, the Black Power Movement, the American Indian Movement, La Raza, the Labor Movement, the Gay and Lesbian Liberation Movements, and the Environmental Movements (Casey 1995). It was from these movements that the demography of Universities changed (Casey 1995). Universities were no longer a reproducer of society with *men in white coats*. Universities were gate crashed by people who wanted their voices and voices of their movements heard. Things were not working before World War II, and this gave way to minority voices being heard. It is not surprising then that there have been new directions in educational research within universities worldwide.

With the inclusion of minority groups into the realm of research, researchers had to find a way in which to portray and understand people's struggles. No longer was research the *glorification of the Great White Man* (Casey 1995). Research now belonged to a variety of subgroups that wanted their voices heard and understood. Groups like the African Americans and feminist theorists questioned the authority of power and as such their plights have since and continue to be imprinted into history. The shockwaves of their social thoughts are still felt and reverberate throughout society today (Casey 1995). It was and continues to be thoughts from these and other varied movements that made up and make up the phenomenon of postmodernism research.

Perhaps Casey (1995, p.216) best sums up the importance of the development of narrative:

Depending on one's theory about the significance of postmodernism, narrative and narrative research can be seen as serving very different social functions. In a world controlled by TV talk shows, tabloid exposes, and slogan T-shirts, telling ones stories becomes exhibitionism, and listening to another's becomes voyeurism. Alternatively, story telling is the way to put the shards of experience together, to reconstruct identity, community, and tradition, if only temporarily. Any discussion on narrative would be incomplete without recognizing the creativity of current postmodern cultural strategies and the ingenuity of their inventors.

It is quite impossible to fully understand narrative research without taking into account where it has come from. Narrative research allows for people's voices to be heard without the constraining boundaries of empirical quantitative research and its charts and impersonal approach to what it is like to be human.

Strengths of narrative

There are various strengths to narrative inquiry as pointed out by many scholars, including Convery (1999, p.131). Convery writes:

Narratives have a holistic appeal, uniting researchers and educators; teachers and academics; theory and practice; past, present and future; personal and professional. Narrative promises connection through insights; in capturing the teacher's 'voice', we (and they) can access 'unique and personal' explanations of their private practitioner experience.

Convery (1999) certainly gives his stamp of approval regarding the value of narrative in research that aims for teachers to understand themselves and their pedagogy practices. Convery explains that teachers through narrative can "...provide information that contributes to a more complete understanding of the educational process" (1999, p.131). One gets the feeling that Convery is inferring that other forms of educational inquiry are unable to completely understand the educational process. Interestingly, Convery (1999) in his paper titled '*Listening to teachers voices: are we sitting too comfortably?*', critically reflects on his personal use of narrative. In this paper Convery explains that he used a personal account of his teaching experience in his background to his Ph.D. After some reflection Convery explains that what he had written actually reconstructed "an attractive teaching identity" (1999, p.132). As a consequence, Convery reconstructed his own personal account of teaching that was more truthful by employing narrative methodology.

Larson (1997) also points out the benefits of narrative inquiry. Larson (1997, p.445) indicates that over the past 25 years:

Research has shifted from a predominately logico-scientific mode of knowing to one that values narrative inquiry, or good stories, as an equally significant epistemological tool for understanding human experience...it is only through stories that we can fully enter another's life. Through narratives, we can penetrate cultural barriers, give voice to human experience, and understand human intention and action.

Many scholars like Larson advocate narratives ability to get below the surface and listen to people's voices. And indeed this is one of the strengths of narrative inquiry over empiricist approaches to research. Furthermore, education and outdoor education in general is concerned with humans and the environment (Keeble, 1995), employing research strategies that are more humanistic would seem not only appropriate but also essential.

Another strength of narrative is its ability for educational researchers and educators to reflect on their practices and to modify their behaviour if appropriate. Moral development is an area that Beringer (1990) feels narratives can promote. In her article titled *Understanding Moral*

Development and Environmental Values through Experience, Beringer is concerned with the moral development of humans and their perceptions of the environment they live in. Beringer argues that through writing one's own story about how you arrived at a certain moralistic stance helps you to understand your actions towards the environment. And in effect hopefully create a human society with greater empathy towards the environmental crisis (Beringer, 1990). Beringer describes how *Mary*, a middle aged women, was able to understand her moral dilemma of killing native animals to save her chickens through a process of narrative and reflection. Beringer (1990, p.31) concludes:

Mary recalls these particular experiences in her life by telling a story about them, she constructs a narrative to represent them. Moreover, Mary's narrative is about a real life moral conflict. In both incidences, her story involves the actual killing of an animal (cat, hawk, owl, chicken). Mary's story also exposes an important lesson she learned from her experiences ('I just need to compromise...I can't really get rid of it'). Consequently a critical aspect of her own moral development is expressed in the story she tells. By telling a story, Mary is forced to reflect on the past event. The process of constructing a narrative about a moral dilemma gives her the opportunity to consider the consequences of her thoughts, feelings, actions. Moral development can happen through reflection.

Like Beringer, Payne (1998) utilised a form of narrative and interpretative writing in trying to understand and report on children's understanding of nature. In one of his classes, Payne had the students look at a series of cartoons. Students had to then write what they thought the cartoons represented without talking to anyone. Personal meanings were then shared via a class discussion. After this discussion, students were then allowed to cast anything new to their original understandings through rewriting (Payne, 1998). It is obvious from reading the students responses that Payne has furthered his understanding of children's concepts of nature and that the students were also wiser in regards to how they perceived nature. Payne's example is one of the strengths of narrative inquiry where both the researcher and researched gain wisdom and knowledge. In this instance narrative inquiry is a two-way learning process. From both Beringer (1990) and Payne's (1998) account, there is no doubt that narrative could be a tool employed by outdoor education researchers. It is interesting to note here that journal writing, a tool used in the Victorian Certificate of Education study, Outdoor and Environmental Studies, can potentially be an effective way for the student and teacher to understand and reflect on experiences. Tools like journals could be a very effective way of narrative research in outdoor education as they tell a story of the now and look at reflection and how a student may have changed their perspectives on nature, their group and themselves.

Within the realm of environmental and outdoor education, we are seeing an increased use of narrative inquiry (Hart & Nolan, 1999; Stolz, 2000). For example, in 2001 in the Yukon, Canada, the Yukon College hosted a conference titled '*Telling Our Stories*'. The entire conference was dedicated to narrative and its different genres. In a conference paper by Sheridan (2001), titled '*My name is Walker: A Resistance Exodus*', it is pointed out that environmental education has become a paradox of studying 'outside inside'. Sheridan strongly believes that environmental education should be conducted outside but more importantly with oral narratives. Sheridan argues "...walking is critical because it asserts entitlement to the raw experience of the outdoors without the technological mediation and demands of existence free from technology...I would also suggest that *Talking* (italics added) also serves this purpose (Sheridan 2001, p.3). Sheridan continues her rhetoric by adding, "As environmental educators we have no choice but to be story tellers. Story is synchronous with the changing Earth, as we know from aboriginal oral traditions" (p.6).

One of the key understandings that I have about educational research is that research is supposed to represent what we do as educators so that we are equipped to critically reflect on our pedagogy practices. This reflection helps us to develop our own educational philosophies and teaching pedagogy. It is through narrative inquiry that teachers and the education fraternity can continue to construct exemplary teaching practices. For example, in my own life-writing project (Keeble 2000, Unpublished) I surmised,

I believe I am a good educator. I have been teaching for 12 years and during that time I have designed much curriculum. Through my studies and readings I have come to the conclusion that my preferred method of research is interpretive/critical and that I follow a holistic/ecocentric approach to outdoor and environmental education.

There is evidence (Beringer, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Convery, 1999; Hart & Nolan, 1999; Larson, 1997; Payne, 1998), which suggests narrative inquiry is capable of worthwhile methodological and contextual outcomes in educational research. In summary this section has briefly looked at the positive approaches to narrative inquiry. These included the ability of narrative inquiry to be holistic and humanistic, to capture people's voices, to access unique personal explanation and experience, to penetrate cultural barriers and to reflect on behaviour and modifying behaviour.

Weaknesses of narrative

Using the stories of others clearly raises important political and philosophical questions. Whose side is the researcher really on? What is the researcher's agenda? What purposes and interests will the outcomes ultimately serve? What types of knowledge are being constructed? As there are many strengths to narrative inquiry, there are as many weaknesses. Many authors (Garrick, 1999; Convery, 1999; Goodson, 1995; Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995; Bowerbank, 1999; Payne, 1994) point out weaknesses in narrative inquiry. Some of these weaknesses include Payne's (1994) critique of Warren's (1990) first person narrative. Bowerbank's (1999) discussion on 'greening ones self' through narrative. Garrick's (1999) scrutiny of interpretive inquiry and its authenticity and individual subjectivity. Goodson's (1995) view of narrative and political personal knowledge and Blumenfeld-Jones's (1995) discussion of fidelity and truth.

One of the first published critiques of narrative inquiry within an outdoor and environmental educational context was written by Payne (1994). In his article titled *Restructuring the Discursive Moral Subjective in Ecological Feminism*, Payne critiques Warren's (1990) article on *The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism*. Warren uses a first person narrative of a rockclimbing experience as an example of understanding the development of a women's voice and relating this to the principles of caring and loving perceptions and a claim for a distinctive ecofeminist ethic (Warren 1990). Payne argues that Warren effectively betrays her own claim for a narrative that can be held to account for the historical, social and material realities in which experience is lived. Moreover, Payne argues that while "the tenet of first person narrative is not directly at issue...the circumstances surrounding voice are" (Payne 1994, p.13). However as Payne (1994, p.142) concludes:

The "politics of text" are revealed sharply –however unintentionally – when I conclude that Warren's discursive historical self does not adequately demystify the patriarchal and oppressive relation in rockclimbing and nature and hence perpetuates them. I contend that Warren's claims for ecological feminism as a distinctive and environmental ethic, is not, in fact, supported by the texts she provides.

Payne's argument about the mismatch of Warren's text and its inability to accurately account for context is strong. It is clear that within Warren's narrative, there is no mention about the historical, social and material role of the climber and the relationships the climber holds with the

cliff environment. Warren doesn't even ponder questions about the contexts of climbing that would be congruent with ecological feminism and a new environmental ethic. Such questions as what does the rock think of me climbing all over it? Or, are my actions as a climber in the best interests of the cliff environment? Thus, by using a weakly constructed and highly subjective first person narrative, Warren has undermined her argument surrounding ecological feminism and a new environmental ethic. Not only has Warren used a decontextualized first person narrative, she has also opened herself up to criticism of greening oneself (Bowerbank 1999).

Another argued weakness of narrative inquiry is the use of narrative to bolster one's claims. In her article titled *Nature Writing as Self-Technology*, Bowerbank (1999) claims that researchers often employ narrative in ecological and moral development themes. Bowerbank tells a story of a teacher who dumps a bag of dirty nappies into the ocean, only to have the bag pecked open by seagulls. As a consequence the nappies soon make their way back to shore and the owner of the dumped nappy bag is forced to own up to his disgraceful act. In the narrative that the teacher writes to his class, Bowerbank feels that the language employed by the teacher does not necessarily lead to changing the student's moral stance on pollution. Bowerbank calls this *eco-confessional* (Bowerbank, 1999). The problem with this type of narrative is that the authors tend to have a particular theoretical slant to their writing and this leads to problems of subjectivity and claims to rightness. For example, at the start of this year, I ran a bushwalk for twelve first year students completing a degree course in Outdoor Education. On the bushwalk, students were asked to think about the different ways Western societies view the natural environment. As a pre activity, a second year student accompanying the trip handed out a reading. The reading was from White Cloud, a Native American Indian. As is generally the case, the narrative was about the poor understanding that white people have of the Earth. These types of narrative are commonplace in some outdoor and environmental education teachers' toolbox. The dilemma with these texts is they only look at an issue from one viewpoint and ignore other worthy contributions. After reading the text by White Cloud, the second year student then asked some questions. Questions such as 'Overall, do you consider the above to be a valid statement?' (Hannah, 2001). Due to the nature of the writing and the language employed by the reader and the teacher, students are lead to believe that Western thought is bad for the environment. Thus their responses to such questions and the discussions that follow are like an eco self-gratification process. If I could coin a term here, it is narrative that is *eco-sympathetic*. While there is merit in eco-sympathetic material, narrative material that promotes an individuals hidden agenda is doing a disfavor to the appropriate use of narrative.

Lack of truthfulness and validity are weaknesses of narrative inquiry that many scholars have discussed. For example, Blumenfeld-Jones (1995) points out that narrative inquiry is like art. And that like art, we can evaluate narrative inquiry by using two sets of evaluative criteria: trustworthiness and authenticity (Blumenfeld-Jones, p.26). Blumenfeld-Jones calls the combination of these two criteria 'fidelity'. Fidelity, Blumenfeld-Jones asserts, is "... the measure of these tales ... in this distinction I take the truth to be [what happened in the situation] and fidelity to be what it means to the teller of the tale [fidelity to what happened for that person]" (Blumenfeld-Jones 1995,p.26). Blumenfeld-Jones expresses his concern that researchers using narrative inquiry actually represent in their research different levels of truth. He uses an example where a researcher summarised that children with violent behaviour displayed that behaviour because they watched violent movies on Television. However the children argued that their violent behaviour had nothing to do with the content of the movies they watched. What the researcher represented included their personal socially constructed understandings of violence and Television. They did not even consider other influences to the children's violent behaviour. As a consequence, Blumenfeld-Jones argues that for narrative to be more truthful, narratives need

to be passed around and read by the researched and then commented on, critiques given and acted upon, and the narrative rewritten.

On a similar theme to Blumenfeld-Jones, Larson (1997) discusses the problems she faced when she participated in narrative inquiry as a participant. One of the possible weaknesses with narrative inquiry is the relationship of the researcher and the researched. How close does a researcher get to the telling of someone's story? How directive and involved do they become? In her article titled *Re-presenting the subject: problems in person narrative inquiry*, Larson describes how she was approached by a college to participate in a narrative inquiry of feminist teachers. Larson continues by explaining how she liked the researcher and that the relationship from the beginning blossomed. However once the research started, Larson felt that the relationship between the researcher and the researched changed, and she (Larson) had a difficult time adjusting. Larson (1997, p.457) explains:

Having established several points of connection, we both felt ready to begin. However, when we transitioned from this conversation to telling stories of my life, I realized that my implicitly held assumptions of Anne's assumptions about how this project would unfold were not quite the same.

Larson goes on to describe that their initial two way conversations ended up with her (Larson) completing most of the talking. Larson strongly states that the focus "had shifted from getting to know each other to getting my story" (Larson 1995, p.457). As a consequence, the researcher would go home and interpret the recorded dialogue and then translate it into their words. This process meant there was room for misinterpretation. Larson felt that it would have been better if the researcher maintained a high level of communication so that she could ask questions during the taping to clarify and develop thoughts. Rather than going home and misinterpreting what was earlier said by Larson. It seems important from Larson's story of narrative, that researchers understand how the relationship between researcher and researched can alter the text that is recorded and written. Larson summarises by arguing that "we fail to recognize how researchers affect their respondents stories and the meanings inscribed in those stories by being human and being present ... narrative involves not only a sequence of stories and events, but also a story teller and an audience" (Larson 1997, p.459).

It is obvious that there are both strengths and weaknesses of narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry is able to reproduce data that is more holistic and humanistic. It helps the participants of research understand their actions in a way where they are empowered to make decisions and modify their behaviour. Conversely, narrative inquiry can fall into the traps of untruthfulness and misrepresentation, depending on how the narrative inquiry is undertaken and written. It seems that without a clear understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of narrative, outdoor education and educational research cannot produce narrative inquiry that encapsulates solid academic work that will be recognized by peers and researchers of other fields of inquiry. It is now my intention, based on the information in this paper and the information I have read, to discuss and construct a method of narrative inquiry.

Narrative: A construction of

After much reading, I have to conclude there is indeed a myriad of possibilities to constructing narrative inquiry. For example Casey (1995) introduces no less than eighteen different styles of narrative inquiry - all valid and worthy of methodological consideration. I have also briefly encountered and discussed the strengths and weaknesses in narrative inquiry from a variety of academic writers. Even though it was not the intent of this paper, perhaps another avenue to follow could be a paper regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the eighteen styles of narrative that Casey (1995) introduces.

Before I started the research for this paper, I had wanted to model a narrative research around Greenall-Gough's (1993, 1997) research on the *Founders in Environmental Education*. After reading Greenall-Gough's narrative, I wanted to look more closely at the people involved in the rise of outdoor education in Australia, and in particular in Victorian Schools. It was going to be a historical type narrative that looked at the life stories of prominent teachers within the outdoor education movement. Another area of narrative inquiry that I wanted to look at was to gather a collection of stories that I use in my own pedagogy and to critically examine their role in helping students understand the environmental crisis at hand in today's Western Societies. Thirdly, another idea I had was to look at the historical rise of outdoor education curriculum in Victorian secondary schools.

As an outdoor and environmental educator, I worry that outdoor and environmental education teachers sometimes misinterpret where the students are at when they come to their classes and might tell stories that are not quite right. I believe, as does Payne (2002), that there is a significant rhetoric reality gap in outdoor and environmental educational practices. Therefore as a consequence, students receive mixed messages. That is, students may never make that connection with the human/nature paradigm and its importance to a healthy society and/or environment. If I was to conduct narrative research I would certainly employ appropriate methodologies, some of which have been discussed in this paper.

In 2002 I conducted a Masters research paper titled *John's Story: Teaching the Victorian Certificate of Education's Study Outdoor and Environmental Studies*. This research paper looked at the strategies that one particular teacher uses in teaching the new VCE study Outdoor and Environmental Studies. The methodology I employed was narrative. *John's Story* is constructed as a *teacher personal narrative*. This term being borrowed from the work of Jalongo and Isenberg (1995). Not only is my research paper a *teacher personal narrative*, it is written and organised in such a way that is known as *narrative-type narrative* (Polkinghorne 1995). Polkinghorne introduces two main types of narrative configuration and analysis. He clearly states that there is an *analysis of narrative* and a *narrative analysis* (Polkinghorne 1995, p.12). *Analysis of narrative* includes the collection of stories as data and the analysis of them in a constructive way. From analysing the stories the researcher can come up with common themes. In *narrative analysis* the outcome is a story. For example a historical account, a case study, a life story or a storied episode of a person's life; a teacher personal narrative. Polkinghorne (1995, p.15) asserts that in 'this type of analysis, the researcher's task is to configure the data elements into a story that unites and gives meaning to the data as contributors to a goal or purpose'.

In *John's Story*, I collected information from several sources in order to create a narrative. I conducted a literature review on the historical circumstances and the educational themes surrounding the introduction of VCE OES. I conducted an interview and I reviewed literature related to narrative methodology as employed in educational research. From these, *John's Story* was written in a process of *narrative analysis*.

When writing *John's Story* I had to be mindful of the way I constructed the text. Who was I writing it for? What outcomes did the narrative need to achieve? How was I going to frame the information and in what order? How was I going to write the narrative and how was I going to analyse it? All these questions resonated in my mind. Finally I worked out that in order to create my narrative, I had to have in place before I started, criteria for constructing a narrative, criteria that would help me fit all the pieces together in order to write a narrative that would accommodate my research questions and a narrative that would be easy and enjoyable to read. After much reading I settled with Polkinghorne's (1995, p.16-18) guidelines for developing narrative, which are a rewriting of Dollard's (1953) work on judging life history, and Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) construction of *three dimensional space*.

Although written 60 years ago, Polkinghorne argues that Dollard's criteria are still applicable in today's configuration of narrative. The following is a synthesis of Polkinghorne's ideas on the configuration of narrative. It is also the method I kept in mind when I constructed *John's Story*.

1. The researcher must include descriptions of the cultural context in which the story takes place. The protagonist has incorporated, to some extent, the values, social rules, meaning systems, and languaged conceptual networks of culture in which they developed.
2. In gathering and configuring the data into a story, the researcher also needs to attend to the embodied nature of the protagonist. The bodily dimensions and genetic-given propensities affect personal goals and produce life concerns.
3. In developing the story's setting, the researcher needs to be mindful not only of the general cultural environment and the person as embodied, but also the importance of significant other people in affecting the actions and goals of the protagonist.
4. The story is about a central character and movement toward an outcome. The researcher needs to concentrate on the choices and actions of this central person. To understand the person, we must grasp the person's meanings and understandings. Attention to inner struggles, emotional states, and valuing of the protagonist provides important data. The story needs to describe the interaction between this particular protagonist and the setting.
5. In constructing the story the researcher needs to consider the historical continuity of the characters. Past experiences manifest themselves in present as habits and are partially available through recollection. The plot in many life histories is about a person's struggle to change habitual behaviours and to act differently.
6. The outcome of a narrative is the generation of a story. A story requires a bounded temporal period; that is, it needs a beginning, middle and end. The power of a storied outcome is derived from its presentation of a distinctive individual, in a unique situation, dealing with issues in a personal manner.
7. The final guideline concerns the need for the researcher to provide a story line or plot that serves to configure or compose the disparate data elements into meaningful explanation of the protagonist's responses and actions.

As well as the above seven criteria for constructing narrative I also employed the ideas of Clandinin and Connelly (2000). They coin a term called *three dimensional space* from current literature (p.50). They believe that narrative inquiry needs to consist of 'temporality along one dimension, the personal and the social along a second dimension, and place along a third' (p.50). From the combination of these three dimensions, *three dimensional space* can be achieved. Their reasoning is that *three dimensional space* shows people what narrative inquiries do (p.55). They believe that narratives must include historical perspectives, current perspective and include future directions. By employing such criteria, I was able to construct *three dimensional space* in order to write *John's Story*. My narrative certainly includes historical and current perspectives and future ideas on VCE OES.

As well as using the above criteria when constructing *John's Story*, I provided the research subject with the opportunity to change the narrative that I produced. One of the key points in narrative reporting is allowing the story-givers the opportunity to look over the narrative written, and then to give them time to reflect and change text (Clandinin & Connelly 2000, p.60). This simple act of allowing the researched subject time to read, reflect and change the narrative I produced, ensured greater truthfulness in the reporting of their experiences in teaching the VCE study OES.

Conclusion

In this research on narrative, I have tried to methodologically write the paper in a way that would be congruent to solid narrative inquiry. I introduced this paper by giving a factual understanding of my background. I wanted the reader to know me and where I had arrived from - an important part of the narrative is the readers' understanding of the writer and what epistemological, ontological and methodological models of education they favour. I employed an analysis of narratives (Blumenfeld-Jones 1995) methodology. That is, I gathered a variety of narratives on narrative research discourse. I analysed the information then wrote my own narrative, looking briefly at a definition of narrative, the historical rise of narrative and the strengths and weaknesses of narrative inquiry. I then reread my own findings and constructed a type of narrative research. Then my findings were read by other academic scholars and commented on. I then took onboard their ideas and challenged myself by rewriting some aspects of my dialog. Only after reflection and being satisfied that my words told the story I wanted them to tell, did I finish the paper.

There is no doubt that research which allows for the *truth* is imperative in educational research. It is my opinion that narrative research can indeed be truthfully represented as long as there are certain safeguards in place. Narrative research will be around for a while longer, especially when we all enjoy a good '*story*'. And Outdoor Education lends itself to telling stories, so let's tell them.

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Biography

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A Code of Ethics for Outdoor Educators

Innes Larkin

Abstract

As a part of my Master in Outdoor Education at Griffith University I embarked on an independent study into Ethics in Outdoor Education. From early research it became apparent that whilst there were many ethical practices occurring, at no stage had they been documented and critiqued. The goal of this study was to facilitate the development of a code of ethics with Outdoor Educators for our profession. The development of a Code of Ethics remains a work in progress. It is intended that this presentation and workshop will facilitate the development of a document that is universally acceptable to the Outdoor Education profession.

Why Ethics in Outdoor Education?

As a comparatively young profession Outdoor Education has become exponentially more complex. What began, arguably, with Kurt Hahn and Outward Bound in the early 20th century has led to the eclectic mixture of outdoor recreation, environmental education, outdoor education, developmental adventure education and adventure therapy that is available today. Underlying this mixture is the feeling that we are doing the ‘right thing’, and that the ends justify the means.

A code of ethics achieves the goal of ensuring the ends justify the means through representing the best practices available in the relevant industry. Fox and Lutt (1996) believe that “through revisiting and inviting conflicts, critiques and contradictions to rise to the surface, Outdoor Educators can strengthen existing or create new ethical frameworks and moral practises.” As facilitator of the process it is important that this code of ethics represents the professional body it is designed for, therefore communication was continually invited to ascertain all viewpoints. This conference represents the final step in that process, following presentations and qualitative analysis’ at Gregory Terrace Outdoor Education Centre (GTOEC), and the Outdoor Educators Association of Queensland (OEAQ) state conference.

My research led me to the opinion that Outdoor Education as a profession was in a dilemma. It was looking for public recognition without following the normal procedure. Martin (2000) presented some commonly accepted steps to becoming a recognised profession. They are:

1. A motive of service beyond self interest
2. Development of a specialised body of knowledge
3. **A code of ethics**
4. Admission to the profession
5. Public recognition

The title Outdoor Education is itself evidence of a motive of service beyond self interest, as education is recognised as being a service provided for others. Evidence of a specialised body of knowledge would include the many undergraduate and postgraduate degrees that are available in Australia. The Bachelor of Arts in Outdoor Education, Latrobe University, VIC and Masters of Arts in Outdoor Education, Griffith University, QLD are examples of two. A Code of Ethics, according to the model presented by Martin, is the next step in the process of outdoor education becoming a recognised profession. Whilst pursuing a Masters in Outdoor Education I chose to focus on developing a Code of Ethics for outdoor education.

Fox and Lutt (1996) state, "Ethical frameworks are complex sets of value claims, rationales, and rules that guide moral reasoning, decision making, and behaviour." A question arose regarding the ethical frameworks that guide outdoor education. Are we as Outdoor Educators guilty of believing that we don't need a code of ethics, or simply guilty of being unable to agree on a broad framework which encompasses all practices?

When planning the facilitation process the most important concept was thought to be relevance. For a code of ethics to have relevance it needs a body of people for which it represents. For this reason a three step process was decided upon.

In the first instance invitations were sent out to South East Queensland Outdoor Education directors, lecturers and teachers to attend a forum at GTOEC on the 30th May, 2002. At the forum a broad, research based framework was presented. The ensuing discussions resulted in the initial framework being discarded and a decision was reached to document all of the core values /ethics according to those present. These values/ethics were then qualitatively analysed to produce broad headings. The resultant headings formed the basis for a Code of Ethics for Outdoor Educators. Following the forum time was spent coalescing the broad headings and the values inherent in them into a workable document. This document was then sent out to the participants for comment and feedback.

As a second step, at the OEAQ State Conference on June 22nd 2002 a wider community representation was available to further revisit, construct or critique the code of ethics. In the first of two sessions at the conference, participants were again asked to document their core values or ethics. These were qualitatively analysed to produce three broad headings with a range of values/ethics underpinning them. Due to time constraints preventing a full analysis, the formation of only three headings resulted. In the second session the draft code of ethics was presented and critiqued. Valuable feedback was received and the commonalities between the broad headings from the GTOEC forum and the OEAQ conference were noted. Following the conference, time was again spent revisiting the code of ethics and attempting to include all relevant values without duplication. Each value needed to stand-alone yet still convey the original concept. At a variety of points the draft code of ethics was circulated for feedback.

The 13th National Outdoor Education Conference represents the third and final step in this process. The code of ethics will be presented in session one and then further workshopped in session two to include the widest representation from the Outdoor Education profession.

The code of ethics that is included in this paper is pre-conference and therefore only represents the first two steps in the full process.

It became obvious early in the research that a national Code of Ethics, which allows others to visibly observe a profession's operation, was missing from the Outdoor Education body of knowledge.

To achieve a code, which is representative of the national Outdoor Education field, a three-step process of consultation was decided upon. Stage one involved a small forum of SE QLD Outdoor Educators, stage two involved presenting and workshopping the draft code at the OEAQ state conference. The 13th National Outdoor Education Conference represents the final stage in the process.

With continued application a code of ethics that represents the Australian Outdoor Education field is indeed a reality. It follows that once this Code of Ethics has been presented and workshopped at the conference, it could then be ratified and adopted by the national body.

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Biography

Innes Larkin is currently an Outdoor Education Teacher at Gregory Terrace Outdoor Education Centre, Maroon, Queensland. His teaching career began at The Douay Martyrs School in London before moving back to Australia and concentrating on Middle Schooling at St Peters Lutheran College. Facilitation of the Code of Ethics for Outdoor Educators represents the final step towards a Masters of Arts in Outdoor Education at Griffith University.

Appendix A

A Code of Ethics for Outdoor Educators

Outdoor Education is the process of applying learning models in, about and for the outdoors. The goal of Outdoor Education is to develop comprehensive understandings of ourselves, and our relationships with the diverse biophysical, social and cultural environments we live in.

Ethical Guidelines

1. The Outdoor Educator will fulfil his/her duty of care.
2. The Outdoor Educator will provide a safe, supportive and appropriate learning environment.
3. The Outdoor Educator will maintain his/her professional standards.
4. The Outdoor Educator will ensure his/her procedures are culturally and environmentally sustainable.

The Outdoor Educator will fulfil his/her duty of care

An Outdoor Educator has a duty of care for the participants under his/her charge. This duty of care revolves around the principle Lord Denning stated in *Donoghue v Stevenson* [1932] AC 580, “ You must take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions which you can reasonably foresee would be likely to injure your neighbour... (that is) persons who are so closely and directly affected by my act that I ought reasonably to have them in contemplation”. When applied to the education field, the High Court in *Geyer v Downs* [1977] (138 CLR 91) moved away from this definition to a more school orientated definition, “ It is now a proper working assumption that the standard of care is that of the reasonable teacher, having regard to the formal and acquired expertise of teachers, and the reasonable school authority, having regards to its resources.”

In fulfilling his/her duty of care, the Outdoor Educator will:

- Maintain as a first priority the mental, emotional, physical and social safety of the participants.
- Understand the concept of duty of care as outlined by the legislations and precedents below
 - Chapter 27 Criminal Code Act 1899
 - Section 93 Qld Crimes Act 1998
 - Qld Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995
 - Principles of Negligence
 - Comply with industry best practice.

The Outdoor Educator will provide a safe, supportive and appropriate learning environment.

An Outdoor Educator is committed to providing learning experiences for his or her participants. A learning environment requires the Outdoor Educator to have clear learning goals enunciated. The programme then needs to be developed and implemented with the participant’s physical, social, mental and emotional maturity in mind to safely achieve these learning goals.

In providing a safe, supportive and appropriate learning environment, the Outdoor Educator will:

- Ensure that the learning environment is appropriate to their level of professional training.
- Ensure that the learning environment is appropriate to the participants' maturity, experience, and developmental stage.
- Employ a variety of leadership and learning models to suit the learning environment.
- Have an inclusive curriculum, which caters for all participants regardless of their race, age, religion, and physical ability.
- Contribute to a just and humane society through the facilitation of participants understanding of themselves and their relationships with the diverse biophysical, social and cultural environments they live in.

The Outdoor Educator will maintain his/her professional standards.

An Outdoor Educator is committed to providing the highest standard of professional service. The learning environment for Outdoor Education is often one based in a remote area, or comprised of activities that are perceived to be in the high-risk arena. To ensure that this challenging environment is accessed successfully the Outdoor Educator needs to maintain a high level of professional competence.

In maintaining his/her professional standards, the Outdoor Educator will:

- Demonstrate passion and commitment to the ideals of the Outdoor Education profession.
- Only provide services for which he/she is professionally educated or trained for.
- Demonstrate commitment to maintaining professional development. Inclusive in this are the concepts of outdoor leadership skills, as well as recent learning trends, theories and critiques.
- Raise the Outdoor Education professional status through:

Contributing to the Outdoor Education body of knowledge via engagement with other professionals.

Facilitating new Outdoor Educators into the profession via recognised pathways

Demonstrate mutual respect for colleagues and celebrate the diversity of practice within Outdoor Education.

Engage in professional reflection and critique on a regular basis.

The Outdoor Educator will ensure his or her procedures are culturally and environmentally sustainable.

An Outdoor Educator is committed to caring for the earth and its people. The learning environment used for Outdoor Education is often of environmental and cultural significance. Responsible stewardship will ensure this environment is accessed by Outdoor Educators in a sustainable manner.

In maintaining culturally and environmentally sustainable procedures the Outdoor Educator will:

- Promote critical reflection on the ecological consequences of both local and global behaviours.

- Personally model culturally and environmentally sustainable behaviours.
- Encourage a greater understanding of the total environment through quality interpretation.
- Maintain a positive balance between the learning goals of the programme and the environmental impact. This could be achieved through
- Utilisation of the most appropriate environment that allows the programme goals to be achieved
- Maintaining group size to a level appropriate to the environment
- Educate participants in the use of environmentally sound practices.
- Improve the local environment through community service.

A Snapshot of Outdoor Leadership Preparation Opportunities in Australia

Kathy Mann

Abstract

The outdoor industry in Australia is complex and changing. Due to a wide variety of influences, there has developed four identifiable sectors. The progression towards professionalism is made more complex by the needs for training in the four different sectors of the industry. The recognised paths for training are personal experience, vocational education academic preparation internships and scattered qualifications.

A snapshot of available training pathways in Australia was taken between August and November 2002. Analysis of these paths of entry into the industry and their compatibility with the needs of industry aims to identify shortcomings in the provision of training required by the different sectors.

As part of a work in progress, this paper sets out to discuss the various entry points into the industry and seeks to provide strategies for the development of a cohesive framework for professional preparation for outdoor leaders across the Australian outdoor industry.

Introduction

The Australian Outdoor Industry is comprised of four main sectors. Figure 1 shows these four sectors, outdoor recreation, outdoor education, corporate adventure training, and wilderness experience programs in the red circles, which are flanked by the outlying black ovals representing some of the types of programs or areas we would expect to see operating in Australian society. I have labelled each sector by consolidating the terminology both commonly used in my experience in the field, and from Australian and international academics on the subject (Priest 1997; Martin 1999). Martin identifies these sectors as 'orientations' (Martin 1999) and although I believe that this term highlights the concept of them all being parts of a whole or larger scheme of things, the term 'sector' is commonly used within the industry, and so I have adopted 'sector' to use for this research.

Increasingly more is being discussed about how and what the outdoor industry is, and of its movement towards being considered a profession. When contemplating entry into a 'professional state' Martin (1999) highlights one particular hurdle that the Australian outdoor industry/profession will encounter, the ideological and practical problems that will arise from the differing training opportunities and entry paths currently in existence in Australia. Some of the entry paths into the industry/profession currently in use by each of the four sectors include such disparate paths as community recognised certificates, university qualifications, TAFE qualifications, internships and extensive personal experience. This level of diversity has the potential to be a contentious issue.

This paper plays a role in opening up the discussion about developing professionalism in the outdoor industry as a whole, by looking at how the industry currently prepares its outdoor leaders.

The research I am engaged in is looking at the different pathways for outdoor leadership preparation in Australia, and my thesis is that current outdoor leadership preparation models are not necessarily meeting the changing needs of the Australian outdoor industry/profession. In this paper I will discuss how I see the Australian outdoor industry, and explain the various types of

training available in Australia currently that prepares individuals for leadership roles within it. Through analysis of a database of the existing training options I hope to address questions of the types of training that are available and whether this training suits the needs of the different sections of the industry.



Figure 1: The Australian Outdoor Industry

The Australian Outdoor Industry

The outdoors is both a vast playground and classroom in Australia. The past fifty or so years have seen a gradual growth in facets of society that utilise it for their own purposes (Pickett & Polley 2001). Activities such rockclimbing, canoeing, kayaking, skiing, caving, diving, bushwalking, ropes courses, are now prevalent within our educational and recreational programs. Outdoor education and recreation are increasingly commonplace in Australian school curriculum, which raises particular issues for teacher training (Lugg 1999, pp.27-28). Opportunities are now commonplace in education, recreation, adult learning, counselling, community support, tourism etc to utilise the wide range of activities that the more adventure based of the recreation activities has to offer. Each of these groups relate to one or more of the four sectors that make up the outdoor industry.

The four sectors of the outdoor industry are complex and evolving. For the purposes of this paper I have used the following summarised definitions of the four industry sectors. Outdoor recreation typically involves the use of outdoor adventure activities in a recreational setting and primarily for recreational purposes. Outdoor education typically involves the use of outdoor and high adventure pursuits and environmental activities to achieve educational outcomes. Corporate adventure training involves experience-based training and development and utilises adventure-based activities typically focused on addressing work-based issues (Priest and colleagues 2002, p.1). It describes a methodology that is essentially utilised to promote and improve teamwork (Priest and colleagues 2001, p.1). Wilderness experience programs utilise remote areas (wilderness) in order to develop individual potential through “personal growth, therapy, rehabilitation, education, leadership and/or organizational development activities” (Roberts cited in (Friese, Hendee et al. 1998, p.40).

Essentially, all four sectors share some common attributes comprising of leadership, core activities, equipment, and locations. Programs within each sector can vary radically in design and facilitation, how staff are recruited and trained, and what specific facilities they require. Each sector has its own unique historical development in Australia. Little is documented, however anecdotally it is understood that an increase in participation and support for such outdoor recreational pursuits as bushwalking, rockclimbing, abseiling and cross country skiing sparked off a movement to incorporate outdoor adventure activities into the Australian psyche from roughly the 1950's (Pickett & Polley 2001, pp.50-51). In this regard, Australia has followed the lead of a number of influential countries, namely, Great Britain, United States of America, and Canada (and to a lesser extent some of the European countries).

Entry into the outdoor profession

The introduction of Outdoor Recreation Industry standards and the ideological differences that exist between the outdoor education and recreation sectors add complexities to the process of professionalisation (Martin 1999). These ideological differences will affect the ways in which each prepares leaders for the industry/profession and may further add to the divide that such diversity can bring. It will be essential for all sectors to establish some level of commonality and celebrate this if they are to address the issue of disparate entry paths and becoming a profession.

In charting the various pathways into the industry, I have come to see the Australian outdoor industry-come-profession as a complex and compelling phenomenon. Its operation can be likened to a public swimming pool where a myriad of staff, voluntary and paid, facilitate the smooth and friendly operations of the pool complex: caretaker, manager, lifeguards, kiosk attendant, and gardener/maintenance bloke.

Sunworshippers laze about whilst others play games on the grass, dipping in and out of the water to cool down. Families lunch in the shade, keeping watchful eyes on young children. The picture is intricate in its detail and interactions. The relationships between some of the elements of the image are sometimes subtle, other times blatant. Always they are present and they require understanding if a response to the reassessment of access to the world of the pool (professional pathways) is to be met. It is also an expectation that regulatory bodies (lifeguards, swim instructors, personal trainers, pool managers) are present to safeguard participant swimmers and staff alike. The corresponding regulatory bodies would include local, state and federal government departments concerned with education, access to national parks and state recreation areas, peak bodies representing particular sectors or aspects of each sector (eg the Outdoor Recreation Council of Australia representing the outdoor recreation sector, and the Australian Outdoor Education Council representing the outdoor education sector). It is both influenced by society and is influential within society. It has meaning, history and relevance. People engage with and enter the water of a public swimming pool in different ways, just as people engage with and enter the work of the outdoor leader in different ways.

Recent discussions within the outdoor community, particularly at 2001 National Outdoor Education Conference, have revolved around a shift towards professionalisation and what that means for practitioners from the various sectors within the outdoor industry. Seeing the industry in the guise of the public swimming pool encourages a type of voyeurism that permits the relationships and interrelationships of the pool users (practitioners and participants/clients and community stakeholders) to be visible and able to be commented on.

For the purposes of this paper, however, my focus is the actual path by which entry into the industry is permitted. How and where are people prepared in Australia that enables them to engage in work as an outdoor leader in Australia?

Entry paths

Currently in Australia there exist five accepted pathways or ways of becoming an outdoor leader. These pathways can be described in many ways, but for the purposes of my research I have described them as, 1) Vocational Education Training (VET), 2) Internships, 3) Academic Preparation, 4) Scattered Qualifications and 5) Personal Experience. Once admitted into the ranks of the paid or volunteer workforce, many outdoor leaders (practitioners) build on their experience and qualifications through professional development either sponsored by their workplace or independently accessed. Many also would be able to identify personally with more than one of the entry paths.

1) Vocational Education and Training

Vocational education and training (VET) is a training framework traditionally offering industry related and recognised skill-based training and qualifications. Essentially, VET has been defined as:

... to encompass all educational and instructional experiences – be they formal or informal, pre-employment or employment related, off-the-job or on-the-job – that are designed to directly enhance the skills, knowledge, competencies and capabilities of individuals, required in undertaking gainful employment. (Maglen in Brown, 2000, p.1)

Certain key terms used here identify the core differences that exist between VET courses and other frameworks for leadership preparation for the outdoor industry. The use of the terms *skills*, *competencies* and *capabilities* as a focus serves to promote the use of competency-based training and assessment. The use of the term *knowledge* highlights the broader educational aspects of the framework. The description of working people as “worker/learner/citizens” (Brown 2000) serves to provide evidence that the education and the vocational needs of individuals are incorporated in the VET framework. The perception here is that those preparing for the world of work are multiply positioned. Their intended role in the workforce structures of our society are acknowledged, they are acknowledged as being learners (ideally as lifelong learners), and the importance of their place in the social and civic structures of our society (citizenship) is also acknowledged.

In Michael Brown’s work on the dominant constructions of vocational education and training and the assumptions that underpin it, he discusses how course design is based on the three principles of relevance, responsiveness and uniqueness (Stevenson in Brown, 2000). VET courses are linked directly to the needs of the employers who have become one of the major stakeholders in VET. The employers determine what attributes they value and will reward with wages and conditions. Courses are written according to the needs of the employer/workplace/industry. These ensure the immediate relevance of certain skills, knowledge, and attitudes for particular employers and workplaces. As such, VET can be said to be providing courses that value and impart ‘market driven knowledge’ or ‘valuable’ knowledge (Brown 2000).

In addressing the skills and knowledge needs or expectations of the industry/market, VET is seen to be responsive. By being seen to be both relevant and responsive in these ways, VET programs are deemed purposeful. VET is considered unique in that it is the only aspect of education that uses employers and the workplace to determine the basis of knowledge, curriculum and pedagogy (the function, work, or art of a teacher, or of teaching or instructing).

Training packages are a main feature of VET in Australia. They sit within the National Training Framework, which aims to “... make training and regulatory arrangements simpler, flexible and more relevant to the needs of industry.” (ANTA 1999, p.1). A Training package is composed of endorsed and non-endorsed components. The endorsed component is comprised of three elements: national competency standards, assessment guidelines, and national qualifications; and

the non-endorsed component also of three elements: learning strategies, assessment resources, and professional development materials.

2) Internship Training

Internship training is typically devised by independent organisations and is responsive to industry training requirements. Individual organisations frame and enhance the training offered within the particular methodological approach specific to the parent organisation. Examples of organisations that operate internship programs include Outward Bound Australia, The Outdoor Education Group, Southbound, Scouting Australia, and Girl Guides Australia. Increasingly in Australia, internship programs are embedding the vocationally based National Outdoor Recreation Industry Training Package (NORITP) into their training programs.

3) Academic Preparation

Academic preparation typically takes place in the Higher Education sector as university-based training. For outdoor leadership this is generally focussed on academically rigorous degrees in outdoor education, outdoor recreation, leisure studies or ecotourism. Such degrees have tended to earn a reputation for not providing industry recognised skills-based qualifications. This is seen, by some, as a negative attribute. As yet, no national consensus exists in higher education for the professional preparation of outdoor leaders.

From a review of information available on university websites in the second half of 2002, the key components of university based courses marketing themselves as providing outdoor leadership preparation included foundations in outdoor education, safety, outdoor pursuits, environment studies, eco tourism, leisure studies etc.

In Australia relatively few universities 'blend' or embed industry-recognised qualifications into their university-based training. From information gleaned from university website information and reviews in literature, the most notable of this few is La Trobe University (Victoria) which operates a university course for outdoor leadership preparation that includes the NORITP (Manfield and Pearse 1998). Also of note is the provision for students at the University of South Australia to gain credit for community/activity-based certification eg for qualifications attained through the Bushwalking Leadership and the Australian Canoeing awards scheme.

4) Scattered Qualifications and 5) Personal Experience

The acquisition of one or more qualifications related specifically to instructing or guiding particular activities within the outdoor industry is a fairly common entry point for instructors. Individual outdoor activity instructor or guide qualifications exist in Australia for most outdoor adventure pursuits including rafting, canoe/kayaking, climbing, abseiling, caving, skiing, snorkelling, SCUBA etc. These qualifications can usually be acquired through the recognised professional associations relating to each activity eg PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors).

Some qualifications acceptable for entry into some outdoor positions are not necessarily specifically related to outdoor leadership. Teaching, counselling, nursing, industrial rigging, are all examples. Considered as a side step in, these qualifications can be useful for particular programs. In a self-regulated industry, it is at the employers' discretion who they employ and why. This is a very liberating aspect of the industry.

Depending on the workplace and the types of programs and activities to be utilised, entry into the outdoor industry can also be through personal experience and/or personal attributes. Because of the breadth of areas covered by the four industry sectors, this person experience and attributes can range from extensive experience in a particular type of terrain or place, specialist counselling

experience or exposure, or experience with a particular section within the community (eg brain injury patients, or youth at risk).

Mapping outdoor leadership preparation opportunities

During the second half of 2002 I collected information detailing the outdoor leadership preparation options existing in Australia. Essentially I was interested in determining who and how many organisations offered what in outdoor leadership preparation and where in Australia these were offered.

In order to ‘map’ the outdoor leadership opportunities (i.e. to create a visual representation) I needed a large pool of information (data) detailing organisations, courses, qualifications, locations etc. Over a period of six months I collected information from the internet and created a database to house this information. My aim was to be able to generate summaries of the outdoor leadership opportunities from this database as well as to create a useable tool for career counselling for intending outdoor leaders.

I chose the internet as my major search tool because of its wide usage not only as a common way to find out information, but also to disseminate/advertise information. It also proved economic in terms of research time and finances.

The database I have created forms a significant part of my data collection. It provides quantifiable information (eg regarding how many, where and what type of preparation courses), but does not address the areas of quality and process. I view it as a mechanism by which I can demonstrate particular aspects of outdoor leadership preparation in Australia that up until now, have only been anecdotally described (eg lots of courses in Victoria or Tasmania, but few elsewhere). The broad and complex area of what constitutes appropriate outdoor leadership skills/requirements is yet another study in itself as Simon Priests’ thesis shows (Priest 1986).

How does it help?

To date, a ‘snapshot’ of Australian outdoor leadership preparation opportunities has not been accessible. By mapping the details of courses available in Australia at any one given time, statements can be validly made about the state of play regarding entry paths into the outdoor industry. For example, statements can be made about the distribution of certain types of courses available both within each and comparatively across each state/territory, and in Australia as a whole. The locations of courses can also be seen on a map of Australia for easy reference. A search of the database can also, for example, generate a list of all the universities that offer undergraduate courses pertaining to outdoor leadership in any specified region of Australia or the whole of Australia.

The database includes 214 organisations that offer qualifications in Australia ranging from those offered by school and adult VET providers, universities, internship programs (linked with Registered Training Organisations) and activity specific organisations. Due to the unwieldy nature of personal experience as an entry path into the industry, it was not included in the database and the mapping exercise.

Essentially I was looking for information that might provide a backdrop for a discussion about some of the characteristics of outdoor leadership preparation in Australia, for example how many organisations offer what type of courses/qualifications and where. This type of questioning would be useful when commenting on the entry paths into the outdoor industry as it moves closer to becoming a profession.

Preliminary findings

At the time of writing this paper, analysis of the database is still in the early stages. The type of information I intend generating from it includes:

- numerical data covering certificate I-IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, and statements of Attainment for Outdoor Recreation in each state/territory and Australia as a whole (school and adult VET providers)
- numerical data covering certificate I-IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, and statements of Attainment for Sport and Recreation in each state/territory and Australia as a whole (school and adult VET providers)
- numerical data covering Associate Degree, Bachelor, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Masters, Masters (Honours), Doctorate courses in each state/territory and Australia as a whole (university providers)
- numerical data covering leader certificates, instructor certificates in each state/territory and Australia as a whole (activity based qualification providers)
- the location of each course, plotted on a map, highlighting the density of opportunity in some regions of Australia
- numerical data for organisations offering only Outdoor Recreation Training Package qualifications
- numerical data for organisations offering only Sport & Recreation Training Package qualifications
- numerical data for organisations offering both Outdoor Recreation and Sport & Recreation Training Package qualifications

I will be able to determine how these courses are spread throughout Australia, and be able to comment, to some extent, on whether this might be equitable. Some of this analysis will be presented at the conference.

Conclusion

In the context of this research as a work in progress, commentary of a general nature can be made on what my research is indicating. This commentary relates to the preparation of people to work in an industry that is moving towards achieving the status of profession within the community.

Commonalities exist across all four sectors of the Australian Outdoor Industry. These commonalities are centred on leadership in the outdoors and specific skill development for the promotion of safe and positive participation in outdoor activities and environments. Learning how to provide such positive experiences for participants is essential to the success of any outdoor program. Whether the outdoor experience is guided, experiential or a combination of both, the training of leaders appropriate for each sector is important for all facets of the industry.

Despite these central commonalities, significant differences also exist between the industry sectors. These differences pertain primarily to the many contexts in which leadership and specific skills are applied. The training pathways that feed each sector all deal with safety and risk management, but with different approaches and modes of delivery.

Safe leadership is at the heart of the Australian Outdoor Industry. The training pathways for outdoor leadership in Australia are varied and evolving in response to many social influences. As the industry moves towards recognition as a profession, it is important to examine that which is currently being offered as outdoor leadership preparation for the Australian outdoor industry.

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Biography

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Out of the mouths of teachers and students – The perceptions held by teachers and students of the outcomes of an Adventure Education subject in Tasmanian senior schooling.

Terri-Anne Philpott

Abstract

The purpose of this presentation is to report information gathered from a pilot research project currently being conducted on the perceptions of year 11/12 teachers and students of the outcomes of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) subject HP 730/729 C (150hr) Adventure Education. The following areas will be addressed: (1) background, (2) research method, and (3) findings to date and discussion.

Background

Research into Tasmanian outdoor education curriculum outcomes is limited at all levels of schooling. If not for Cooksey & Wells (1990), Tasmanian outdoor education programs, research and evaluation information would be extinct much like the Tasmanian Tiger. Therefore, the purpose of this pilot research project is to investigate what teachers and students perceive to be outcomes of the adventure education subject. There is at least twenty different outdoor education programs offered in Tasmania but due to limited time and funding the study will focus on one subject of the outdoor education program (HP 730/729 Adventure Education) offered at the TCE level for year 11/12 students at both public and private schools.

The research will form the basis of a much larger study in the near future. Miles and Priest (1999), Priest and Gass (1997), Attarian (2001), Martin (2001) and James (2002) all recommended further research and evaluation in outdoor education specifically adventure programming to help design, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning experiences. At present the majority of the evaluation for the HP730/729 adventure education subject is anecdotal shared between outdoor educators at assessment moderation meetings held twice annually.

Why focus on Outdoor Education outcomes?

Outcomes are used in assessment methods to measure the effectiveness of the learning experience. Educators have used this method of measurement to gauge the learner's progression across scholarly disciplines. According to Kraft (1999) educational theorists such as Dewey (1938), Kolb (1984) and Fine (1999) provided insights on how the learner learns and processes which would allow the educator to facilitate better learning environments. The educational theorists identified learning processes such as classroom-based learning compared to experiential based learning and a mix of the two processes in an effort to cater to all intelligences (Kraft, 1999). This was linked to Coleman's study of information assimilation versus experiential learning were Kraft (1999) stated that

The information assimilation model leads to almost guaranteed failure, as they are unable to translate the learning's into concrete sequences of action... experiential learning appears to be more deeply etched into the brain of the learner, as all learning can be associated with concrete actions and events, not just abstract symbols or general principles. (p.185)

Kraft (1999) further stated that,

Adventure educators, who spend a majority of their time providing experiences that involve active, concrete learning in interaction with the physical environment and in social

interaction with members of the group, have taken a leadership role in the 1990's putting into practice in adult learning environments the ideas of Piaget. (p.184)

The idea to mix theory and practice is supported by Wurdinger and Priest (1999) who stated,

Theory without experience is incomplete because ideas need to be put to practice to verify their significance. Likewise, experience without theory is inadequate because it does not allow individuals to take what they have learned and apply it to future experiences. (p.190)

This research aims to identify aspects of the Adventure Education subject that will help guide the redesign of curriculum content in the future. This is important because Kraft (1999) found in Resnik's study that future educational experiences should include:

... an educational process that is dependent on shared cognition, skills directly related to real-life settings, learning in environments that demand a wide range of reasoning skills, and a range of specific competencies which provide immediate feedback and are transferable to other life settings...(p.186)

This is why it is important to obtain perceived outcomes of the Adventure Education subject from both teachers and students. It would be hard to obtain an accurate account of the actual learning taking place, the transferability of the learning or relevance of the learning to other life settings for students if only teachers were involved.

Fine (1999) investigated the application of stage development theory in adventure programming. Amongst the findings, Fine (1999) stated that, "As our sophistication in processing adventure activities increases, so too will our need to understand development and life stages of our client" (p.193), and further stated that,

This notion of balance is critical in adventure education. Invariably we will be pushing our clients outside their comfort zone. However, if we want them to benefit and learn from the activity we must seek a balance between their life stage and the type and degree of challenge. Here the concept of optimal dissonance (the perfect challenge) comes into play, designing experiences just beyond the scope of the client perceived capabilities. (p.194)

Fine raised the point of a need to balance the learning experience and optimal dissonance so that the experience would provide benefits and a positive learning environment. The interplay between the experience and dissonance needs to be considered when investigating the outcomes of the adventure education subject, especially from a student perspective, for future subject delivery and content. Fine (1999) also stated that "Adventure education is a powerful tool; anything powerful enough to help is powerful enough to harm. Age and life stages need to have a significant consideration in program design" (p.198). The pilot research study will be broad enough to include an opportunity for teachers and students to report on both negative and positive outcomes of the subject.

Cooksey and Wells (1990) identified the main aims of the outdoor education programs in Tasmanian primary and secondary schools. The list of aims for outdoor education programs in Tasmania link well with all of the criteria and objectives stated in the HP 730/729 adventure education subject TCE syllabus. This researcher aims to compare perceived outcomes from teachers and students with each other. The researcher will then compare perceived teachers outcomes with to the list of criteria and objectives set by the Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board (TSAB) and then compare perceived outcomes of students with TSAB's criteria and objectives.

Details of the subject

HP730 level C Adventure Education is a 150 hr TCE year 11/12 subject.

The subject hours are broken into:

Theory (50hrs) content

Seven topics including: First Aid, Navigation, Clothing and Equipment, Food and Cooking, Planning, Weather, and Emergency Procedures

Practical (100hrs) content

Students specialize in either:

Expedition activities (self sufficient journeys)

Adventure recreation (three outdoor activities with focus on skill development)

Scientific expedition

International expedition

Research methods

Stage 1

A case study approach has been utilized with both qualitative and quantitative dimensions. The mixed method approach was proposed by Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989), who stated that, “qualitative data were brought in to support or explain quantitative findings, to flesh out conclusions or to make recommendations” (p.271). Because of the practical nature of the subject, this study will adopt written and oral methods of data collection to provide a more comprehensive approach to data collection. This approach is supported by Kraft (1999) who points out that, “It is difficult to generate research evidence backing Coleman’s (assimilation versus experiential) theory, as most evidence of learning is shown through pencil and paper tests, which are dependent upon mastery of symbolic media” (p.185).

The quantitative data has been collected from a self-developed questionnaire. A draft questionnaire was given to six students and teachers who tested the questionnaire for clarity or misinterpretation. Once the clarifying changes were made to the questionnaire, it was sent out to all teachers and students involved in the TCE HP730/729 Adventure Education subject.

Stage 2 – to be completed

From the data collected a follow up qualitative oral method of data collection will be implemented in the form of five focus group meetings. Focus groups will involve both students and the teacher/s from the same school. This will allow the researcher to explore data provided in the questionnaires in more depth. The data collected will then be cross-referenced with objectives and criteria stated in the TSAB TCE HP730/729 Syllabus.

Findings to date

Preliminary survey results will be shared with the delegates at the conference and a handout will be provided. The presentation will be followed by a group discussion that will focus on outdoor education programs offered at the year 11/12 levels throughout Australia.

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Biography

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Ecological Footprints:

Taking steps towards sustainability in outdoor education

Scott Polley & Richard Smith

1. Introduction

This paper - and the workshop based on it - sets out to provide some practical answers to the question: "How can outdoor educators and their clients ('us' or 'we' in what follows) do better, because we know we always can?"

There are, of course, many dimensions to outdoor education about which we might aim to 'do better'. Martin (1998) has suggested that education has the potential to assist its participants – students and educators – develop individual and group attributes in at least three arenas:

- 1.1 personal development or emancipation
- 1.2 social skills
- 1.3 social change

The central concepts discussed here will be those of 'sustainability' and 'ecological footprint'. During the following descriptions of these each might be thought on a first consideration to be about the third of Martin's arenas. That will be the major thrust of the approach taken. However, the other two arenas will be briefly proposed as also of importance.

Further, the concepts will be presented from two perspectives. The first is intended to be of immediate practical use by outdoor educators and their clients. The second is for further thought and, perhaps, action as time and opportunity allows.

2. What's sustainability - and what's it got to do with 'minimal impact activity'?

Outdoor Education enables participants (including leaders) to experience and learn in areas of high natural value. This includes participants examining their current approaches to, and hopefully improving their relationships with, natural areas. A long-term outcome might be that, ultimately, wild places are better appreciated and nurtured. Participants are also offered a unique set of opportunities to live simply – to practice 'profound simplicity' (Australian Outdoor Education Council, 2001). Outdoor education can, in this context, provide practice-based opportunities to explore the concept of 'sustainable living' or 'sustainability'.

'Sustainability' is said to be based on several principles, the number and nature of which depend, not surprisingly, on who writes the list, on the 'interests' they bring to the concept of sustainability (for example, see Beder, 1993). However, there is universal agreement, even amongst groups who would otherwise disagree about many things, two principles are central to sustainability. One of these—and another will be discussed later in the paper—is the principle of '*fairness between generations*'. (The official term, should you want to lighten the mood when dining, is 'intergenerational equity' – which pretty clearly means 'between-generational fairness', more or less as we said earlier!). This principle means that every generation has a responsibility to live in such a way that succeeding generations get 'a fair go', are as able to satisfy their needs as comfortably as do present generations. More lyrically, 'We don't pass on the Earth to our children; we borrow it from them.' To accomplish this we need, obviously, to be efficient - some would say intentionally frugal - in the use made of what, in the end, comes only from the Earth. So, are we outdoor educators explicitly trying to do this and, if we are, can we do better—even, say, in the activities associated with 'minimal impact' approaches? And can we use such experiences to assist us consider the nature of the largely consumer-oriented societies in which we live, the growth economy/consumer paradigm driving this orientation—and, perhaps, our own roles in challenging these obvious obstacles to sustainability?

The paradox is of course that we consume massive amounts of mostly non-renewable resources in gaining access to wild places, the kinds of places we would be most likely to practice 'minimal impact' approaches. Such resources include: the oil used to power vehicles and stoves and to make the nylon and other plastic materials (whose properties include making equipment more lightweight – a quality we value precisely because it helps to save on transport fuel use, and, of course, our aching bodies); steel for vehicles, cookers and nifty candle lanterns. Then there's the fuel needed to get the raw materials into final product and transport them to us, often from many places on Earth. This aspect has been clearly discussed by Ryan & Durning (1997). We are also involved in the production of waste materials that might take up areas with much better uses than landfill, as well as possibly jeopardising wildlife populations. These include, for example, batteries containing heavy metals and other materials, snap-lock plastic bags and other packaging.

We might justifiably argue that *systemic*, or *whole-society* changes are required to seriously tackle global environmental problems - which themselves might more accurately be called 'human-induced erosion of Earth systems'. However, it remains that the demand for non-renewable resources, the production of excess waste and chemical damage to natural ecosystems ultimately places pressure on wild places—for example Alaskan oilfields, Brazilian rainforests, Australian deserts and waterways, and so on. Fortunately the western - or 'minority' - world is increasingly appreciating that 'our' resources are finite and we must become Earth 'custodians' if we are serious about survival of the human species with any kind of quality of life. This appreciation presents our generations with challenges not previously appreciated by more than a few. It is instructive to note, however, that this 'human-centered' appreciation is worlds away from the more profound and less egocentric notions held by indigenous peoples around the Earth for millennia, and at least 40,000 years in this country - that the Earth and its products - as different from 'our resources' - deserve our deep and continuing respect.

If we are to make useful responses to our appreciation that the Earth's capacity to support anything - including us - is finite we have a problem, possibly several! A major one is that consumption is like muzak in a lift. It's there, whether we asked for it or not! So much of our daily lives incorporates consumption - even writing this paper has resulted in the consumption of non-renewable resources - it is sometimes difficult to know where to start.

A practical approach towards attempting to conduct outdoor education activities/programs that are explicitly intended to be less consuming of resources is to begin to change the 'trend graph' of resource use, waste production and environmental impact and so on. At present for most of us it's probably creeping upwards; if we're already trying to be 'minimal impacters' it might be creeping more slowly - or even levelling out. All of that is fine as long as we see our attempts—however fresh, or established, they might be - as small steps in the long process of changing the trend to a downward curve. That is, working towards objectives such as zero use of non-renewable resources, or zero production of 'wastes' that are not ecologically compatible in our activities/programs is a long walk, with many paces and a few stumbles. Ideally, engaging our students in discussions about why these ideas and actions are important, and how they can be made practical - even enjoyable - along the way will act as a possible model for their own attempts at living more lightly on the Earth in their everyday lives beyond outdoor education activities.

Probably many outdoor educators are already looking for, or constructing, opportunities to role model more sustainable behaviours. Environmental or lifestyle audits can be useful means of evaluating the effectiveness of 'strategies towards sustainability' which we and our participants might develop. Examples of several will be shown in the workshop based on this paper. Many such 'instruments' have their own inbuilt motivational capacity as those completing them seek to

get the 'best' score. However one provided by Turner (1996) shows that they can be both carefully constructed enough to provide useful information to help guide our behaviour and to improve our strategies - while still raising important ideas in unusual and engaging ways. Turner's example is a simple, not simplistic, adaptation of ideas first proposed by Wackernagel and Rees (1996). Their work, now much developed, describes the impact humans have on the Earth in terms of our 'ecological footprint'.

3. Ecological footprint is more than a contradiction!

3.1 In theory:

- Take all the surface of the Earth that's productive of 'things for humans'
- Divide by the total number of humans
- You get the 'ideal', 'average', 'theoretical' ecological footprint (EF) - about 1.9 hectares person (or 1.9ha/capita).

3.2 In practice:

- EF varies depending on how it's calculated! On a scale in which the 'ideal' is about 1.9ha/cap calculations for many countries around the world suggest a variation from about 1 ha/cap for countries such as India and China to about 12 ha/cap for the USA. The average of all the 'calculated' EF's is, alarmingly, about 2.3ha/cap. That means, on average, everyone is using 0.4ha more than is available! That's 0.4 out of the theoretical 1.9 ie about 1/5th or 20%. That's because we're 'mining' the earth, using things faster than they can be replaced. That 'mining' isn't just minerals. It's many things we use - forests, farmlands, fish and so on.
- For 'the average Australian' EF is about 7ha/cap.
These figures come from a variety of places. (see 'Redefining Progress' in section 6 below).

The implications of all these calculations and results are that humans need to become very serious about reducing their EF, and right now!

4. But what's possible in the real world?

How can these ideas assist 'the average outdoor edder'? We can usefully think in terms of:

- reducing 'resource use' - or being more efficient with all the materials we use, including fuel, food and water
- reducing 'waste' - or improving 'resource recovery', and improving 'habitat retention'
- reducing 'harmful materials' - trying to ensure we use as little as possible of materials dangerous to natural systems (including humans!), or things made from such materials.

Borrowing from the work of Turner (1996), Wackernagel and Rees (1996) and others we have developed 'version 1' of an environmental audit tool called 'Reducing your ecological footprint in outdoor education'. We have tried to pick out key resource, chemical production, waste production and disposal issues and to make a user-friendly tool for outdoor programmers and students alike. The intention is that the tool could be used to monitor the effectiveness of any changes to your outdoor education program that are aimed at reducing resource use, increasing resource recovery and reducing harmful materials. It does not allow you to calculate figures for an EF but it should allow you to adopt specific strategies to reduce your activities' impacts, and to see how well you and your participants are going. It should not be seen as definitive because its intended 'handiness' means that it needs to be at least a little simplistic in its approach. Feel free to modify as you see fit. And let us know how useful—or not—it is, and how you've modified

it to make it work better for you.

Refer to Appendix A. In it you'll find a series of questions raised. Some will be fairly straightforward to answer. Others will not. The main reason for the latter finding is that much of what we consume is inadequately labelled as to its content, materials used in its manufacture, fuel used in its transport, habitats harmed in the search for and extraction of pre-cursor materials and so on. We can only do the best with the information available. Or perhaps we could ask some pointed questions of suppliers, or manufacturers?

In an earlier section we referred to 'fairness between generations' (or 'intergenerational equity') as one of the principles of sustainability. It's time for the second principle we said we'd discuss later in the paper.

That principle is the one of: 'intragenerational equity' or 'fairness within each generation'. It means that each generation has a responsibility to seek to minimise the (always unfair) distribution of resources that takes place. This is not so that everyone has the same amount of money, but so that each person has a fair chance of satisfying their legitimate needs. It involves, in the context of what we're discussing here, asking questions like:

- are the people who were involved in the production of this object or service treated fairly, and accorded their rightful dignity, in their employment?
- are they paid an income appropriate to them meeting their needs within their society?
- do the organizations (businesses, governments) which control much of the lives of these people have in place explicit strategies to ensure that their rights to appropriate levels of health, education and so on are safeguarded?

As we indicated above, one of the great difficulties about finding out whether items of equipment and so on meet 'fairness between generation' criteria is that 'things' are rarely labelled clearly, or sufficiently or, in many cases, at all with the kinds of information we need. If anything, that's even more the situation in the case of criteria towards this second principle. Some assistance is available from organizations such as CAA-Oxfam, and publications such as *New Internationalist* both of which are referred to in section 6 below.

Together the two principles for sustainability presented in this paper encourage us to strive towards life on a more socially and ecologically just Earth. An organisation which offers some useful frameworks for thinking about how to take on this apparently huge task is 'FairShare International' (see section 6 below). A questionnaire 'How Earth-friendly are you?' also raises many of these issues in ways suitable for upper middle school years and older (see 'New Road Map Foundation' in section 6. below).

But the suggestions in this paper come with attendant problems!

5. What's wrong with these ideas?

As we suggested early in the paper many of these ideas are already everyday practice for some outdoor educators. However, although we have endeavoured to present suggestions that constitute 'possibilities' for fledgling sustainability seekers, we have intentionally raised some ideas which we think will challenge even the already experienced 'minimal impacters' with serious intentions towards providing more ecologically sustainable programs. So this section of the paper merely raises the question:

'What's so difficult about this? Really? C'mon, people.'

That's so you, the reader or workshop participant, can get it off your chest and, more importantly, take intelligent account of what the problems will be - so you've got them covered. Then it's not a barrier to the more important questions:

‘What’s possible in all this? How can we get started, or improve what we’re doing? And keep trying to improve!’

...and the probable realisations:

‘Hey, maybe some of it’s easy. Maybe we could have some fun with it, too. You know, like competitions, and stuff?’

The workshop will provide time for some discussions of these difficulties – so we can all suggest some ways around them!

We believe that many of your participants will be willing co-conspirators in trying to be continually more responsible and empathetic companions to all the other entities - including, but not only, humans - on Earth. We said at the outset that most of this paper would concentrate on the third of Martin’s (1998) ‘educational potentials’, that of ‘social change’. We think it’s fairly clear that what we’ve proposed is also quite fundamentally about the other two: ‘personal development or emancipation’ and ‘social skills’ as leaders and learners grapple with the task of becoming more human/humane in societies which often seem to be about ‘mateship’ and ‘the environment’ but which subtly encourage us all to be more selfish than fairness between and within generations would lead us to be.

6. Who thought up all this?

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New Internationalist - www.newint.org

‘New Road map Foundation’ – the questionnaire is in *New Internationalist*, November 2000. see also www.newroadmap.org and www.simpleliving.net

Ryan, J. C. & Durning, A. T. (1997). *Stuff: The secret lives of everyday things*. Seattle: Northwest Environment Watch.

(Further information is available at their brilliant site - <http://www.northwestwatch.org>)

(Ryan & Durning (1997) are referred to in Vanderbilt, T. (1998). *The sneaker book*. NY: The New Press. Vanderbilt will tell you more than you thought you needed to know about these badges of status.)

‘Redefining Progress’ – at www.RedefiningProgress.org

The Ecologically Sustainable Development Unit of the SA Department of Education & Children’s Services produces an occasional newsletter ‘Energy matters’. Term 1, 2003 centred on Ecological Footprints with a terrific range of information and sources. Copies of this is available from Tineta Ellis, the Senior officer of that section of DECS via ellis.tineta@saugov.sa.gov.au

Turner, T. (1996). *Activity: Calculating your ecological footprint*. Clearing, #95, pp. 14 - 15.

Wackernagel M. & Rees, W. (1996) *Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing human impact on the Earth*. Gabriola Island: New Society.

Appendices

6.1 One of these sources is an undated (probably early 1990s) supplement to the Australian Consumers' Association magazine *Choice* entitled 'How does your household rate?' This source provides data helping users to distinguish between different sized vehicle, and ones using different fuels.

A second is the greenhouse gas calculator which again uses data from the early 1990s and is found at www.cat.au/greenhouse/stinkOmeter

6.2 Information comes from several sources:

- brochure – 'Help stop the clearfell logging of Victoria's Central Highlands', from Environment Victoria, 19 O'Connell St, North Melbourne
- brochure – 'Must we pulp our forests to make paper?', from Boycott Woodchip Campaign, PO Box 2461, Fitzroy, Vic 3065.
- unpublished material available from authors of this paper.
- information could also be sourced from websites of Friend of the Earth, The Wilderness Society and their associated website links.

Biography

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Appendix a

Reducing your Ecological Footprint in Outdoor Education

Outdoor Education Program: _____

Location: _____

No. of participants: _____ Date(s): _____

Item 1: Resource recovery

Item	Last program	This program	Difference
Recyclable	___kg	___kg	+/- ___kg
Non-recyclable	___kg	___kg	+/- ___kg
Total	___kg	___kg	+/- ___kg
Total per participant	___kg/person	___kg/person	+/- ___kg /person

• Item 2: Composting

Ideally, the number of kg of composted organic material is minimal due to efficient purchasing. Calculating the amount may not reflect minimising waste. But you could do it this way (see also Item 3, below):

Item	Last program	This program	Difference
1. Organic/compostable material produced	___kg	___kg	+/- ___kg
2. Organic material composted, buried in gardens.	___kg	___kg	+/- ___kg
Organic material wasted. (ie 2. minus 1.)	___kg	___kg	+/- ___kg
Total organic material wasted per person	___kg/person	___kg/person	+/- ___kg /person

Item 3: Greenhouse Gas Emission:

(Adapted from several sources. See 6.1 above)

Item	Unit	Multiply by greenhouse factor	CO2 production previous program	CO2 production this program	CO2 production difference
Electricity conventional	Kwhr	× 1.2	___kg	___kg	___kg
		×0.10	___kg	___kg	___kg
renewables					
Fuel					
Natural gas	MJ	× 0.07	___kg	___kg	___kg
Metho/Shellite	litres	×2.85	___kg	___kg	___kg
Wood	kg	×0.03	___kg	___kg	___kg
LPG	litres	×1.7	___kg	___kg	___kg
Transport					
Bicycle	___km	× 0.1	___kg	___kg	___kg
Bus*	___km	× 0.2	___kg	___kg	___kg
Train*	___km	× 0.2	___kg	___kg	___kg
Internat'l air*	___km	× 0.3	___kg	___kg	___kg
Domestic air*	___km	× 0.8	___kg	___kg	___kg
Car**	___km	× 4.8	___kg	___kg	___kg
Waste					
Organic waste (not composted)	___kg	× 1.6***	___kg	___kg	___kg
Other waste (not recycled)	___kg	× 1.4***	___kg	___kg	___kg
Total kg CO2 for program			___kg	___kg	___kg
Total kg CO2 per participant			___kg/ person	___kg/ person	___kg/ person

*Assumes vehicle full. If half full, double your figure; if a third full, triple the figure and so on.

**Assumes vehicle contains only driver. Divide figure by number of people in vehicle.

*** Figures differ significantly in the two sources. Low estimates used here.

Items 4-7 pose some problems for you and your participants to workshop!
How will you quantify these 'indicators'?

Item 4: Purchasing

- Plantation or recycled paper for readings, note-taking etc (in an approximate order of preference. See 6.2 above. A=Australia, Br=Brazil, NZ=NZ!, E=Europe Enviroboard[A], Botany offset[NZ], Steinbeis[E], Nautilus/Canon100[E], Triotec[E], Ecopy[E], Evolve[E], Cyclus[E], Datacopy[E], Envirocopy[Br], Biotop[E], Renew 80or 100[A],).
- Recycled toilet paper
- Low or zero(organic, biodynamic pesticide fruit and vegetables
- Low or zero(organic, biodynamic pesticide dried foods
- Bulk foods
- Natural fibre rucsacks, etc
- Natural fibre clothing

Avoid purchasing

- Australian Paper products eg Australian Copy Paper, Reflex, Copyright , Crown, Optix, Precision, Oz Copy. Alternatives: Contact Lasercopy, Renew 80 (80% recycled), Renew 100 (100% recycled), Xerox Green Wrap (50% recycled), Postspeed Ultra (80% recycled)
- Tissues - especially Kleenex, Wondersoft
- Individually packaged foods such as soups, pastas, rices, jams, etc.
- New clothing
- New equipment
- Batteries (especially non rechargeable)
- Packaged drinks
- Meat, especially highly processed

Item 5: Recycling

- Garbage bags
- Food containers
- Clothing

Item 6: Group Equipment

- Sleeping bag
- Tent
- Rucsac
- Raincoat
- Stove
- Fuel bottles, gas cylinders.

Item 7: Positive Actions

- Minimal impact camping
- Rubbish removal
- Weed removal
- Track maintenance
- Investigating Flora and Fauna
- Letters to government, etc
- Return to manufacturer (with explanatory letter) of anything you think you (or your local council) would otherwise dump in landfill eg. non-rechargeable batteries, non-recyclable plastics.

Let's Go Outdoors: A Narrative Inquiry into the Memories of Significant Outdoor Experiences

Jo Straker

Wendy: Why did you come to the nursery window?

Peter: To hear the stories. None of us know any stories.

Wendy: How perfectly awful!

Sir James M. Barrie. Peter Pan

Abstract

This research started as a drawing together of stories about significant moments in the outdoors from a group of outdoor professionals. The outdoors has been a way of acquiring stories that has enriched and defined my life. Through the research I discovered that the stories we tell are shaped by our own culture but that it is also possible for us to shape our remembered experience. Stories about the past often reveal more about ourselves than we realise. While this research is about the stories of others it inevitably entwines my own story.

Introduction

This research project intertwines the stories of outdoor educators and their significant memories of the outdoors with my personal story of research. One of the strengths of the outdoors, as an educational environment, is the level of engagement it demands. It's hard not to take an interest in the weather when holed up in a hut waiting for the storm to subside. What I was unprepared for was the level of engagement that research also demands. The story unfolds.

I am an outdoor enthusiast and have worked as an outdoor educator for the last 35 years, so this research is not distant and objective, my life is entwined with the topic. This comes through in the research as I allow snippets of my own outdoor experiences and research experience to merge with the stories of others.

Narrative

Stories play a large part in all areas of education but especially so on outdoor camps. It's impossible to think of a night around a campfire when stories were not told. Eisner (1991) says that the "selection of form through which the world is to be represented not only influences what we can say, it also influences what we are likely to experience"

Narrative research started as a form of literary criticism where the structure of the story was studied in order to determine its function. This strand was developed further into the linguistic theory of Saussure and a semiotic analysis of narrative. Ricoeur (1984) looked at narrative research from a different angle; reading the text to see what could be interpreted from it. Constructivism explores narrative from the perspective of identity development in which life stories do not simply reflect actual events but actively shape the individual. Narrative is used in critical research, hermeneutic research, autobiographical studies, literary research and feminist studies. Its wide ranging use is partly due to its ability to make connections to the self, others and society.

The audience also influences the story. A story teller relates to different people in different ways so in narrative research the relationship between the narrator and the listener/researcher is a determining factor as to what story is told and how it is told.

To change the story of our lives must, in fact, always involve changes for other people. Because our stories must have an audience, because their themes encompass other lives besides our own, because our characters are intimately, inextricably interlinked - we cannot, as single individuals, take the story just wherever we might choose. ... Changes that are convincing, that can be personally lived out, can only be made jointly with others. (Salmon 1985, p.146)

Most people learn how to listen to and tell stories at very early ages. It is part of our cultural upbringing we learn about what is acceptable and how we should behave. "The narratives of the world are without number.... the narrative is present at all times, in all places, in all societies: the history of narrative begins with the history of mankind; there does not exist, and never has existed, a people without narratives" (Barthes 1966, 14). Most people tell stories, and when those stories are about themselves they often reflect their cultural backgrounds. The stories we've heard from others influence the stories we tell others.

Personal narratives are constructed by the individual from memories, but sometimes those memories are changed by the present. They become more than personal histories they are often a way of forming our identity. We sometimes feel happier telling someone a story about the past than revealing our innermost thoughts. This mixing of past and present is not usually a conscious action but what is most current and uppermost in our mind tends to emerge within a story from the past.

I was about 5 or 6 at the time and it was my first wilderness trip. At least it was wilderness to me then. I went with my father, uncle best friend JM and my uncles 2 sons. We walked in to a remote beach on Manakau Heads with just one tent and not much food. We were having a survival trip where we built a bivouac and had to get our food by fishing and collecting seafood. We lived mainly on fish.

On the last day we had no food we hadn't caught any that morning or the day before so my father and uncle rationed out the little bit we had left. They went without so that we had something. We must have taken eggs because my friend JM buried his egg in the sand because he didn't like eggs...my father was furious as he had gone without and JM had just wasted some precious resources. It was a great lesson on sharing resources and the implications of not sharing fairly and only thinking about yourself.

The narrator was involved in preparing and delivering a course on resource management at the time. It seemed evident to me that this focus on sharing, not wasting resources and being prepared to go without were definitely issues more relevant to the present. However, when I asked about the significance of the story the narrator made no connection to the present. Individuals attempt to make sense of the world and of themselves through the telling of stories (Riessman, 1993). Stories hold our memories and our dreams together in the here and now. They are windows to our inner self. Through them we reveal ourselves and construct ourselves (Holfstein & Gubrium, 2000).

Denzin., N.K. (1999) points out some of the difficulties of interpretation of narratives, particularly when he quotes Derrida in explaining how difficult it is to interpret others when everything is masked in language which is constantly changing and is itself being reinterpreted. He talks about "epiphanies" as moments and experiences that leave marks on peoples' lives, altering the fundamental structure of their lives, creating a point of change and defining moment. Once a story is told, it can become that point of change.

Dad used to stop at the beginning of the driveway and beep the horn and me and my brother would run down and he'd drive us up to the garage. Every time I did it I'd burn the inside of my thighs so they'd have to rush me into the bath to cool it down. It would

slowly heal and then I'd do it again...I just kept on doing it...I don't know why they let me keep on riding on the bike I guess was so determined and if I wanted to it and wasn't allowed I'd chuck this big hissy fitty. Is that related to the outdoors?.....maybe I was trying to conquer it not let it beat me yeah I'll say that I wasn't going to let it beat me ...I'm not going to let it beat me...I guess if I was a psychologist I'd read a bit more into it.....

The teller of this story continues with a few more stories about not letting the outdoors beat him and finishes by saying:

I enjoyed the challenge of the river and all the moves that you had to make and all the things the river would chuck at you, all the thrashings ... it was great it's all part of it for me... I don't know I guess it is me.

Narrative is about the telling of stories. In the telling, listening, and reading of stories the opportunity arises to share experiences about our own lives and the lives of others. Eisner (1997) commented, 'Narrative, when well crafted, is a spur to the imagination, and through our imaginative participation in the worlds that we create we have a platform for seeing what might be called our "actual worlds" more clearly' (p. 264).

Gathering stories

Colleagues shared stories with me about early significant outdoor experiences. An important point I had learnt from the literature on narrative research was to allow the participants story to emerge and not try to force it into my research parameters (Reissman 1993; Mishler 1986). That was surprisingly easy as I didn't really have many parameters. In retrospect I may have stood back too far at times, by creating a bit more dialogue, I could have drawn out more detail. The balance is delicate and each interview demands some subtle adaptations, to respect the individual is important.

For this research I collected 22 stories from 13 different people. Three people told me stories which I did not record on cassette tape; one of those was a compilation of many as they were recollections prompted by a photo album. Seven other people told me stories which I taped and transcribed. I gathered their stories at home, at work, indoors and outdoors. Some places were more relaxing for the story-teller; other spots were easier for the audio-cassette. The other two people wrote out their stories and sent them over the electronic highway. Everyone who shared their story works in the field of outdoor education as a teacher, instructor or tutor. Three of the contributors were women not a totally accurate representation, but there are more men in the field of outdoor education.

It was a privilege to hear the stories and in doing so bonds of friendship and understanding developed. The teller changed in the telling, I changed in the listening and our relationship changed as connections were made. The gathering of stories was certainly the top of the mountain, the highpoint. The summit means that the journey is only half completed and as a mountaineer I know the downhill is the most treacherous part.

“Analysis”

Once the stories had been gathered and transcribed, the focus was on analysis. I began the search for structure and for themes. I spent time with coloured pens and coding squiggles, dissecting and searching for clues. I read and listened to the stories multiple times. I gave priority to the stories that were shared after the consent forms were signed and the tape recorder switched on. What about all the other stories I'd heard around campfires and in mountain huts?...were they less significant because I hadn't recorded them?

I seemed to be joining a group who strip the world of its mystery, complexity, and ambiguity in a search for answers and maybe even the “truth”. I originally chose narrative for its ability to engage the personal and reveal the richness of lives but I started to reduce this richness into impersonal parts. Bochner (1992) says that to embrace the narrative study of lived experience...is to open ourselves up so that we don't merely analyse life but also live it.

Stories don't retain the same meaning when they are dissected, cut up and sorted into boxes. The analysis was limiting the wholeness of the story. I left the analysis for a while and went back to the whole story. I then realised that the whole and the parts are connected too, just as sometimes a single rock can reveal much about the geology of an area so a single phrase or metaphor can reveal much about a person. Narrative is one way of helping us to make connections whether it is the whole story or part of it.

Whether I was looking at the stories holistically or analysing them, different interpretations kept emerging. I was told by a colleague that when the interpretations are the same in the morning as they were in the evening then the journey is coming to an end. I wasn't entirely comfortable with that, I felt that instead of trying to preserve one meaning or interpretation, most narratives promote the evolution of many interpretations and meanings. We are constantly changing and developing and so do the interpretations.

Themes and threads

I had chosen to gather stories from outdoor educators because I was one. I thought that it would be more interesting to be connected to the stories I was listening to. I could not be a dispassionate observer; the research was part of my identity and my culture. Josselson's (1996) said: "No matter how gentle and sensitive our touch, we still entangle ourselves in others' intricately woven ... tapestries" (p. 70). Giroux (1997) noted, "...how we understand and come to know ourselves and others cannot be separated from how we are represented and imagine ourselves" (p. 14).

What we choose to represent as memory is what we now believe and this in turn has been influenced by society. The cultural format of stories can also influence identity (Gergen 1998). The stories gathered had many similar elements and a similar structure. Within the field of outdoor education did all our stories begin to sound the same? There is a danger that a story becomes "a form of social and political prioritizing, a particular way of telling stories that in its way privileges some story lines and silences others" (Goodson, 1995, p. 94). As the group culture becomes more defined fewer differences occur.

A. Personal Growth

A lot of outdoor education work has personal growth as a stated objective. All the stories I heard also had a theme of personal growth; was this because it's what I expected, which in turn framed the question I asked? ... "Can you tell me a story about an early significant experience that you had in the outdoors?". Or is it the expectation of outdoor educators that the outdoors is a place where we grow and develop?

In the past it was assumed that identity was an inherent quality now it is accepted that it is constructed by events and relationships. In most of the stories that I gathered the outdoors provided a place where the identity was strengthened and consolidated.

Every night we'd stop and put up the tent. I became dad's right hand man and would always help him with the tent. I remember when my dad said that I was in charge of putting the tent up, and he just left me. ... I was so proud to be left in charge...I don't know why he chose me I wasn't the oldest..

We went fishing every night and then I caught some silver-bellied eels and we ate those silver-bellied eels with potatoes that night. I was really proud that I'd been able to help feed the family.

Some mornings mum would say I've got to go to the sea so we'd all pile into the car and drive 200 miles to the beach play on the beach, mum just loved the sea it was very important to her she couldn't live without it. We'd all pile back into the car and drive back home again and mum would say I'm alright again for a while.

The stories were affirmations of having strong connections to the outdoors often going back generations. I had not anticipated this strong focus, as my parents were not involved in outdoor activities; in fact they discouraged my early interest. My own story was one of resistance but that didn't emerge in other stories gathered.

B. Outdoors, outside, out of doors.

What is the outdoors? As I gathered the stories I tried not to define or limit it in anyway. The term is interesting and has different meanings in different places and contexts. The outdoors is a place: a space outside the confines of walls. Most stories were not about spectacular places but about areas where the people felt comfortable. The places described included beaches, bush, mountains, rivers and oceans the outdoors, not necessarily pristine but away from urbanisation.

What is not said is also important but often harder to spot and analyse. In the stories I had gathered none linked the outdoors to farming or working on the land. The group who supplied the stories work as teachers and lecturers in outdoor education within New Zealand and so the activities were all about recreational pursuits. As part of the culture of outdoor education the group had self-defined the term. If I had been asking farmers stories about the outdoors would a different meaning of the outdoors have emerged? The culture of outdoor educators privileged certain places and had placed limits on what were acceptable outdoor environments.

C. Relationships

Nash, (1982) said that the "Wilderness is a state of mind influenced by personal and cultural values" as the stories were gathered it became evident that the outdoors was less of a pristine place but more a place where something happened a place to do something with others. It was not the place that made the story special but what happened and with whom.

The people orientation was important. I was analysing the stories and coming to terms with the stories being more about people and relationship when I serendipitously received an email on the OUTRES listserve, "The outdoors is often a term which is very people orientated rather than nature orientated (using the term nature in a simplistic way). This would seem to be different than surface level interpretation of the term outdoors when not contextualised within a conversation" (Quay, 2002).

My earliest memory of a significant outdoor experience was with my father, brother and sister, boating over to Kapiti Island.

So when I was about 15 my sister and I persuaded mum and dad to go down to the South Island on a tramping trip

We camped by a creek, and went for a swim, it was so cold...my dad was usually working so hard it was good to see him laugh.

Most of the stories were about family trips or made reference to family members. This could be significant but it could also be a consequence of asking about early experiences. The family bonds that develop when doing things together in the outdoors are important. Often it is the

concept of quality time together without the pressures of work. As a researcher taking time to listen to stories also provided quality time with colleagues and as result bonds were strengthened.

D. Journeys

The journey is as important as the destination. There were stories about recreational outdoor activities like tramping, camping, fishing, hunting, kayaking, skiing, and rock climbing but many of those stories driving was an important part of it too. The outdoors was not just seen as a destination but included the journey to and from it.

We went everywhere in the old Zephyr Zodiac station wagon with a trailer to match. Dad would drive with a couple of kids in the front seat it was a bench seat...you were allowed to ride in the front if you were car sick but we all took turns. Mum would sit in the back on the other side to dad with 3 or 4 kids...3 kids and she would be nursing a baby and the rest of the kids would be in the back.

We drove down to the South Island, crossed on the ferry, My sister and I were on the deck so we could be the first to see the South Island. I don't know why just getting to the South Island was special.

For the outdoors to exist there needs to be indoors and the transition between them is important. Architects design buildings with windows allowing the outdoors to come in and landscape gardeners design outdoor rooms. Many early explorers in New Zealanders rarely talk about going outdoors, they were already out there. This tension between the outdoors and the indoors is a construct of our society. It is important to acknowledge the transition, to focus on the journey and not just the destination.

F. Confidences

The level of engagement and responsibility placed on the researcher is very intense. Just as confidences are shared at those special moments outdoors when relationships are intensified because of the place or activity then confidences can also be shared through research. For stories to be gathered there needs to be an interest, a place and the time to listen.

He committed suicide later. I always have a sense of guilt that if we had have had more trips more outdoor camping trips it may have been different. He may have found a place for himself if we had done more and shared more camping experiences.

Dad and I never have seen eye to eye on a lot of things and have not had a close relationship which is unfortunate, however I respect his cleverness and ability in many ways – and of course love him very much.

G. Disenchantment

While the stories were generally about positive personal growth and relationships there was one area of disquiet that surfaced. They revealed nostalgia for the past, when it was perceived that there was more freedom and fewer rules.

I was given freedom back then to go and explore but parents don't do that now

My parents trusted me, it was amazing they let me go on alone, I'm sure they wouldn't now

There was a recurring theme that the world was imposing too many restrictions on the freedom of the outdoors. Many outdoor educators realise that it is because they take groups into the outdoors that many of those rules and restrictions have been developed. Much of New Zealand society at

the moment values security ahead of risk and when accidents occur there is a culture of blaming an individual without relating the problem to the much bigger problems of society.

There are many safety and ethical conventions around research which can restrict how research is conducted, some are necessary but given the number of committees that this research had to be approved by, perhaps research too is being limited.

Narrative revisited

As a researcher, listening to the stories of others, it was hard not to just hear the bits that confirmed my story. Through the processes of transcribing, reading, listening and squiggling some objectivity is assumed. No one else has read or heard the full collection of stories, so the interpretations and themes are my own. I was the instigator, the audience, the transcriber and the interpreter. The collection unedited may convey a more powerful message than this summary because then you as the audience could read what you want to believe and hear. What you have instead is my personal story of research and how you interpret this depends on who you are and the stories you have heard.

Links to practice

Having acknowledged that the interpretations are my own then the links that can be made are also my own. It must be remembered that they were made at a certain time in a certain cultural climate.

Some of the links I made to the practice of outdoor education are:

- The importance of not narrowing down the definition of outdoor education but to be more open to the places and spaces where outdoor education can occur and what it means to others.
- A greater understanding that the outdoors is a place where relationships develop. The focus of instruction could swing a little more towards relationship building and away from activity.
- That personal growth occurs through consolidation as well as challenge. To encourage more sharing of past experiences and allow time for stories to emerge which make the links between past and present and not rush from challenge to challenge
- To value the experiences which happen with families and allow more opportunities for families to participate in outdoor programmes.
- To take responsibility for the world we construct and if there is disenchantment with things like the increasing restrictions placed on the activities then it should be challenged, not necessarily in a confrontational way but through reflection, open dialogue, and working together.
- An appreciation that the outdoors does not exist without indoors and the journey is an important time of transition. As more people become removed from the outdoors then the role of the educator may be to guide others along the journey rather than focus on achieving the outcome or providing the outdoor activity.
- To listen to stories with increased awareness because they may be reflecting the present as much as describing the past.
- To appreciate the intimacy and bonds which do form in the outdoors.

Conclusion

Through sharing stories about significant early experiences in the outdoors I have strengthened the connection with colleagues and deepened my relationship with the outdoors. The reading I have done has taken me on a journey through memory, narrative, research, values and personal growth. I made some connections, ignored others and probably missed some completely.

Stories reveal bits about ourselves, others and the society with which we identify. The past and the present merge, only to re-emerge in the form of a story. Stories are important ways of sharing ideas, teaching and learning. The importance of listening carefully to those stories around the campfire and on the riverbank should not be underestimated; they are a point of connection. The stories we tell also have the power to influence society, we need to critique them carefully for the messages they transmit. As I critiqued the story of my research I realised that I had learnt more about myself than I did about the significant memories of others. It is impossible to escape the values of our own culture and research will ultimately reflect those dominant beliefs.

In reflecting on practice through research and research through practice, the door opened and allowed me indoors to take a different look at the outdoors and go outdoors to look at the indoors.

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Biography

Jo Straker currently works in New Zealand at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology as a lecturer on the Bachelor of Adventure Recreation and Outdoor Education.

For the last 30 years Jo has worked as an outdoor educator in Wales, Canada, Australia, Antarctica, and New Zealand. She has a passion for using the outdoor environment as a medium for learning. Having worked in remote areas of Antarctica for five seasons, cycled in the Australian desert and climbed in Greenland and the Himalayas, Jo knows how powerful and inspirational natural environments can be.

She has also management experience as director of the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre and as past president of the NZ Outdoor Instructors Association.

A review of different approaches to facilitation and the training and development of facilitators.

Glyn Thomas

Abstract

This paper provides an overview of the current literature on facilitation within the experiential education and organisational development fields. Specifically, a typology that describes the range of approaches to facilitation training and development is presented. The typology distinguishes between technical facilitation, intentional facilitation, person centred facilitation, and critical facilitation. Some implications for those involved in the training and development of facilitators within the field of outdoor education are also provided.

Introduction

A range of definitions and conceptualisations of facilitation processes exist within the literature often as a result of the context in which the facilitation occurs. The meaning of the word facilitator apparently comes from the Latin word *facilitas* meaning ‘easiness’ and the verb facilitate means “to make easy, promote, help forward” (Bee and Bee 1998, p.1). In this respect, facilitation is generally about “holding out a helping hand, removing obstacles and generally creating a smooth pathway for the delegates to pursue their learning journey” (Bee and Bee 1998, p.1). Bendaly (2000, p.3) defines the facilitator as “the person responsible for guiding a group through a process in order to accomplish specific task or achieve a specific goal”. Bentley describes facilitation as:

the provision of opportunities, resources, encouragement, and support for the group to succeed in achieving its objectives, and to do this through enabling the group to take control and responsibility for the way they proceed. (1994, p.12)

Schwarz (2002, p.8) distinguishes between *basic facilitation* where the “facilitator helps a group solve a substantive problem by essentially lending the group his or her process skills” and *developmental facilitation* where the facilitator “helps a group solve a substantive problem and learn to improve its process at the same time”. One of the simplest definitions is provided by Heron (1999, p.1) who defines the facilitator as “a person who has the role of empowering participants to learn in an experiential group”. For the purposes of this paper, it is not necessary to adopt any single definition and the above description seeks only to provide an overview of the way the terms *facilitation* and *facilitator* are used in the literature.

The literature described above suggests that there are some inherent assumptions in any facilitation process and in this paper it will be accepted that, ideally, the facilitator is formally appointed and voluntarily accepted by the group; participants are motivated, competent, and want to achieve the objectives of the group; and participants can and want to share responsibility for the outcomes of group sessions (Bee and Bee 1998; Heron 1999). In reality, these assumptions are rarely accurate, but they do give a picture of the ideal group context in which facilitation, as described in this paper, hopefully occurs.

Finally, whilst the literature reported here uses different terms to describe aspects of the facilitation process, in this paper the term *participant* will be used to describe group members, and the term *group* will be used to describe the collection of participants (except in quotes where the original descriptors are maintained).

Typology of Approaches to Facilitation

Despite what seems to be general agreement on the ingredients for a definition of facilitation there is less agreement on the best facilitation processes and strategies. The different approaches

described in the literature vary greatly in how they believe facilitation should occur and how novice facilitators should be trained and developed. Most of the approaches seem to fit into one of the following broad frameworks:

Technical Facilitation: a skills-based, formulaic approach to facilitation;

Intentional Facilitation: facilitation where practice is grounded in theory and justifications for particular interventions can be articulated;

Person-Centred Facilitation: emphasising the role of attitudes and personal qualities of the facilitator;

Critical Facilitation: emphasising an increased awareness of the political nature of facilitation and the effects on all participants.

A review of the facilitation approaches found in the aforementioned literature within each of these categories will now be provided.

Technical Facilitation

Approaches to facilitation that may be classified as *technical*, focus on the skills and competencies required to facilitate groups. Implicit within these approaches is the assumption that by mastering a certain set of skills, actions and responses an individual can learn to effectively facilitate a group's process.

This approach to facilitation is compatible within the Vocational Education and Training sector in Australia today. This sector, which has adopted a competency based training model, is outcomes focussed and does not critique the standards or practices of the industry or job role for which training is occurring. Training in this sector is aimed at "maintenance of the existing social worldview as it is currently envisaged and practiced" (Martin 1998, p.16).

Bendaly's (2000) contribution, "The Facilitation Skills Training Kit", is typical of facilitation approaches within this category. After a brief introduction to facilitation, Bendaly presents twenty skills focused modules that can be used to help people to develop facilitation skills. The delivery of each module is budgeted a set amount of time and the manual is deliberately prescriptive about the skills that a prospective facilitator will need to develop to be able to facilitate effectively. A similar facilitation training resource developed by Hart (1991; 1992) provides two manuals: one for the trainer and one for the trainee facilitators. Hart's approach, called the "Faultless Facilitation Method", provides an equally prescriptive training program focussing on developing particular facilitation skills. The trainer's manual provides detailed lesson plans, examples of course overviews, resources, and evaluation forms.

In an article focussing on the 'never-ers' of workshop facilitation, Sharp (1992) provides a list of twenty practical tips for potential facilitators and all but one of the suggestions relate to specific actions that should be avoided. Only one of the 'never-ers' deals with the beliefs or attitudes of the facilitator. In a management context, Parry (1995, p.14) maintains that facilitators, in addition to possessing certain attributes, need a combination of technical skills, behavioural and interpersonal skills, and consultancy skills. The primary aim of Hackett and Martin's (1993) book is to help facilitators build skills, although they do indicate the need for some thought about ideas and concepts.

Therefore the facilitation approaches within the category of *technical* facilitation focus almost exclusively on the skills that facilitators need to facilitate and/or the methods they should use. There is typically little or no discussion about the theories upon which skills or actions are based, or about the values, attitudes and beliefs that are conducive to effective facilitation.

Intentional Facilitation

Facilitation approaches within this category are *intentional* in the sense that the facilitator is attempting to be more deliberately conscious of what he/she is doing and why (Brockbank and McGill 1998, p.152). The facilitator in this case seeks to make explicit the hidden processes within the learning program and is also aware of, and able to articulate, their personal stance.

Describing facilitation in organisational setting, Robson & Beary (1995) argue that many useful theories underpin good practice but that success as a facilitator comes from trying a wide range of interventions and being able to justify a course of action and predict likely outcomes. Killion and Simmons (1992, p.2) believe that to be facilitators within the management development context people “need to go beyond the application of new skills, knowledge, and practices - they will need to adopt the belief system of facilitators”. They believe the challenge when developing a facilitator is to help people to move from the mindset of a trainer to the “Zen” of facilitation. They explain that the Zen of facilitation is not a religious practice, but rather a strong set of beliefs that drive a facilitator’s choices and actions. Their three essential beliefs for “Zen Type Facilitators” include: a trust in the group's ability to find its own direction and resolution, a belief that a sense of community creates a forum for group work, and that the facilitator has no preconceived notions.

Van Maurik (1994, p.34) developed a model that summarises the range of facilitation styles that can also be used by facilitators in a management context. The model outlines four different facilitation styles with varying degrees of knowledge input and process input. The model is similar to the Situational Leadership model (Hersey and Blanchard 1993) in that the four styles described utilise different combinations of emphasis on task behaviour and relational behaviour. Van Maurik maintains that the challenge is for facilitators to become more consciously aware and intentional about the style that they use. He explains,

the benefits of having models of facilitative behaviour to think about are that the facilitator can enact a more deliberate strategy and then look to see how effective it was (van Maurik 1994, p.34).

Bentley (1994) believes that traditional definitions of facilitation describe an activity, things that people do. However, he argues that it also includes “non-action, silence and even the facilitator’s absence” (Bentley 1994, p.10). Thus, the intentional facilitator must not only carefully consider how they act and respond but also how and when to not respond. Bentley explains that when a facilitator is functioning effectively “it puzzles people at first, to see how little the able leader actually does, and yet gets so much done” (Bentley 1994, p.10).

The *Skilled Facilitator Approach* developed by Schwarz (2002) is based on a set of core values, assumptions, and principles. His systems approach integrates theory and practice and focuses on the internal and external work of facilitation. The first foundation on which Schwarz builds his whole approach to facilitation involves making core values explicit. He explains that:

rendering them (core values) explicit enables you to understand and evaluate them directly rather than having to infer them from the techniques I describe. (Schwarz 2002, p.9)

The other foundation of Schwarz’s approach is understanding and establishing ground rules for effective groups. In this respect,

...a facilitator needs to understand the specific kinds of behaviour that improve a group's process. The Skilled Facilitator Approach describes these behaviours in a set of ground rules for effective groups. (Schwarz 2002, p.9).

Ground rules function as a diagnostic tool and a teaching tool for developing effective group norms. They also enable a group to share responsibility for improving process, as well as guiding the behaviour of the facilitator. With regard to intentionality, Schwarz explains,

you not only need a set of methods and techniques but also an understanding of how and why they work ... you see the reasoning that underlies each technique and method ... you can improvise and design new methods and techniques consistent with the core values... you can discuss your approach with clients so they can make informed choices about choosing you as a facilitator. (Schwarz 2002, p.9).

Facilitation is mentally demanding, cognitively and emotionally and our own ineffectiveness diminishes the effectiveness of the groups we serve. In a scathing analysis of technical approaches to facilitation Schwarz states it is “not simply a matter of learning new strategies, tools, or techniques. Your ineffectiveness results from the core values and assumptions you hold” (Schwarz 2002, p.66).

Through his approach, Schwarz (2002, p.12) aims to help facilitators understand “the conditions under which you act ineffectively, and understand how your own thinking leads you to act ineffectively in ways that you are normally unaware of”. He warns aspiring facilitators of borrowing methods and techniques from a variety of other approaches, because basing methods and techniques on conflicting values and principles can also lead to ineffectiveness.

Schwarz draws upon the work of Argyris and Schön (1996) to explain that we have in our heads “theories in action” which reveal to us how to act in various types of situations. He differentiates between *espoused theory* and *theory-in-use*. *Espoused theory* is “what we say we do” or how we would tell others we would act in a given situation. *Theory-in-use* is essentially what we actually do and it is very powerful because it operates quickly, effortlessly and most significantly, outside our level of awareness. When we as facilitators find ourselves in an embarrassing or psychologically threatening situation we usually activate just one *theory-in-use* to guide our behaviour and it often leads to ineffective facilitation. Unfortunately we are usually blind to the inconsistencies between our *espoused theory* and our *theory-in-use*.

Heron has published numerous books on the topic of group facilitation over the last few decades (1989; 1993) but his latest book “The Complete Facilitator” (1999) presents the culmination of his writing and thinking on the topic of facilitation over many years. He conceives of six dimensions of facilitation which include:

- (1) The *planning* dimension: the goal oriented, ends and means aspect of facilitation to do with aims and how to meet them.
- (2) The *meaning* dimension: the cognitive aspect of facilitation about helping participants to find meaning and make sense of experience.
- (3) The *confronting* dimension: the challenge aspect of facilitation effected to raise awareness of resistant and avoidance behaviour.
- (4) The *feeling* dimension: the sensitive aspect of facilitation involving the management of feeling and emotion.
- (5) The *structuring* dimension: the formal aspect of facilitation which includes methods of learning and form, shape and structure.
- (6) The *valuing* dimension: the integrity aspect of facilitation focussed on creating a supportive climate which honours and celebrates personhood.

Heron explains that there are effectively three modes of facilitation which include:

- (1) The *hierarchical* mode where the facilitator directs the learning process, uses power to lead from the front, and takes charge and full responsibility.
- (2) The *co-operative* mode where the facilitator shares the power, and is collaborative and co-operative with group as they manage the group process.
- (3) The *autonomous* mode where the facilitator respects the total autonomy of the group and works to subtly create the right conditions for the participants to exercise full determination in learning.

Heron's approach essentially revolves around the combination of these two lists to create a matrix of eighteen options for facilitation. However, Heron is not prescriptive or formulaic with these eighteen different combinations of modes and dimensions of facilitation. Rather, he suggests the matrix can be used: to make facilitators aware of the range and subtlety of options; as a self and peer assessment tool to work on strengths and weaknesses; and to devise training exercises to develop skill within particular modes and dimensions. Heron emphasises the importance of developing *facilitator style* which,

...transcends rules and principles of practice, although it takes them into account and is guided by them. There are good and bad methods of facilitating any given group, but there is no one right and proper method (Heron 1999, p.13)

Heron defines facilitator style as "the unique way that a person leads a certain group, and more generally, the distinctive way that a person leads any group" (Heron 1999, p.13). Whilst it is a function of the dimensions and modes it is also a "function of the facilitator's values and norms, psychological make up, degree of skill and development, of the objectives and composition of the group, and of a wider cultural context" (Heron 1999, p.13). Heron maintains there is a gap between any training and the "unique distinctive process of your creative and selective imagination, and of your way of being present in and to the world" (Heron 1999, p.14).

In their book focussed on reflective learning, Sugerman, Doherty, Garvey and Gass (2000) explain that to use the process of reflection effectively with groups it is important to understand the models and theories that support reflective learning. This requires a deeper understanding of how individuals process and manage intellectual information. The notion of intentionality is also not unique to facilitation and in the sphere of traditional teaching, Brookfield (1991) suggests that teachers need to develop a critical rationale which he defines as the "set of values, beliefs, and convictions about the essential forms and fundamental purposes of teaching" (Smyth 1987, cited in Brookfield 1991, p15). Brookfield provides a strong rationale for carefully thinking through a personal rationale to guide our practice when he explains,

it is not enough to accept whichever rationale your employers espouse at a particular time or to follow the pedagogic fashions of the moment. It might work for a while and you may even convince yourself, as well as your students and colleagues, that your practice is grounded in strongly felt and carefully conceived convictions. But sooner or later your employers will change and pedagogic fashions will alter. Then you'll realise that the convictions you thought were solid are, in reality, opaque and insubstantial (Brookfield 1991, p.27-28)

The differences between intentional facilitation and technical facilitation are therefore quite profound even though to an observer their actions may seem similar. The intentional facilitator does not use skills and techniques in a formulaic manner devoid of any real understanding why they work. Rather, they seek to carefully, deliberately and thoughtfully facilitate using skills, techniques, and methods that are aligned with explicit theories, values, and beliefs.

Person Centred Intentional Facilitation

The person centred approach is also intentional in nature but is sufficiently different to warrant separate discussion. Instead of focussing on skills, techniques or methods that a facilitator may use, or the theories that underpin those methods, the person centred facilitation focuses on the attitudinal quality of the interpersonal relationship between the facilitator and group. Egan (2002) addressed the role of the *relationship* between the helper and the client in a counselling context but his ideas are relevant to this paper. He identified that some counselling approaches see the relationship as being central to the helping role; other approaches focus on the work done through the relationship, still others focus on the outcomes to be achieved through the relationship.

The person centred approach is founded on the work of Carl Rogers who wrote extensively on the importance of the relationships involved in teaching or counselling. He believed that the personal qualities and attitudes of the facilitator are more important than any methods they employ. The attitude of the facilitator has almost entirely to do with climate and “none of the methods mentioned ... will be effective unless the teacher’s genuine desire is to create a climate in which there is freedom to learn” (Rogers 1983, p.157).

Rogers (1983; 1989) described the essential personal qualities of a facilitator as:

- *Being Real*. Facilitation is not about playing a role and good facilitators don't fit little educational formulas.
- *Prizing, acceptance, trust*. Facilitators maintain a belief that the participant is fundamentally trustworthy.
- *Empathic understanding*. Facilitators help establish a climate for self- initiated, experiential learning.

Ringer (2002) presents a slightly different perspective of facilitation but it sits most comfortably within this category. He advocates a ‘subjectivist’ view of group leadership and facilitation that frees the facilitator from “the illusion that leaders are in control of the group. We can see our interactions with the group in a new light: as influence rather than control” (p.62). In this respect, the facilitator is still intentional in their approach to facilitation but that their role in a group is aided less by technique and more through a ‘presence’ which is developed by enhancing a conscious awareness of their own subjectivity. Thus, it is the facilitator’s presence that becomes the focus of their intentionality not their actions or responses to the group. This perspective, based in psychodynamics, takes the emphasis off facilitators learning skills and methods, by explaining that effective group leadership is

not about control of the group or dazzling with knowledge or skill, but simply maintaining your self fully present with the group and providing appropriate support for the group to achieve its goal. (Ringer 2002, p.18)

Although the prospect of an approach that seeks to “do less” may sound attractive to the novice the emphasis on maintaining a dynamic presence is potentially more demanding on the facilitator than other models of group leadership that emphasise techniques and methods. Ringer deliberately avoids providing “algorithmic step-by-step recipes that are intended to substitute for the judgment and experience of the group leader” (Ringer 2002, p.38).

Critical Facilitation

An increasing number of writers have begun to question the reality of neutral facilitation. Kirk and Broussine (2000) refute the notion of facilitation as a set of skills and processes which are value free, objective and neutral. Rather, they provide a framework for developing political

awareness in facilitation and they suggest that facilitators in a management context need to be clear about roles they hold in the client-consultant relationship.

In the sphere of adult learning (Drennon and Cervero 2002, p.195) maintain that teachers “need to take a critically reflective stance towards their practice, recognising and working to overcome its inherent oppressive dimensions”. Although facilitators are often conceived as people apart, distanced from an organisation’s political networks, able to comment and intervene independently and neutrally, Kirk and Broussine (2000) do not share that view. They contend that facilitators must recognise the political and emotional impact an organisation has on them, and that political awareness is necessary for effective facilitation. Other authors (Broussine, Gray et al. 1998) have also identified the difficulty for facilitators in organizations to admit to the emotional and political aspects of their roles.

Within this critical facilitation approach others espouse the need for a socially critical approach to facilitation because whilst most facilitation would aim to be emancipatory

...facilitation can become part of a system of oppression and perpetuation of dependant relations, with facilitators becoming unwitting agents of manipulation and managerialism (Kirk and Broussine 2000, p.14)

Warren (1998, p.21) suggests that socially critical facilitation requires us to “become more conscious of how methods can advance or impede social justice”. She is also critical of facilitation lacking in theoretical validation and describes it as “empty attempts to practice without a sound grounding” and that it is particularly irresponsible if facilitators “attempt to ‘do the right thing’ without an understanding of their own biases or the current anti-bias work theory” (Warren 1998, p.23).

White (1999, p.9) adopts a socially critical perspective by suggesting that “good facilitators are ... committed to empowering those who are weaker, more vulnerable, marginalised, oppressed or otherwise disadvantaged”. White explains that socially critical facilitation entails unlearning which starts with “recognising and countering disabilities of orientation” which are often imprinted or inflicted on facilitators in the name of education and training (1999, p.9). Similarly, Warren (1998, p.23) is critical of facilitation training that focuses only on techniques and she suggests that developing facilitators must also focus on the “social and cultural backgrounds of their participants and the way their locations in privilege or marginality affect how they teach and facilitate”.

Kirk and Broussine (2000) maintain that protestations of neutrality show either naiveté or cleverness and that there will always be tensions between those who wish to preserve the system and those who wish to change it. The exercise of power is part of the system dynamic and the authoritative facilitator will be aware of how she or he is positioned in the dynamic. Drennon and Cervero suggest that facilitators “develop their own healthy scepticism towards the aims they seek to achieve and interrogate all practices for their effect on individuals and groups” (2002, p.207). Kirk and Broussine (2000) identify four positions of facilitator awareness: *partial awareness – closed, immobilised awareness, manipulative awareness, partial awareness – open*.

Within the *partial awareness – closed* position, awareness is only partial and there is no omnipotence enabling them to see all there is to be seen, no consideration to their own partiality. The facilitator is unaware of interpretative lenses, denies the potential abuse of power, is unaware of group pressures on them as the facilitator, and is unaware of influence of the client (the person paying the service!). In a acerbic critique, Kirk and Broussine (2000, p.18) claim the “naiveté of such a position does not excuse its incompetence”.

In the second position of *immobilised awareness*, the facilitator is immobilised by fear. This includes: fear of getting it wrong, fear of making the difficult intervention, fear of breaking past

patterns in co-facilitation, and the fear of disagreeing with a co-facilitator. To be effective, facilitators ought to be able to model mistake-making and imperfection to avoid nurturing blame cultures which are averse to risk taking and consequently learning.

In the third position of *manipulative awareness* “the cause of learning may be sacrificed on the altar of the facilitator’s own political agendas” (Kirk and Broussine 2000, p.19). Three types of manipulative awareness exist: manipulating alliances, secret agendas, and personal image manipulation. In the fourth and final position, *partial awareness – open*, the facilitator is:

...aware of his or her own limited awareness, actively and openly works with what they think is going on in themselves, in the group and wider system. They will do this vigorously, but cautiously, realising their own partiality. (Kirk and Broussine 2000, p.20)

Conclusion and Implications for Practice

The literature reviewed in this paper has relevance to the way the outdoor education profession approaches the task of facilitating groups. Those who seek to develop the facilitation skills of outdoor leaders using a technical facilitation approach should heed the warnings offered by the advocates of intentional and critical facilitation. That the Vocational Education and Training sector in Australia currently seeks to develop outdoor leaders through the exclusive use of a competency based training approach is problematic. It would be prudent for the outdoor education profession be cognisant of the limitations of such an approach in the development of facilitators. At best, technical facilitation offers outdoor leaders a limited ability to deal with basic group processes. At worst, it equips outdoor leaders with a mishmash of facilitation skills and methods without providing any knowledge, understanding, and values to guide and underpin their practice. In an outdoor recreational setting, where the program goals focus primarily on providing enjoyment (Ringer and Gillis 1995), these shortcomings are less consequential. In outdoor programs with educational, developmental, and/or therapeutic goals the problem is more significant. The focus of such programs ranges from personal and group development to addressing dysfunctional behaviour patterns (Priest and Gass 1997). The outdoor education profession needs to recognise that it is unwise to rely on technical facilitation approaches to prepare outdoor leaders to work in programs with an educational, developmental or therapeutic focus.

Outdoor education practitioners may would do well to heed the five suggestions provided by Kirk and Broussine (2000) which seek to help facilitators to practice with authority and confidence. First, facilitators should acknowledge their partial awareness and recognise that they are not fully aware. Secondly, they ought to engage in reflective practice and give attention to their own development. Thirdly, facilitators should practice *reflexivity* which means “actively noticing in the moment, during the facilitation, what seems to be going on in themselves and in the group, and intervening or not as a consequence” (Kirk and Broussine 2000, p.20). Fourthly, acknowledge the complex, unpredictable, surprising nature of the role. Leave open spaces and don’t use excessive structure to create more certainty and control. Finally, exercise care about the process and for the people in the process. A facilitator who does not care in this way will not “be able, however technically competent, to facilitate the learning of individuals and groups effectively and ethically” (Kirk and Broussine 2000, p.21).

If outdoor leaders in the future hope to receive greater recognition and respect as responsible and professional practitioners we should rise to the challenge of adopting intentional or critical approaches to facilitation. If, as a profession, we can develop a greater awareness of the theory and practice of facilitation and become more reflective practitioners it will help us to facilitate with greater confidence and authority.

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Biography

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Many Voices Speak the Country: An ecological listening to experience in outdoor education

Brian Wattchow

Abstract

This paper is presented with an accompanying ‘poetic’ text, *Many Voices Speak The Country*. Together they represent a novel approach to inquiry into the complex and ambiguous ways that we make meaning and knowledge in the outdoors. The research is presented with a committed interest to the pedagogical issues that surface in an ecological ‘listening’ to experience. To do this the poetic text calls upon biographical, ancestral, historical and anecdotal textual fragments to construct a fuller text that contains less forgotten and silenced voices. There is some ‘breaking away’ from the European traditions of philosophy towards a style that is more responsive to Australian ‘country’. This paper intentionally embraces ambiguous, earthen interpretations and representations of experience as the basis for meaning making and knowing in outdoor education. Two ecological alternatives, ‘empathetic insidedness’ (Relph, 1976) and ‘embodied implacement’ (Casey, 1993), are presented as the necessary philosophical and pedagogical boundaries of any educational practice that claims that its teachers and learners will know their ‘country’.

Forgetting Outdoor Education

Forgetting outdoor education is both a statement of my intended starting point for this essay, and a request for the reader to not consider what is presented only in terms of outdoor education theory, values or practices. This seems perverse given that the theme of the 14th National Outdoor Education Conference is *Relevance: Making it Happen*. But, forgetting our reasons for being at the conference, or reading these conference proceedings, is an important first step for this paper. The journey towards professionalism is too often an inward looking disciplining of practice, which has many advocates. At times, in certain professional capacities, I feel compelled to be one of them. Collectively, we make a lot of *noise*.

Canadian teacher educator David Jardine has called the never ending research and discussion of every facet of the curriculum, the schooling of the child and of teaching practice, an ‘exhausting racket’, beyond which ‘there is no silence, no pause, no unprepared space in which something other than our own voices can be heard’ (Jardine, 1998, p. 30). He is a strident critic of the ways in which Descartes’ legacy (of a mind-body dualism) has served as an extreme extension of rationality which have resulted in an alienation of knowledge systems from everyday life. I take a lead from Jardine in this paper, in seeking an ecological alternative which calls us to ‘to admit that the continued existence of our lives and the lives of our children contain an Earthen darkness and difficulty – an Earthen life – that we have heretofore fantasized out of curricular existence’ (Jardine, 1998, p. 76).

My intent from the outset is to consider the ecological web of relations that brings together people and places, country and identity, teacher and learner – in the outdoors - in the act of education, a *bringing forth* of meaning and knowing. To do this it is necessary to first embrace the ‘deep ambiguities of life as it is actually lived’ (Jardine, 1998, p. 11). Paul Sinclair, environmental historian of the Murray River and its people, suggests that we ‘need to be alert for openings, for moments when truth reveals itself within the mundane’ (Sinclair, 2001, p. 11). There are issues here of attentiveness and listening, of finding ways to explore and articulate meaning making, and of cultural imperatives relating to selective forgetting and remembering. By ‘restoring life to its original difficulty’ (Jardine, 1998, p. 11). I hope to show that educating in

the outdoors has the potential to make a significant contribution as a more ecologically inspired, way of knowing and making meaning.

My approach in this paper is to enter this 'earthen difficulty and darkness' by re-entering imaginatively two places on the Murray River. The first is a stretch of the river from Morgan to Renmark (appropriately so for the South Australian location of this conference); the second a stretch of river from Morgan's Beach to the township of Barmah in Victoria. The first of these sections of the river yields stories of the impact and experience of settler history through a lens of family history. The second is a place visited by students and myself on canoe trips over a span of eight years during my tenure in the Department of Outdoor Education and Nature Tourism at La Trobe University, Bendigo. This second set of stories may appear more immediate and relevant to the outdoor educator, but taken together, they combine to capture a fuller sense of the river and its stories, as the personal and the professional overlap.

These places have iconic, biographical, ancestral and educative presences in an web of many stories, and are recorded in the accompanying poetic text *Many Voices Speak the Country*. This text brings together many textual fragments from wide ranging sources that challenges the often oversimplified story of Australian places we are tempted to present in outdoor education. It serves as a personal, cultural and experiential reference point for reflecting upon the *bringing forth* of knowing and meaning in the act of educating in outdoor places. However, it is important to first to turn over some ground together – to place the text within its context of traditions and intentions.

I Listen

The American writer Barry Lopez, in his influential book *Arctic Dreams: Imagination and desire in a Northern Landscape* tells a wonderful story of an Inuit man's response to encountering a place for the first time.

'I listen'. That's all. I listen he meant, to what the land was saying. 'I walk around it and strain my senses in appreciation of it for a long time before I, myself, ever speak a word. (Lopez, 1986, p. 257)

Phenomenologically speaking, the Inuit man's first response is zen like in character. He sets aside any preconceptions, theory, and expectations about the encounter as he *listens* to the land. His first act is to be obedient to the land prior to any social constructions of that place. Max van Manen describes this approach in terms of phenomenological inquiry:

Phenomenological human science is the study of lived or existential meanings; it attempts to describe and interpret these meanings to a certain degree of depth and richness. In this focus upon meaning, phenomenology differs from some other social or human sciences which may focus not on meanings but on statistical relationships among variables, on the predominance of social opinions, or on the occurrence of frequency of certain behaviours etc. And phenomenology differs from other disciplines in that it does not aim to explicate meanings specific to particular cultures (ethnography), to certain social groups (sociology), to historical periods (history), to mental types (psychology), or to an individual's personal life history (biography). Rather, phenomenology attempts to explicate the meanings as we live them in our everyday existence, our lifeworld (van Manen, 2001, edition, p. 11).

Phenomenology emerged as a radical way of practicing philosophy that has gained favour (and criticism) in 20th century Europe (Moran, 2000). I do not intend to trace the rise of phenomenology, or discuss its influential figures in this paper. It is enough to mention here that the influence of the phenomenologies of Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty have

provided important inspiration for the approach adopted in this paper, particularly how they have been interpreted and applied in the educational inquiries of Canadians Max van Manen (2001) and David Jardine (1988). In phenomenology the emphasis is on the phenomena itself and how it reveals itself to us through direct experience, and it constitutes a traumatic break from Cartesian rationality. In particular, the poetic, interpretive and ecological style of Heidegger is drawn upon. So too is Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception and the pre-reflective role of the sensing body. It is precisely the combination of these two ways of making meaning and knowing – the interpretive and embodied – that I propose provides a way forward for an ecologically inspired education outdoors. This deep subjectivity, and 'peculiar tolerance for ambiguity' (Jardine, 1998, p. 11) re-invites us into the difficulty of the earthen experience – the point of which is to connect, not sever, us from the country which supports us and of which we are a part.

It has been suggested that 'phenomenology begins in silence' (Seamon, 1979, p.20). That is to say, that true listening also begins in this silence. This listening is 'not trivially but deeply subversive', and constantly must strive 'to give a voice to the living text and texture of human life that underlies our idealisms, our objectification, and our plentiful fantasies ... Its desire is not to render our experience of the world, but to give a voice to it just as it is' (Jardine, 1998, p. 19). It is crucial to note here that this shift in purpose and attention has no desire to dismiss or discredit other pedagogical approaches to cognitive and sociocultural constructions of meaning and knowing (so called constructivist theories of knowledge making). However, the shift in purpose here is to subvert the dominance of these theories and to stand with them as significant equal as an alternative approach to interpreting the lived-experience of knowing and meaning making. There is also a need to acknowledge, and leave space for, silences that cannot be rationally articulated, yet continue to influence our teaching and learning.

I Write

How does the phenomenological attitude to lived-experience give a voice to the living text and texture of human life? Hermeneutic phenomenology involves the writing of careful interpretive texts that allow the researcher / writer and the reader to mutually interact with the essence of the phenomena being studied. For van Manen (2001, p. 129), 'the aim of phenomenology is to transform experience into a textual expression of its essence – in such a way that the effect of the text is a reflexive re-living and reflective appropriation of something meaningful: a notion by which a reader is powerfully animated in his or her own lived experience' (van Manen, 2001, p. 36). Ultimately, the text in all of its forms intentionally aims to serve better educational practice, and thinking about educational practice. This work of the text occurs as it is listened to, written, read, and as it shifts the empathetic reader *inside* the territory of his or her own lived experience. It calls upon 'subtle undertones of language, to the way language speaks when it allows the things themselves to speak' (van Manen, 2001, p. 111).

Let me give you an example. Think for a moment of the use of the word 'country' in the title of this paper. It is a crucial 'choice'. What possible alternatives exist? Environment, location, land, landscape, place – these are just the beginning of a potentially long list. Yet, think of how the word 'country' *speaks* in Australian language. It has nationalistic overtones (still called upon regularly) such as in Dorothea Mackellar's 'I love a sunburnt country' (from her poem, *My Country*, 1908). Judith Wright sought to internalise an indigenous knowledge in a 'country that built my heart' (from her poem *Train Journey*, Wright, 1971, p. 77). Les Murray, in writing, 'this country is my mind' (from his poem *Evening Alone at Bunyah*, Murray, 2002, p. 15) surrenders his rational viewpoint to a more reciprocal relationship with his ancestors and their collective stories of their farmland home. Finally, Aboriginal use of the word 'country' has shifted our meaning. It is one of the few English language words that perhaps now have more potency in indigenous use of English language than that in does in settler Australian usage. In *Words for*

Country: Landscape and language in Australia (2002), Tim Bonyhardy and Tom Griffith's explore 'both the environmental and the cultural, the geographical and linguistic, the official and the vernacular – and [try] to discover how stories grow out of, or take root in a particular place and may then in turn transform them' (Bonyhardy and Griffiths, 2002, p. 1). Words, language and voice is never stable or static – it is ever changing, influencing and being influenced by local conditions.

Did I choose the word 'country' for the title or am I a victim of culture acting out a choice already made for me? Did the word's changing 'power' choose itself? And, how were you affected in that fleeting moment of reading the paper's title? These questions point to the complexity, and possible reciprocity of the ground we enter as educators trying to find voice for the experiences we have that compel us to tell their stories.

No standardised methodological structure is available to support the phenomenological researcher. Rather, the researcher must enter a community striving for meaningful insights into the essential nature of human experiences. Exemplary hermeneutic texts serve as role models, yet each new text must find a way into and through the labyrinth of many meanings that spring from each experience. Phenomenology does not offer a theory, technique or a mechanism for the control or measure of experience. Yet it does offer us a way *inside* the apparent mystery of human experience and can deliver us to a "critical pedagogical competence...[a] knowing how to act tactfully in pedagogical situations on the basis of carefully edified thoughtfulness" (van Manen, 2001, p. 8).

There are many potential problems associated with a hermeneutic project. Descriptions may fail to aim at lived experience or fail to elucidate the lived meaning of that experience (van Manen, 2000). In addition, there is the persistent problem that the hermeneutic project remains 'a matter of Euro centric enculturation' (Jardine, 1998, p. 87). An Australian phenomenology of 'country' must differ. Of course all places differ, but Australian places differ profoundly in my view, and this difference must be allowed to influence the text (in much the same way as each author, and each reader, was and is influenced by the word 'country' in the above examples). For a text to be carefully crafted and engaged with in Australian places, for pedagogical intent, the hermeneutic interpretation that guides the text must surface locally. It must locate a style that both embodies and interprets the difference of Australian places and offer us a way inside this apparent mystery.

It is no coincidence that the origins of hermeneutics lay in the interpretive study of sacred texts, and much has been written of the collective inability of settler Australians to engage with the sacredness and mystery of this country (see David Tacey's work for a good overview; 1995, 2000). We do have our sacred texts in Australia, but more often than not, the sacred and the mysteriousness of our experience is earthen. It surfaces in the country itself. The complexity and ambiguity here is daunting. For we are not dealing with single, isolated words, but whole interwoven nets of storylines.

Words, Voices and Silence: being caught in the net of storylines

Let us begin to explore the terrain of this difficult concept, of being caught in a net of storylines, with two brief stories and one analogy. In the first story I refer to how the Aboriginal peoples of the Murray River used local materials in many ways. One of these involved the sedge grasses growing along the rivers banks and backwaters, which were widely used for weaving and making a range of useful objects. Weaving was, and remains, an important communal activity amongst aboriginal women near the Murray River mouth – where the river enters the Southern Ocean. Paul Sinclair recorded the words of Daisy Rankin: 'weave with the rushes, the memories of our loved ones are there, moulded into each stitch. And when we're weaving, we tell stories. It's not

just weaving, but the stories we tell when we're doing it' (Sinclair, 2001, p. 18). Physicality, materiality and memory story telling combine, each mutually dependant upon the other.

In the second story I call upon my memories of several canoe journeys along the Barmah Forest section of the river with students when we were in the company of Wayne Atkinson, a Yorta Yorta man. Wayne would guide us to places of ancestral significance in the forest – canoe scar trees or earthen mounds built up over thousands of years of people living in that country. At other times Wayne would often motor ahead of the canoe group in his small aluminium tinnie, with its 8-horse power motor, to find a lunch or camp spot, and would have a fire going, with the billy boiling, and some cumbungi shoots steaming in the coals before we arrived. He would often speak to us of 'the mat' – a Yorta Yorta concept of at-homeness. 'The Mat' – a home place of woven meanings and knowing (and I hope I have done this some justice with these clumsy words).

Nonie Sharp, who has been associated with the indigenous coastal people of northern Australia for more than 25 years, introduces the analogy to which I refer. Her recent book, *Saltwater People: The Waves of Memory* (2002) explores the complexity of differences and similarities between Western and indigenous land and sea tenure systems. She presents an instructive analogy of the nature of the ancestral pathways for Aboriginal peoples. I am sure that it is no coincidence that the materiality of the saltwater people's fishing culture – ropes, twine, nets and fishing lines is called upon to represent a system of knowing that is simultaneously abstract and physical.

If you throw a length of rope it will coil into various shapes. The travels of ancestral figures along 'Dreaming tracks' are rather like this. But the traveller's path is studded with dots; these are the stopping places along the way. Now imagine tying several of these ropes together. Their knotting points, as I shall call them – places where different tracks converge – may become sites of joint responsibility. (Sharp, 2002, p. 137)

What I am struck by here is the consistent imagery of weaving, knotting, stitching, inter-twining and how this is so often both of material significance, whilst being simultaneously embedded with personal experience and culturally significant story telling. We are immersed in the act of the stories as they are happening to us, and as we bring a voice to them. Cultural theorists would caution here against the apparent appropriation of indigenous knowledge systems that I may seem to be endorsing. Settler Australians cannot gain from either attempting to steal or copy indigenous meaning and knowing, but can draw upon their patterns and styles for inspiration, and need to become reconciled to the reality that every inch of this country was once, and remains still, a storied place. Now, successive waves of invasion and immigration bring further storylines to that same country. Yet there is a way that indigenous and settler Australians may stand together on common ground.

We experience and dwell in a place largely due to our pre-reflective sense and perception of the world. The French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who centred his phenomenological inquiry in the relation of perception and being, believed that, 'we never cease living in the world of perception' (cited in Moran, 2000, p. 418). The co-dependency of each is critical. For Merleau-Ponty:

It is not a question of reducing human knowledge to sensation, but of assisting at the birth of this knowledge, to make it as sensible as the sensible, to recover the consciousness of rationality. This experience of rationality is lost when we take it for granted as self-evident, but is, on the contrary rediscovered when it is made to appear against the background of non-human nature (cited in Moran, 2000, p. 418).



The story and the body come together at an experiential level, in ways that we can and cannot name or voice. Paul Sinclair, suggests that we should offer ‘future travellers the imaginative space to think about *and experience* [italics are my addition] land and water in new ways’ (2001, p. 15). He believes that settler Australians in the Murray River region have employed a ‘practical forgetfulness’ (2001, p. 57), silencing many of the narratives of knowing the river. He argues that both Aboriginal and early settler stories have been quietened and forgotten to create a space which has been filled with the dominant progressive and management stories of the river.

It is this image of a multi-dimensional inter-twining of storylines and silences, of a simultaneously abstracted and embodied knowing, that I’d like you to take with you as you read *Many Voices Speak the Country*.

Many Voices Speak the Country is not presented in the manner of a ‘normal’ hermeneutic text - as a long section of reflective and interpretive prose. It alters because I perceive we need new ways of inquiring philosophically into the nature of lived-experience, both in Australia and in the pedagogy of outdoor education in Australia. The textual fragments are sourced from many places and take many forms. The fragments constitute research data in this form of inquiry and they act with and against each other.

(Note that in some places I am referred to as ‘Ponch’ in a number of the textual fragments. Many friends, family and students have called me Ponch since my undergraduate university years. A series of endnotes are provided for the textual fragments that offer additional background and source details for the entries).



Many Voices Speak the Country – Part I:

Wattchow's Landing on the Murray River

...a Yellow Spoonbill flies overhead. It glides on motionless wings curved against a great weight of air, that I cannot feel. Mid flight it cocks a leg and scratches behind its head with its black webbed foot and then prepares to beat its wings to fly out of sight above the Redgums. It seeks another river bend this morning perhaps. It takes the incredible for granted. Just now I feel like that - relaxed, at ease - happy for a moment to let my thoughts drift on hidden currents that I cannot fully understand. The river has slowed me to its pace and my thoughts begin to drift and eddy.²

*The Wattchow River Storyline*³

'I brought the waters and made the desert bloom' Hammurabi, King of Babylon (about 4000 years ago)⁴

great
grandparent
country

Herman Wattchow, my great grandfather, stepped ashore from the iron barque the 'River Ganges', in 1870, in Port Adelaide, South Australia

Renmark
Australia's first
Irrigation Settlement, 1887

itinerant farm worker around Hahndorf handed an axe, clearing the land, for some years until he and my great grandmother, Emma, settled, cleared then farmed salt-bush country near Morgan – an important river trade port on the Murray

William Chaffey
entrepreneur business man and publicist
George Chaffey
engineer
... laying out channels
arranging for the pumps that would lift
that water
... put that water to work

By Federation Herman had worked the riverboats, dug irrigation ditches, shifted farms.

In 1902 leased 1443 acres in the hundred of Cadell halfway between Morgan and Waikerie

part lignum covered river flats
part hungry mallee scrub
the river - its treacherous sandbars

Maps of European expansion into the landscape displayed in borough offices 'so residents could see the results of their labours in the wilderness' (Sinclair, 2001, p. 43).⁵

The Wattchow family lived in an enlarged, roofed dugout in the side of the cliffs on the edge of the floodplain
The land was cleared
the cut mallee stacked for the wood burning paddle steamers, the riverboatmen collecting it from

Wattchow's Landing

² This quotation is drawn from a paper I wrote in 1998 titled 'River ... I Follow River' The title is itself quoted from Bill Neidjie's book *Story About Feeling*.

³ The Wattchow river storyline is constructed largely on the unpublished memoirs of my father, Colin Wattchow, who grew up on the banks of the Murray River on the family farm at Wattchow's Landing. The family no longer owns the farm – but Wattchow's Landing can still be seen marked on the old paddle steamer charts of the river in South Australia. Once, 'Wattchow's Landing' would have been a daily part of the vernacular of the riverboatmen.

⁴ Cited from Peter Davis' book *Man and the Murray*.

⁵ Paul Sinclair's book, *The Murray: A River and its People* explores the mutuality of environmental and cultural degradation of the river – and the magnitude of what we still stand to lose unless we can find a way to arrest the damage. 'Without an understanding of what the river has been and what it has meant to people there is little hope of recognising and articulating what has been lost, or imagining a future other than the river's present dismal condition ... Some

“There really was a joy in his rhythmic swinging of the axe”

“My last vivid recollection of Grandpa Wattachow is when, as a small child I rode on a horse-drawn buggy between my father and grand-father through a field of waist high, green wheat. Perhaps it was his last view of the mallee he had carved out early in the century.”

My Father, Colin

grand parent country	1918 the land transferred to grandfather, Gustav brought his 24 year old wife, Alma’ to a farm house by the river the dugout now a cellar a windmill by the river pumping water to a galvanised tank on the roof, water piped into the house.
TIME personal ancestral evolutional geologic	400 acres of marginal wheat turn over the land, turn over seed and fertilise with liberal super-phosphate look to the sky for rain fear the wind loose soil blowing about
<i>my evening fire builds a ceiling of blue smoke above the river billy water bubbles above a bed of hot coals I throw in a handful of dark leaves stir it all with a redgum twig the water stains to tannin; circles, eddies and my thoughts are drawn down into its vortex a fern frond unwinds before me springs into an acceptance of future rain a rough edged boulder is worn round tumbled, chipped and polished by the river – right before my eyes a whole mountainside collapses slides into the water messmate gums, stringybarks and all and the lots is drawn away by the current I stare open mouthed and mute I stand and stretch on my rocky ledge I see the river I extend and plunge into the swirling current bone cold I head back to the surface my clothes dissolve and are carried off naked I float carried away downriver two kookaburras are laughing from their tree as I am swept past, a wombat tunnels beneath a tall eucalypt, hits a tree root, gives it away, trundles off, placing back foot on the print of front foot, he leaves the tracks of a little man⁶</i>	“Wheat growing was always a gamble” The Wattachow’s blocked off anabranch of the river – as a flooded lucerne paddock it helps ride out the worst droughts Father country. (from his written memoirs – as a boy) Floods were infrequent but awesome, and began as quietly as if nothing was happening. First the river swelled from bank to bank and it seemed to grow more sullen and quicken as the swirling current carried vegetation it had pulled away. Then one morning you would be surprised to see a tongue of water licking out onto the flat. In no time it would have covered all but local rises in the flood plain and stretch, it would seem, for miles. Slowly it would inch up and up until even the house was in danger. I can dimly remember my father in our rather cumbersome rowboat picking oranges close to the house. Eventually the water would recede, the trunks of the gums would again be wholly visible, posts would seem to climb out of the water and mud would dry out. As a child the Murray was always with me. When I went away to boarding school in 1941, it was the physical feature I missed most ...Down stream you could see the almost vertical fossiliferous cliffs on the left and a gum tree covered low flat beyond the opposite bank. While our home overlooked a wide expanse of red gum, box and scarcely penetrable lignum covered flat, the cliffs re-appeared across the river around the next bend upstream. The river swept in a giant meander with the sandbars on the inner side of the curve.

Part of the contents pages of two books

scholars have argued that landscapes that fail to ‘speak’ to people are more likely to be destroyed by them’ (Sinclair, 2001, p. 11).

⁶ This poem is part of an unpublished poem titled ‘The River Dreams’ which I wrote over several years during the canoe trips with Bendigo outdoor education students, to the Barmah on the Murray River, and to other rivers in Victoria. Over these years the poem both helped me begin to understand my own connections with the river, and guided my work with the students.

Where the creeks run dry or ten foot high
 In the Beginning
 The first Migrants
 Mungo
 The Explorers
 The River as Highway
 Irrigation
 The thirsty Cities
 The River Today ...
 Management
 Choices for the River
 (*Man and the Murray*, 1978)⁷

on the Murray River
 Part I Understanding river systems
 1.1 The rivers of the basin and how they work
 1.2 Cause and effect in large rivers
 1.3 A model of river function
 Part II In More Depth – the Physical Environment, Plants and Animals
 4.1 Landscapes past and present
 4.2 Climates past and present
 4.3 River flow regimes
 4.4 River flows and channel form

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 (*Rivers as Ecological Systems: The Murray-Darling Basin*, 2001)⁸

‘A healthy river requires maintenance of:

- the natural physical and biological processes
- the natural linkages – downstream, river-floodplain, and river ground-water
- the natural diversity of habitats and plants and animals

(*Rivers as Ecological Systems: The Murray-Darling Basin*, 2001)⁹

‘The stories that river communities tell about their history continue to celebrate the unfolding vision of an empty land made purposeful by the life-giving powers of the Murray. These triumphant narratives are increasingly difficult to maintain as the ecology of the regions responds to the cumulative impact of agricultural, industrial and urban development of the last eighty years’ (Sinclair, 2001, p. 44).

Many Voices Speak the Country – Part II: Canoe Trips Through the Barmah

Classic definitions – Ford etc.

3 broad categories

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>1. Outdoor education as outdoor teaching and learning (traditional subjects taken outdoors)</p> | <p>1999 collaborative project between the Victorian Outdoor Education Association (VOEA) and the Department of Outdoor Education and Nature Tourism at La Trobe University, Bendigo</p> | <p>What outcomes to students achieve through outdoor education programs?</p> |
| <p>2. Outdoor education as outdoor environmental education ‘... involves teaching and learning about natural environments and the need to protect them and about constructed environments and the need to improve them’ (McRae, 1990, p.7).</p> | <p>461 mailed out
 143 response rate (31%)</p> | <p>Do the outcomes justify the program costs?

 What are the critical factors which determine outcomes for individual students?</p> |
| <p>3. Outdoor education as outdoor leisure education.¹⁰</p> | <p>‘Results indicate that group cooperation, improved self esteem and increased responsibility were considered the most important outcomes of Outdoor Education ... This finding comes as a disappointment to some who have argued for Outdoor</p> | <p>‘Unfortunately, there is a surprising paucity in the quality and variety of research and evaluation studies in this field. There are some notable exceptions, however these studies do not constitute a sufficient body of knowledge from which to answer the questions posed’ (Neill, 1997, p. 193).¹²</p> |

⁷ Davis’ book largely represents the dominant settler Australian stories of the river – its taming through irrigation, and the challenges facing its management.

⁸ Like Davis’ book, this recent publication by the Murray Darling Basin Commission is indicative of the lengths that scientific understanding of ecological systems is capable of. But can monumental places in Australia ever be ‘managed’ when we act only upon the singular, deafening voice of scientific reason. There seems to be no voice here for the silenced indigenous people’s who lived along the river for more than 15,000 years.

⁹ As for endpoint 7.

Education to develop a more distinctive role in education' (Lugg & Martin, 2001, p. 44).¹¹

Nine years of university outdoor education canoe trips on The River, three to four trips a year, through the Barmah (the last major stand of flooded redgum plain), drifting, paddling, solo, partnered. Canoes lashed together build a floating community, circling in the long slow eddies midstream; a spotter scans the surface for snags. Living on the river edge - no tents, not stoves, no watches – a fleeting river canoe community of shared food, shelter, travel, thought, laughter, conflict.

... Dear Ponch letters from students of the river trips ... down the years ...¹³

Dear Ponch ...
I think of and feel
Gravity, Slope, Time and Energy,
Life around.

Moon shadow
moon reflection,
On the boat,
On the water,
On the forest,
On the bow wave.

Stars pass behind treetops

White Ibis *Threskiornis molucca*
GENERAL: Very large white bird with black head ...
VOICE: Hoarse, croaking call.
FLIGHT: Fast, straight. Makes good use of upper currents.
FOOD: aquatic and terrestrial animals (not many invertebrates)
NEST: Nests in colonies, usually ...
BEHAVIOUR: Usually in flocks ... Often seen feeding along mud flats, tidal flats, estuaries and creeks.
DISTRIBUTION: Common, in swampy localities, irrigation and cultivated areas ...

(Birds of Victoria Inland Waters, Gould League, 1975)¹⁴

*It is morning on The River
when the Sacred Ibis fly overhead
a single skein of twenty birds
soaring at two thousand feet.
I'm searching for them, squinting into the low sun
and when they come,
the backlit wings of each bird shine
each bird is a bird of light*

*Launching the canoe
I drift away – float away
reflections of tree and sky
spread in the ripples of my wake*

*When the sun comes hard into the land
it warms all the spaces in the forest
it solidifies the tree trunks
as a billion Redgum leaves
start pumping up the river*

¹⁰ Definitions are all endpoints / destinations of one sort or another. These are a few of the common descriptions of the scope of a professional educational activity that has come to be known as 'outdoor education'

¹¹ Lugg and Martin's study seemed to reveal a disjuncture between the hopes and dreams of what some feel outdoor education might be in schools, with the respondents in those schools. Surveys, as a means of gathering research data, can never give us meaningful insights into the nature of how a curriculum such as that encountered in outdoor education, is actually a lived-experience. We need to find alternative research methodologies that will allow additional stories and silences to challenge and collaborate with more standard methods of inquiring into the nature of experience.

¹² Similarly, Neill seems to suggest that more research will answer the questions that matter – outcomes, costs, and critical factors. Phenomenology and hermeneutic inquiry does not wish to discredit other forms of research activity, but it does want to 'stand alongside them', contributing equally to the many ways that experience finds a voice.

¹³ Many students wrote the "Dear Ponch" letters to me over a number of years. Students were invited to write to let me know about the things that mattered to them in their experiences of canoeing and rivers. They were unstructured and completely open in scope and style. They were not a work requirement. I almost always found time to reply. I learnt a great deal from the letters

Dear Ponch,
life could not have been more simple.
Without the distractions and bullshit
normally associated with getting
through the day, I felt free to struggle
with my perceptions ..

Dear Ponch,
for me this trip has been both an
inward and outward journey ...
I want to go back
I sit in the lounge chair listening to the
silence being broken by the sound of
cars and ambulance sirens
There is no flowing river to hear, no
croaking frogs
There is only silence

I cannot hear the birds singing or the murmur of people collected around
the campfire There is only silence
The gas heater hums There is only silence

Dear Ponch,
I wanted to test my improved paddling abilities. Gliding through the
trees, weaving around logs and stumps, bursting into the sunlight, then
onto a new stand of trees. Seeing the forest in a new way ... expressing
some art. The joy of this was interrupted by the group. I could not avoid
them. There was no way around it. They'd find me or I them, one way or
another. And they did.

Dear Ponch,
I do think I feel a connectedness with nature ... when my chest tightens with an emotion I cannot express and I feel I
might explode with the enormity of my feelings, when I am brought to the brink of tears by the ecstasy and beauty of
a place, of just being there, of experiencing it, of sharing it or keeping it to myself. I don't know what these feelings
symbolise or mean. In many ways I'm afraid I might destroy them by analysing them and reducing them to words.

Dear Ponch,
I felt as though I was one with
the river as I drifted along,
part of the river's load.

Dear Ponch,
I didn't have to look in the
mirror, or wear shoes once ... I
loved it, picking all that Murray
River Mud of my feet each
night ... to then be replaced by
black ash dust from the fire ...
these are little things ...

*The canoe rides like a shadow
a second presence
the day heats
the Redgum trunks file past
wax blue and green through the vaporising breath
of eucalyptus
I hear their thin xylem skins
sucking hard at the River
The Sacred Ibis are long gone
drawn away by the horizon
the shadows lengthen
How I wish to be up there with them
all hollow boned
pinions outstretched
at the tip of that westward skein
The River snaking its green path beneath,
is not hurrying to meet
its great blue ocean
beyond the vast dome of dry brown land¹⁵*

Dear Ponch,
Yet it is sad to see the huge amount of erosion
that has taken place through grazing,
introduced plants, such as willows ... speedboats

Dear Ponch,
even though it rained I was kept warm and dry
by simply leaning my canoe against a tree and
fixing a groundsheet to it ... Dear Ponch,
a real poetics of movement around the j-stroke
... I'd like to pass that along

– especially when they presented things that students could not find a way to say in any other form.

¹⁴ I often carried, as the students did, small natural history style field guides. This particular guide to inland waterbirds is stained and wrinkled by rain and river drops. These guides have the power to shape our perceptions in certain kinds of ways – claiming, naming, listing and classifying.

¹⁵ This is a continuation of the poem ‘The River Dreams’.

Dear Ponch,

I remember feeling somewhat short-changed when Wayne spoke of his people getting "back to the mat", back to a place significant to you for cultural and ancestral reasons. Our culture thrives on having a place that belongs to 'you' whereas Aboriginals thrive on belonging to a place.

Dear Ponch,

But you know Ponch, here a whole new question/dilemma raises its head (for me!). And that is just how much are these experiences of "simplicity" and "inner reflection" a privilege of our class? How much of our enjoyment and learning comes from them because we know at the end of it all we can walk back into our heated homes, have a hot shower, sit down in front of the T.V. or driver over to the pub?

Bill Neidjie, Story About Feeling

*Have a look while e blow, tree
and you feeling with your body
because tree just about like your brother
or father
and tree watching you.
Someone can't tell you.
Story e telling you yourself.
E tell you how you feel because tree or
earth because you brought up with this
earth, tree, eating, water.
Sky...
this cloud for us.
Your story, my story.
River...I follow river.¹⁶*

I Read

There is no 'right' way to read *Many Voices Speak the Country*. It deliberately attempts to escape the usual linearity of narrative, and readers may meander from left to right, from top to bottom, in cluster, or back and forth, they may pause and rest along the way. There are many possible readings. The text attempts to bring together many voices, like Nonie Sharp's coils of ropes, knotted at meeting points where storylines connect. Your voice, the reader's voice, is as mutually engaged in the seeking of essential meaning as any of the voices that speak from the text. Notice how *I listen, I write, I read* equally applies to the reader and the writer.

New Zealand ecological historian Geoff Park suggests that 'Reading the landscape – like using a tiny net in a big river – you can catch only some of the infinite detail. The rest is washed away beyond memory and possession. Unequivocal facts are elusive ... It attracts my senses with its primeval, land-before-people meeting of forest and water – yet amiably unhidden, as though last century was yesterday, is the abundant sign of its human history' (Park, 1995, p. 232). The stories are everywhere, beneath our feet, and are all around us. We need to begin to allow the stories that have long been silenced to speak, and we need to accept other silences that cannot speak, in the act of educating outdoors. We need to recognise the scientific alongside the mystical, the personal alongside the communal, the memory along side the dream. We need to allow all of these to speak, not at the expense of, but in collaboration with the other.

Australian radical preservationist William Lines feels little hope for nature in the future unless we can begin to write (and I presume he would have us read as well) 'joyously and unambiguously celebrate and identify with Australia'. It is worth following his line of thought at some length here.

We need histories of the sun-shocked, heat struck canyons of the Hamersley Ranges, odes to the Yilgarn reds of the Western Desert, liturgies to the sharp light and brilliant space of

¹⁶ The last word is given to Bill Neidjie – whose stories I read on one long summer journey on the river. I have found no more powerful or insightful voice about being in the 'country'. This confronting book is the work of collaboration between tribal elder Bill Neidjie and editor for the book, Keith Taylor. I would recommend it to anyone as a potential sacred text of 'country' in Australia.

the Nullarbor, chronicles of the thump and roll of the ocean in the Great Australian Bight, testimonies to the flux and clarity of light, its tint, its harmony, and hue on the gibber plains, epics of the Holocene desiccation of the Willandra lakes, sketches of the lithic heights, plateaus, and tarns of western Tasmania, portraits of the richness, subtlety, and presence of the grey-green forests of east Gippsland, eloquent evocations of the arching beaches and rocky headlands of the northern New South Wales coast, ballads to the volcanic soils of the Darling Downs, and narratives of the plenitude of the eastern and northern rainforests. When we write these stories our engagement with nature will be an encounter with the immediate and the corporeal, not a step into the future. We can then begin the work of conservation, which must always start with the particular in the present. (Lines, 2001, p. 62)

Lines is only part right here in my opinion. We do need find joy identifying with particular Australian places. But we cannot escape the ambiguity and difficulty of the many stories, voices and silences that fill those places. I feel that Lines may have us love only a lonely landscape, a scene emptied of its people, and their stories silenced. It is right that we should find joy when we recognise those moments when our collective storylines connect, where we find a shared responsibility to keep certain stories alive. But we will find more than joy. We will also find grief.

Remembering, Grieving, Forgiving.

Australian historians Peter Read (1996, 2000) and Mark McKenna (2002), both from the Australian National University in Canberra, have recently published important books regarding memory, forgetting and grief in Australia. A common theme is the ‘cult of disremembering’ – a silencing of the stories of frontier violence against Aboriginal communities and later further displacement of early settler communities and their descendants. These repeated erasures made space for the creation myths of modern Australia: the heroic occupation and ‘taming of an empty and wild land’ – and the ‘putting to work of that land’. Read (1996) gathers stories for particular places, unearthing layers of occupation, cultural memory, state enforced forgetting, and the erasure of old stories with new.

But in some places the storylines persist – the grief of loss from loved places returns again and again – ‘those places which we loved, lost and grieved for were wrested from the Indigenous people who loved them, lost them and grieve for them still’ (Read, 2000, p. 2). On the Murray River, Sinclair believes that communities have refused to critically examine the river’s past because out of a fear of judging our forebears unfairly (Sinclair, 2001, p. 20). I am not sure I agree completely with Sinclair here. I think it has more to do with an inability to live first in silence, and then to be obedient to country – to be responsive to voices that speak, no matter how faint their cry. ‘Settler Australians have spent too little time grieving’ (2001, p. 21) writes Sinclair. This I do agree with. It is probably fair to say that many of us are too caught up in the noise and turbulence of the dominant voice of the day that drowns out all others (in this case – the story of modernity’s unlimited economic expansion and later scientific management of river places). I strongly suspect that this can be just as true for outdoor education as it can be for any other form of modern endeavour.

Yet the remarkable stories that Peter Read collects and tells in *Returning to Nothing: the meanings of lost places*, suggest that many settler Australians do develop deep attachments to country remarkably quickly. He tells the stories of grief and loss experienced by people as they have been forced from their farms, or those who had whole towns removed and ‘relocated’ from beneath them, of city neighbourhoods severed by concrete freeways, of townships burnt out in the Ash Wednesday wild fires of ‘83, and even the drowning of Lake Pedder, under the cold, impounded waters behind the Serpentine Dam wall in 1971.


An ecologically inspired alternative to being trapped within the dominant noise of the day is to strive to dwell empathetically inside the places we encounter. The influential place theorist Edward Relph suggests:

Empathetic insideness demands a willingness to be open to significances of a place, to feel it, to know and respect its symbols – much as a person might experience a holy place as sacred without necessarily believing in that particular religion. This involves not merely looking at a place, but seeing into and appreciating the essential elements of its identity. Such empathetic insideness is possible for anyone not constricted by rigid patterns of thought and who possesses some awareness of environment.... To be inside a place empathetically is to understand that place as rich in meaning, and hence to identify with it, for these meanings are not only linked to the experiences and symbols of those whose place it is, but also stem from one's own experiences (Relph, 1976, pp. 54-55).

'Empathetic insidedness' demands the most careful and obedient *listening, writing and reading* ourselves into place. *Many Voices Speak the Country* attempts this by surrendering the author's authority in the text. Ambiguity is given precedence over coherence, or rather, the illusion of coherence that is often presented in the noise of the dominant story. This ambiguity is not meaningless. On the contrary, it is full of interpretive meanings that compete with, for and against each other.

Simultaneous to our interpretive meanings is a knowing that cannot be spoken – an embodied knowing. It is the collaboration of the interpretive and the embodied that the phenomenological philosopher Edward Casey calls 'embodied implacement' (1993, p. xvi)

In my embodied being I am just at a place as its inner boundary; a surrounding landscape, on the other hand, is just beyond that place as its outer boundary. Between the two boundaries – and very much as a function of their differential interplay –implacement occurs. Place is what takes place between body and landscape (Casey, 1993, P. 29).

Casey's 'embodied emplacement' is a vital addition and expansion to Relph's seminal theories of place outlined in *Place and Placelessness* (1976). Together they provide a valuable insight into our potential work as educators in the outdoors. Our bodies remain the ultimate centre of our learning, yet cannot be considered separate from the significance of their place(s). This mutualism of the embodied and interpretive *bringing forth* of meaning and knowing establishes the philosophical and pedagogical boundaries of any educational practice that is true to its claims that teachers and learners will know their 'country'. The imperative for this 'empathetic insideness' and 'embodied implacement', both to country and our texts, is so strong in Australia that I have argued for it both as a justification for challenging settler Australian's European traditions, and as a pedagogy for the outdoors. The side-by-side, inter-twining and connecting empathetic interpretation and embodiment, the insideness found in the *bringing forth* of meaning making and knowing, embraces the deep earthen ambiguities of the many voices that speak the ntry.

Afterwords: Remembering Outdoor Educatio

As experiential outdoor educators it is at once both sobering and liberating to realise that we cannot instruct learners in this 'empathetic insideness' and 'embodied implacement'. We can however shape the opportunity and guide our students towards the possibility of their learning, but we cannot instruct them in it. It is exactly this notion of the empathetic and embodied insider that I hope you have been able to bring and/or take from *Many Voices Speak the Country*.

As an outdoor educator the text reminds me of how close my own ancestral line is to the 'country' of the River, and how complicit I am in the river's current condition. I believe that



each of us, as teachers and learners in outdoor places, will find our ties to those places (that we may already believe we have lost), just beneath the surface. I also suspect, and draw from the text, that we all too easily want to simplify the complex and ambiguous nature of our educational experiences. Note how the degraded and near toxic river becomes pristine again to the participants on the outdoor education river journeys. Outdoor education may be culpable of a neo-Romantic re-writing of Australia, rather than an open encounter of the complex stories and silences found in Australian places. Do we really want to encounter, with our students, the dark earthen difficulty of experience? I don't think we have a choice. Denial, the turned blind eye, and the erasure of stories – these things have run their course. Just beneath the surface, if only we were to dive into those undercurrents, we would find the many threaded storylines and silences that are the river. The obedient listening demanded by the text *Many Voices Speak the Country*, brought forth the opportunity to write myself and my collaborators (ancestors, students, inspiring friends and other writers I have never met) back into the living text of the 'country'.

The continuing ecological decline of the Murray and the impermanent and transitory quality of memories of earlier rivers make it important to identify the places, qualities and species where stories of attachment, shame, grief and hope converge ... Perhaps when more of these stories are made to live in the public domain, settler Australians will be better able to think themselves into the country and adapt more successfully to the constraints of the environment. Perhaps then more sustainable futures will be possible to imagine (Sinclair, 2001, pp. 233-234).

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Biography/ Note from the author

G'day,



I'm employed as a Senior Lecturer at Monash University, Gippsland where my work as an academic in sport and outdoor education studies includes program and course leadership, lecturing, teaching on field trips, supervising post graduate research students and my own research and scholarship. I am currently completing a PhD relating to coastal place and identity, and pedagogy of the outdoors.

Brian Wattchow

Part 2: Non - Peer Reviewed Section
Keynote Presentations

Keynote no. 2

Adventure-based Practice: Reciprocal Relationship between Adventure Therapy and Outdoor Education

Dr. Christian Itin

This keynote will look at how adventure therapy and outdoor education inform each other. Rather than separate endeavors that are related, this keynote will posit that methods and process from each are intertwined and continually inform each other. Outdoor education provides valuable information on the technical adventure skills and foundational philosophical elements. Adventure therapy provides valuable information on working with people who provide challenges and useful philosophical influences. Both aspects are critical in making all aspects of adventure-based practice relevant for our clients and society.

My goal in this presentation is to explore with you the complex interrelationship between outdoor education, therapy (psychotherapy) and adventure therapy, with specific attention to how it informs adventure-based practice. I must begin this address with an acknowledgement that any attempt to deconstruct the component pieces of a human endeavor is inherently flawed. Furthermore, the attempt to describe the linkages between these component pieces will inevitably fail to capture the true richness and complexity of the very endeavor. So why do it, why attempt to describe the elements and relationships between outdoor education, therapy, and adventure therapy? First, it is one of the potentially unique elements of our humanity, the ability to critically analyze and categorize. Second, though two (or even three) dimensional models are flawed they do provide a useful vehicle for exploration and discussion. Third, I do believe there is value in the presentation I will make, and fourth, since I was invited to give this keynote I'm sure you would all be disappointed if I ended it here.

It is convenient to think that outdoor education, therapy, and adventure therapy are separate endeavors, however in reality they are interrelated, intertwined and interconnected. I will start with some general philosophy and perspective that I think informs each area and helps established the shared relationship. I will then move on to explore specifically how I think the areas of adventure therapy and outdoor education specifically informs each other. My hope is to leave you with an invitation to explore the interrelationship more fully. However, I will also end with a few words of caution and ethical observations.

It is probably important for you to understand a bit about me as my ideas flow directly from my experience, background, and orientation. First and foremost I am an experiential educator and social worker. I have spent a good part of my life involved in adventure/outdoor pursuits both personally and professionally. I am a college professor, so if I get to erudite, please just yell out "g-day mate." I am the oldest child of a Swiss born graphic designer and an U.S. born would be actress and future pre-school teacher. I come from an upper-middle class background and have been privileged to receive education through a doctorate and to travel extensively throughout the world.

So with that said, let me begin with discussing the three areas for this presentation. The first area to consider is outdoor education. Now personally, I'm not a huge fan of this term. I remember asking once; "if I take my research class outside and do a lecture sitting in a part, is that outdoor education?" Be that as it may I am going to use the term for two reasons. First it appears to be the preferred term in Australia and is the theme of this conference. Second, in its breadth it invites the potential for more connections. I want to be clear here that I am not referring to experiential education, though the literature is replete with the terms being used synonymously.

By outdoor education I hope to capture the range of activities that would include: environmental education, outdoor pursuits, adventure-based education, outdoor recreation, challenge/ropes course, wilderness activities, trust and team initiatives, high adventure activities, and related concepts. At the core of this area is the actual skills for living and being in the out of doors (though there is considerable debate as to whether the out of doors is a necessary part, part of the problem with the term outdoor education). Also within the rubric of outdoor education are the qualities of individual and community in terms of living and working within the natural world, especially as it relates to wilderness expeditions.

The second area to consider is that of therapy. I am speaking primarily here of psychotherapy, though it should be understood that other forms of therapy, especially experientially based ones such as expression-based (art, drama, dance, poetry, etc.), mind/body-based (massage, meditation, etc.) and others are extremely relevant. From therapy comes information on how to work with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations.

The third area is adventure therapy. This is not just the addition of therapy and adventure; but rather reflects the unique and true integration and synthesis of adventure and therapy. It has been said that adventure therapy is best thought of as the multiplication of adventure and therapy. It is within this multiplicative position that the unique elements of adventure therapy are found.

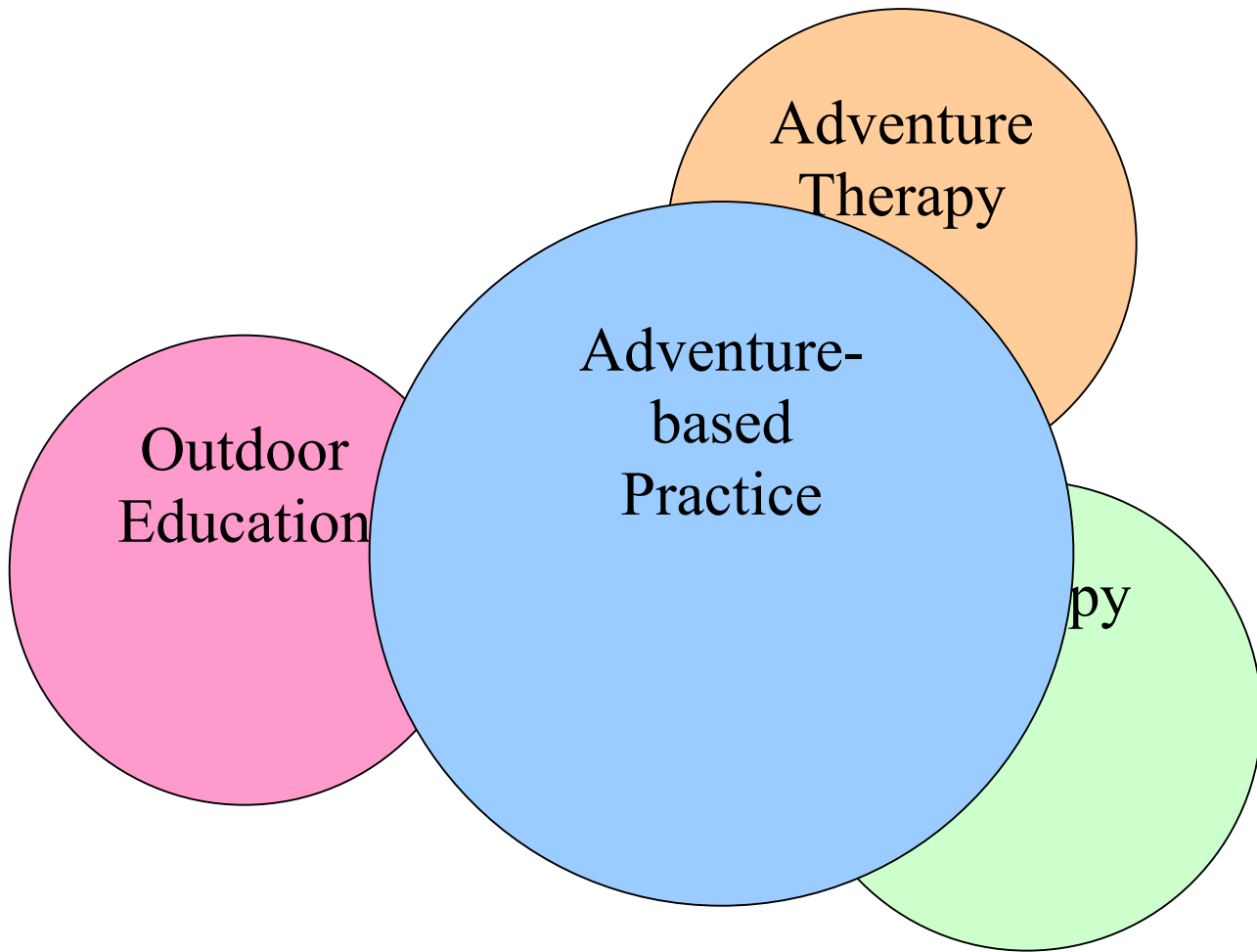


Figure 1: Interrelationship of the core components of adventure-based practice.

Adventure-based practice is perhaps best thought of as the place where outdoor education, therapy and adventure therapy overlap. It is in this area that we are most interested in exploring during this talk. It is not within the scope of this talk to consider the extent to which this overlap exists. It might be that some of these domains are more represented in adventure-based practice than others.

I will outline some of the larger philosophical concepts that inform and influence all three areas. This is not a complete list and it is not my intent to explore each of these fully. Rather I simply wish to move this into the level of our conscious consideration.

Here are the elements I believe are most relevant:

- Classic Philosophy - The ideas of Plato and Socrates
- Existentialism - Introduces the perspective self defining meaning
- Post-Modernism - Introduces the perspective of multiple realities
- Humanistic Perspective - The role of self-actualization
- Experiential Education - the place of experiential learning and preparation of the whole person for democratic participation.
- Spirituality - An understanding that the world does not circle around one person.
- Ecological Perspective - Understanding of the interrelationship and organic relationship between systems

- Systems Theory - An understanding of the universality of intra and inter system phenomenon
- Empowerment-based Perspective - recognition of intra and inter system levels of power and need to make demands upon larger system levels.
- Praxis - Action and reflexivity
- Critical Theory/Conflict Theory - Recognition of the place of power in system relationships
- Feminism - Recognition of the dominant position of men in western society.

Before addressing the interplay of adventure therapy and outdoor education it will be useful to speak briefly about some of the more dominant themes from the world of therapy that have influenced adventure therapy. Clearly there are areas of cognitive, behavioral, and psychodynamic that have had influence. In fact it might be suggested that they are a part of the larger philosophical elements that influence all three areas. Here then I will mention those that are more specifically identified with the therapy side of the equation. The first area is strategic therapy. This school of thought is the modern progenitor of most post-modern approaches. The work of Milton Erickson is a critical component. From this school of thought we get the purposeful use of activity and the metaphoric introduction of activity. A second area is solution oriented and problem solving approaches. These approaches grow directly out of the work of Erickson and focuses on enhancing the attempts at solutions that are working or likely to work. Strength-based approaches focus on building on the competencies and resources that a person already possesses. Perhaps the newest perspective is that of narrative therapy. Narrative approaches add the element of understanding the socio-political context of issues and the recognition of the ability to rewrite the narrative of our lives. Various adventure therapists have drawn differentially upon some of the aforementioned approaches.

Now let us move on to the heart of this discussion, the interplay between adventure therapy and outdoor education. As previously mentioned some of the core elements that come from outdoor education are all those that related to living, traveling and being in the out-of-doors. In particular the qualities of expedition behavior are critical. Kurt Hahn noted the qualities as, enterprising curiosity (an active exploration), readiness for sensible denial (a willingness to give up what is reasonable), tenacity in pursuit (perseverance in the pursuance of a goal), an undefeatable spirit (maintaining an essential belief in oneself), and compassion (a caring for oneself and others). These qualities which are essential in the context of an expedition turn out to also be quite important in life. The themes first articulated by Kurt Hahn have begun to appear in resiliency research. Adventure therapy has infused the ideas of Hahn, resiliency and other therapeutic techniques as a means of enhancing clients lives. Many adventure therapy programs are expressly built upon a foundation of providing clients the opportunity to explore and develop the aforementioned qualities. Sometimes this is framed within the context of empowerment, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and related concept. However at the core adventure therapy is the understanding that life is best lived as an adventure.

We can look at the interplay between the ideas of outdoor education and adventure therapy in some of the other themes that appear to be critical to adventure-based practice. These themes are consistent with the qualities already mentioned and add to our understanding about how ideas from outdoor education blend and merge with ideas from adventure therapy.

The Unknown – Adventure is first and foremost an exploration of the unknown. Life is by definition unknown in its course and direction. Adventure is about actively engaging in this unknown and exploring how to live/work/play in it. This exploration is often framed in the context of exploring beyond an individual's comfort zone. There can be many emotions experienced in the exploration of one's comfort zone but often there is both fear and excitement. Those who explore their comfort zone can discover that what is known and comfortable may not

be the healthiest for them. In exploring outside one's comfort zone new experiences, resources, and opportunities are available. In this exploration individuals and groups often discover they are capable of more than previously believed.

Action Orientation – Life requires action to live it fully. Life is not simply about talking about life. Participants and leaders are engaged in an active process that requires everyone to take action. One can not simply talk about change or action in an adventure experience actual movement is required.

Challenge and Difficulty – Life is difficult. The active exploration of the unknown presents challenges and difficulties. Adventure activities provide opportunities for participants to explore these challenges and difficulties and learn about how one engages these elements in ones life. New skills can be developed in problem solving and dealing with the challenges presented by life.

The Practitioner takes an Active Stance – The practitioner in the adventure context is actively involved in presenting challenges, being a resource and providing necessary information. In many adventure activities the practitioner faces the same challenges and obstacles that the participants face. Participants and Practitioners are involved in a shared adventure and therefore there are opportunities for developing shared relationships.

Opportunity for Genuine Community – Life in the human context is not lived in isolation. Human's are my their very being social animals. Adventure calls forth on people to be active members of their community. Participants are challenged to participate fully, called on to be ready to make personal sacrifice, encouraged not to give up on themselves or others, dared to find creative solutions to problems, motivated to strive toward attainable goals, and inspired to be compassionate with each other. In this way adventure offers the opportunity for participants to discover the power of community in the empowerment and change process.

We can explore these themes in a bit more detail and examine some of the ideas that adventure therapy brings to them and how they might be of value to outdoor education. The exploration of the unknown is a domain that is particularly fruitful. Most outdoor education programs ask clients to explore some area of the unknown. This may involve the environment, an activity, or themselves in this new context. Adventure therapy provides a useful perspective on exploring when clients appear to be struggling with this unknown. Adventure therapy provides insight into explore why a client might appear resistant to exploring some aspect of the unknown. This can include sensitivity and awareness of previous trauma involving the unknown. Many clients come with a history of various forms of trauma in their life. Adventure therapy provides some useful ways of conceptualize working with people who have suffered a trauma. I will not go into a full exploration of this, but it is important to note that the goal is not for outdoor educators to explore a client's trauma, but rather to recognize it might exist and to provide legitimate ways for a client to remain safe. It is not unlike a client who has broken an arm, if you move it around it will hurt, if you bind it, often a person can walk out on their own. Adventure therapy offers experience with appropriate containment and support.

Adventure therapy also offers an ability to reframe the "resistance" as a healthy choice to avoid a repeated pattern of being "talked" into something. Sometimes the unknown is standing up for oneself; it is the choice of saying no. It is a true irony that many programs that are set up to help adolescents resist peer pressure, especially around drug use, end up promoting this pressure through "strong encouragement." Ironically, it is this same sort of "strong encouragement that is often associated with drug use. Furthermore, many drug-using activities share a similar thrill-seeking element with adventure activity. Adventure therapy introduces the conscious exploration of the unknown, and what really is in the unknown for the client. Adventure therapy would

suggest that going down a rappel could be an exploration of the unknown for one person, but not for another and that the unknown would be different for each.

The action orientation is another area that adventure therapy brings some useful material to. Outdoor education places a great deal of consideration on the physical aspects of the activity. The doing of outdoor education is a refreshing alternative to the talk orientation of most therapy approaches. Adventure therapy adds to outdoor education a balance between action and reflection. Adventure therapy can offer useful strategies to help clients explore and reflect on activity. It offers creative ways of asking questions and inviting clients to explore activity. Adventure therapy has offered a great deal to the introduction of activities. Adventure therapy has offered the possibility that activities can be purposefully introduced to encourage clients to explore a certain area within the activity. For example during a day hike (bush walk) it is possible to introduce the day as being about compassion and to encourage clients to explore how are they demonstrate compassion throughout the hike. Adventure therapy has also offered the ideas of metaphoric introduction of activities. The best metaphors tap into the inherent "truth" within an activity. Outdoor education has offered the inherent "truth" within an activity such as rock climbing. Issues of trust, perseverance, and balance offer natural metaphors that adventure therapists often build upon and link to clients' direct life experiences. So for example climbing becomes less about climbing the rock and rather the exploration of trust in a relationship, or asking for and receiving support. It is no longer enough to talk about trust or asking for help, the actions taken in the activity provide clients with the opportunity to act on what they are talking about. Outdoor education can use the same introduction techniques without an emphasis on the therapeutic issues that might be the goal within an adventure therapy context.

Outdoor education has offered great clarity on the value and place of challenge and difficulty. Clearly many of the activities within outdoor education have an element of challenge or difficulty. Climbing a mountain is by definition a challenge. Kurt Hahn noted the importance of impelling people into value forming experiences, and challenge certainly is an important part of this. Most in outdoor education have moved beyond the military model of forced engagement in challenge activities or what has been referred to as "impaling students with value forming experiences." As previously addressed in exploring the unknown, adventure therapy provides value information as to how to appropriately work with people to explore challenge. Adventure therapy has offered the opportunity to explore is the need for the client to engage in the experience a reflection of the client's need or the instructors. It is the clients needs that must drive both the type and nature of the challenge (it is important to differentiate the appropriateness of a challenge for a client or client population). Furthermore, adventure therapy offers insight as to how to frame or offer the challenge in a way that is more closely aimed at meeting the client where they are. For example with clients where there are significant trust issues, an activity involving trust might be framed around support or commitment. Trust is still implicitly a part of the process, but rather than forcing clients to confront this issue directly, it may be beneficial to approach it indirectly.

Outdoor education has provided a great deal of evidence of the value of the practitioner taking an active stance. Outdoor educators provide a great deal of guidance to individuals and groups in both the technical and team dynamics in the context of adventure and expedition activities. The outdoor educator is actively involved in all aspects of the process, even when they allow the group to operate independently the educator usually has provided through safety procedures and monitors the groups ability to follow these. As previously mentioned adventure therapy can offer some valuable insight into the process of how to be in this active relationship with clients. Balancing whose need is only but one aspect of this complex relationship. Issues of boundaries are a critical part of maintaining a "professional" active stance. Adventure therapy offers insight has to how to engage in a genuine, empathetic relationship that fosters interdependence within

the group rather than dependence upon the instructor. In the familiarity of a small group faced with challenges and the unknown, all parties are forced to consider the nature of the relationships. The intensity of the experience is an issue that is often further magnified in the adventure therapy context.

The opportunity for genuine community is something that is actively fostered within the outdoor education context both in terms of the nature of the experience and the active stance of the practitioner. Adventure therapy can add to this experience through the unique blending of group work and group psychotherapy within the wilderness or adventure context. Adventure therapy can offer the outdoor educator skills to enhance and refine the skills necessary to build community, especially with groups that are experiencing greater challenges in making this happen. Where there are significant issues of trust (be it from intrapsychic, interpersonal, or social/contextual); limited social skills, or other significant challenges adventure therapy can offer a set of skills to aid the outdoor educator.

Conclusion

Outdoor education and adventure therapy while distinct are interrelated. They share a rich tradition of informing each other. Through conscious attention to the contributions each make to each other we have the ability to benefit the entire profession of adventure-based practice. It is to the advantage of all concerned with how to enhance the quality of services provided to our clients to seek ways of building and refining the nature of services through mutual dialogue and exchange.

A few words of caution are warranted at this point. One of the concerns within Adventure Therapy has long been the lack of skill and training in the wilderness and adventure activities. I can not tell you how many times I have seen someone with a therapy background attempting to conduct an adventure activity without the training, skill, awareness, or consideration for the technical and safety aspects of an activity. I have also seen them attempting to engage in the activity outside the philosophical underpinnings of outdoor education as well. The other side of this is also an experience; the attempt of an outdoor instructor to engage clients in a process that is beyond their facilitation ability, qualifications, and awareness of theory. Having some awareness of techniques and ideas associated with therapy does not make one a therapist, just as having gone camping does not make one an outdoor guide. The hallmark of ethical professional practice is knowing ones skills and abilities and operating within these. While certifications and licensure are tempting solutions to ensure this occurs, truth be told, they only ensure the minimum competence required.

The best way to ensure the highest quality of adventure-based practice in both the fields of outdoor education and adventure therapy is to encourage the ongoing and continued reciprocal relationship between the two fields, while at the same time remaining aware and conscious of the unique and specialized skills and competency of each. We must actively foster and encourage the exchange and dialogue while recognizing and legitimizing the differences. In this way the development and enhancement in one area can inform and strengthen the practice in the other and thereby foster the growth and refinement of the broader field of adventure-based practice.

“I Was Framed!”

The ‘invisible work’ of the hidden curriculum and outdoor education.

A collaborative presentation by Mike Boyes, John Maxted, Mike Brown and Brian Wattchow

Abstract

“I was framed” examines several critical aspects of hidden curriculum: the commodification of Outdoor Education; the nature of experience in experiential education and the subversive curriculum. This paper supports the ‘Dinner Presentation’ given by these four speakers at the 13th National Outdoor Education Conference, *Relevance: Making It Happen*. The presentation challenges each of us to reflect on our teaching out-of-doors and to work towards practical solutions.

Part A:

The disciplining of experience and the deceit of technique in Outdoor Education.

Brian Wattchow

It will be centuries
before many men are truly at home in this country,
and yet, there have always been some, in each generation,
there have always been some who could live in the presence of silence.

Australian Poet, Les Murray, Noonday Axeman

The clarion call of the conference title – RELEVANCE and MAKING IT HAPPEN – sounds a note that I acknowledge with some caution. There are many ways of being and becoming relevant and there may be some very good reasons for not being immediately relevant. Equally, there are many ways of ‘making it happen’, but we had better first be confident that we know just what ‘it’ is that we want to happen, and how ‘it’ might happen best. If I ‘listen’ to the conference title and theme it first asks me to reflect back, before leaping forward to embrace an optimistic future for the outdoor educated.

The expectation of ‘making it happen’ is the deepest, most difficult and confronting phenomena that we face as educators – and we face it daily in our work with child and adult learners, colleagues and in our institutions. It is all too easy to imagine that as Outdoor Education becomes more established as a profession and disciplined in practice, that we will have a reliable set of techniques to draw upon to guide us through our educational experiences towards a relevant set of objectives and goals. It is this collective notion of experience, discipline and technique that I wish to examine for its ‘hidden meaning’ and the ‘invisible work’ that occurs there. But first, I’d like to dwell for a moment upon some personal experiences in outdoor education that will give this discussion a human face.

It is educative to revisit the past from the perspective of the present. I completed my undergraduate teaching degree in physical education here in Adelaide 20 years ago. In the final two years of that degree I specialised in outdoor pursuits, which included a number of theory

classes in subjects like ‘conservation’ and ‘expeditioning’, and a broad range of practical experiences. I can still clearly re-call the magic of building and then climbing into a ‘Sun Kosi’ fibreglass kayak to paddle in the surf at Port Nourlunga. Or the exposure on my first rock climb, an arête called *Al Sirrat* a grade eight, 15-metre climb at Morialta Gorge. In my final year a friend and I completed a 12 day traverse of the central Flinders Ranges taking in the high peaks of Mt Aleck in the Elder Range, Pompey’s Pillar and Saint Mary’s Peak in the Wilpena Pound Range and the ruggedness of the ABC Range as we walked our way north to Parachilna Gorge. It was like being set free, let loose into a world of raw experience unfettered by discipline and technique. It changed my life.

I reflect back on these experiences now and realise that they occurred on the threshold of the popularity of the wild outdoors as mass recreation in Australia, and within a breath of Outdoor Education becoming a recognisable school subject and the emergence of specialist degree programs training outdoor education teachers and leaders. We went skiing in that final year of my studies, snow camping out the back of Mt Loch, near Mt Hotham – and we had bought our first back packs – internal framed and imported from Europe.

Not long after that first ski trip I saw a job advertised for a teacher of Physical Education and Outdoor Education at a Catholic Secondary College in the Gippsland region of Victoria. I knew nothing of Gippsland, but when I looked it up in my atlas it was only 1.5 centimetres from the nearest snow-capped mountains. That was good enough for me. I applied and was interviewed on the telephone. I got the job.

The Latrobe Valley in Gippsland in the early 1980’s was a profoundly working class region – dominated by the power and timber industries. I was working at a boy’s year seven to ten college, and for many of the students this would be the final years of schooling. They were on the cusp of manhood and would soon take up one of the many apprenticeships constantly on offer in local industry.

Although I also taught in the classroom and on the sports oval, much of my work involved towards taking the boys into the outdoors on a program of trips and experiences that the school vigorously supported. Manliness, an antidote to the pent up energy of the disciplined classroom, a chance to explore nearby nature – I’m sure these were some of the reasons behind the schools commitment to the program. Yet there was nothing grandiose about these programs. Both students and the school cobbled together equipment, and most trips were no more than an hours drive away from the school campus. The boys would turn up in lace-up leather work boots, and vinyl waterproof jackets ‘borrowed’ from their fathers’ work place. I cannot say that my job seemed overly difficult to me at the time – in fact it was quite the opposite – it was for both the boys and myself – a joyous escape from the constrictions of the classroom, the schoolyard and the staffroom.

I was there for the briefest time, only a few years, before furthering my studies in Outdoor Education at a university in Canada – but memories of those programs linger long and two in particular, are worth re-telling here. Perhaps it is because these memories have been in part ‘captured’ in two photographs I took on one of those early outdoor education bushwalks into the mountains.

Photograph 1: The Mountaintop.



The first photograph shows a group of year ten boys standing on top of Mt Spion Kopje, above Lake Tali Karng and the Wellington River in the Victorian Alps. They are looking south, across the hazy blue mountains and valleys, and in the distance it is just possible to see the brown lowlands and signs of industry that surround their homes. The photograph seems commonplace and possibly. But when we consider it (as I have many times over the years since) as a record of a moment in time, a crucial and pivotal moment for these boys and their teacher, the image calls for a deeper and more careful consideration. From this vantage point the boys look into their pasts, they see their histories from a new perspective. From the peak, they see into their domestic and disciplined lives at home and school. Equally, they may glimpse their future. In just a few months time they will complete their schooling and enter the workforce, or continue their studies. This group of friends will soon begin to fragment; their lives will take new and unplanned directions. How will their outdoor education, and this particular experience, serve them on that journey?

Photograph 2: Restful reflection.



The second photograph shows one of the boys on this walk a few days later. On the walk out, along the Wellington River, there was always plenty of time for swimming in the plentiful waterholes, or resting. There was little urgency to reach the destination and return to school and home. This image captures one of the boys in, what I will call, a deep and natural restive state. What can he be thinking? Is he reflecting back upon the recent days experience, trying to make sense of the struggle and the journey, the joy and the camaraderie, the meaning of the mountains? Is he trying to unearth some sense of the experience that will translate to his life back home – that will help him face the difficult decisions about a future that is rushing to meet him? Can I, his teacher, ever know his inner thoughts, and he mine? How do I care for this boy as he faces the formidable challenge that lies ahead?

These stories and questions deliver me to a place of deep concern for some of the trends and disciplines that have become mainstream in outdoor education in the intervening 20 years. The rise of the techniques of experiential education as they have come to be applied in outdoor education endanger my ability to care for the boy I am entrusted to teach. The boy and teacher are disciplined to the techniques and hidden ideologies of a practice that may ‘work invisibly’ against its own claims. Like the Canadian teacher educator Douglass Jardine, I fear that we have ‘render[ed] children into strange and silent objects which require of us only management, manipulation, and objective information and (ac)countability. Children are no longer our kin, our kind; teaching is no longer an act of “kindness” and generosity bespeaking a deep connectedness with children. In the name of clarity, repeatability, accountability, such connections become severed in favour of pristine, “objective” surface articulation’ (Jardine, 1998, p. 7).

The “invisible work” in the framing and processing of experience

John Dewey (1859-1952) is often cited as one of the principle founders of the progressive and experiential education movements. Dewey’s main concern in education was for learners to

engage in an emancipatory, democratic learning experience rather than to be passive and disengaged in a learning environment that was controlled by others. *Primary experience* for Dewey initially involved an encounter with ‘... the immediate, tangible, and moving world which presents itself to the senses ... the raw materials from which knowledge can begin’ (Hunt, 1995, p. 26).

The real educational significance of experience for Dewey came through secondary experience. This reflective experience would take the ‘gross, macroscopic, and crude’ materials furnished by primary experience and seek to make them precise, microscopic and refined’ (Hunt, 1995, p. 27). For Dewey, this was where knowledge, reconstructed as ‘growth’, was forged. He elaborated a ‘scientific method’ for experience in education.

Dewey’s methods have been adapted and its application (some say, appropriation) in Outdoor Education (amongst other areas of experiential learning) has become commonplace. Joplin’s Five-Stage Experiential Learning Cycle re-works Dewey’s Scientific Method (involving a process of leading individuals and groups through challenging activities, including a Focus Stage, followed by Action, Support / Feedback stages, and culminates in a Debrief stage where participants are guided to articulate what they have learnt) (Joplin, 1995). This facilitation is often called ‘processing the experience’. This popular model underpins the pedagogy of a great number of experiential outdoor programs. Much of the neo-industrial and technicist language and practices of outdoor education are derivative of Nadler and Luckner’s (1992) *Processing the Adventure Experience*. They prioritise cognition over experience at all times, and maintain a steady commitment to Deweyian scientific logic.

Potentially more problematic is the de-legitimising of experiential learning inherent in the hierarchical structuring of facilitation techniques outlined by Priest and Gass (1997, pp. 181-184). ‘Letting the experience speak for itself’ (1997, p. 181) is considered the least sophisticated of approaches. Priest and Gass prefer ‘directly frontloading the experience’ (1997, p. 182), a process of questioning, focusing and predicting the nature of learning that may be encountered in an experience.

This approach to experience in outdoor education has become entrenched, but critics are beginning to emerge. Bell argues that ‘... his [Dewey’s] promotion of scientific logic can be seen to reinforce linear, cause-effect, ‘either-or’ terms of facts and knowledge. This gives us a false sense of the unity of knowledge, its objective nature and the ability to ‘discover reality’ (Bell, 1993, p. 21). Hovelynck also finds the process problematic; ‘if the lessons to be learned from an experience can be listed before the experience has taken place, and thus independently of the learner’s experience, it seems misleading to call the learning ‘experiential’ (Hovelynck, 2001, p. 8). Chris Loynes, crediting Martin Ringer, has called it *the algorithmic paradigm* of experiential outdoor education. He argues it is epitomized by its commitment to a modernist tradition which promotes a scientific rationale, a production line metaphor and renders learning a product and thus a marketable commodity (Loynes, 2002). I suggest that the influence of its ‘invisible work’ extends even further; and that it embraces the ‘imperial project’ - no less than the colonisation of the learner, the teacher, their community and any peoples or ecologies that stand in their way. Take the following quotation as an example:

...they [the learners] leave their safe, familiar, comfortable and predictable world for uncomfortable new territory. Like the pioneers and explorers who travelled to the “Old West” in search of fortune we hope that the learning adventures of participants also will lead them to “gold” ... What is gained from the struggle can lead to learning that can be applied in the future. At the “edge” is where many explorers turned back because of the lack of water or food, battles with Native American Indians, or an inability to endure and tolerate the continual fears and apprehension. Breaking through the edge into the realm of

possibilities and the land of gold was thereby suppressed. It is the journey between the two worlds, where processing the experience is most important (Luckner & Nadler, 1997, pp. 28-29).

There seems little room here for care and mystery, dreams and silence. Or, the sense feeling that ‘we know more than we can say’, and that there are subtle nuances that the humble teacher and learner may discover together. This ideologically driven disciplining of the outdoor educated in Australia and New Zealand leaves little hope of reconciliation with ourselves, with each other (including the first peoples of these countries), or the natural ecologies that we live with. If these reconciliations are to be a part of the outdoor education pedagogy in Australia and New Zealand – the ‘invisible work’ of experiential education *will not make it happen*.

A ‘practical’ solution to the invisible disciplining of experience outdoors

I can only hint at possible alternatives to the somewhat gloomy future I have outlined. To do so I return to my student of twenty years ago, resting quietly against a eucalypt on the banks of the Wellington River. If I care deeply for his well-being, I must care equally for his friends’ well being, and I must care deeply for the country and places that we find ourselves in together, and that we will find ourselves in separately in the future. To do this I sense that I will find myself searching – *listening* - in the opposite direction to the disciplined territory I have discussed.

I am greatly encouraged that we find ourselves, and many of those around us, ‘listening’ in this other direction daily. In song, poem and prayer, in performance and movement, and in our bodies knowing of how to ‘be’, when we try to live (and teach) humbly within the earth’s limits.

It seems to me that the careful crafting of an educative experience that *can* and *does speak for itself* would signal an act of virtuosity in teaching that is, quite literally, worlds apart from the disciplined techniques I have described. When the experience *speaks for itself* I argue the great multiplicity of meanings and potentials finds voice – finds a home in the careful act of becoming outdoor educated. But even this will not be enough for the outdoor educated to face the future challenges rushing to meet us. We must also find a way to embrace the knowledges that we desperately need, that cannot speak, that demand silence. As David Jardine and the Australian poet Les Murray suggest, ‘we must begin to believe again that silence may be our most articulate response’ (Jardine, 1998, p. 30) and we must learn to live amidst this silence – like the boy resting against the tree by the Wellington River.

Then, perhaps, I may hope for my student, as David Jardine hopes for his son, that ‘he finds the empty space required for the natural affections and kinships of speech and experience and understating to come forth. I hope he becomes deeply conversant with this precious Earth. I hope someday that he will understand that he, in his good fortune, is indebted to all things without exception’ (Jardine, 1998, p. 101).

Part B:

“I was framed” and “I framed”

Mike Brown

Introduction

I start this section, somewhat ‘tongue-in-check’ with the a few lines from the soundtrack in the Baz Luhrmann movie, *Romeo and Juliet*.

Wear sunscreen...

If I could offer you only one tip for the future sunscreen would be it

The long term benefits of sunscreen have been proved by scientists

Whereas the rest of my advice has no basis more reliable than my own meandering experience

Everybody's Free (to wear sunscreen) from Something for Everyone (1997) EMI Music, Australia.

In this section of the paper I wish to expand, and perhaps run tangentially, with a line of thought stimulated by the comments made earlier by Brian in regard to “the ‘invisible work’ in the framing and processing of experience”.

I make no apologies for adopting an intentionally provocative position in a critique of the misuse of the concept of experience, (expressed through the term ‘appropriation of experience’), in adventure education generally and more specifically in the verbal facilitation of these experiences. I will go so far as to state that much reflection on experience conducted through verbal facilitation (as is commonly practiced), acts as a means of direct instruction. While direct instruction may not be a stated aim of the leader of such sessions, and many of us would be horrified to think that this was a consequence of our actions, it is one possible outcome from our unquestioned adoption of contemporary practices advocated in much of the literature on facilitation in adventure education.

As a student, practitioner, and more recently a tertiary educator, I am unable to write myself out of this narrative. While I could conceivably argue that in the early stages of my career I “was framed” I also acknowledge that I have been the agent in ‘framing’ the experiences of others. I am not an innocent party, nor however do I wish to appear as the ‘reformed facilitator’ who is on an evangelical (and painful?) quest to convert you. I do not have THE answer, or the magic formula, in regard to the correct way to reflect on experience; rather it is my aim to reveal in some small way the invisible work that we engage in as ‘experiential’ educators. How “I was framed” and “how I framed” is discussed from two perspectives. Both draw on a combination of personal experience, observations and research. Firstly, I want to briefly discuss the nature of training, or more accurately the exposure to the theory and practice of experiential education and facilitation in the profession, whether this is in the workplace or tertiary level. Secondly, I will make some brief comments on the practice of verbal facilitation as a common form of reflection on experience.

Professional development; “Framing the educator”

An understanding of facilitation and its role in learning is contingent on a sound understanding of experiential learning theory and the role of reflection and experience has within the model. I suspect that as educators and students of experiential education theory we fail to develop or convey a deep appreciation and understanding of the complexity of the relationship between experience and reflection. While we may present students with a model which represents ‘experiential learning’ (typified in simple models such as those proposed by Joplin, 1995; Kolb, 1984) we fail to engage in a deeper debate concerning the individual nature of experience; the fact that knowledge derived from experience is socially constructed and therefore unique and individual. This individual meaning making and ‘difference’ does not necessarily sit easily within adventure education settings where great emphasis is placed on the group and consensus.

The ‘separation’ of experience and reflection as discrete elements within these models also creates a false dichotomy. One experiences and then one reflects (possibly through verbal

discussion), then you apply this learning, which has been publicly articulated, to the next activity (which provides a resource for subsequent experiences). Experiential programs are thus conceived as a process of *activity*, which provides an experience which is ‘reflected upon’; *reflection*. ‘*Learning*’ is then articulated and a new task is engaged in which provides an opportunity to implement these new skills. I would argue that experiential education (and adventure education programs) that employ this approach simply become a ‘process’ or pathway, which becomes repetitive and predictable. The adoption of such an ‘experiential approach’ confuses doing activities and being seen to verbalise learning with authentic student centred learning. I will elaborate on this point further in a few moments in my comments in relation to how this reflection is commonly conducted in adventure education programs.

Coupled with the presentation of experiential learning as a process that can be followed in four easy steps (experience, reflection, generalisation, and reapplication), is the notion that programs can be designed with specific outcomes. There are a number of programming models that purport to permit the educational provider to assess the students’ needs and design a program to achieve these specified outcomes. In assessing the needs of a group, where are the needs of the particular individual situated? I’m not for one minute suggesting that it is possible, when working in a group situation to cater for the needs of all members, for part of working within a group are elements of compromise and negotiated solutions. What I am regaling against is the notion that, like a ‘simple’ experiential learning model, we can apply some sort of needs analysis that defines the learning objectives in advance and then insert a series of activities that can be mechanically facilitated to reach these objectives.

How can we teach to this ‘needs analysis-predetermined objectives’ within an ‘experiential model’ and remain true to the centrality of the students’ experience as the basis of valid knowledge? Let us not fool ourselves; by articulating in advance the desired outcomes we are potentially diminishing the importance of learning that falls ‘outside’ our objectives. Who’s kidding who when we tell a client or school group co-ordinator that the outcomes will include increased communication, trust and cooperation? It is possible to, on the surface at least, achieve these stated objectives, but is it experiential or a way of ‘framing’ the student experience?

In summary, perhaps “I was framed” through an oversimplified understanding of what experiential education was about and the grounding that I received at both a tertiary and vocational level. This simplification goes something like this, “This is the process, these are the aims of the course, here’s the program and here are a series of activities, or questions to ask”. Simple really! But what are we really doing?

How many of our colleagues and students are also being framed to function on this level?

I now will now turn briefly to a succinct discussion on how the reflection component, frequently articulated through group verbal discussions, functions as a means of enabling the group leader to frame student contributions.

Being the “framer”: How I framed the experiences of others

I have argued extensively (Brown, 2002a; 2002b) that the leader of facilitation sessions is able to determine student contributions in group discussions. I have argued that the leader’s ability to determine the topic for discussion, his/her ability to allocate students turns at talk and his/her ability to both paraphrase and/or modify and accept or reject student contributions are indicative of asymmetric power relations which favour leader sponsored versions of events being accepted as appropriate knowledge. These features are also well documented as a means of direct instruction. Through the systematic analysis of transcripts of data recorded from group verbal discussions I have been able to show that without due care this form of ‘reflection’ only allows students to have the reflections on their experiences validated through the mediating and

constraining filter of the group leader. Facilitation thus becomes an orchestrated affair (Heap, 1990) where the student's experience turns into a managed social accomplishment (Perakyla & Silverman, 1991). The extensive use of a leader question (the topic for discussion), a student answer and leader evaluation, referred to in the literature as the I-R-E sequence (Mehan, 1985) acts as a means of direct instruction. In less subtle language Young (1984, p.223) states that this three-part format has a "number of features which appear more consistent with indoctrination than education". As such it provides a direct challenge to notions of verbal group discussions as being a legitimate means of student learning based on *their* reflection on *their* experiences.

The call for public verification of learning is well documented in literature on facilitation (see Joplin, 1995; Priest & Gass, 1997). The need to publicly verify learning is, I would argue, based on notions of surveillance and a need to justify that we, as outdoor educators are doing our job.

The need to hear our students articulate their learning, most commonly through verbal responses, involves a paradox common to other educational endeavours. On the one hand we consider that the students are sufficiently mature and cognitively able to perform an activity but on the other they are not able to understand or make meaning from this experience on their own. It is our role and prerogative as competent leaders to inform the student of what an experience really meant for them.

In evaluating and/or paraphrasing a student response the leader is declaring what the student really meant.

What role is left for the autonomous individual in this process?

Whose experience is being valued?

Whose ego is being massaged?

I have participated in these verbal discussions on numerous occasions and have observed and recorded other leaders engaging in such practices. The fact that I am not alone in this practice does not exonerate me from my role in 'framing' the experiences of others. In our efforts to be experiential (by providing reflection on experience) we may in fact be reinforcing existing pedagogical practices albeit veiled in the discourse of experiential learning.

Conclusion

Let me wrap up by making the following points.

- Just because we have experiences, or more accurately activities, in our program does not mean that we are employing an experiential approach.
- Verbal facilitation, which is leader driven has the potential to be a form of direct instruction.

I suggest that we have found ourselves in the present position for a number of reasons. These include, a lack of focus on facilitation theory and skills in tertiary and vocational settings; a superficial and under-rated appreciation of the difficulties and complexities of the experiential learning process and a belief that 'anyone' can facilitate experience. Somewhat ironically, I would posture, one of the principal reasons is through a lack of critical reflection on our existing practices.

There is a deficit in research on the 'process' of facilitation. Correcting this is a challenge for practitioners, outdoor educator educators and professional bodies. Perhaps I was framed into thinking that I was doing something, that on reflection I wasn't. I'm guilty of framing the experiences of those with whom I was working. The challenge that lies before us is to continually

reflect, in meaningful ways, on practice to make transparent the consequences of our actions and modify them as necessary.

“I was framed” and “I framed” the experiences of others, and in the very act of addressing you tonight I am suggesting another frame from which to view how you approach experiential education. This critique should not be seen as hostility towards the experiential process but as an impassioned call for us to re-evaluate our practice and to rediscover our role in providing opportunities for students to have the opportunity to have legitimate experiences that they can reflect on to find meaning. For as Heap (1990) reminds us, if we render some activity transparent we may find cause to modify our practice.

And finally ... remember to wear sunscreen.

Part C:

Outdoor Educators as Agents of the State

Mike Boyes

Introduction

This paper examines the hidden curriculum of Outdoor Educators as mediated through the dominant neoliberal ideology. A broad perspective on curriculum is used as a framework to identify aspects of practice that could be considered to mostly originate from the hidden and covert curricula. The outdoors is considered as a site for embracement and resistance to neoliberal cultures and commodities. The effects of an incongruent educational philosophy on a teacher are discussed and suggestions made for the future.

I would like to begin by considering the notion of the hidden curriculum and how it is mediated by dominant discourses and ideologies. Then I will briefly outline the dominant ideology of the times; neoliberalism (economic rationalism) and amplify how outdoor educators can be seen as unknowing purveyors of neoliberal and capitalist dogma. This will be illustrated through a number of practical examples from the field including examples of resistance, where aspects of the hidden curriculum have the potential to become a covert curriculum.

The Hidden Curriculum

Kirk (1992, p.37) defined the hidden curriculum as: “the learning of knowledge, attitudes, norms, beliefs, values and assumptions ... communicated unintentionally, unconsciously and unavoidably” (see also Seddon, 1983). The formal teaching, organisation and content of the official curriculum are the medium through which the hidden curriculum works. Dodds (1985) narrowed the concept by identifying the hidden curriculum as one of four aspects of the functional curriculum: (a) Explicit curriculum – those publicly stated and shared items that teachers want students to acquire; (b) Covert curriculum – a teacher’s unspoken, non-public agendas (still consciously and intentionally communicated); (c) Null curriculum – the ideas, concepts and values left out (that could be included); and (d) Hidden curriculum – reflexive aspects of what teachers say and do (e.g. non verbal communication and/or unconscious messages related to speech, action and organisation). In effect, it is difficult to unpick the effects of the hidden curriculum from other aspects of the functional curriculum.

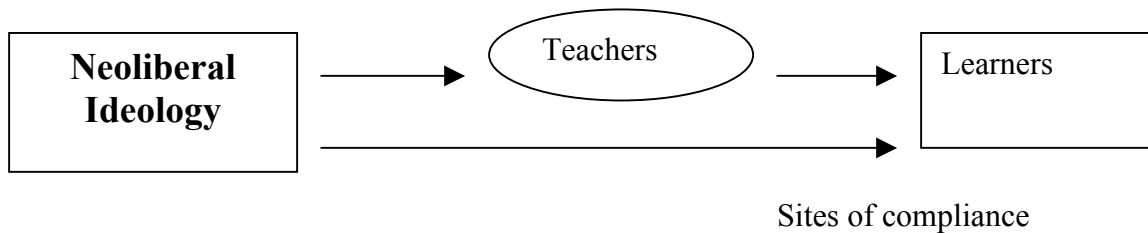
Kirk (1992) emphasised the interweaving of all four aspects of the functional curriculum to produce purposeful teaching and learning. To this end he saw the hidden curriculum as including the domains of “...communication and meaning making, in a symbol world of action, gesture,

intonation and sound” (p.42). Kirk goes further in linking curriculum to a pedagogical discourse by describing a discourse as “... the ways in which people communicate their understanding of their own and others’ activities and events in the world ... embracing all forms of communication ... whether intentional, conscious, unconscious, explicit, tacit or reflexive” (p.42). Furthermore, he describes an ideology as “...an arbitrary linking and fixing of formerly separate discourses in ways that seem natural and necessary and that have effects on social relations and power” (p.43). An ideology therefore appears inevitable and incontestable and actually frames our perceptions and thinking about the world. It also justifies “...particular political, moral and social conditions and interests” (Sage, 1990 cited in Fernandez-Balboa, 1993, p.230). It is through these kinds of mechanisms that students tacitly learn and internalise norms and values representing the private interests of the dominant groups in society (Fernandez-Balboa, 1993, p.232; Apple, 1985).

The idea of a dominant ideology that pervades reality is not new. For instance Karl Marx identified that initially the ideas (knowledge) of the ruling classes would become the ideas of all and accepted as right and just. Foucault (discussed in Rouse, 1994) links knowledge to power and purports that new methods of power are much more likely to be embraced locally and beyond the formal apparatus of the state. While a teacher is focussing on teaching to the formal curriculum that reflects the dominant ideology, it is through the hidden and covert curricula that the messages are rearticulated to reinforce or resist the ideology.

The relationship between an ideology, the teachers and the learner is presented in simplistic fashion on Figure 1. In a situation where there is an unknowing workforce (Saul, 1997), both teachers and learners are unaware of the true nature and agenda of the ideology and hence unwittingly recreate the dominant ideology through all aspects of the functional curriculum. However, when the teachers in particular become aware of the true nature of the ideology, and question the efficacy and inevitability of it, the hidden curriculum can become a covert curriculum and the pedagogical situation becomes a site of resistance to the dominant ideology.

(a) False consciousness



(b) Growing consciousness

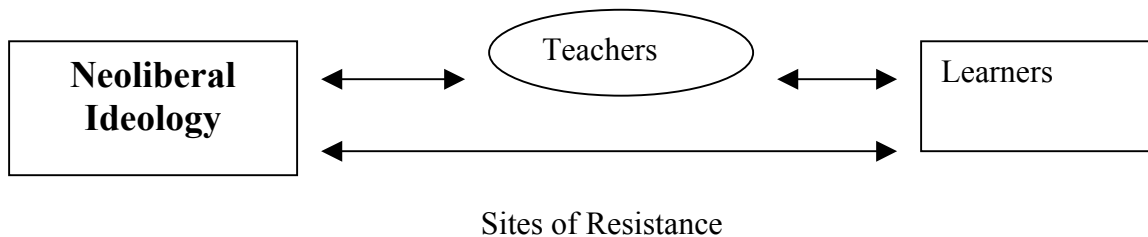


Figure 1: Who Influences Whom?

The dominant ideology – Neoliberalism

The Neoliberal ideology is based on economic values being paramount in the running of society. The free market model is promoted as being the organisational principle for all aspects of social life including health, education and welfare. In order to optimise economic growth it is seen that the ultimate goal for an individual is maximisation of his/her satisfaction through the consumption of goods and services. To this end society is seen as a collection of self interested individuals all ...”making choices that will benefit themselves.” This means “...independence, not interdependence is the new social and moral order.” (Ballard, 2002, p.19). This economic ideology neglects human needs for stability, social networks and a sense of community and could not be considered to be the ultimate determinant of human welfare.

Consistent with an ideological belief that we are motivated primarily by self-interest is the implication that we are not to be trusted. Hence, relationships become written and contractual with a language of contracts, charters, strategic plans, objectives, training competencies and the like that create a field day for managers, accountants and lawyers through compliance, litigation, liability laws and actions. We are “...watched and endlessly reviewed, assessed and audited to ensure the purchaser gets maximum and quality benefit from the provider” (Ballard, 2002, p.19). To this end, educators are operating in a corrosive and low trust environment and have become the managers of learning outcomes.

People are constantly encouraged to consume and are increasingly influenced by the globalisation of goods, money, services, technologies, corporations, people and values that transcend traditional national borders. The media saturates people with a diet of images, goods and lifestyles all of which promote consumption. For instance, it is not possible to separate adventure activities and ecological tourism from trade, finance, lifestyles and images. Traditional outdoor activities have become commodities for sale on the market (Loynes, 1995), and are also used as desirable images by which to sell unrelated products. Technology has bedevilled our activities

with some real advances being made to produce safer and better gear (always more expensive) but now coupled to situations where it is difficult to determine advancement from fashion.

Outdoor educators as agents of the State

I would now like to ask you to focus on your own practice and ask yourself the question: To what degree am I a purveyor of the hidden curriculum of the neoliberal ideology of the state? Are you happy about that? I want to focus on these questions by looking at the two photographs used earlier.

The self-interested individual

Is this a group of individuals or a team? What has each individual achieved? How many learning outcomes have been achieved? Is the group just an organisational factor? Is this a one-off adventure experience? How many aboriginals are here? Are we actually on top of the environment? I wonder what my girlfriend is doing? How can I progress a bit faster? How can I get Mum to buy me a new ... Now if could get unit standard 6931! What's for dinner? When I get back I must... Jim's got a nice bum! How can I get out of service? I'd love to go parachuting up here. This would be a great place for a few tinnies and a Barbie. I'm the strongest in this group. If only we didn't have ... to slow us up. It would be faster to just get a chopper in here.

We are not to be trusted

In what ways am I accountable for these students? What are my lines of accountability? What can I write in my report? Who is in charge? Do they have the right qualifications? Is the programme accredited? Have I done my RAMS form? Will the institution stand by me if things go wrong? What learning outcomes can be ticked off?

Individuals as consumers

Whose got the latest gear? That's a nice camera. Whew, the latest Lowe Alpine pack. A new blue foam cell pad! My hat is right up there. I'd love a MacDonaldis. What's on at the movies? Now if the Brumbies beat the Crusaders... On Playstation Two...

(d) Market organisation

Could I set up this wee trip as a private operation and make money on the side? Will I get a career out of this? How are my clients doing? Are there any ways to save money and make more profit here? Can we get them here faster? Can I skip some progressions and still get the same learning outcomes? Can we use this photo in our school advertising brochure? Shall I join NZOIA or EONZ (ORCA & AOEC)?

Conclusion

By buying into the curriculum structures promulgated by neoliberalism we are conscious and unconscious purveyors of the ideology. If we are embracing the ideology then our hidden curriculum will be reinforcing that worldview. Alternatively, unease with neoliberalism will be reflected in the hidden curriculum, hence mixed messages to students. The outdoors could therefore be considered a site for the embracement or the resistance of neoliberal cultures and commodities. Economic interests are recreated in localised cultures in conjunction with individuals' philosophies and interests. In this way, awareness of the neoliberal ideology can lead to the hidden curriculum becoming the covert curriculum and change being consequential.

An example of resistance is New Zealand Maori who have not bought into the individualised adventure activity industry. Rather, leisure and activity patterns reflect considerable involvement in family and group based activities that promote a sense of community (Thompson, Rewi &

Wrathall, 2000). It is possible that cultural codes are resisting the dominant white power structures. As a member of a number of professional outdoor associations we have had continuing concerns about the low participation rates of Maori in our organisations and have taken many steps to increase membership. Is this the hidden curriculum at work?

Williams (2001) examined the inconsistencies between teachers' philosophies of outdoor education and the philosophies of the unit standards promulgated by the New Zealand Qualifications authority. She found that one teacher fully embraced the new ways and converted his course so the students could gain more credits. However the other three teachers in her study manipulated their content so credits could be obtained but their personal philosophies were less compromised. This incongruence undoubtedly places pressure on individual educators. This is exemplified in the chat room statement from Jonesy (2002, p.2) on the adventurepro.com web site: "I can no longer justify the imbalance between what we claim we are doing and what my beliefs and philosophies really are."

On another level, an examination of the null curriculum reveals some important omissions from our offerings. Where are the focussed components that promote creativity, social cohesion, social harmony and community development? Why not reintroduce service learning? Perhaps the signs are there for change, by challenging the dominant ideology, demystifying the hidden curriculum, developing a covert curriculum (hence a new hidden curriculum) and examining the null curriculum.

Part D:

My Subversive Self:

A Confession from a Crooked Outdoor Educator

John Maxted

Introduction

All education is ecological education... It requires breaking free of old pedagogical assumptions, of the straightjacket of discipline-centric curriculum, and even of confinement in classrooms and school buildings. Ecological education means changing... the substance and process of education contained in curriculum... and most important, the purposes of learning.

David Orr, 1994

Should the pedagogical process in outdoor education ever be anything but subversive? Are we being subversive if our personal ideologies underpin our teaching philosophy and practice? This 'confession' promotes a (hidden) curriculum of subversion in outdoor education as both ethical and necessary: for our students' collective future living on a healthy planet, and for our own professional sanity. Academics have typically referred to 'hidden curriculum' as those socio-political and other socialised influences that are invisible to the educator and which subconsciously infuse our practice. I would argue that regardless of our depth of social and political consciousness the very constraints of our education 'system continue to impart undue influence, and that such influence continues to propagate a curriculum of consumption and a separation of person from planet. Outdoor educators must resist such 'scholastic enslavement', as libratory educator Adam Curle so eloquently puts it, and promote a new ecologically-centred meaning for our work. This requires a 'hiding' of the stated curricula and challenging (read

subverting) young minds with a curriculum of connection and action, to ensure that all (outdoor) education is indeed ecological education.

Education as Ecological

In 1992 Al Gore prioritised the rescue of the environment as the central and essential ‘organising principle for civilisation’, yet in the past decade mainstream education has continued to educate our youth as if nothing is inherently wrong ecologically. Most outdoor education, despite the direct experiences students may be provided with nature, cannot escape enslavement to the system. Bowers (1995) highlights the role of mainstream education in conserving the deepest and largely unconsciously held patterns of modern culture, and points to public school education as the primary site for reinforcement of such cultural norms and structures. Indeed for Bowers it is schooling that is central.

Whether we like it or not cultural and political influences surround School based outdoor education... national policy directives, institutional objectives, curriculum strands and emphases, instructional procedures and delivery frameworks all infer specific ways of teaching, instructing, guiding, leading or facilitating that inevitably point towards a generic cloning of the student. This is a hidden curriculum that emphasises corporatism and consumption. With rare exception we are immersed in a system that manages to equip our students and ourselves as more effective consumers. It is a system to which outdoor educators must resist the urge to both conform and confirm.

David Orr’s (1994) notion of all education being ecological education infers that we must authentically connect students with their natural selves and surroundings. As importantly it requires equipping students with the potential to do what we have been unable to achieve collectively in recent years: resolving fundamental ecological problems such as stabilising or reducing human population and significantly reducing western consumption. I concur with Orr in that as educators our effectiveness must surely be measured in the future by our students’ ability to resolve such important and fundamental issues. To be effective educators utilising this radical measure requires of outdoor education a serious rethink.

It is my view that teaching ‘outdoors’ definitely remains a profession of care and kindness, and that outdoor educators are genuine in their concern for their students, for the adventure areas they ‘work’ in, and also for the future of the planet. The time has come to follow a path with a heart and to resolve the tension between our environmental concerns and our teaching practices.

Avoiding a failed curriculum for outdoor education

Canadian educator James Raffan suggested back in 1990 that environmental educators were perpetrating a ‘failed curriculum’. His primary point was that programmes were not specific to local places and issues, and thus not influential upon the enhancement of either local or global conditions. Within outdoor, adventure education an immediate measure of our effectiveness must surely be the here-and-now and long-term health of the very environs we live on and travel through. And unless I am badly misguided and out of touch with practice, most outdoor programmes continue to operate without an ‘activeness’ for local places. Our curriculum as it currently exists needs to be hidden and replaced with a more authentic, localised, and ecologically-active pedagogy. It is time to get radical and avoid yet another decade of failed curriculum. It is time to subvert!

The notion of ‘teaching as a subversive activity’ is not new; indeed renowned social critique’s Neil Postman and Charles Weingarten published a book similarly titled back in 1971. There they strategise a radical rethink for education, asking such fundamental questions as ‘what is education for?’ and ‘what’s worth knowing?’ These are questions that have regularly been asked

through the ages, by many brilliant minds such as Emerson, Thoreau, Leopold, Bowers, Orr, and more recently here in Australia by colleagues such as Brookes, Chennery, Gough, Kiewa, Martin, and even Wattchow! Indeed there are some wonderful critical voices arising from Australia that promote alternative visions for outdoor education emphasising the socio-ecological and this is exciting. But there is a risk that these voices, like those of our ecologically-minded forbearers, shall not be heard. The challenge now is to allow these visions to permeate our educational practice in the face of the institutional constraints that we are challenged with.

To subvert, if I utilise the thesaurus function on my computer, could also mean to challenge, undermine, threaten or weaken. This is exactly what I am proposing – for outdoor educators to push far beyond the boundaries of curriculum statements and objectives that hide a culture of industrialisation and to instead replace these with a curriculum that is focussed upon the preservation and enhancement of the very places we educate in.

Stories of subversion

Passionate and committed teachers can only continue their pedagogy for so long when it is oppressive to the landscape. From my own experience, delivering an ecologically-shallow curriculum is similarly oppressive to oneself and one's spirit. Thus reconciling the tensions between one's personal ideology and teaching practice can be a revelation, and I would encourage this. Subversive teachings can also be inspirational...

My first conscious recollection of being 'subverted' as an outdoor learner occurred at the University of Alberta in the mid 1990's. I thank Professor Harvey Scott for his subtle, though (in reflection) direct strategies for placing outdoor education clearly within a socio-ecological and political context, and for gifting me a toolbox of alternative strategies for ecological consciousness-raising. His primary subversive strategy was to situate adventure experiences in local areas where he knew participants would come face to face with 'natural resource extraction' (yes, interesting language isn't it). In northern Alberta this was typically the 'harvesting' (read clear-felling) of vast tracts of native timber, and the exploration and extraction of natural gas and oil, often by highly mechanised multinational corporations. As the learners we were focussed upon adventure and somewhat blissfully unaware of the true issues at hand.

Adventure was Harvey's tool for exciting and connecting students to local plants, animals, and the joys of 'being' wild and free, and then to bringing us face to face with environmental devastation. These experiences typically spoke for themselves; processing was unnecessary. We knew too that Harvey was a 'greenie' and that the questions and the discussion that might arise much later would be designed to evoke and inflame, and also to pacify and to heal. Thus it was a remarkable winter and spring with Harvey: dog sledding and snow shoeing through Boreal forest destined to become chopsticks and chipboard pulp, Canoeing waterways blocked by hydro dams and polluted by pulp and paper processing plants, gathering primitive living skills next to a Lake soon to be denuded of the surrounding forest, and later sea kayaking a western shoreline and coming face to face with acres of stumps of a size all our group of ten could comfortably stand on.

In recent years, thanks to Harvey, I have been deliberately rebellious in some of my own teaching practices as a means to both challenge typically mainstream thinking and in an attempt to influence behaviours in the everyday lives of those in my charge. In a university this can, I tell myself, be justified as a form of encouraging critical thinking and acting. Here's a confessional tale by way of example...

The Matau (Clutha) River, NZ's highest volume waterway and third longest. A flowing constant through vast and diverse landscapes, draining a massive mountainous catchment, and travelling to the sea some 270 kilometres. On a personal level the Matau river flows through my veins. It is

an enduring series of places that haunts, hypnotises and awakens me, and is a source of inspiration and also the site of despair. I wish for my students to experience the moods of the river and to become the river when paddling and living with it. The Matau has been and continues to be central to a variety of human endeavour: food and crafting for traditional Maori, a source of hope (gold) for early European and Chinese prospectors, as a source of irrigation for orchards and more recently for millions of grape vines. The human impact upon the river is also massive: two hydro electric dams and seventy kilometres of reservoir (I hesitate to use the word Lake), four significant towns spewing treated human waste downstream of their water intakes, and endless dairy farms creating erosion and effluent issues. It is a wonderful river to witness the magic and mystique of nature and also the raw side of human influence.

Eight Physical Education students sign up for a source to sea journey of nine or ten days. An adventurous outdoor experience is what most are after and likely no one selects the course as a deliberate opportunity to enhance their understandings of Physical Education. The curriculum on the other hand suggests an opportunity “to experience, examine, and investigate human movement and physical education through the pursuit of open Canoeing”. My personal interest is the examination of the socio-political and ecological dimensions of adventure and education, and therefore I carry my own curriculum as an underlying current down the river. My pedagogy is saturated with pointed questions, micro-solo’s to deliberately ponder controversial notions, the sharing of deliberately biased songs, poems and other literature, and celebrations of past river travellers. Canoeing the river is a way for students to better ‘see’ and ‘know’ the river in the present and historic contexts, and to foresee its future. I want students to be exposed to the impacts of humanity upon the river, as well as paddling and living with a river that is sometimes wild and beautiful.

When I take students onto the Matau I deliberately want them to hate hydro dams during and after their paddling trip, to actively reduce their own electricity use, and to be politically active against the development of proposed future dams on the river. I seek to exploit the impacts of portaging around hydro dams upon the collective consciousness of a group. Knowing too well the immense anger and frustration portaging generates against operators of the hydro dams, I ensure that there is no vehicle support for the trip. There is little adventure in this process for students, despite the excitement of a river journey being a likely prime trip motivation. I am deviously excited about the very real opportunities for discussions around personal power use, of alternative energy sources, of the pros and cons of hydro electricity, the influence of fluctuating river levels that are not arising from natural processes upon fish species, invertebrate life and the natural maturation of the river. Operating well outside my ‘human movement’ brief I expect students to take a personal position on hydro electricity and my bias might likely be quite pervading and influential. My questions around what students might do beyond the course with respect to hydro electricity would likely be explicit and direct. I promote the many and varied opportunities for activism against further loss of the river to hydro electricity, sowing seeds for personal student action that is without doubt based upon my own personal and ecological ideologies and my desire to protect the river.

Is an alternative curriculum worth it?

I am excited by the idea of our next generation thinking deeply about their relationship with nature and how they shall ensure the future of their planet. I would imagine that as an educator attempting to promote such wisdom there exists the potential for lots of warm fuzzies, and so I encourage you to not waste a teachable moment. Yet there are also big chills associated with the promotion of action in opposition to the mainstream. In the mid 1990’s the Environmental and Outdoor Education Studies Curriculum (ENVOE), a wonderful integrated junior high school programme delivered by the Calgary Schools Board (Canada), was removed from their Schools

for political reasons. The programme was quite brilliant: relevant to local adventure spaces and largely undisturbed natural areas, involved outdoor pursuits and environmental field studies, investigation projects led from these endeavours, and ultimately a 'commitment to action' followed as its pinnacle. The Teachers were passionate, and the students obviously equally so, for inevitably the 'action' phase presented excessive exposure and heat to industry and business, and politicians intervened.

There are lessons to be learned here. Certainly it would not be wise for an action pedagogy ultimately leading students towards bulldozers armed with pliers and other destructive tools in an EarthFirst! / eco- sabotage response to an outdoor education programme. Perhaps the better response is summed well by Gould:

We cannot win this battle to save species and environments without forging an emotional bond between ourselves and nature as well – for we will not fight to save what we do not love. (in Orr 1994, p. 43)...

The real work lies ahead, and my gut feeling is emotional bonds shall be critical. Our workplaces often afford us opportunities to authentically connect students with nature, and it is imperative that we serious outdoor educators take advantage of such a platform of privilege. In the words of the Lorax (Suess 1971, p.56), "UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." But love will never be enough: Something must be done. Our programmes must speak for the trees and the rivers, for those special places, those open spaces, and our local places. For if we truly do care about our earth-home and our students then we must go out of our way to subvert their souls and hearts and minds, and for them then to act!

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Biography

Dr Mike Boyes coordinates outdoor education studies (undergraduate and postgraduate) in Otago University's School of Physical Education.

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The Heart of Outdoor Education's Contribution to the 21st Century

Peter Martin

What is the heart of outdoor education's contribution to the 21st century?

As a lead up to the last biennial outdoor education conference I completed a literature review concerned with how professions such as nursing and teaching had developed (Martin 2001). The model identifies different levels of concern, or facets, that professions consider in their development. Recall that the intent of professionalism within outdoor education was to improve the quality of service to enable protection of members (those working in the profession) clients (those with whom we work) and nature.

To quickly recap on the model (figure 1). A body of knowledge is developed from a motive of service or contribution which is in some way distinctive or unique to that field. The body of knowledge itself is developed via research and also through professional practice. Ethical behaviours are part of that professional practice. Professions also seek to maintain their body of knowledge and their ethical practices via some form of education, accreditation or registration system – it's the professions way of ensuring quality provision. Professions are also concerned about their members – sustainable work practices, appropriate public acceptance, remuneration and reward. In our culture how we reward differing professions seems to be a function of perceived worth, extent of education, supply and demand, as well as cultural factors such as sex or social traditions.

In retrospect I think the model describes best the aspects that combine to identify professionalism in a field rather than describe the developmental stages. In other words a description of the end rather than the journey. In OE we are not at the point of saying we are a clear profession – we may even be several different professions serendipitously clustered under the single notion of outdoor experience! There is contestation about the contribution outdoor education, in its various guises, makes to contemporary culture. The answer to a question enquiring as to the public good of outdoor education is hard to pin down, simply because it's not a question that has been taken seriously enough for long enough.

The 2001 Summit and it's lead up tried to explore the issues central to understanding outdoor education's place in Australian culture. It also tried to tease out what different sub-fields may exist within outdoor education. In retrospect, the tasks were not well framed and I'm aware that some participants at that conference left wondering what was going on. I hope I have learned something from that time.

In this paper I aim to provide a summary of what has been occurring in outdoor education over the past 10 years as a way to determine the heart of OE's contribution to our age – and in so doing provide some follow-up to the 2001 Summit. My thinking here is based on a belief that if we look at what is happening in the field of outdoor education, in terms of development of the body (or bodies) of knowledge, practice and other issues, then we ought have a window to help clarify emerging motives of service or cultural contributions. How we have been investing our energy in recent years should tell us much about what we value and see as a priority into the new century.

How has the body of knowledge been developed in outdoor education in the last 10 years?

Outdoor education's body of knowledge is developed via two primary pathways, research and practice. Research and practice are manifest in the sorts of articles people write, the programs

people conduct, in the curriculum material they produce, in the manuals and books that are published, and often through shared ideas via conferences or short courses.

Finding data to explore the practice of outdoor education is difficult. While I could hazard a guess about trends in outdoor education I wanted to gather more specific and trustworthy data. As a consequence I made three assumptions upon which this paper is based.

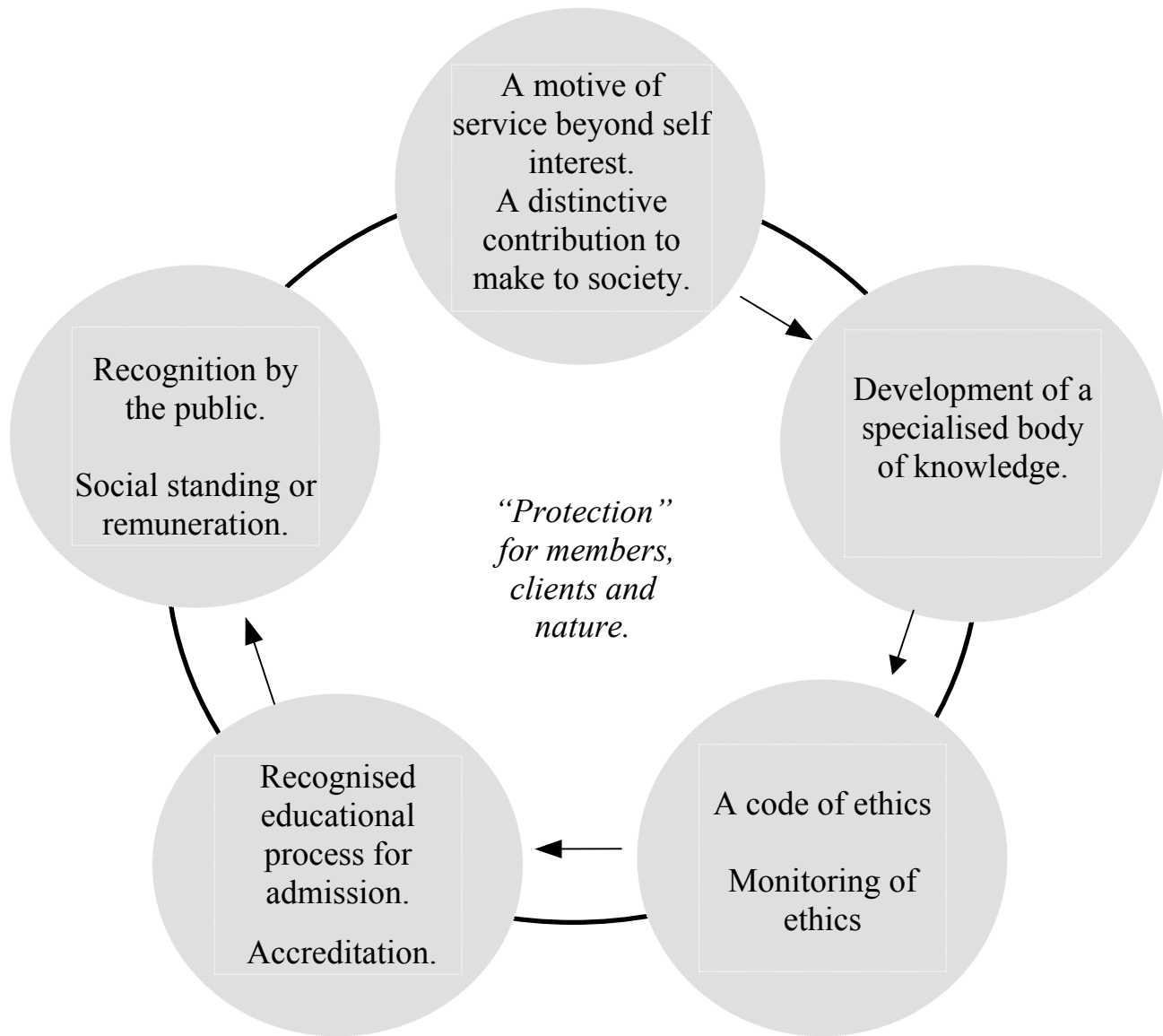
I assumed that national outdoor education conferences, such as this, ought to be good sources of information about what is happening in the field. What has been presented at national conferences in the last 10 years should tell me something useful about outdoor education priority and direction.

I assumed that the key journal in outdoor education in Australia is AJOE, and it also ought to be a good indicator of the field's contribution. AJOE was in fact, specifically established to further the body of knowledge in outdoor education.

Finally, I assumed that material available in the public domain which described school based curriculum in each State would also be useful in sketching in detail of outdoor education's contribution.

In the end I had a strategy to try to determine what outdoor education had been about over the past decade.

Figure 1. Signposts to a Profession



Analysis of National Conferences Since 1991

To try to get a picture of what might be happening in outdoor education I analysed the conference proceedings from national outdoor education conferences since 1991. I wanted see what conference presentations, as a whole, might say about how we have been developing our body of knowledge.

The method I used was simple. I looked at the official proceedings and coded each of the papers they contained – in the end six categories emerged from the data, but I could have equally divided these further into subcategories. To verify coding I had a colleague recode on the basis of the category attributes ensuring that variance was less minimal. Coding was based on the question: what is the main theme of the paper, what is it about? The categories included.

Table 1: Categories of Foci Within Outdoor Education Conference Presentations

Coded as	Including?
Personal or group development	Adventure therapy, personal growth. Corporate training, community, caring. Articles were clearly centred on personal or group issues often with special populations.
Outdoor skills or teaching of.	Knot tying, cooking, equipment advice, games. These sessions tended to be practical but also included discussion of teaching for skill acquisition.
Environmentally related topics or teaching of.	Issues included such things as: minimum impact discussions, relations with nature, environmental philosophy. Also coded here were sessions on gaining environmental knowledge or use of particular environmentally identified sites.
Staff welfare issues	Any issues which were concerned with staff health and wellbeing: Health, wages, staff burn-out, staff training.
Accreditation related	Leader accreditation registration schemes, camp accreditation.
Professional practices	Many papers were concerned with generic issues of importance for the field, but were not aligned to any particular content. Examples include: Facilitation, women's issues, curriculum descriptions, professionalism.
Risk and safety	First aid, risk management, emergency responses, legal implications.

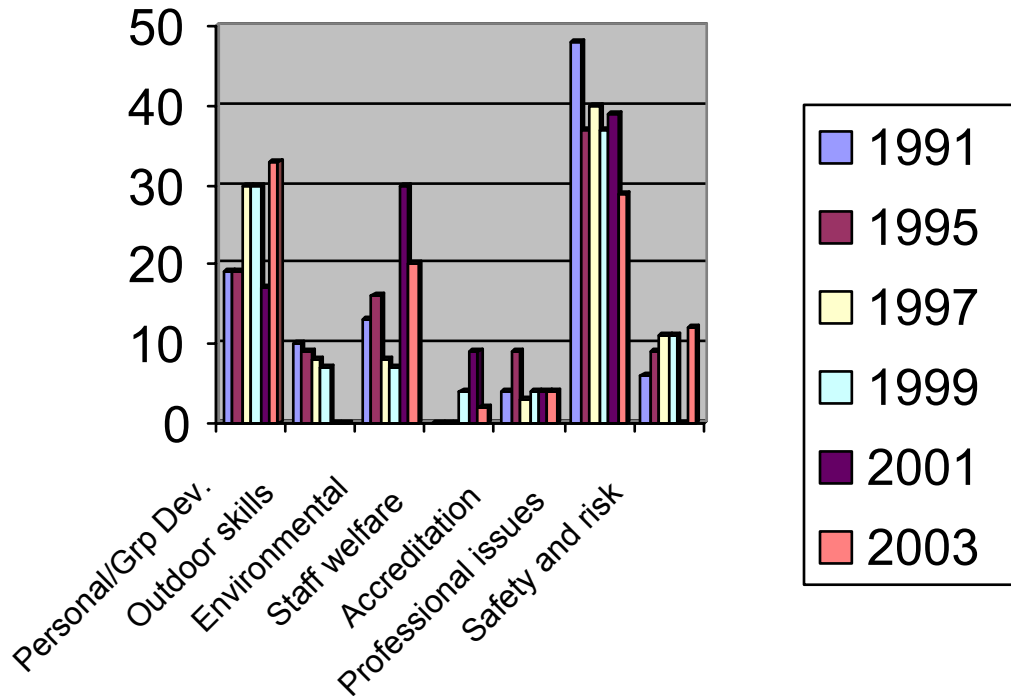
In analysis I chose to represent data as percentages. There is a problem in this as it can mask the small sample size, but percentages do allow me to compare different conferences. Conferences differed in their structure, themes and size, but the same range of sessions were evident in most of the six biennial conferences for which I had a source of data. (There was no material available from the 1993 conference in Bachelor NT., but I recall it was a small affair with few papers

presented.) To increase the sample I have included this 2003 conference, but my data source here is based on abstracts only, so must be seen as less reliable. In all there were 253 papers spread over the past six conferences hosted by five different States. See table 2.

Table 2: Percentage of Presentations at National O.E. Conferences by Category.

National conference	Personal/grp development /practices for.	Outdoor skill development / teaching of	Environment related & teaching of	Staff welfare issues	Accreditation related issues	Professional practices, no specific area, curriculum delivery	Risk and safety issues	Total number of sessions conducted
2003 SA Relevance	33	0	20	2	4	29	12	49
2001 Vic Sense of Place	17	0	30	9	4	39	0	23
1999 WA The human face of OE	30	7	7	4	4	37	11	27
1997 NSW Catalysts for change	30	6	11	0	2	40	11	63
1995 Qld Putting the outdoors back	19	9	16	0	9	37	9	43
1993 NT no data								
1991 Vic Quest for quality	19	10	13	0	4	48	6	48
Average	24.6%	5.3%	15.8%	2.5%	4.5%	38.3%	8.1%	(n=253)

Figure 2: Comparative Emphasis in National O.E. Conferences since 1991.
(Percentage of presentations.)



The sorts of things outdoor educators have considered important over the last decade are indicated in figure 2. My discussion here proceeds left to right in the figure.

Personal development aspects of outdoor education are consistently important as indicated by conference papers. At risk youth, development of community, corporate training – all have contributed to ensuring there is a steady development and sharing of idea within the personal and group development area. Interestingly within this area I noted, but did not quantify, a shift from corporate training foci of the early 90’s to more papers dealing with youth at risk in recent years. In terms of content, personal development is THE most important area if prevalence of conference papers is taken as a statement of importance. The interest in personal development papers has increased overall, other than a blip in 2001.

Skill development perhaps does not lend itself well to a conference setting and has been minimal in conferences to date – fair enough.

Environmental papers peaked in 2001, no doubt because of the conference theme – Our sense of place – but also I suspect that because the conference was conducted in Victoria environmental outdoor ed enjoyed a higher profile. It is worth noting that environmental papers have never been as common as those concerned with personal development,

except in 2001 a conference where paper presentations were reduced yet all the five keynotes had environmental content. That environmental papers are less prolific than personal development papers is an interesting point I will return to later.

Staff welfare, it seems, was not an issue 10 years ago. It was not until 1999 that burnout, wages, working conditions and specific training courses started to become the subject of formal papers at conferences – although I suspect there has always been elements of this in the informal chats between sessions.

Accreditation issues such as leadership registration or campsite accreditation schemes have always had a smattering of interest in conferences with the standard few papers outlining the latest proposals and schemes. There may be times when some of us would wish accreditation might stabilize, but the last 10 year's data suggests otherwise.

Professional issues were the main focus of papers at every conference in the last decade. Perhaps not surprising as a conference lends itself to that. The professional category was the depository for four main areas: facilitation techniques, women's issues, descriptions of curriculum and discussions of professionalism. These areas were all mostly concerned with *processes* related to teaching, rather than areas of content or what was taught.

Facilitation was consistently a significant part of every conference – debriefing, reflecting, models and processes. It is interesting to note that often sessions concerned with facilitation did not refer to what goals were being facilitated, preferring instead to be more general in scope. A generous conclusion here is that presenters preferred to encourage attendees to apply the facilitation to their own context as they saw fit – but it does beg a question about the universality of facilitation. However, I suspect that in the majority of facilitation presenters were talking of facilitation as applied to personal or group development rather than other areas – in effect I think this raises the popularity of the personal development category.

I included women's issues in this category as such papers were broadly about developing more inclusive curriculum. However, often they were bent toward personal development for women and could easily have been coded as personal development, again raising that aspect compared to others.

Descriptions of curriculum included papers about school based programs, offerings in different States, timetabling options, or other specific programs. Although areas of content were discussed by many, these papers often focussed about how the program was conducted. The papers in this group tended to suggest specific programs as examples, none were self critical in more than a passing way.

The final aspect of professionalism includes aspects such as ethics (a continuing theme) and outdoor education's place in curriculum - a minor but persistent theme.

So What do Past Conferences Tell Me About Outdoor Education's Body of Knowledge?

Professional issues dominate conference fare, with a focus on *how* rather than *what*. Although often not stated, the underlying assumption in many of these professional papers was that outdoor education was primarily concerned with personal development issues.

As a consequence of professional papers and specific sessions, outdoor education as personal or group development education is the major theme of outdoor education at conferences – and it hasn't changed over the past decade. (If you were to include facilitation and women's issues personal and group development would constitute about half of all conference presentations.)

- An interest in corporate training has lessened in recent years.
- Interest in adventure therapy or special populations use of OE is increasing.
- Environmental learning through outdoor education is ever present, but a lesser content contributor.
- Staff welfare has recently emerged as a more formal topic.
- Accreditation and safety are perennial issues of discussion at conferences.

While I commenced this review with a sense that outdoor education in Australia had shifted in its focus away from personal development and towards environmental contributions – if we can trust the spread of conference papers to be an indicator of the field's emphasis – this has not been the case. In fact there is only minor change of emphasis over the past 10 years – 'a steady as she goes' conclusion. A diversity of outcomes and issues remains a defining characteristic of outdoor education conferences nationally.

Perhaps my sense that OE may have shifted was as a consequence of what I see as substantial shift in Victoria over the past decade. Within the yr 11 and 12 Victorian Certificate of Education you find modules from the outdoor recreation training package, focussing on outdoor recreation skill development, offered as Certificate II. Also within the VCE is outdoor environmental studies – a merger of the old environmental studies and outdoor education subjects. I believe this is a signature subject for outdoor education in Victoria and most illustrative of the changes in OE curriculum in Victoria over the past decade. In addition, when I looked at last year's State VOEA conference I found that environmental topics constituted 33% of sessions, the highest of any category. Environmental sessions outnumbered personal development sessions by over four to one in last year's Victorian State conference – this is totally at odds when compared to the national trends described above.

Contribution of Research

At the outset I suggested that past conferences could indicate OE's body of knowledge. The body of knowledge also comes from research – in many respects research is a primary vehicle for substantiation and innovation within a field's knowledge base. Research is important as it is deliberate in attempts to ensure trustworthiness and validity. Outdoor education has been susceptible to preaching from, and to, the converted, in this respect good research is a way to address such claims of narrow thinking.

Within outdoor education in Australia I believe there are three main avenues for dissemination of research findings in ways which can impact upon and develop a field's body of knowledge: via conferences, in journals and through publication of thesis and dissertations. Journals and conferences (proceedings) are the most accessible to practitioners.

To follow this notion of research, I asked – “At national conferences over the last decade, how many of the papers have been delivered as a consequence of research, compared to papers coming from the literature or professional opinions?”

The first problem here is to determine what is research and what is not. Commonly research is thought of as empirically based – in other words it is when someone engages in collection and analysis of data. I did count empirical papers as part of research and that served as a key criterion. I also included papers which drew upon data, although may not have actually collected that data. However, another key criterion for determining research was the degree to which a paper was scholarly, reflecting analysis which was referenced to the literature. For example, the best papers from the professional category spoke about curriculum from the platform of education literature, rather than just the narrower outdoor education literature. So good literature based research was therefore evident. In the end it was quite subjective to determine if an article was based on research. (I didn't make judgements on the quality of the empirical based research.)

Research in Conference Papers

I omitted the 2003 conference from this analysis simply because it was impossible to make judgements about the basis of the papers without seeing the full text – so I reviewed 204 papers for this process (Table 3). Only 39 of the 204 papers were research based by my deliberations. However, it is clear that presentations based on research have steadily increased since 1991 to where they constituted over a quarter of papers presented in 2001. (The numbers are small and there was a slight drop in 2001, but I suspect that was again due to the nature of the Summit format.) See Figure 3.

Table 3: Presentations at National O.E. Conferences Based on Research.

National conference	Ratio of sessions based on research vs number presented	Percentage of research papers	% of Personal/grp development /practices for.	% of Outdoor skill development / teaching of	% of Environment related & teaching of	% of Staff welfare issues	% of Accreditation related issues	% of Professional practices, no specific area, curriculum delivery	% of Risk and safety issues
2001 Vic Sense of Place	6/23	26%	0	0	33%	16%	0	50%	0
1999 WA The human face of OE	8/27	29.6%	88%	0	0	0	0	12%	0
1997 NSW Catalysts for change	14/63	22%	64%	0	14%	0	0	14%	7%
1995 Qld Putting the outdoors back	7/43	16.3%	57%	0	14%	0	0	28%	0
1991 Vic Quest for quality	4/48	8.3%	50%	0	0	0	0	50%	0
Averages over all conferences	39/204	(19%)	60%	0%	10%	2.5%	0%	25%	2.5%

Figure 3: Percentages of conference research based papers 1991 – 2001.

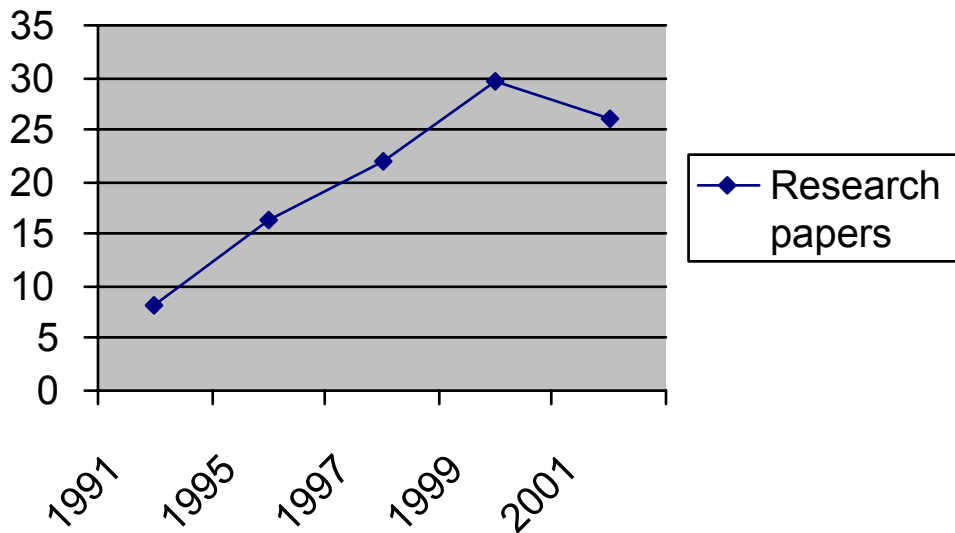
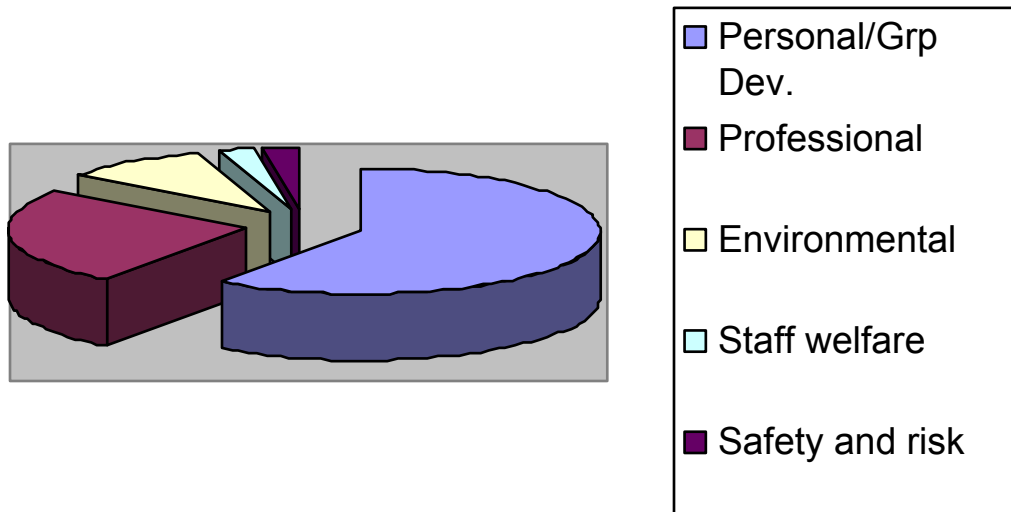


Figure 4: Focus of National OE Research Based Conference Papers Since 1991



The bulk of the research is being conducted in areas of personal and group development (60%). Professional issues such as investigating facilitation or program outcomes as a whole constitute 25% of the research, while environmentally related research accounts for 10% of research papers. Safety and staff welfare have been the

subject of only one research based paper in the last 10 years of conferences while accreditation, and outdoor skills have not been topics discussed from a research perspective.

Research in Outdoor Education Journals

The other most accessible form of research for developing outdoor education's body of knowledge comes from Journals. I have concentrated here on the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education, first published in July of 1995. Since then 14 editions have been produced. As an edited journal AJOE was published six times between 1995 and Feb 1998 after which it became fully refereed. Under Tonia Gray's editorship eight journals have been published up to 2002. Table four summarises the content of the articles under the same categories as employed in the review of conferences. (Once AJOE became a refereed journal I excluded non-refereed articles from analysis.)

Case studies were included as research if careful analysis of the case data was evident. Again determining what is research and what is professional opinion is difficult. I have included all empirical studies and analysis of data not collected by the author.

Table 4: Percentage of Papers Published in AJOE by Category (n=73*#).

Vol. and Year of publication	Personal/grp development /practices for.	Environment related & teaching of	Staff welfare issues	Accreditation related issues	Professional practices, no specific area, curriculum delivery	Risk and safety issues	Total number of papers published	Research based articles
Vol 6 #1-2	2	1	2		6	1	12	PD = 2 Prof = 2 Welfare = 2
Vol 5 #1-2	7#	4			2		12	PD = 2 Prof = 2
Vol 4 #1-2	6*	2			5	1	12	PD = 3 Env = 2 Safe = 1
Vol 3 #1-2	7	1	2	1	2	1	14	PD = 5
Vol 2 #1-3	5	2			4	1	12	PD = 4 Prof = 1
Vol 1 #1-3	2	1	1		5	2	11	PD = 1
Average/vol.	4.8	1.8	0.8	0.2	4	1	Total =73	Total = 27

* Two of these papers were *also* included as environment related, both were research based papers.

One of these papers was *also* included as environment related.

Figure 5: AJOE articles based on research by category.



Conclusions with Respect to Research in AJOE.

In all the number of research based articles appearing in AJOE is small, only 27 out of 73. While I could have included more professional articles as ‘research’, I erred on the side of caution. What constitutes a research article if it is not empirical, not based on data, is its scholarship. To really determine scholarship requires that the article looks to particular reference points inside and outside the field. Unfortunately very little of the writing in outdoor education looks outside the field. In many cases quotations drawn from other sources were used only because someone else had said a similar set of words and they sounded nice, rather than references to other sources being part of the critical evaluation of professional opinion. Many professional papers referenced quite narrowly. AJOE can be the major vehicle for sharing and developing outdoor education’s body of knowledge, but it still needs to be able to draw on a pool of good quality material and this relies on the existence of people actually engaged in researching outdoor education.

However, there are clear indicators in the material I reviewed.

- The proportion of material coming from research based investigation in OE is steadily growing (but still tiny).
- The bulk of research work is in the area of personal and group development – mostly seeking to examine claims of effectiveness.
- The emergence of staff welfare as an issue has done so as a consequence of deliberate research efforts to try to identify factors discussed anecdotally within the field for years.

- Despite considerable expenditure of resources on accreditation related schemes in Australia, there is no research investigation of these ideas or practices (I note Andrew Brookes' paper on safety at this conference as a timely exception).

Where else might OE research be published?

I sought to look outside the outdoor ed field to see if there is research being published about outdoor education elsewhere. The brief answer is no. In the last ten years the Journal of Environmental Education published a couple of articles you could interpret as concerning outdoor education – the bulk of the others of course are about environmental ed – but the dialogue between the two fields is weak. There is a recent article in The Journal of Curriculum Studies, but not much else besides. There are articles by Australian's appearing in international journals such as the USA's Journal of Experiential Education, or the UK's Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning. However, basically there just isn't much work being done by Australian authors which is published elsewhere. (I'll add a caveat here as I didn't search for adventure therapy material that may be appearing in journals from other areas or countries, but I suspect the number there is small also.)

The research base for outdoor education theory and practice in Australia is tiny. I won't dwell here on the importance of developing a research culture within outdoor education, except to say that credible claims of outdoor education can only come from carefully constructed research which seeks to ensure validity and trustworthiness of data, analysis and conclusions – open to scrutiny by the unconvinced and sceptical. I would encourage all to visit James Neil's website <http://www.wilderdom.com/research.html> to get a feel for the broader range of research related to outdoor education and to consider the range of reasons he presents as to why research is warranted in outdoor education.

School Outdoor Education Curriculum

There is one other area, beyond conferences and journals, which is adding to the body of knowledge for an outdoor education profession, and that is outdoor education in schools. What does school based curriculum tell us about outdoor education's body of knowledge – what do teachers think outdoor ed is contributing to schooling?

To answer this I looked at curriculum documents from different States, or research which had investigated this question directly.

(In states other than Victoria I risk misrepresenting any curriculum changes and nuances as I simply don't understand subtleties evident in the way curriculum is arranged. The following represents my best take on the emphasis evident in outdoor education curriculum around the country.)

Queensland has sought to embrace personal and group development, environmental and recreation aspects via mapping against Key Learning areas, predominantly in Health and PE and Studies of Society and Environment. Outdoor education is envisaged as contributing to outcomes for the environment, personal discovery, community, and outdoor activity (OEAQ 1998).

NSW curriculum includes outdoor recreation as part of PE. Outdoor education is not a formal part of the curriculum. (Hearne & Gray, 1997)

Western Australia has OE appearing in the learning area of health and PE, but enjoys only a small mention. Ironically however, outdoor education is not always part of the PE department. It seems therefore, that OE exists in schooling as a consequence of the innovation and enthusiasm of teachers, often as cross curricula syllabus (Jaeger & Harvey, 2001). The outcomes pursued by OE in WA are therefore specific to individual programs and vary as a consequence.

Tasmania has included adventure education as a year 11 and 12 subject under the Health and PE learning area. The content embraces personal development outcomes and includes recreation and environmental skills as appropriate for participation in outdoor activities (Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board 2002). Programs at junior school levels vary on the outcomes sought depending on the staff involved.

South Australia has outdoor education in some form or another in most schools. Mainly taught by physical education teachers, outdoor education is directed mostly towards personal and group development outcomes and as a curriculum area is most strongly linked to physical education. However, teachers of outdoor education while considering environmental outcomes to be moderately important, tended to not see this as something approached via outdoor education. (Polley & Pickett, in press).

Victoria includes outdoor education outcomes in a way similar to Queensland by mapping against key learning areas. OE also appears in the VCE yr 11 and 12 as Outdoor Environmental Studies, where a clear focus is upon environmental outcomes derived from practical experiences of place. Like S.A., teachers of outdoor education in Victoria consider the primary outcomes of outdoor education to be those related to personal and group development. Those who have completed tertiary qualifications in outdoor education rate environmental outcomes far more highly than teachers without such qualifications (Lugg & Martin 2000; Lugg 2001).

I have not been able to locate curriculum details for the ACT or NT.

So?

While there is diversity on curriculum offerings and content taught, the general focus of outdoor education in Australian schools matches that of conferences and journals. School outdoor education is most strongly directed towards personal and group development outcomes in all Australian states. There is however, considerable variance in the importance of the natural environment.

The role of outdoor education in contributing to environmental learning or environmental action outcomes varies from State to State. In NSW I found no formal environmental outcomes pursued via OE. In Tasmania, environmental learning exists as a means to minimize the impact of adventure activity participation. In Queensland, Victoria and I think SA, outdoor education has been mapped against environmental outcomes in other learning areas. In Victoria, environmental outdoor education has been created as a separate subject area.

Conclusions and Directions for the 21st Century

I am reminded of something Alison Lugg, quoting Nicol (2002), included in her paper at this conference.

... it appears that outdoor education has "evolved" into what it is more by chance than design. Consequently philosophical debate proceeds in defence of what has always been done... In this respect outdoor education shares with mainstream education a philosophy which is more likely to be a reinforcement of the status quo than a visionary pedagogical endeavour.

If the data I have presented accurately reflects outdoor education's body of knowledge as it has emerged via conferences, through research and through school curriculum then the answer to my initial question is clear.

Outdoor education is primarily concerned with issues of personal and group development. Given that outdoor education would not have any sort of mandate or monopoly on personal development, outdoor education could therefore be seen as a *process* of learning rather than a distinctive body of content knowledge. The professional knowledge base then, is one of how to teach rather than what to teach. The content that flows as a consequence of this, is that related to participation in outdoor recreation activities – although I note Alison Lugg has at this conference questioned the logic of activity choices. The conclusion that outdoor education is a process of personal/group development grounded in outdoor recreation activities reinforces the belief that outdoor education exists as a subset of physical education.

To briefly follow this conclusion along the professional pathway, leads inevitably to accepting accreditation centred on outdoor pursuit competence and facilitation techniques. The recognition community outdoor education then receives becomes a function of how convinced the sceptical public may be about its potency for personal and group development when compared to other such processes, like the performing arts or community programs.

I applaud the work and goals that outdoor education as a process has achieved with special populations – and no doubt such work will continue to be achieved and process knowledge will continue to be refined and more widely applied – but I can understand how outdoor education becomes marginalised when times are tough. There just isn't enough convincing substance to outdoor education as a process for personal and group development – especially when you consider the field has only published 17 research based articles in the last 10 years in its primary professional journal.

But is there something else besides? I suggested earlier that few published papers were critiques – most are advocates for a particular approach rather than seeking to position outdoor education's contribution within a more expansive curriculum or social debate. I am left wondering what directions are open for outdoor education to become truly visionary in its contribution to 21st century Australian culture.

In personal and group development outdoor education, arguments and research needs to ensure that dialogue takes place within the broader social framework. Outdoor education's claims need to be heard in forums that consider issues such as youth suicide, drug abuse, increasing child obesity, or decreased physical activity. If outdoor education is a potent process then let it be heard in the professions where such issues are being debated. To increase its relevance, outdoor education needs to position itself directly with respect to these mainstream social issues. I believe that adventure therapy is beginning to do just that.

There is another contribution for outdoor education.

Outdoor education as education for sustainability is the whispered claim for the new millennium. At least in Victoria, there is a growing body of research and discussion that suggests outdoor education ought be more concerned with issues of environmental sustainability than individual or group development. Or further, that personal and group development is a central part of the broader context of education for environmental sustainability. While much of this can be traced to tertiary academics (myself implicated here) the ideals have been instilled in school curriculum and at State conferences.

If outdoor education is conceived as education for sustainability the body of knowledge moves beyond processes and outdoor recreation, to understanding human/nature relationships. The body of knowledge here differs from environmental education in that it is located in the lived experience of place, in direct and ongoing understanding of how the natural world enables health, action and thought. Accreditation would be significantly different in this view of outdoor education – it would focus more on contextual knowledge of place, on understanding local environmental interactions and activities and knowledge appropriate for those local environments. The universality of knowledge is questioned by this notion of outdoor education. I have previously refereed to this form of outdoor ed as critical outdoor education (Martin 1999b).

Public recognition of outdoor education as education for sustainability would largely rest on claims of effectiveness against environmental education, and the degree to which society has understood the need for environmental concern.

Conclusion

To begin to conclude I offer a few insights from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

- Australia's energy consumption increased in the last 10 years by 23% while our population only increased by 10%.
- Our energy consumption per capita is among the top 5 most consumptive nations of the world, and growing.
- We are using less renewable energy sources now than we were 10 years ago.
- We are less concerned now about environmental issues than were 10 years ago despite our worsening environmental impact.
- It is young Australian's 18 to 24 who are declining most in their interest in environmental issues.

(ABS 2003: <http://www.abs.gov.au/>)

I believe outdoor education as process for personal and group development, and critical outdoor education for sustainability can co-exist and be mutually supportive – recognising how each contributes to human and environmental futures is an imperative for our field. Recognising how the field is composed of similar yet different groups is compelling and needs to be clarified before ethical and accreditation issues can be resolved.

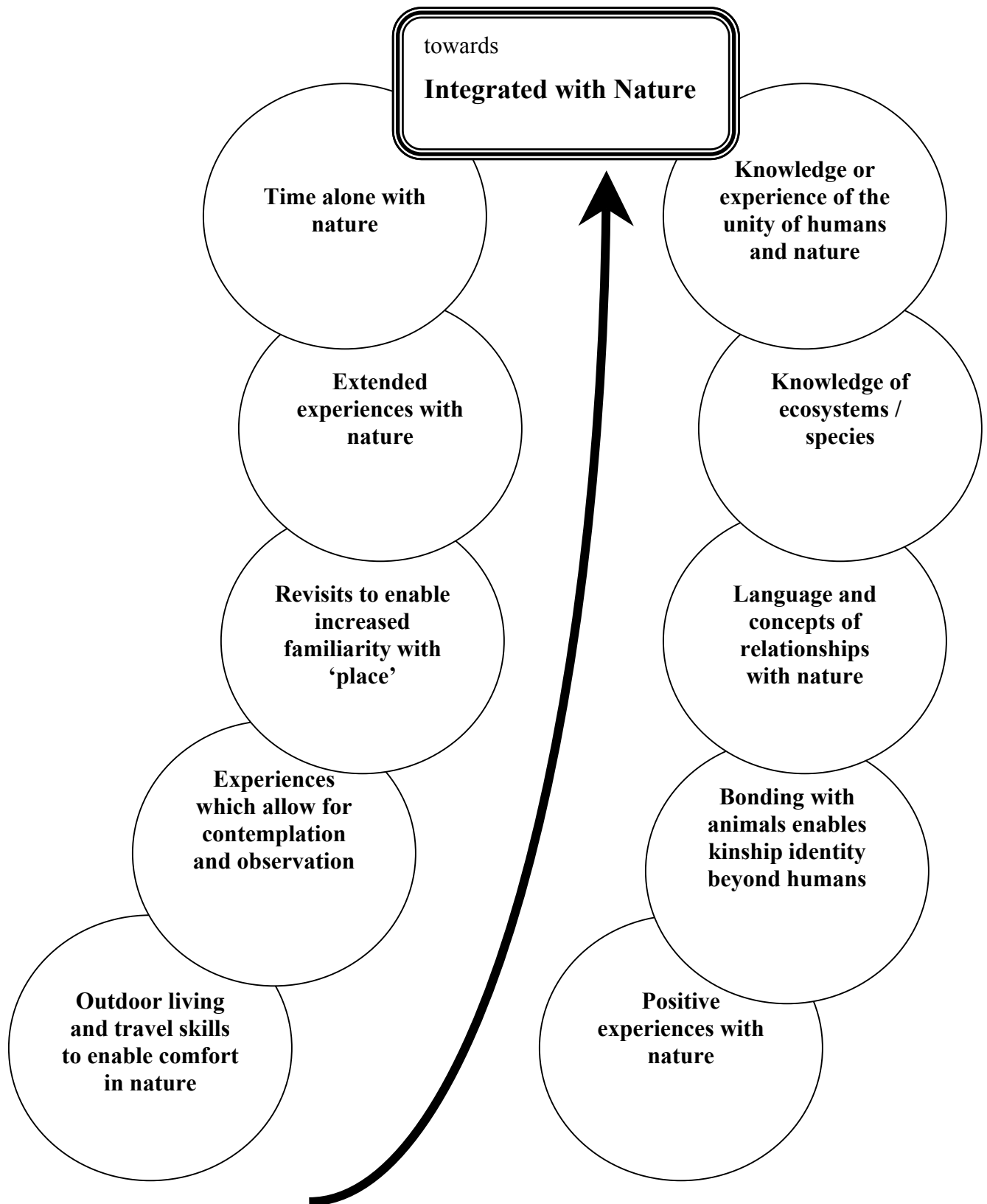
I'll conclude with a key finding from my own research into how students develop more environmentally sustainable beliefs and practices through involvement in outdoor education (figure 6) (Martin 2003). You will note the important role here for both personal development outcomes and outdoor recreation as *a means to know yourself and the place to which you are introduced*. It is my contention that critical outdoor education builds upon the lessons of outdoor education as personal and group development in this way.

In schooling and Australian culture to date we have been fixated on understanding the natural world through rational ecological science. Clearly this has told us much about how environments work and is essential in future relationships humans develop with the Earth. But equally, such knowledge is not enough to ensure we live well *with* the Earth.

The heart of outdoor education's contribution to the 21st Centenary is recognizing that the heart matters.

Rational scientific ecological knowledge must blend with heart felt emotional knowledge of nature; knowledge derived from *direct personal experiences of place* if we are to prosper as a species and culture. Outdoor education is beginning to remember how to connect people with place. I say 'remember' here because it is knowledge we once knew prior to the technological age and development of universal context free knowledge. Today, outdoor activity is a primary way in which Australians can understand and encounter the natural world. I believe we are the primary professional education body poised to enable people to understand the importance of connections to nature. Outdoor education can lead to personal and cultural insight into the integrated relationship humans have with the natural world. That this is understood and acted upon is the ultimate good of outdoor education, and its gift to the future. Personal and group development then, it a stepping stone to greater insight and environmental sustainability.

Figure 6. The Ecology of Influences on Relationships With Nature



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Addendum - Why is research necessary?

From James Neill's website <http://www.wilderdom.com/research.html>

Where do you sit here?

-1. Active disinterest or intentional non-engagement with research and evaluation due to fear or misunderstanding.

0. Denial or non-awareness that research and evaluation could be a potentially valuable option.

1. The lowest level of motivation for actually conducting research and evaluation takes place when a person or organization is forced, such as being required by a funding agency.

2. An organization may seek out research and evaluation, but do so primarily for marketing and funding purposes.

3. An organization may seek to find out more about their program through research and evaluation because they genuinely want to learn about and improve the quality of the program.

4. An organization may conduct research and evaluation not only for program improvement but also to contribute to the development of a profession or industry.

5. An organization may conduct research and evaluation primarily for the sake of humanity and the cosmos. (Neil 2002 <http://www.wilderdom.com/researchresearch.html>)

Biography

Peter Martin is a lecturer in outdoor education at LaTrobe University, Bendigo.

Section 4:
Non-Peer Reviewed Presentations

Hasty Search and Rescue Principles

Rob Brittle

Hasty Search

a search is an emergency!

All search and rescue operations follow four basic steps:

1. Locate
2. Access
3. Stabilise
4. Transport

Every lost person scenario will be different, as a guide/leader you may be involved in one or all of the steps.

Locate

We will talk about “locate” from the point of view of:

- limited person power
- limited specific training
- limited resources
- the thought processes that a program co-ordinator or group leader might consider.

Why is a search an emergency?

More time= greater the search area

How fast do people move?

1km travelled= 3.1 km circumferential area

3km= 28.3 km square search area

“Hasty search” small teams/ independent/ fast moving. Search while the clues are the freshest.

“Search is the classic mystery. All of the clues are available, and the solution is reachable if the right questions are asked.” Dennis Kelly

Search for clues, not the person. Trackers say a person leaves thousands of clues for every kilometre.

Information gathering skills are key. Asking the right questions, making some predictions about a lost persons behaviour and being an observant searcher can reduce search area.

Information gathering

Record all information gathered, this will reduce the possibility of inadvertently repeating the same actions over when help arrives.

Isolate the 'Reporting party' and question them

1. What general category does the subject belong? Student, hunter, child, climber. How strong are they and how experienced are they? What sort of terrain will they attempt to cover?
2. Point last seen (PLS) – mark as PLS. Go to this area and cordon off.
3. What are the general circumstances surrounding the persons disappearance? Angry, anxious, running away, content. What did they say they were going to do? Route plan for the next day?
4. Subjects' physical/mental health. Under the influence of drugs/alcohol. Asthmatic, diabetic, wear glasses and can't see without them?
5. Subjects personality type. How might they act when discover they are lost? Stay put or keep moving? Independent? Attitudes to leader?
6. Gear and clothing. How well dressed are they? Weather proofs? Colours? Shoes? Pack? Tent? Sleeping bag? Food? Matches? Knife? Medication? Rope, boat, pfd? Scent articles-into a plastic bag and preserve.
7. Persons physical appearance? Height, hair, build, distinguishing features.
8. Terrain surrounding Point Last Seen (PLS)? Natural catching features eg, rivers, cliffs, steep ridges, roads and areas of least resistance eg, paddocks, roads, trails, dry streambeds.

Divide areas of terrain surrounding into segments by noting easily discernable barriers, i.e. ridges/rivers etc.

Record your efforts

Try to avoid new searchers duplicating efforts.

Cross-reference terrain to information gathered in questioning the on Subject. Where are they most likely to go? Probable Location.

Rule

- People follow paths of least resistance
- Generally move downhill, not uphill, especially if steep
- Stop when it gets dark
- Weather forces shelter

Now we take into account what we see in PLS

Preserve it like a crime scene. Contains footprints – where do they lead?

Experienced people can track.

Draw a circle on the map 4.5km out from the PLS and one at 9km from PLS.

Possible location- statistical average half subjects are found inside a 4.5km radius of PLS and 90% of all subjects found within the 9km for typical Outdoor Ed terrain.

Naismith's rule:

For walking with average fitness and pack size:

1 hour = 5 km on road or open land

1 hour = 3 km easy off trail terrain

1 hour = 1.5 km rough, scrubby, sandy

1 hour = 500 m vertical gain

1 hour = 1000 m vertical drop

Worst case scenario

- Very young person
- Alone
- Known medical condition
- No experience or area knowledge
- Poor weather
- Little or no equipment
- Hazardous terrain

Confinement

Important to do this as rapidly as possible. Includes leaving notes at trail intersections or road heads, place sleeping bags, bright tarps etc, at attraction points- build fires or use lights.

75% of people are found through containment, not searchers.

If the person does not want to be found create "step beds" – clear ground of prints and check later. All tracks should be noted and recorded even if they don't match subjects' prints.

Flagging tape / toilet paper if dry.

Hasty teams

3-4 People who are independent search for clues not the person (there are many more clues than victims) making appropriate noises.

Footprints, clothing, broken vegetation, wrappers.

Move down the most likely route i.e. least resistance.

Absence of clues = no person = helps put the puzzle together fast.

Tips for hasty teams

Mobilise fast.

Send best searchers to areas of highest probability.

Establish communications prior to separating.

For example:

- a). Establish a central meeting point and allocate time for meeting there e.g. I'll search the creek line and meet you at the hut in 2 hours.
- b). Leave messages where possible as to intentions and when recorded and projected completion time.
- c). Cut off times – if we can't find the student by 2.00pm lets send for help. (It can take time to mobilise searchers. It is easier to call them off than expect them there to help within minutes after you make the call).

Resources to request

- Personnel- number, experience, fitness
- Food
- Water
- Shelter
- Vehicles
- Rescue equipment
- Activity specific equipment
- Injury specific equipment

Communications options

- Phones
- Radios
- Distress beacons
- Ground to air signals
- Runners
- Whistles/sirens/lights

Tips for having others find you

1. Stay in the vicinity where you first realised you were disoriented. If you explore possible routes to camp look back lots and mark a trail so you can backtrack to last point.
2. Conserve energy by relaxing while you can.
3. Signal – bright objects, smoky fires, making noises. 3 of anything means SOS.

4. Wander out and place markers or arrows pointing to your spot- geometric patterns easier to see.

Participant/client “lost” briefing

It is recommended to brief to all participants/clients before the program on what to do if they find themselves lost.

1. STOP – stop where you are (once you realise you are lost/alone)
2. STABILISE – sit down, rest, try to relax, work out what shelter, clothing, food, you have.
3. ADVERTISE – light small smoky fire, whistle blasts (3 blasts repeated), put ground sheet/sleeping bag up tree to attract attention.

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Rob Brittle is a facilitator for Wilderness First Aid Consultants.

Are wilderness-adventure programs effective for youth at-risk of offending?

Karen Heseltine, Phil Mohr and Kevin Howells

Abstract

Arguably there is an increasing interest in using alternative forms of intervention with at-risk youth. One such therapeutic approach is wilderness-adventure programs. Of concern, is the uncritical acceptance of the wilderness-adventure programs as appropriate and effective interventions. The aim of this paper is therefore to explore briefly this question of efficacy. In order to do this, the historical origins of wilderness-adventure programs will be outlined briefly, followed by a discussion of the empirical research with at-risk youth. An alternative evaluation methodology will be suggested.

Introduction

There is an increasing recognition that service providers need to identify and subsequently treat youth at-risk of engaging in a number of behaviours, including antisocial behaviours. For such youth, traditional “talking” therapies may have limited success. There is therefore a need to explore alternative forms of intervention that may reduce the youth’s level of risk, especially risk of criminal behaviour. One such intervention gaining popularity as a therapeutic tool for youth at-risk is wilderness/adventure-based programs. However, the question that is infrequently asked is - are these interventions effective? The aim of this paper is to explore briefly this question of efficacy. In order to do this, the historical origins of wilderness-adventure programs will be outlined briefly, followed by a discussion of the empirical research with at-risk youth. An alternative evaluation methodology will be suggested.

What are wilderness-adventure programs?

While this question may appear at first to be a straightforward one, the considerable ambiguity in the literature as to what constitutes an adventure-based program makes universally accepted operational definitions difficult to find. For the purpose of this discussion, a wilderness-adventure program is a multi-day, round the clock intervention in which a small group of individuals are taken to an isolated location. The group therefore operates as a self-reliant community. In addition, the program incorporates “adventure experiences” such as rock climbing, abseiling, which are designed to have therapeutic outcomes, possibly using metaphors and solution orientated paradigms to place the challenging nature of the task in a real world context.

Origins of contemporary wilderness-adventure programs

From its inception as camping with young people (circa 1850s), tent therapy with psychiatric patients (circa 1900s) and Outward Bound survival programs with seamen (circa 1930), the theoretical underpinnings of wilderness-adventure programs have been largely unarticulated. In addition, therapeutic change in some cases was an unexpected positive outcome and reports of change have been largely anecdotal or based on simplistic homilies. Despite the absence of a theoretical foundation or empirical outcome

studies, the intuitive appeal of wilderness-adventure therapy has led to their adoption with a wide range of client groups. The application to different cohorts often appears ad-hoc, with little consideration given to theoretical rationale for use with a specific client group, as is the case for at-risk youth.

Who are at-risk youth?

The meaning of the term “at-risk” warrants further examination. The literature contains a wide range of opinions of what constitutes at-risk, ranging from broad descriptors (i.e. troubled young people), variables outlining the nature of risk (e.g. at risk of family breakdown, violence, juvenile offending etc), or descriptions of the at-risk cohort. There is no single definition of what constitutes at-risk, therefore, for the purposes of the remainder of the paper at-risk has loosely been defined as a youth at-risk of engaging in antisocial/delinquent behaviours.

Theoretical underpinnings of wilderness-adventure therapy for at risk youth

Where attempts have been made to develop theoretical rationale, the central theme that emerges is that the environment is a mediator for change. This argument is somewhat complex, in that some theorists argue that the wilderness environment itself acts as primary catalyst. Others argue that the removal from the dysfunctional home environment is the mechanism of change. An alternative view is that the sense of community created amongst group members is responsible for positive outcomes. Yet others argue that, it is a combination of the environment, removal from the dysfunctional home environment and the creation of a therapeutic community. What is not developed adequately in theoretical discussions is the rationale as to why such programs should promote prosocial behaviours. This is of particular concern when there is an increasing interest in the use wilderness-adventure programs with at-risk youth.

What does the research tells us about the effectiveness of wilderness-adventure programs with at-risk youth?

There is a paucity of methodologically sound evaluations of wilderness/adventure-based programs. To date, the majority of articles addressing outcomes in an at-risk population rely on descriptive or reflective methods. It is not uncommon for the anecdotal accounts and speculative conclusions arising from these studies to be interpreted as fact and invoked, inappropriately, as proof of program efficacy.

There have been attempts to assess changes in recidivism as a result of wilderness-adventure program participation. However, this body of literature has yet to establish long-term changes in recidivism that can be attributed to participation in wilderness programs. The difficulty in using recidivism as a dependent variable has been highlighted in recent reviews. It is argued that recidivism is not an effective assessment of change in delinquent populations as the measure reflects the activity of the criminal justice system and not the level of criminal behaviour within the cohort of young people. Instead intermediate outcome measures, using standardised tools, should be the target of evaluation.

Targeting Intermediate Outcomes

The question that needs to be addressed is how can forensic psychological rehabilitation principles inform the development of methodology to evaluate wilderness programs. The answer to this question lies in recent advances in offender rehabilitation that has dispelled the myth that “nothing works” (e.g., Howells & Day, 2002; Day & Howells, 2000) and has led to the identification of the core tenets of effective offender treatment (Andrews & Bonta, 1994), which in turn inform evaluation methodology. In essence, these core principles address the questions:

Whom should we treat?

Given that resources for intervention are typically stretched, it is sensible to target our interventions at those who would most benefit – those at most risk of re-offending or antisocial behaviours. According to the Risk Principle, it makes little sense to target programs at those who are very unlikely to re-offend anyway – those of low risk.

How do we assess risk?

Risk assessment involves attempting to predict human behaviour. There are two ways of doing this: clinical and actuarial methods. Clinical assessment is based primarily on the professional’s judgement of the person’s likelihood of re-offending. Actuarial (statistical) assessments are based on empirically established correlations between a risk measure and recidivism. Research investigating the ability of both methods to predict recidivism clearly shows that clinical judgments of risk are significantly more unreliable than actuarial assessments. Scales intended to assess risk of re-offending have been developed, however the applicability of such scales for assessment of wilderness therapy participants has not to date been addressed.

What factors should we target in our rehabilitation efforts?

According to the Needs Principle, interventions should address factors about the person that are causally linked to offending behaviour. Such needs are labelled *criminogenic needs* and should be the focus of intervention if our goal is to change offending behaviour. The person may have other needs that are non-criminogenic or factors that have only a weak relationship to their propensity to become involved in criminal behaviour. Non criminogenic needs may include high levels of anxiety or distress. Where the main aim of the intervention is to reduce the risk of re-offending or the level of anti-social values, such an aim is achievable through the targeting of criminogenic needs: the dynamic or changeable predictors of an offender’s criminal behaviour. In contrast, directly targeting non-criminogenic needs – factors (such as self esteem or anxiety) that are not unequivocally related to offending behaviours – is unlikely to have an impact on recidivism.

How should we deliver programs?

The Responsivity Principle suggests that interventions will be more effective if they are adapted to meet the learning styles and general characteristics of the particular group being treated. In the context of a wilderness program, an example of a responsivity factor

may be a liking of camping. There is an absence of research looking into personal and program factors that may decrease the likelihood of treatment efficacy.

Criminogenic Needs as Intermediate Outcomes

The implications of the notion of dynamic criminogenic risk factors for the evaluation of wilderness programs are twofold. They are that criminogenic risk factors constitute both appropriate targets for intervention and appropriate indices of the effectiveness of intervention. Examples of criminogenic needs that may both be intervention and evaluation targets include:

- **Anger.** Aggression in childhood is positively correlated with adult criminal behaviour ($r=0.30$; Gendreau, Goggin & Little, 1996). The experience and expression of anger are thus considered to be relevant targets for and indicators of change.
- **Criminal attitudes and cognitions.** Although criminal attitude has been under utilised in the assessment of offending behaviours, it has been identified as one of the reliable predictors of risk of criminal conduct (Andrews & Bonta, 1994)
- **Classroom Behaviour.** Disruptive classroom behaviour can be assumed to be predictive of withdrawal from education and (indirectly) of future offending.

Intermediate Outcomes: What does the research tell us?

As criminal attitudes and beliefs are among the best dynamic predictors of risk of recidivism in an offending population they are, arguably, appropriate targets in the evaluation of wilderness programs for at-risk youth. To this end, there is an emerging body of evidence that examines changes in criminal attitude attributable to wilderness/adventure program participation. The results thus far are mixed. From our own research (Mohr, Heseltine, Howells, Badenoch, Williamson & Parker, 2001) it would appear that, consistent with the “What works” need principle, the higher need respondents (as determined by those scoring within a dysfunctional range) demonstrated significant improvement in attitudes toward the police, levels of neutralisation and levels of identification with criminal others.

Surprisingly, there is little empirical literature measuring changes in antisocial behaviours for at-risk youth. There has been a report of a significant reduction in asocial behaviours in participants attending a 30-day wilderness program compared with controls enrolled in a Big Brother Program. Our research using team leaders’ ratings of participant change over a 8-day wilderness-adventure program showed substantial positive change for participants over the course of the exercise, although these patterns should not be interpreted as evidence of success; rather they should be viewed as descriptive of the course of conduct within the exercise, as perceived by the team leaders.

Although the changes in self concept and related characteristics (e.g. self-esteem, self-confidence, self-efficacy and locus of control) have little utility as predictors of general criminal behaviours, such variables are routinely targeted in outcome studies with at-risk youth. The research findings are mixed with no clear pattern emerging.

Wilson and Lipsey (1998) conducted a meta-analysis of 200 experimental or quasi-experimental intervention studies with cohorts of serious juvenile offenders. As part of this evaluation, they calculated effect sizes for juvenile offender treatment approaches and attempted to control for between-study differences in method and procedure. Treatment programs that showed the least consistent evidence in reducing recidivism for non-institutionalised serious offender included wilderness/adventure programs (EF=0.07).

Limitations of research

A major limitation of the literature on wilderness-adventure programs is the scarcity of methodologically sound program evaluations. In essence, the literature is not theory driven, researchers often fail to describe what they are studying, standardised measures of change may not be employed, many studies are methodically unsound (lacking control or comparison groups, for example), have limited follow-up periods, and use inappropriate psychological measures of effectiveness.

Are wilderness-adventure programs effective for at-risk youth?

The use of wilderness-adventure programs as a means of effecting pro-social change in at-risk populations appears to have intuitive appeal. The origins of this appeal may be a function of the combination of exposure to nature, physical exercise, a change in environment, discipline, the opportunity to reflect, and the need to acknowledge and cooperate with others. For all that, the theoretical underpinnings for such approaches are frequently neither clearly articulated, well founded nor convincing. Similarly, the empirical evidence for their effectiveness tends to be compromised by methodological limitations and uncertain rationale for selection of outcome measures. Such theoretical and methodological limitations have resulted in uncertainties of program efficacy.

The efficacy of wilderness-adventure programs for at-risk youth may be able to be more accurately determined if researchers used dynamic predictors of recidivism (criminogenic needs) as dependent variables. In accordance with the need principle, such dynamic predictors or criminogenic needs would include antisocial personality traits encompassing symptomatology of conduct disorder (aggression both physical and verbal), antisocial companions, identification with criminal others, and attitudes and beliefs supportive of an antisocial lifestyle. Until such time that criminogenic needs are routinely employed as dependent variables, the question of whether or not wilderness-adventure programs are a suitable means of intervention for at-risk youth shall remain unanswerable.

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Biography

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Contemporary approaches to risk management in outdoor education – how relevant are they?

Rob Hogan

Abstract

Risk management in Australia is increasingly being influenced by frameworks derived from the 1999 standard AS/NZS 4360. Attention to participant safety in outdoor education programs may not receive the priority it should in such frameworks. For risk management frameworks to be relevant to the work of outdoor education program planners and leaders they need to be easily used, ensure identification of all risks that could lead to a fatal or serious injury, and lead to development of clearly defined and understood actions to reduce dangers. The Risk Analysis and Management System outlined by Haddock (1993) is one such model that could fit this criteria if modified to consider only risks that could lead to ‘death or disabling injury’. A short checklist of circumstances that could lead to such risks is presented.

Introduction

Responsible outdoor educators have paid attention to issues of participant safety since the field first developed, originally under titles such as *safety planning*. Over the last 15 years or so such titles have been dropped in favour of *risk management*. I initially thought that this was merely adopting more contemporary jargon for the same old concern, but applauded the introduction of formal frameworks for what had previously been largely left to intuition and following of proscribed procedures. In an earlier paper (Hogan 2002) I outlined two frustrations that I feel about these new and developing frameworks.

Firstly, the list of things considered *Risks* has grown well beyond issues of participant safety. The Australian and New Zealand standard AS/NZS 4360: Risk Management (Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand, 1999), now the primary source for formal frameworks across at least the public sector, in my view represents the endpoint of a gradual dilution of attention to identifying and avoiding serious harms. Risk is here defined as ‘the chance of something happening that will have an impact on objectives’ (Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand, 1999, 3). What might once have been called contingency planning is now risk management.

Secondly, the emphasis in risk management policies and frameworks seems to be protection organisations themselves. Here in South Australia the state education authority is now urging schools to develop formal risk management plans and has based its approach on AS/NZS 4360. The orientation to protection of organisations can be seen in this extract from an advertisement for a web-based risk management tool for schools.

The potential consequences of an inadequate school risk management program are significant – financial loss, decline in enrolments, loss of reputation, litigation, personal liability, damage to careers, injury and even death. (CLASSROOM™ 2001, DETE, 2001)

Sure, participant safety gets in there, but it seems to me very much tacked on the end.

I can now see, thanks to Brookes (in press), that I had completely missed an important point. The whole focus of what is now called Risk Management **IS** the protection of organisations. Brookes says

Risk management, originally developed as a means of limiting litigation (Vincent, 2001), bundles safety management with other considerations, such as loss of reputation or financial loss. Although one way to limit litigation is to prevent accidents, another is to become skilful at avoiding liability. Risk management, in other words, may only be about acting in the best interests of those in an institution's care while it is in the institution's interests to do so. It can mean actively working against the interests of an injured person, for example in attempting to deny them compensation for loss.

Relevance of contemporary risk management frameworks

Risk management practices in Australian workplaces and the content of most training materials will be very much influenced by AS/NZS 4360 and the frameworks for applying risk management that are developed from it.

I am unaware of any research that has examined the efficacy of any particular framework in actually minimising risk (however defined), so consideration of the relevance of any one model must be considered somewhat intuitively. It is also regrettable that we seem to only get feedback on a risk management process when it is seen to have failed. This is particularly so when a fatality occurs and the coroner is called in to conduct an inquest. Having, over the last 20 years read one court judgment where outdoor education teachers were found negligent and a number of coroner's inquest reports, it seems to me that legal authorities are expecting more and more of us each year as program directors and leaders in terms of risk avoidance.

Stevenson (2001), the NSW Senior Deputy State Coroner, provides a stark indication of this in her findings on the death of a 15 year old student who was swept off a log when trying to cross a flooded creek on an indirectly supervised school bushwalk. She found that the staff was trained and skilled and that students received comprehensive training before undertaking hikes. Also, the school did have a formal process of risk management planning and documentation in place. All good signs of proper practice I would think. However Stevenson concluded that the staff 'did not understand what was required to be done as part of proper risk management. This is tellingly illustrated by the Risk Management Evaluation Form which is completed by those teachers and assistant teachers attending the hike. The form did not deal with all contingencies...' (p.28). This should be a worry for us all. A school is following contemporary best practice by adhering to minimum activity guidelines and using a formal risk management protocol, but the coroner finds that the staff did not understand *proper risk management*. Regrettably, in her written findings Stevenson didn't detail what she thought proper risk management was, so to that extent we are still in the dark.

In accepting that the primary focus of risk management as outlined in AS/NZS 4360 is the bigger picture, that is protecting organisations, it seems to me that it is even more important to ask whether the frameworks suggested for implementing it are relevant to outdoor education program planners and leaders. For a framework to be relevant to us I

would argue that it must be effective in protecting participants, both staff and ‘students’, from serious harm. This is most likely if a framework;

1. is seen by program staff as manageable and able to be incorporated into their work,
2. results in a plan that identifies **ALL** foreseeable risks that could conceivably lead to a fatal or serious injury, and
3. has as its ‘product’ a set of clearly defined and understood actions that program participants, particularly staff, will take to reduce the dangers that could lead to an identified risk eventuating.
4. Following AS/NZS 4360, the South Australian Department of Education and Children’s Services suggests, in its training notes for school principals, that for any identified ‘topic’ a school should;
5. List all possible risks under 4 categories – people, information, physical assets and finances, and reputation.
6. Analyse and assign a score for the potential *consequences* and *likelihood* of each risk (1-5 for consequences, A-B for likelihood).
7. Determine the *level of risk* for each listed risk from the scores determined in step 2 and a table provided.
8. If not happy with the level of risk, identify and document what already happens to manage the risk and consider whether the strategies are adequate.
9. If still concerned about the level of risk, determine and document the actions needed to bring risks to an acceptable level.

Under this sort of framework the documentation required for just a one week school camp starts to look formidable. If this is seen as additional to all the other planning that needs to be done, unless plenty of non-contact time is allowed for the process one suspects leaders involved will not commit to doing it fully. Moreover there is no guidance given for being ‘happy’ with the level of risk, nor a clearly recommended threshold for determining when risk mitigation is necessary. The relevance then of such a model must be questioned.

In examining the competency standard *Undertake Risk Analysis of Activities* (Australian National Training Authority, 1999) within the new national outdoor recreation training framework one finds a similarly global risk management approach. Also based on AS/NZS 4360 it requires those involved to follow the same ranking of likelihood and consequences and determination of the level of risk to arrive at a ‘risk-treatment plan’. The full unit is too long to include here but sample statements include;

- A comprehensive list of **sources of risks** within the particular activity is generated, including risks that are not under the control of the organisation
- **Areas of impact** on the organisation are taken into consideration
- Existing control, likelihood and consequences are determined

- Level of risks are compared against previously established risk criteria and decisions made as to whether risks can be accepted
- Consideration is given to the tolerability of the risks borne by parties other than the organisation that benefits from it
- Risks that fall outside the low or acceptable category are treated using a range of options
- Risk treatment options are evaluated in accordance with the organisations risk management plan, on the basis of the extent of risk reduction, the extent of benefits or opportunities created and taking into account the risk criteria previously established
- Risk treatment plans are prepared identifying responsibilities, schedules, the expected outcome of treatments, budgeting, performance measures and the review process set in place

Extracted from *Undertake Risk Analysis of Activities* (Australian National Training Authority, 1999)

Following the process through fully might eventually result in a sound plan, but it sure sounds lengthy. While I can imagine it useful in an overall organisational approach, particularly where staff are designated and given time to facilitate the addressing of risk management issues, the relevance of such a framework to the actual day to day work of program staff must again be questioned.

Towards a relevant framework

My main concerns about the relevance of these contemporary frameworks is their requirement that one;

1. list all possible risks, and
2. make quantitative judgements about their likelihood and the severity of consequences.

Firstly, why list all possible risks? This makes the exercise, if done fully, very lengthy and time-consuming. We end up with such lengthy mixed lists of real risks, discomforts and unwanted outcomes, that either the whole process collapses under the weight of documentation of encyclopedic proportions or it becomes so truncated that some risks get missed. The very broad definition of risk and insistence that all be listed may have led to a concentration on documenting the routine ‘safety’ things we already do, at the expense of focussing attention on how one might prevent or manage the less frequent but more harmful situations that can and do occur.

Secondly, why is it necessary to engage in some quasi-scientific calculation of scores to judge whether controls are needed? Dickson (2001) has given an overview of one such approach following the model first proposed by Fine (1971), and has also identified the major weakness of such systems. Calculating a risk score is not an empirical process; it is one reliant on qualitative judgement. ‘The risk score is one person’s (or team of people) perception of risk at a given point in time. A different person, a different time ...may

change that score' (p.38). If the score is so rubbery why bother to spend valuable time doing the exercise that way?

How then do we approach risk management planning for outdoor education programs? I would say that an organisation should recognise the need to break the overall exercise of risk management planning into smaller subsets and use a framework specific to that area. I think this is actually consistent with statements within AS/NZS 4360 that 'risk management is the culture, processes and structures that are directed towards effective management of potential opportunities and adverse threats' (Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand, 1999, 4). The main problem seems to be that frameworks developed by individual organisations from the standard emphasise the same comprehensive process no matter what the priorities in any one work situation.

Arguably the prime risk management focus of outdoor education program staff should be participant safety, so program planners and staff need a framework oriented to that. I consider the clearest approach to managing these risks in outdoor programs is the Risk Analysis and Management System (RAMS) outlined by Haddock (1993) in her book *Managing Risks in Outdoor Activities*. This framework has probably had the greatest exposure to the outdoor education community in the last decade and I know that at least some outdoor organisations have adopted the RAMS or hybrid approaches that are derivations of it. Is it relevant to the work of outdoor education program planners and leaders?

The RAMS uses a more narrowly focussed definition of risk than AS/NZS 4360 - 'The potential to lose something of value. The loss may be physical, mental, social, or financial' (Haddock 1993, 11), but again I'd argue that it is too broad. It reminds us of the breadth of potential harms an organisation should give attention to at some level, but the result of adopting this definition again has been an assumption that all risks must be documented in a sound risk management strategy. In one example Haddock lists one risk of a trust fall activity as 'Students do not want to take part in activity' (1993, 44). If risks are of this level one would have a lot to document!

I have previously reported my experience at using the RAMS as a training tool with tertiary students and at a training course run by the Tasmanian Outdoor Leadership Council in 1996. Although the participants in that course were all experienced practitioners, for each scenario presented 'the list of potential risks threatened to be longer than the training course manual, and I noted we spent considerable time documenting many of the routine preparation things that most of us would have done anyway' (Hogan 2002, 73). I think it possible that the RAMS may be approached as 'busy work', people documenting all that they have already been doing in their routine planning, teaching and instructing, and proceeding under the illusion that this has reduced the level of risk. If this is the case the relevance of the RAMS to the work of program planners and staff is also questionable.

One way to avoid the potential for the routine to dominate the task is to determine a threshold for seriousness of risks to be included before listing them. The approach adopted by the United Kingdom Adventure Centre Licensing Scheme might provide guidance here. For the purpose of inspection under the act establishing it, licensed centres need only document risk management policies for situations that 'if not managed or

avoided could foreseeably result in death or disabling injury' (Bailie 1996, 6). It is stressed that at an organisational level it will still be necessary to have a wider risk management perspective (financial risks, behavioral problems, program quality, etc.) but the view of the authority is that these can be dealt with separately.

If one adopts this sort of screening process in identifying risks then one immediately dispenses with listing and working out a 'treatment plan' for such minor matters as blisters, getting wet, mild sunburn, chafing rucksacks, poor footwear and the like that seem to feature as examples in the training literature. The plan becomes focussed on the more serious potential injuries. This means much smaller lists than would otherwise be the case and fuller attention to minimising those risks.

Support for this type of approach is given in some risk management texts. For example, the Office of Sport and Recreation in Queensland says that risks rated as severe 'must be managed with a detailed risk management policy, as the potential (outcome) could be devastating to the organisation', whereas those rated as low 'can be managed by routine procedures' (Office of Sport and Recreation, Brisbane, 1998, 19-20). Routine procedures I would argue don't necessarily need to be comprehensively documented. More pragmatically I would also argue that risk management documentation is only likely to come under scrutiny in the event of a serious incident. Why clutter a plan with trivia and run the risk of not giving sufficient attention to those most serious of risk that are the ones that might get one into trouble?

The basis to the RAMS framework, and in my view its main strength, is the distinction drawn between risks and dangers and a structure that requires listing of sources of dangers under three separate areas - people, equipment and environmental factors. This gives structure to the listing of risks, and analysis of the dangers that may lead to the risk occurring, whereas those models based on AS/NZS 4360 suggest merely the brainstorming risks and dangers in the one list. Also, such an approach is based on a number of anecdotal reports and evidence from coronial enquiries that has shown the incidence of serious accident to be greatest when there are human and equipment deficiencies together with adverse environmental conditions. Attend to all three areas and the margin of safety increases markedly. Without this listing of all dangers it is easy to see that in determining 'risk treatments' attention might only be given to sub-sets of dangers. Take for instance an incident in 1988 that resulted in the drowning of the two adult leaders and two teenage scouts when a Venturer Scout Group was struck by gale force winds when kayaking across Lake Alexandrina in South Australia. The scout group and the state association responded to criticism of the activity by stating that the kayaks had all passed their annual safety inspection, all persons were wearing life jackets and that the leader held the required scout qualifications. Attention of the organization to safety management had focussed purely on equipment and leader training, not on environmental dangers or necessary prior kayak experience of participants.

A modified RAMS format

The RAMS does offer a sound framework for outdoor activity risk management planning, but it might be more effectively applied if when faced with the question 'what are the risks' consideration is limited to those that may result in 'death or disabling injury', or words to that effect. For practical purposes, in applying a modified RAMS

process I have suggested that disabling injuries could be seen as those requiring ‘outside’ medical or rescue authority assistance.

Risks are best written in terms of defining the event that will directly lead to death or serious injury. Getting wet or even becoming lost don’t in themselves lead to people dying or being injured. It is what may also happen when wet (getting cold as well leads to hypothermia) or lost (again getting very cold, or perhaps falling down a cliff while trying to find ones way to safety in the dark).

So, what sort of occurrences can lead to death or disabling injury in outdoor activities? Bailie says;

I rather like the Idiot’s Guide approach to things ... there are only three things which will cause death or disabling injury during an activity session;

- Drowning,
- Impact with something solid (which either falls onto you or onto which you fall)
- Exposure / Hypothermia (Bailie, 1996, p. 7)

This is possibly a little simplistic, but I don’t think the penultimate list would be too long.

I would add the following.

- **Heat stroke** This would probably not be a high probability in the UK so Bailie wouldn’t have needed to consider it, but clearly we do in Australia. There have been a number of deaths attributed to it.
- **Severe burns** Wildfire is one we have to think of in Australia, but I am also aware of a number of severe burns cases from incidents with lightweight stoves and tent fires.
- **Electrocution** The danger from lightning strike in some environments is well known. There have also been sailors killed and injured when the mast of their boat has accidentally made contact with overhead power lines.
- **Poisonous bite** Australians are well aware of the dangers of snake and spider bites, and while rare these are potentially fatal when they do occur. I know of two SA cases in organised outdoor recreation, neither fatal but definitely disabling.
- **Pre-existing medical condition** Complications of a potentially life threatening medical condition such as asthma, diabetes, cardiac irregularity, extreme allergies, etc. are always possible, even in a well controlled sufferer. In such cases the sufferer or parents obviously have to accept some risk, but accepting such participants into a program means accepting the responsibilities for having a contingency plan in place. I’m aware of 2 student deaths during school outdoor expeditions, one from asthma, the other a congenital heart condition. A greater number of sufferers have had to be evacuated to hospital after becoming ill during an activity.

If we add these five to Bailie's three categories we have a short checklist of possible occurrences to consider. When asking what the risks of death or disabling injury are in a given situation ask whether one of these occurrences is possible. The 'impact with something solid' is obviously a very broad category, and would include things like falls, rockslide, vehicle accidents, even being hit by a sailboat boom, but I think it gives one the idea.

It is also important to note that risk management is situational. The nature of risks and the risk reduction options in an activity will vary according such things as the location, prevailing weather conditions, the participant group, leader skills, and resources available. Also, it is worth noting that risks do not only occur in formal program activities. Brookes (in press) has found that a number of fatalities have occurred during what could loosely be called free time. How often do these possibilities get documented in risk management plans?

Having identified the risks, I suggest considering and recording existing policies and guidelines (internal and external to the organisation) that may be relevant to managing such risks. The original RAMS format leaves this to the end, but it makes more sense to look at this first.

Then, one goes on to identifying the dangers that might lead to those risks eventuating. For those unfamiliar with the RAMS, examples of things to consider under each category are;

People Attributes that people (both leaders and participants) bring to an activity, such as skills, knowledge, experience, health and fitness, age, fears, etc.

Equipment Resources that impact on the activity, such as clothing, buoyancy aids, kayaks, tents, climbing ropes, helmets, motor vehicles, etc.

Environment Factors that originate from the surroundings and can impact on the activity, such as weather, terrain, availability of shelter, remoteness, etc.

Strategies to reduce each danger are then identified and documented. Finally an emergency response procedure is detailed, should the risk eventuate despite all the planning that has gone on. For all risks this is a most important part of the process and, particularly for things like poisonous bites and pre-existing medical conditions, the most critical to the overall plan. Risk management planning is just that, planning, not a guarantee that the risk will not occur, so one needs to be armed with a crisis plan.

This RAMS process could be used at all levels within an organisation, from setting overall policy about activities to detailed planning for a particular venture. In my experience it is most usefully utilised by an organisation to have program staff prepare 'standing orders' for operations and the conduct of regularly scheduled program activities. Undertaking the process clarifies procedures for those staff involved in preparing them, and also enables production of clear guidelines that can be used in induction of new and casual staff, who make up a significant proportion of the outdoor education workforce.

Concluding remarks

I have worked with two organisations using this modified approach. Experience in both these cases has confirmed for me that filtering the list of risks with the death or disabling injury screen streamlines the process and focuses attention on these most damaging of risks. The clutter induced by considering all risks is avoided.

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Biography

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Wilderness Solos: Insights from Tihoi Venture School

John Maxted and Christine Furminger

Presentation Overview

The 'wilderness solo' is a feature of a surprising number outdoor education programmes in New Zealand, and the 'solo' promoted often as a profoundly powerful learning opportunity for participants. One New Zealand resource for Teachers even promotes a nature solo as 'the greatest experience that teachers can give students' (Kelk, 1994). But is such time alone in / with nature really that powerful for young New Zealanders?

This presentation provides insights from two independent research projects to the variety of wilderness solo experiences for students from Tihoi Venture School, an outdoor education residential school based in the central North island of New Zealand. Tihoi delivers a five-month residential integrated curriculum for year ten students from St Paul's Collegiate School, and in 2002 was awarded the 'Outdoor Programme of the Year' award by Education Outdoors New Zealand. Solos have remained an important curricular element since Tihoi's first beginnings in 1979.

This presentation has two parts: (i) an introduction to Tihoi Venture School and some of the key findings of Christine's masters degree research (University of Waikato, 2002), and; (ii) the sharing of relevant 'solo' literature and preliminary insights from John's doctoral research (University of Otago) on the Tihoi solo experience.

Christine's research investigated the experiences of past-Tihoi students, utilizing interviews and narrative to retrospectively capture the essence of the Tihoi experience. Of significance to this presentation has been the long-term influence of 'solo' for teaching the importance of reflection, as a source of challenge, and as a contrasting alternative to many of the other adventurous endeavors at Tihoi.

John's study (ongoing) is a phenomenological exploration of the solo experience for Tihoi students, utilizing participatory qualitative methods to acknowledge and validate participant perspectives and perceptions of their own experiences. Preliminary insights to the experiences of students are somewhat varied and not always consistent with literature on (educational) solitude. These shall be shared alongside deeper indicators from solo to the value of the Tihoi experience.

As a closure to the presentation Christine and John shall provide insights to the use of hermeneutic phenomenology and narrative / grounded theory as potential theoretical frameworks for investigating solitude experiences.

Biography

John Maxted is Senior Teaching Fellow, Outdoor Education at the University of Otago and has coordinated the applied outdoor programme within the School of Physical Education since 1996. Other research and teaching interests include human-nature relationships within the broader adventure context, sustainable outdoor education, and primitive (traditional) outdoor technology(s). John's other passions include the re-vegetation of a three-hectare block of land in Dunedin

North, open Canoeing, and connecting his three youngsters to special local places. Contacts: University of Otago (64 3) 479 8649 jmaxted@pooka.otago.ac.nz

Christine Furminger is a co-Director of the Tihoi Venture School, and has a background in education spanning some twenty years. A passionate and dedicated Teacher, Christine has been a nurturer of student endeavor at Tihoi over the past twelve years. Her educational interests include life long learning, and Christine's recently completed Masters in Educational Leadership is testament to her ongoing journey of personal growth and fulfillment whilst at Tihoi. Christine has wide-ranging interests in adventure and is deeply connected to the coastlines and rugged bush of the North Island of New Zealand. Contacts: Tihoi Venture School (64 7) 372 8416 / staff@tihoi.org.nz email

Safety audits: Who? How? When?

Alistair McArthur

Abstract

Prudent professionals need to ensure that their outdoor program meets accepted 'common practice' or 'best practice' guidelines and standards so they can obtain insurance, gain access to public land and, if required, attend a coroners inquest to defend, with integrity, their philosophy, practices and risk management strategy.

Safety audits examine the following broad areas: participant screening and selection; staff qualifications and competence; management systems; program activities; emergency procedures; logistics, facilities and transportation.

Introduction

The design and implementation of a risk management system will be influenced by the varying needs of an organisation. However, once the decision is made to embark on a risk management program, decision-makers need to access relevant and current resources to assist in the development of the strategy.

Risk management is recognised as an integral part of good management practice. To be most effective, risk management should become part of an organisation's culture. It should be integrated into the organisation's philosophy, practices and business plans rather than be viewed or practiced as a separate program. When this is achieved, risk management becomes the business of everyone in the organisation.

The risk management process can be applied to any situation where an undesired or unexpected outcome could be significant or where opportunities are identified. Decision-makers need to know about possible outcomes and take steps to control their impact.

The identification, analysis, assessment, treatment and monitoring of risk, in a proactive manner, is important.

Planning and preparing for risk in Outdoor Education is imperative. Outdoor Program Directors have a legal duty of care with regard to the safe management of staff and participants. The key to this planning and preparation is the development of a published operations manual containing program policies and procedures. Manuals or handbooks for outdoor programs have been in existence around the world for over 30 years.

Key areas for consideration are: *goals and objectives, leadership, reconnaissance, detailed route plans, participant details, permits, equipment, transportation and logistics, record keeping, contingency arrangements, incident records, first aid, insurance, accident and emergency response.*

Safety audits – Why and how?

A crucial step in the management of outdoor programs, granted the cautionary notes listed above, is the regular completion of a Safety Audit. Prudent professionals would consider that safety audits are essential and should be done internally on an annual basis,

and externally every two years. It is essential to budget the necessary time and money to conduct the audits.

The implementation of a Safety Audit process is a proactive approach towards achieving "best practice" in an Outdoor Education or Adventure Program.

The process should ensure that objective, dynamic and positive feedback is achieved through helpful and constructive collaboration between the Auditor and the Program Director.

How important is this process? In a worst case scenario, prudent professionals should be able, if necessary, to attend a coroners Inquest and be able to defend, with integrity, their particular program philosophy, practices and risk management strategy.

What is a Safety Audit or Review?

As its name suggests, a Safety Audit is an assessment of the safety practices of an organisation. It is intended to collect information about the programs and operations providing feedback and specific recommendations which will help to upgrade the programs in the area of safety.

Its purpose is to assess safety management practices and to reduce unsafe occurrences, including informed comparison of the program's safety practices with what is known to be "state - of - the - art" or "best practice". A safety audit is intended to investigate the following broad areas:

- participant screening and selection
- staff qualifications and competence
- management systems
- program activities
- emergency procedures
- logistics and facilities, and
- transportation

A key feature of a safety review is to engender a sense of helpful and constructive collaboration.

Content of a Safety Review

In compiling a guide to the development and completion of a Safety Review, a checklist can be prepared to ensure that the review will examine the integrity and effectiveness of the necessary program components. Hence the following components should be considered in any safety audit:

- Philosophical and mission statement
- Program goals
- Learning objectives
- Methods to evaluate behavioural outcomes of clients

- Educational rationale for the activities
- Communication
- Transport
- Specific details on activity times and places
- Emergency contact phone numbers
- Proposed itinerary with anticipated risks and expected counter - measures
- Route maps with escape plans
- Summary of health information of participants
- A budget of expenses
- List of participants
- Supplies and equipment
- Schedule for monitoring and maintaining equipment
- Litigation protection
- Liability or accident insurance
- Health care procedures
- Accommodation and tentage
- Food
- Screening of applicants
- Activities and site selection
- Staff recruitment
- Staff supervision
- Staff training
- Staff assessment
- Staff/participant ratios

The process and the auditors role

The actual process naturally involves visiting and observing the program, in order to collect data on safety practices and procedures.

From experience - based judgement, the auditor needs to infer how safe the program is; indicate what changes might improve overall levels of safety; discuss the audit findings with appropriate program representatives, providing a chance for feedback and checking of impressions; write and present a summary report of review methods and results; and make recommendations for appropriate changes.

Time frame, cost and benefits

There is general agreement that a process of policing ones own "industry", "profession" or "community" is preferable to local or federal government agencies imposing what might be considered arbitrary certification on outdoor staff and programs. It is therefore crucial that self-generated reviews should be demonstrably rigorous and as effective as possible.

As has been suggested above, a full external peer safety review should be carried out every two years. Based on experience, and depending on the program size and activities, the actual on site audit could take three to seven days, with report writing taking about two to three days. Plans should be made several months in advance to take advantage of program activities and seasonal variations. It is difficult to estimate the cost, as it will depend on individual program size and the complexity of the individual review.

The review should be designed as a dynamic and positive vehicle for training and sharing of ideas rather than a mechanical, checklist process. As a result, in addition to the obvious intent of providing objective feedback from an experienced, independent source, the review should lead to learning and networking for all involved in the process.

Sharing of experience raises general standards, and state of the art procedures begin to evolve which can then be shared by a wider audience.

Summary checklist

In summary, the following are key points.

The Outdoor Education Program Co-ordinator should:

- be able to operate as a prudent professional demonstrating a clear understanding of "duty of care" for all staff and participants.
- have a proactive rather than reactive approach to safety
- have a thorough understanding of the "outdoor industry" safety benchmarks.
- be able to meet community standards and adhere to world best "common practices" for outdoor programs, and
- in a worst scenario case, if required, be able to attend a coroner's inquest and defend, with integrity, his/her philosophy, practices and risk management strategy for the program and activities.

Conclusion

Outdoor Education program administrators and managers have abundant resources available to them in order to conduct safe and effective programs. They must be aware of the legal duty of care that they have for staff and participants. Over the past fifty years Outdoor Education has proved to be a valuable adjunct to mainstream education and it is generally recognised that the outcomes greatly outweigh the risks involved and if nothing is ventured, nothing is gained.

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Biography

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Joining Forces: Quality Assurance in the Outdoor Industry in Tasmania

Tony McKenny

The outdoor educational landscape of Tasmania has recently been undergoing a period of rapid and fundamental change that is affecting what we teach, how we teach, and how we organise to teach.

In the early nineties, the Education Department in Tasmania followed the worldwide trend to local management of schools by empowering Principals and their school communities to have a degree of control over the educational and administrative functions of their school. This, coupled with complex curriculum changes such as the development of Essential Learnings and changes to exiting certification, has led to significant changes in the way schools organise and deliver Outdoor Education.

With the development of local school based curricula, Outdoor Education is now often a component of an overall curriculum area, rather than as a subject per se or as a separate and distinct stand-alone program. There has also been a shift away from programs involving personal challenge and socialisation. Few, if any, schools in Tasmania now include any aspects of wilderness therapy in their outdoor programs, or have structured programs to promote social interaction, other than as a part of specific retention or behaviour management programs. In these cases, expertise is usually bought in from specialist organisations such as Project Hahn.

In many schools there has been a move to short outdoor recreation programs that focus more on the development of outdoor recreational skills such as rafting, abseiling, and mountain biking which combine maximum excitement, (the instant adrenalin sports) with a minimum of skill acquisition, reflecting in part the lack of time in the crowded curriculum.

With Local Management has also come responsibility for the professional development of teachers and there has been a general recognition that intensive, and expensive, professional development is now required in all areas of Outdoor Education leadership, whether social or recreation programs. Not surprisingly schools are now looking to hire in specialist instructors for skill programs rather than expensively re-accredit their own staff each year.

Lastly, we mustn't forget that our teaching force is aging: they have the skills and the experience... but not necessarily the energy to continue with physically demanding outdoor programs!

At the same time as the landscape has been changing in schools so it has in the wider outdoor recreation community. We have seen, for example, the rapid growth of adventure and eco tourism and a growing number of commercial operators in the tourism market place. The development of national outdoor recreation leadership certification, and complex licensing, insurance and access issues have all had major impacts. There are major concerns about cultural and sustainable environmental practices and new activities such as mountain biking and small wheel sports adding their numbers to the already crowded environment.

The Department of Education had recognised its central responsibility for providing advice on quality assurance to School Principals who were required under Local Management to authorise and assume responsibility for the safety of any activity outside the classroom. However, discussions between the Department of Education, The Tasmanian Outdoor Recreation Council (Tas ORC), and other government agencies in 2001 – 2002 identified an increasing number of ongoing issues related to qualifications, insurance, licensing and land management common to all sectors of the industry. These included:

- Inconsistency of government agencies in dealing with commercial operators in the outdoor recreation and environmental tourism industry.
- An emphasis on minimum standards and a lack of effective quality assurance systems and processes.
- Variance of standards for Operational Manuals, insurance and access applied within the industry as a whole¹.

The Outdoor Education Management Handbook, first published by the Department of Education in 1994, has been widely used in all sectors of the industry both in Tasmania and on the mainland. However, it was clear that the changes in the industry as a whole, coupled with the rapid development of information technologies, had largely rendered the Handbook redundant both in content and in style.

To meet the changing needs of teachers, and the need for a comprehensive uniform reference document for Government agencies and commercial operators, the Department of Education established a joint working party with representatives of all sectors of the industry, including TasORC, to develop a web based site that would:

- Provide up to date advice on best practice and standards for everyone in the education/recreation/insurance industry
- Provide advice on developing and/or assessing licence applications
- Be a whole of government approach
- Be on the cutting edge use of communication technology
- Build on the reputation of Tasmania as a national leader in Outdoor Education and Recreation

The Department has now completed the first part of the process with an on line site specifically for schools, and commercial operators working with schools. The web site incorporates current Departmental Advice and Instructions but is also one of the most powerful Outdoor Education resource sites in Australia with over one thousand two hundred hot links to related community and Government sites in Australia and around the world. www.education.tas.gov.au/outdoors/

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The second stage of the project, involving commercial operators, other Government agencies and community groups, is now in progress with general agreement on web architecture, web server location and maintenance, and a budget provision for development work. The project is expected to be completed by the end of the year (2003).

The creation of such a quality assurance system will be an Australian first and will deliver significant benefits to schools, the outdoor / eco-tourism industry and Tasmania as a whole. It will involve the integration of the Commercial Visitor Service with industry standards and the Outdoor Education Website to create a common reference for all stakeholders. It will also develop an information resource that will provide a catalyst for moving the environmental and adventure tourism industry from minimum activity standards into a quality assurance framework.

Hopefully, visiting school parties or commercial organisations will very soon have a “one stop shop” for all information on standards, forms, access, insurance requirements, qualifications and venues when planing their trip to the wonderful environment of Tasmania.

Biography

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¹ Review of Safety Management Practices in the Tasmanian Outdoor, Environmental and Adventure Tourism Industry – March 2002

Busy doing nothing: the relationship of stillness to an activity orientated wilderness therapy program

Val Nicholls

Abstract

This paper explores the motivation, methods and emerging data of a research study into participant experiences of stillness within a challenged based wilderness program.

Welcome. I am looking forward to hearing myself speak. I am not sure that 3 or 4 years ago I would have turned up to listen to a Phd student. I think I would have probably thought 'I Hmm, interesting topic but bound to be a dry, dusty and boring presentation.' However since, by a surprising set of circumstances, I now find myself intimately associated with those 3 loaded letters I find I am having to revise, rather rapidly, my negative assumptions about doctoral studies and students into something more positive and sustaining.

So the aim of this session is threefold.

Firstly, it is to provide me with some personal therapy. To address my need to begin to articulate what I am doing and to help myself grow into the challenge I have taken on.

Secondly it is to share that which I am finding to be an exciting and interesting experience in the hope that it may provoke some reflection about your own experience and practise,

And thirdly, to blow away some myths and be of encouragement to any would be researchers in this audience.

Since I am not sure how many of you are familiar with Wilderness/ Adventure Therapy I would like to set the scene a little and give you something of a picture of where and how I work.

I work in the mountains, on the water, in the caves and off the cliffs of Tasmania as a senior facilitator for Project Hahn. P.H. a not for profit community organisation whose motto is "Personal Growth Through Challenge and Adventure." It is based in Hobart but runs programs throughout Tasmania.

Project Hahn participants vary in age from approximately 14yrs old to participants in their early 50's. Most participants are considered 'At Risk' in some respect either by themselves or others and come to the program with an understanding that Project Hahn is about personal growth through challenge and adventure. Participants may refer themselves to a six day Standard Course program but most are referred by teachers, counsellors, social workers or concerned others. Four day Specialist Programs are run for specific Agencies such as the Vietnam Veterans Children's Education Service and a Salvation Army residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation program. All participants who have successfully completed a Standard or Specialist course may refer themselves to a four-day Follow Up program. Program locations vary but the basic structure and underlying philosophy of the camp remains the same.

Adventure activities are used as a vehicle or metaphor for dealing with issues participants are facing and for accelerating positive attitudinal and behavioural change. The trip provides a window of opportunity for participants. They go away with 9 people they do not know, and who have no preconceived ideas about one another. Participants are encouraged to set goals, try out new behaviours, explore their strengths, deal with issues, learn some new skills, and have fun.

A couple of key components in the program are that facilitators adopt a stance of positive unconditional regard and a non directive leadership style that encourages participants to take responsibility and make decisions. For many this alone makes the experience quite unique.

‘If you guys as leaders had pointed out where we were going, it would have taken all the adventure and mystery out of it and probably to a great degree a sense of accomplishment.’

‘If there had been any inkling or sense of being judged or, you know, more being expected of me than I was prepared to let go of and give then the whole thing wouldn’t have worked. I wouldn’t have been able to light the fire for fear of not being able to light the fire instead of having a go at lighting the fire.’

‘But what I did find interesting is that you guys didn’t give me the answers, I came up with them myself...pretty proud, I’ve got to say, pretty proud.’

The impetus for this study came after my working for Project Hahn for about 4 yrs. It was easy to see the overt changes and learning that were directly related to the adventure activities. For example;

At the end of a challenging 3 day walk. " I can do big things if I break it into steps."

After dealing with an abseil take off "What I say to myself makes a difference,"

Campfire sharing - "It was really great to share and get things off my chest"

"I didn't realise that other people felt the same as me."

But there seemed to me to be something else going on, some other sort of learning that was deeper and more spontaneous. It seemed to be associated with 'nothing going on.'

Two incidents particularly struck me:

- We are steaming along the track, 4 teenage boys and me. My co - facilitator and trainee are accompanying 3 participants back to the city. Darren had been under a lot of peer pressure to do likewise. He stops, turns to me, beanie, as usual, pulled down around his tight face and says, “You know I just feel like crying.” ‘How come?’ “For once I’ve made a decision that was good for *me*, I didn’t just go with the cool group. It feels really good.” Later at camp participants are invited to sit alone on a cliff top for 15mins before walking silently back to our camp. Everyone comes, and when I get back to the tents Darren has his hat off, his hair is wild, his face animated, he leaps and dances. ‘I feel like I’ve found the real me!’ “What’s the real you like?” “He’s happy and fun.” Darren ran the debrief that night. The beanie never returned, he

talked more, his face got softer, his body relaxed. On the last night he slept on top of the troupe carrier under the stars and we heard him singing and laughing into the small hours. I wondered what would be his memories of our camp? Making a positive decision, how he felt at the cliff, leaping around the tents? One cognitive one somatic? Are they equally important?

- I was talking with a 47yr old participant three months after he had completed a Specialist Project Hahn trip. We'll call him Doug. At the time of the trip Doug was in the last few weeks of a 4month Salvation Army drug and alcohol residential rehabilitation program. Doug said that the absolute best part of what had been an emotional and challenging Project Hahn trip was when we were quietly walking through a forest of huge and ancient ferns on our last day. He was walking by himself, a little behind the rest of the group, he looked up and noticed that sunlight was just catching on the leaves and at that moment, he said, he felt totally at peace, totally happy with himself and who he was. That was, he said, the first time he had felt like that in many years. He also told me that he often went back to that memory to support himself. The other day he had bumped in to an old pal who invited him to join him at the local pub. Doug said "It was hard but I said no and as I walked away I thought of those fern trees and I felt proud."

Whether it was the bliss of a quiet sit on a mountain top or the frozen 'stuckness' of indecision it seemed to me that a space had been created that was a potent force for insight and deep understanding of self. It was also clear that quietness and the opportunity for reflective space could also be frightening and overwhelming and was often the time a participant might create a drama of some kind or run away from the camp.

I decided it was time for me to Walk my own Talk, and take a step into the unknown, to find out more about the processes at work within wilderness therapy.

I looked first for a TAFE course and found nothing suitable. I looked at a counselling diploma at Uni. of Tas, but that didn't seem to be quite what I was looking for either. After much deliberation I applied to U.O.W. to do a Masters degree. I received a phone call inviting me to change my application to that of a PhD. My initial reaction was shock and horror, "Nice girls like me don't do things like that!" It was mentioned that no fees were attached to the PhD. I listened again, but this time to myself and all the very negative beliefs I had about people who study at that level; impractical, dusty, dry academics, not "At the coal face people" like me. However, when I stopped preening those self righteous "Oh so practical me' feathers and challenged myself to forget the P, the H, and the D and consider instead how it might be to study at depth for 4 years or so, the answer was clearly 'yes, please.' But how could I do PhD with no Masters degree? I had a degree in Speech Pathology from the early 1970's, a Cert IV in outdoor leadership, an Auswim teaching certificate and B.F.A. Honours in Ceramics and kiln building! "No worries" was the University's reply. I realise now, 2 years down the track that they were absolutely right. In my years as an art student and later as a practitioner, I had developed skills that would be essential to my longevity as a doctoral student. I had learned to be self motivated, self disciplined, self critical, to develop a self esteem that was not entirely dependent on public approval and to be prepared to stick my neck out, take risks in the

name of discovery and expression of self. So far I have to admit that I am finding the research exciting, scary, challenging, boring, and strangely satisfying. It's just like walking the Western Arthurs in the mist. I look at a big learning curve and think " How on earth am I going to get up there?" Get to the top, feel smug, chill out for a bit and then look at the next bit and think 'How in earth am I going to get down there.'" And off I go again, only ever be able to see 10m ahead of myself, carrying some essential gear in my back pack and lots of humour and sheer faith that I will get to the end. I share this saga with you as an expression of encouragement to anyone here who may be considering a similar journey of any sort. Pre planning and choice of suitable route is essential, get that right and off you go.

Back to the main plot.

Trying to find a word or way of getting to what I could feel rather than articulate was tricky. Busy Doing Nothing easily came to mind, and was catchy as a title that could help keep me focused but I needed to get narrower, to isolate what it was I was going to study. I opted for the word Stillness and decided that in the research it would be used broadly to encompass the nuance of interpretation suggested by the Macquarie Thesaurus. Stillness as 'free from bubbles', 'at rest', 'stuck', 'silence', brewing, 'no movement.' In essence, those brief or longer periods of time when activity is suspended or relinquished, when there is no apparent movement out of the comfort zone, when there is 'nothing going on'.

So I had my broad idea of Stillness to start with, but why bother, why pick up my pack and start walking with what, I was beginning to realise, was going to be an enormous load.

Wilderness therapy has its roots in Outward Bound and is now used with a broad range of populations throughout Europe, Australasia and USA. Research into the therapeutic use of the wilderness began in the 1950's. In the 1960's some researchers began to focus on the personal and social benefits of outdoor adventure activities. That interest in evaluation of outcomes has continued. However affirmation of efficacy has come at a price.

Wilderness therapy is no longer an untried, undocumented, and experimental approach; rather, there is persuasive evidence that it is an effective and powerful method of treating troubled youth.

Gass 1993

The nature, extent and conditions under which positive outcomes occur remains largely unknown.

Mulvey, Arthur & Repucci. 1993

Wilderness-adventure therapy aims to work with people who often have poor coping skills or who may be especially vulnerable or prone to extreme risk taking behaviour. "There is a significant ethical responsibility to know what we are doing and what the outcomes are most likely to be" (Crisp,1996; p.12)

I decided the journey would be worth it.

Having enrolled with University of Wollongong I conducted informal interviews with 4 adult males from a Mountain Challenge Bridge program 4 months earlier. I needed to test out my idea that Stillness, Doing Nothing was a significant process within a program.

From their replies it seemed that Stillness had the potential to foster a deep seated sense of self, to promote change and may also be a gauge of group energy and focus.

"Time out was a spiritual thing"

"I felt like I was just me and that's all I had to be, here for the here and now."

"Just after (the quiet sit) the penny just dropped. I knew inside myself basically where I stood, which is basically the same place I knew I was, but I felt at ease with it, a change of attitude."

"I still do, I still do take my 10minutes every night. It's definitely one of the most important tools I've picked up. Just to take time, just to take time for me."

"I've taken the quiet times home...it's a really useful tool."

Despite the potency for change contained within these typical statements focus in the literature and research sits comfortably on the 'mechanistic' components (Powch 1994) of programming, the 'Doing' of wilderness therapy that is generally associated with first-order change e.g. sequencing of activities, the use of narrative, the use of metaphor, non directive leadership styles, debriefing or not debriefing and so on. The 'Being' of wilderness therapy associated with stillness, silence, ruminative thinking, spontaneous, and intuitive learning is acknowledged but not generally recognised as alternate and valid ways of knowing despite recent research findings in the cognitive sciences.

We know that the brain is built to linger as well as to rush, and that slow knowing sometimes leads to better answers. We know that knowledge makes itself known through sensations, images, feelings and inklings as well as through clear conscious thoughts...To be able to meet the uncertain challenges of the contemporary world, we need to heed the message of this research, and to expand our repertoire of ways of learning and knowing to reclaim the full gamut of cognitive possibilities.' (Claxton, 1997, p.201)

Encouraged by the pilot study and Claxton I embarked on a steep and rugged learning curve, The Research Plan.

Step One was to determine what it is I wanted to ask. Easy! It took me a year to write my first sentence.

At this point I feel vulnerable, like an artist again, at the opening of a solo exhibition. I will flick up on the screen my picture of questions and most of you will decide within a minute or less whether you like the questions or not. But for me this slide represents hours and hours of sifting, sorting, getting stuck, and sitting with myself long enough to get some clarity. Even so this neat, orderly, 'oh so PhD'ish list of questions can surely only ever be at best a depiction of commitment to a work forever "in progress."

The study and especially the data gathering process will be guided by the following questions:

- What do participants identify as experiences of Stillness within a challenge based Wilderness Therapy program?
- How do participants describe these experiences?
- What are the characteristics of these experiences?
- What are the causal conditions of these experiences?
- What meaning do participants attach to the varying experiences of Stillness?
- How do participants attach value to the stillness experience?
- What factors influence the nature of Stillness experiences?
- How do participants describe the consequences of the experience in the short and long term?

These general research questions will be refocussed and refined as the study unfolds. That first sentence I mentioned earlier was:

The aim of this research is to use grounded theory methodology to both describe and explain the impact of one aspect of a wilderness therapy experience, *stillness*.

Grounded theory is not a theory at all. It is an overall strategy, or method for doing research, and as such has an explanation about its own particular set of techniques and procedures. The method provides for both thick description of participant experiences and a set of concepts and linking propositions that will provide theory and explanation about the research phenomena. (May 1986, p.178). 'Grounded' infers that theory will generate from, and therefore be grounded in the data. (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Securing that grounding is achieved in part by the engagements of participants as critical members of the research team. Throughout data analysis participants engage in verifying data and emerging theory. This role of participant as co-researcher sits comfortably with the mutual respect and neutral power relations engendered in wilderness therapy programs. The methodology dictates that data collection and data analysis continue in alternating sequences through out the study. A sort of zig zag process of going out into the 'field' to gather data, coming back to the desk to analyse the information and back out into the field again to gather more, so on. In this study data gathering methods include semi structured interviews, the use of photographic and written diaries, field observations and document analysis.

The population for this research is drawn from the 400 anticipated participants in Project Hahn wilderness therapy programs between January and December 2003. One of my concerns about the study and the interview process was that it was heavily dependent on verbal language. A communication skill that many P. H. participants struggle with. Wanting to facilitate a rich exchange I heeded the advice and guidelines set out by Tuckwell & King (1980) " The willingness to report completely and accurately is predicated on the rapport that is established between the researcher and the subject. Rapport characterised by the acronym CARE, that is, communicated authenticity, positive regard for the other person and empathy" (p. 6). So far, I have been impressed by the enthusiasm of participants to share their thoughts and feelings.

"It's really nice to know that someone is interested in my experience."

A central feature of the research design was to use Stimulated Recall methodology (Tuckwell & King, 1980; Marland,1977) and Photo Elicitation techniques (Bogdan & Biklen 1992. Bloom (1953) the pioneer of stimulated recall describes the basic idea of stimulated recall as one in which,

A subject may be enabled to relive an original situation with vividness and accuracy if he is presented with a large number of cues that occurred during the original situation. (Bloom,1953, p.161)

In this case those cues would be largely photographic.

I have just returned from my first foray out into the 'field'. This initial sample group was made up of four participants and two P.H. facilitators on a four-day Project Hahn Mountain Challenge program run specifically for a local Salvation Army drug and alcohol residential rehabilitation program. The nature of the Mountain Challenge is such that there is ample opportunity for a range of Stillness experiences.

Participants were invited to make a visual and written, or drawn, diary of their experience. They were each given a disposable camera for their private use and access to the Project Hahn camera for more general snaps. One of the facilitators also created a detailed photographic journal of the trip.

An interview was conducted within 10 days of completion of the program. The semi-structured format of the interview was based on Stimulated Recall methodology and Photo Elicitation techniques. Participants were invited to relive the program by viewing photographs of the experience. The participants were encouraged to select photographs that connected with their personal experiences of the program and talk aloud about the thoughts, feelings, reactions and perceptions that the photographs evoked. With the participants permission the interview was tape recorded and later transcribed for analysis.

In my initial proposal I noted that some controversy exists over the effect of a camera on rapport between subject and researcher (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p.143). On Project Hahn programs Facilitators and participants are encouraged to maximise the use of the Project Hahn camera and that from personal experience this shared use of the camera adds to rather than detracts from rapport with participants. My experience so far has been that participants have been extraordinarily interested in the project and excited about viewing and securing copies of the photographs especially those taken by the facilitator. The facilitator was a talented photographer and took 80 pictures over the 4 days. Comments from the participants included;

"That's it, he's got it right there, that says it all."

"That's not me in the photograph but that's exactly how I felt..."

"Just looking at it now brings it all back, makes me tingle."

"That one says it all, I can't put it into words but that says it all."

Since I have only just completed my first round of interviews I have not yet begun the business of analysis. In fact analytic procedure is just out there in the mist. When this

conference over I will have to proceed so that the next '10 metres' reveals itself. Until then however it is a delight to look at the view. Following are extracts from these initial and pilot interviews.

‘Yes I went down on the rocks...I didn’t come up with any answers, not any answers at all, but, it was clear thinking and after coming away from there I knew inside myself, basically, where I stood, which is basically the same place I knew I was but I felt at ease with it, if that makes any sense....a change my attitude and the way I see the problem...to get relief in that, like I said, was part of the emotional side of the journey for me and its probably one of the most brilliant things I have ever experienced in my life, relief in knowing, knowing inside myself not just thinking actually knowing inside myself that that is the way it is. Just to accept it. It’s just the way it is.’

‘I was just me and that’s all I had to be....no one expected anything different of me, no one wanted anything different of me and it just actually felt good. Basically I didn’t let me hair down as such but I didn’t put walls up neither. Basically, like you said, there for the here and now, and I took it all in two hands and loved every bit of it.’

‘Just to be who you are and not J. the addict, J. the person is what it's all about. If I’d had any inkling of being judged in any way I would have gone.’

‘If you guys had come in heavy handed I would have shut up like a clam. I would still have enjoyed the trip, don’t get me wrong. I still would have had a ball, absolute ball, but it would have been a lot different and I don’t think I would have got a 10th of what I got out of it. I don’t think anyone else in the group would have neither.

"The fun made the time pass, and some things not so hard to do’.

‘Having fun was one of the things I had forgotten, fun without the piss and the drugs and everything else that goes with it and one more of the wonderful things of the trip was waking up and remembering it.’

‘....we were trusting that we weren’t gunna get lost, trusting each other to cook, trusting each other with the blindfolds walk...’

‘.....once again it was seeing people achieve and seeing that sense of joy in their face I guess it just lifted the whole group up to another level..... I got a bit of compassion back, which you tend to loose in addiction, compassion for others, compassion for yourself’

‘I watched her do it and I was pleased for her but it didn't make any difference to me I was still terrified."’

‘....and I could see that you two were working well together by the simple fact that your communication was very open to each other.....and that was very important to me.....(it had) a great effect on me. Just the feeling of mutual respect and it put me a lot at ease, like I felt so at ease with you guys that um, I was on common ground basically, there was no I’m up here and you’re down there."

‘...to see others go into detail and things like that I think I actually learnt not so much how to do it, I know how to do it, but the fact that is alright.’

‘If you guys as leaders had pointed out where we were going, it would have taken all the adventure and mystery out of it and probably to a great degree a sense of accomplishment.’

I am at the top of a huge funnel, right now I want information about everything, my next move will be narrower,

What have I learned so far?

I've learnt what a privilege it is to sit and listen to participants stories. I've learned how hard it is to listen openly. I'm learning how hard it is to restrain myself, I want to rush in and elicit connections, theories and solutions. But, like being in the Arthurs the steady plod will get me there and leave me breath to look around for depth, detail, and nuance, the extraordinary in the ordinary.

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Biography

Val Nicholls is a PhD student with University of Wollongong and facilitator for a Tasmanian wilderness therapy program called Project Hahn whose motto is "Personal growth through challenge and adventure."

What works, what doesn't work and what might be promising in interventions with young offenders: A very brief guide

Aldis Putniņš & Steve Harvey

Introduction

There are many factors that relate to offending risk. Broad social factors such as civil conflict, prevailing community values, economic exploitation, political and/or economic inequality, racism, tolerance of violence and other antisocial behaviours in the media, mass entertainment and advertising, the availability of alcohol and other psychoactive substances, urban decay and so on can influence offending at a group level. These and other similar factors will influence overall offending rates and many are suitable targets for intervention. However, most of these factors are too broad for individual social workers, youth workers or other professional workers to have much direct influence on. They are matters that require policy decisions at a senior political level followed by the implementation of large scale social programs. Perhaps the best that social services workers can do in relation to these broad factors is to advocate on behalf of their clients for appropriate policies and social programs.

At an individual level, three important factors that need to be considered when planning interventions are needs, risk and responsivity (Andrews, 1995).

Needs

At the level of working with individuals, there is accumulating evidence that some interventions can help to reduce the risk of offending. To better understand what works and what does not work at an individual level, it is necessary to first consider the notion of individual needs. These are things that are required for an individual's successful functioning. This is a broad concept and encompasses many different areas of adjustment. Everyone has a variety of personal needs. Services in areas such as education, health, disability, housing and so on have been created for those who require assistance to meet them. However, it should be remembered that, irrespective of what other problems they might have, the only reason why offenders are involved with the criminal justice system is that they have offended. A primary aim of that system is, therefore, to prevent (or, more realistically, to reduce) offending. The needs that are of greatest importance and relevance when considering offenders are those that influence offending risk. These are termed "criminogenic needs" and should be the main targets of assessment and intervention. Other welfare concerns ("general needs") should not obscure this, particularly as other agencies already exist to service more general welfare needs. This is an important point because general needs are often confused with criminogenic needs. Interventions that focus on general needs are less likely to reduce offending risk than are interventions that focus on criminogenic needs, i.e. those needs that are more directly related to offending.

Risk

Not all youths are at equal risk of reoffending. Most youths stop offending after their first few offences. It would seem, therefore, to be inefficient to intervene with these

youths when most will cease offending naturally. There is, however, a small percentage of youths who go on to offend with increasing frequency. This smaller percentage of chronic offenders requires more intensive services. There is some evidence with adult offenders that providing intensive services to low risk offenders leads to higher offending rates (perhaps due to enmeshing them more deeply in the justice system), whereas high risk offenders benefit from more intensive interventions. Assessing offending risk is, therefore, an important preliminary step before planning and implementing interventions for individual youths.

Responsivity

Another factor that needs to be taken into account when considering interventions for offenders is individual responsiveness. Because we are not all the same, consideration needs to be given to whether a particular program matches not only the needs but also the abilities and learning styles of each individual. For example, there is little point in putting a youth in a program that requires reading if the youth is illiterate, that requires abstract reasoning if the youth is intellectually very dull, that requires sitting still and paying attention if the youth suffers ADHD or that requires punctuality if the youth cannot tell time and so on. Therefore, needs assessments should include measures that indicate the youth's capacity (e.g. motivation, ability to concentrate, literacy etc) to respond to various tasks, deficits in which might need to be attended to before particular programs can be offered. Alternatively, if these deficits cannot be immediately remedied, programs might require modification to better suit some individuals.

What does not work

- There is little evidence that judicially sanctioned punishment (at least not at the levels and in the manner used in our justice system) by itself works to reduce reoffending risk. With adult offenders imprisonment seems to increase the risk of reoffending (Gendreau, Goggin & Cullen, 1999). Important factors that are needed for punishment to work include immediacy and consistency. Neither of these conditions is adequately met in our criminal justice system. "...[At] present no convincing evidence exists that confining youths in secure custody facilities has any meaningful impact on individual or aggregate crime rates" (Hoge, 2001, p.212).
- Electronic monitoring does not reduce reoffending risk, though it might be justified on economic grounds.
- There is little evidence that treating distress variables (e.g., anxiety, depression) reduces offending risk. In fact, youths who are more anxious are less likely to reoffend. However, there are occasions when distress might interfere with a youth's ability to be engaged in other programs.
- There is no evidence that counselling about grief and loss experiences helps to reduce offending risk. Furthermore, there is evidence that such counselling can often intensify distress (Bonanno, 1999). Two recent longitudinal studies have failed to find any significant reduction in levels of distress after emotional disclosure following bereavement (Stroebe et al., 2002).

- There is no evidence that increasing self-esteem reduces offending risk (Baumeister, 1999). In fact, many offenders have exaggerated feelings of self-worth and unrealistic notions about their abilities (perhaps a reflection of many young offenders' egocentricity) (Salmivalli, 2001). When looking at the relationship between self-esteem and performance, there is a stronger relationship in the direction of achievement leading to increased self-esteem than for self-esteem to lead to increased achievement.
- There is little evidence that counselling or other interventions that focus on earlier experiences of child abuse reduce offending risk.
- There is little evidence that Wilderness programs result in a reduction in offending. The wilderness challenge or survival experience by itself does little to alter criminal tendencies. This is not to say that a Wilderness program might not be useful as a way of engaging youths in other programs or interventions, but on its own it does not reduce recidivism.
- Scared straight and other provocative or confronting programs (including boot camps and Shock incarceration) do not reduce offending risk or subsequent substance use (Lipsey, 1995; Pearson & Lipton, 1999). There is evidence that Scared straight interventions and boot camps most likely increase offending risk (Aos et al., 2001).
- Literacy and numeracy programs have not been demonstrated on their own to lead to reductions in recidivism, at least not in the short term. It is possible that increases in skills in these areas might have some positive effect on obtaining and maintaining employment, but the direct effect on recidivism is very weak. This is not to say that such programs should not be offered, but any positive effects might be restricted to those with the largest discrepancy between general ability and basic skills performance levels. Because many offenders are intellectually rather dull, their basic skills levels, although low, are often not below the what might be expected from their overall intellectual ability. Significant increases in basic skills are unlikely in such circumstances (Putniņš, 1999).
- Vocational programs that do not result in getting a job do not reduce recidivism risk, at least not in the short term.
- Loosely structured and unsupervised recreational programs do not lead to reductions in recidivism (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). For example, providing a basketball court or a billiards table to play on, in the absence of structure and adult supervision, does not reduce recidivism and could even strengthen delinquent associations.
- The benefit of getting a job is unclear for young offenders. There is evidence with adult offenders that getting a job can reduce recidivism risk but the evidence with youths is equivocal. Remaining in school is more protective regarding offending than is getting a job. There is some evidence with non-clinical population youths that getting a job might be associated with behavioural deterioration while emotionally and/or behaviourally disturbed youths might benefit from having a job (Cone & Glenwick, 2001). However, the findings are only suggestive and need to be replicated with stronger research designs. The income that a job can generate can facilitate offending by increasing access to alcohol, drugs, cars etc. An income,

however, can also reduce the need to offend for material gain. It is a two-edged sword. Much might depend on the nature of the particular workplace, the quality of the work and the people that the youth will be working with. The point is that getting a job does not necessarily reduce offending risk among youths.

- Family preservation by itself does not reduce offending risk if dysfunctional relationships and inadequate parenting are not dealt with.
- Diverting from court (e.g., police cautions, Children’s Panels or Family Conferences) compared to proceeding to court does not seem to offer substantially different outcomes regarding recidivism (see Wundersitz, 1997), though diversion might be cheaper.
- Group-counselling programs in correctional settings that focus on substance use have not been found to be effective in reducing subsequent substance use or offending (Pearson & Lipton, 1999). There is evidence from other studies that group treatment of very deviant youths can sometimes lead to worse outcomes (Dishion, McCord & Poulin, 1999), perhaps due to the mutual support of their deviancy and the absence of more prosocial models.

The elements of what works

- “Risk classification – a matching between offender risk levels and the degree of intervention, so that higher-risk individuals receive more intensive services and lower-risk ones minimal intervention.
- Responsivity – an appropriate matching between styles of worker and styles of clients, but the learning styles of most offenders require active participatory methods of working rather than either didactic methods or loose unstructured experiential methods.
- Community base – on the whole, programs in the community or having close links with the community tend to be more effective.
- Treatment modality – effective programs tend to be multimodal (seeking to impact on several different types of problems) and social-skills oriented; they tend to use methods drawn from behavioural and cognitive-behavioural sources.
- Program integrity – the stated aims are closely linked to the methods to be used; adequate resourcing is provided; and there is adequate staff training, systematic monitoring and evaluation.
- Criminogenic needs – a focus on problems or features that contribute or are conducive to offending rather than those that are only distantly related to it.” (Rutter, Giller & Hagell, 1998).

What works - or at least is promising

A number of large-scale reviews and meta-analyses have been carried out during the last 10 years on the question of what, if any, interventions work with offenders. However, there is considerable variation in the results between different programs. There is also considerable variation in the quality of individual studies, with few studies meeting the highest standards of scientific rigour. One can only get out of a meta-analysis what one

puts into it. Published studies, due to their accessibility, are the main sources of data used in meta-analyses. There is, however, a tendency for studies that find no positive improvement or that find negative effects to be less likely to be published than do those studies that find positive effects. In other words, what is published is not necessarily an unbiased representation of research on a particular topic. This can influence the results of research summaries. Bearing in mind that much more research still needs to be done, some fairly consistent trends have emerged from recent major reviews. There is agreement that programs intended to reduce recidivism among young offenders do have an average net positive effect. The average reduction in recidivism from a large range of programs is about 10%-12% (Lipsey, Wilson & Cothran, 2000; Lösel, 1996), though there is considerable variation between programs. Programs that are intensive, appropriately targeted, maintain high treatment fidelity, use well trained staff, are guided by the principles of risk, needs and responsivity and use empirically based treatment methods could be expected to obtain better results. However, expectations should be kept modest. There is no panacea or quick fix for the problem of young offenders, particularly as some offending can be considered to be normative but transitory for most youths, particularly for boys.

The types of programs that most consistently give positive results are those that are either behavioural, cognitive-behavioural, skills based or multi-component (intervening in a number of different areas simultaneously). Cognitive or cognitive-behavioural programs cover a wide range of interventions that aim to modify thoughts, attitudes, reasoning, interpersonal skills and problem solving in order to develop new behaviours. Examples of programs that are likely to be successful are given below.

- Parent-training programs based on Patterson and Gullion's (1968) manual *Living with Children* use operant principles of behaviour change and are designed to teach parents to monitor targeted deviant behaviours, monitor and reward incompatible behaviours and ignore or punish deviant behaviours. Such treatments have been found superior to control groups in several studies (Brestan & Eyberg, 1998). These programs are suitable for conduct disordered children but not particularly for adolescents.
- Anger management programs based on cognitive-behavioural principles (such as the Systematic Training for Anger Reduction [STAR program] [Putniņš & Harvey, 2001]) are effective with adolescents (Brestan & Eyberg, 1998). They will be most effective with youths who have mild to moderate anger management problems. Because some of the skills that are taught (e.g. self-monitoring, thinking about longer-term consequences) are relevant to controlling other deviant behaviours, such programs might have benefits beyond problems relating to anger. However, being able to pay attention and possessing some degree of maturity are likely to be needed for this and similar cognitively oriented programs to work. They are, therefore, more suitable for older adolescents.
- When group care (GC - similar to our residential care units) was compared to multidimensional treatment foster care (MTFC – similar to INC but with more structured behaviour management methods and the addition of individual weekly therapy sessions with the youth focussing on skill building in problem solving, social perspective taking and non-aggressive methods of self-expression), MTFC was found

to have significantly better outcomes on variables such as absconding and offending (Chamberlain & Reid, 1998).

- “Multi-systemic therapy (MST) is a multiple component treatment program conducted in families, schools and communities (Henggeler et al. [1998]). The particular type of treatment is chosen according to the particular needs of the youth; therefore, the nature of the treatment is different for each person. The treatment may include individual, family, peer, school and community interventions, including parent training and skills training. . . . MST is an effective method of treating juvenile offenders” (Farrington & Welsh, 1999). This conclusion is supported by a number of outcome studies. Outcomes include reductions in both substance use and offending. Treatment personnel usually have tertiary qualifications in behavioural or mental health disciplines and carry small case loads so that they can provide intensive supervision and support. Studies have shown that outcomes are also very sensitive to treatment fidelity. In other words, the more a program deviates from its original design and intention, the less effective it becomes. This applies to effective programs in general, not just to MST. Treatment fidelity is enhanced by, among other things, good program documentation (usually in the form of a manual) and close professional supervision of those who run the programs.
- “A therapeutic-community (TC) is a group-based residential program with residents involved in all aspects of the group’s operations, including administration and maintenance [therefore only suitable for older adolescents]. Crime and drug use are seen to be symptomatic of a disorder of the whole person, so the treatment problem to be addressed is the person, not the drug. The key to solving the person’s problems is right living. Right living develops from committing oneself to the values of the TC, including both positive social values such as the work ethic, social productivity, and communal responsibility, and positive personal values such as honesty, self-reliance, and responsibility to oneself and significant others. . . . Staff and residents roles are aligned in a clear chain of command. New residents are assigned to work with the lowest status, but they can move up strata as they demonstrate increased competency and emotional growth. Thus, they have an incentive to earn better work positions, associated rights and privileges, and living accommodations. The program uses groups and meetings to provide positive persuasion to change behaviour, and it uses confrontation by peer groups whenever values or rules are breached. On the other hand, peers also provide supportive feedback such as reinforcement, affirmation, instruction and suggestions for changing behaviour and attitudes and assistance during meetings as residents during group meetings recall painful memories. . . .” (Pearson & Lipton, 1999). Several studies have found that participation in therapeutic communities reduced offending and drug use.
- Mentoring is a promising intervention. It not yet well researched, though a large scale study is in progress and preliminary results are encouraging. A program that provided one-to-one counselling by citizen volunteers (very similar to mentoring) led to significant decreases in offending (Moore, 1987). Using pro-social models (which is an important aspect of mentoring) has been found to reduce recidivism (Dowden & Andrews, 1999).

- Prevention is more desirable than is intervention. A program of home visitation by prenatal and early childhood nurses to low-income first-time mothers has been found to be successful in increasing the children's health and reducing later delinquency (Olds, Hill & Rumsey, 1998).
- Victim awareness programs are promising and are theoretically sound. Initial outcome evaluations indicate that increases in moral reasoning maturity occur (Putniņš, 1997) but more study is required to find out how much of this translates into behaviour change.
- Multi-component programs that focus on correcting criminogenic thinking errors and increasing social skills in a context of peer group guidance such as the EQUIP program (Gibbs, Potter & Goldstein, 1995) are cognitive-behavioural in nature and have positive outcomes in follow-up studies (Gibbs, Potter, Liao, Schock & Wightkin, 2001). Work is currently under way by FAYS young offender psychologists and Y.A.R.S. staff in developing measures of pro-criminal thinking that can be used in individual assessments to identify cognitive distortions. These measures might also be used as pre- and post-program evaluation tools.
- Conduct disorder and ADHD are known to often co-occur. The heightened impulsivity, restlessness, poor concentration and stimulus-seeking that characterises those with ADHD makes them very difficult to engage and treat if they present with antisocial behaviour problems (often including substance abuse). The underlying ADHD needs to be controlled before other interventions for antisocial behaviours can be effectively implemented. Despite some public controversy, psycho-stimulant medication (when administered following a careful assessment and together with close monitoring of effects and dose) remains a very effective means of controlling ADHD symptoms (Klassen et al., 1999; Stern, 2001), thereby increasing clients' responsiveness to other interventions.

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Biography

(None supplied)

The Relevance of Research: Using Research to Improve Outdoor Education Practice.

Kate Spencer, David Johnstone, Dale Hobbs, David Axford

Abstract

Each of the presenters are Outdoor Education professionals working at different locations around Australia whilst engaged in post graduate research at Monash University. Each will provide an overview of their research, examine the issues and challenges that their research is highlighting

How the Social Construction of Gender Influences the Professional Advancement of Female Outdoor Educators – In – Training

Kate Spencer

Abstract

This topic of research arose out of my own personal observation at the lack of female role models available to females, like myself, studying within the outdoor profession. Of my own personal experience, a majority, if not all, of the texts utilised within our degree were written by men, we were taught by all-male lecturers and a majority of my supervisors on outdoor teaching rounds were male. Of my work within the profession, I have only thrice worked with, or under, another qualified female. Of those I have observed, the majority were essentially ‘masculine’ in nature, this trend observable in many of the female outdoor education students I know. It was observations such as these that led me to investigate reasons behind the lack of women prominent in the profession, and the inherently masculine nature of those who are...

The outdoors - a woman's world?

Here, at the beginning of the twenty first century, a great percentage of people who participate in outdoor activities, enrol in outdoor education courses, and purchase outdoor equipment are female (Graham, 1997; Neill, 1997; Nolan and Priest, 1993; Henderson, 1992). Whilst this could be placed down to an increase in the overall population interested in outdoor pursuits, in her article, Henderson (1992) demonstrates that ‘In virtually all aspects of outdoor recreation, the percentage of women participating is increasing faster than men...’ (p.50). However, this increase is rather recent, much research indicating that the dominant male history of the outdoor profession was a barrier. In general, women were excluded from involvement in the outdoors because it was not viewed as socially acceptable for them to adopt the masculine role required, or to enter what was classified as a masculine domain (Nanschild, 1997, Wittmer, 2001). The current interest from women has been so prominent that, currently, there are many areas of the outdoor industry who cater solely for this increasing female clientele base: activity-specific equipment/clothing constructed to fit the female form, women-only outdoor and

training programs and an academic interest in the female outdoor experience. As this shows, such high female interest appears to have greatly influenced many aspects of the industry, however such influence does not appear to have extended to the number of women in roles of responsibility within the profession. My own personal observations, plus research that presents the overall low percentage of female leaders (Clemmensen, 2002; Humberstone, 1994; Friedrich & Priest, 1992, Huxley, 1997), gives rise to the question, 'with all this new interest from women, what is stopping them from climbing the professional ladder'? I believe this is due to the industry's historical, and continual, stronghold on hegemonic masculinity that views the concept of 'feminine' as inferior.

Femininity and masculinity are classifications for inherently human psychological traits displayed by both females and males (Friedrich & Priest, 1992). Hughes (1998) has defined these gendered social constructions in the following way:

'Femininity is a model for female perfection. Although it changes over time, some of its enduring features are passivity, empathy, slimness and heterosexuality... Masculinity, like femininity, is seen as a gendered conception of perfection – this time for males. Some of the qualities seen as masculine in contemporary Western societies are physical strength, individualism, heterosexuality, competitiveness, rationality and being unemotional' (p. 91 & 95).

Through our socialisation as members of the human society, we are taught that masculine traits are more acceptable for males to exhibit, and feminine traits more appropriate from females, if we are to be 'normal' (Friedrich & Priest, 1992). Consequently, with the industry's apparent lack of 'femininity', I believe females face both visible and invisible barriers that limit their ability to have a greater influence within the profession. This perhaps, the cause for that very small, and only slowly increasing number of qualified female outdoor leaders visibly representing an outdoor vocation.

A patriarchal influence

The socialisation of gender within our society has been, and still is, predominantly based on the ideals of patriarchy. Hughes (1998) defines patriarchy as 'A social system in which all men have power over all women. This power is manifest both in public office where men control all the great avenues of power, and in private relationships where men are thought to both control and dominate women' (p. 96). In my own words, I see patriarchy as the dominance of the masculine over the feminine, whereby the masculine influences and defines social 'norms'. The connection between this, and Hughes' (1998) view of men having power over women, is based on the abovementioned norm of masculinity socialized as accepted male characteristics, and those of femininity the female equivalent (Nanschild, 1997). My definition, unlike Hughes', incorporates differences to the rule, such as the blatant discrimination of men who exhibit feminine characteristics, and the power obtained by women who utilise strong masculine qualities. However, for the remainder of this paper, I shall centre discussion on the plight of females under a patriarchal society.

Different societies exercise varying degrees of patriarchy, the effect of which, in our contemporary Australian, westernised society, is the *latent* or *systemic* discrimination of females in many social institutions simply because they are born female (Guillemin, 1992). I believe that the social institution of the outdoor profession, because of its

hegemonic masculine perspective, still perpetuates elements of patriarchal socialisation. Nanschild (1997) elaborates on this statement,

‘In a landscape traditionally perceived as the domain of men, there are issues for women that stem from patriarchal perceptions that the outdoors is a masculine domain and is experienced according to the behaviour codes of men (Norwood, 1988). The male codes of bravery, courage, heroism, and conquest have provided the cultural context for such experiences and can intimidate women from venturing into it...’ (p. 177).

Traditionally, men have been more closely socialised with the ‘masculine domain’ of outdoor environments than women, as it was seen as an area in which to ‘symbolically measure their identity’, in an environment absent of women, who were, and in many ways still are, inextricably linked to the domestic social sphere (Nanschild, 1997, p. 177). This traditional separation of women from the land based on socially endorsed (patriarchal) gendered discrimination is I believe one of the main determinants as to why the highly masculinised outdoor profession (Clemmensen, 2002) lacks a strong feminine perspective, and, consequently, a dominant population of qualified women within the profession.

A breakthrough for femininity

Within the past two decades, a good deal of outdoor professional research has been devoted to highlighting the leadership advantages of combining masculine, or technical, skills with some feminine characteristics to achieve greater success in outdoor programs (Wittmer, 2001). A leader who can be seen to draw upon masculine traits such as risk-taking, initiating and assertion, and balance them with a range of feminine traits, like caring, expression, empathy and intuition, is perceived to be a more effective facilitator, and able to bring about more meaningful learning experiences for their participants (Hartley & Williams, 1988; Wittmer, 2001). Neill (1997) believes that this recognition of feminine, or ‘interpersonal’ skills by the profession ‘is likely to have encouraged and valued more females as outdoor educators’ (p. 185). I believe Neill (1997) is correct in his assumption that recognition of feminine traits has been important in increasing the number of women interested in the profession. However, unless this acceptance and approval of feminine qualities is wider reaching in the outdoor sphere, the women who enter, and the few who remain within the profession, will continue to be restricted by the same latent patriarchal barriers.

Restrictions faced by the outdoor woman

Women who choose to enter into the masculine domain of the outdoor profession not only face open opposition from many facets of society, but also must deal with the personal reservations that entering into a field not socialised for their gender might stir. As previously stated, the outdoors is traditionally seen as the domain of men – this continually reinforced even today by public images reproduced by the media and throughout history of the ‘rough and rugged’ male adventurer (Nolan & Priest, 1993, p. 15). It is still uncommon for society to portray women in similar high-risk activities (Friedrich & Priest, 1992), this seen in the lack of women represented in outdoor manuals, outdoor textbooks, advertising material and adventure magazines.

As seen in this example of the continual masculine socialisation of the outdoor profession, there is a prior expectation that, to be involved in the profession at any level, the participant must be highly masculine in nature (Nanschild, 1997). This not only includes encompassing unfamiliar masculine traits, but rejecting the familiar feminine traits not viewed as socially appropriate by the profession. Many women within the profession conform to, and so uphold, this patriarchal mode of thinking. For example, by adopting male linguistic norms in order to achieve success within the profession, Pauwels and Winter (1992) believe that women appear to,

‘...i) devalue their female identity, ii) affirm the prestige and power of male norms and/or, iii) be perceived as illegitimate users of male language, i.e., their femininity may be questioned. However, if women maintain their own linguistic behaviour in an attempt to counteract points, i) and ii) above, they are dismissed as silly, weak, ineffective communicators and ignored in the interactive encounters in the workplace’ (p. 118).

Therefore, if a woman rejects the norm by disincluding herself from the profession, or devalues her ‘female identity’ by accepting and adopting the masculine hegemony in order to ‘fit in’ with the outdoor population, she can be seen as colluding with and supporting a system that continues to discriminate against her as a female (Bell, 1996). Even if a woman adopts the masculine norm of the profession in order to ‘fit in’, she may (more often than not) be viewed as an ‘illegitimate user’ of these conventions and so discriminated against for rejecting her feminine social status (Wittmer, 2001). This is a frustrating situation, of which Johnson (1990) has asked the question, ‘How can we hope to persuade more young girls to get involved in outdoor activities if we ourselves are still putting across the message that outdoor activities are mainly for men?’ (p. 39). The potential effect of these unfeminine females currently within the profession may be to deter to the very women they are aiming to inspire. Warren (1990) explains the dilemma this can cause for these women:

‘To achieve in this field, women educators need to acquire a competency and ability in all areas to achieve parity in the male dominated profession. Unfortunately, this sets her apart from the girls and women in society, causing an unintentional detrimental effect on the very people she wishes to encourage. She in fact becomes the “superwoman” of the outdoors, following a male model in a male inspired programme, which then negates her efforts to be an effective role model’ (p. 415).

So, what are women to do? As alluded to by Warren (1990) above, and according to Burton (1994), ‘If women want jobs and careers, they are expected to fit in with standards and practices based on the typical male life style’ (p. 11). This is probably what many women currently working in the outdoors have unknowingly done to be where they are today. And yet, this path does not seem to be successful for all women. I believe this to be because of the latent social norms of patriarchy that still continue to restrict the career advancement of the many other women interested in the profession.

The Relevance of this Research

‘The outdoor world is no less a reflection on life in general and no more immune from the processes of the social differentiation’ (Humberstone, 1994, p. 26).

With this said, I see the relevance of this project not only in benefiting our profession, but being of importance to the many other masculine and feminine dominated professions within our society. Perhaps a slightly idealistic notion, however I believe that awareness is the first step to change.

I see potential benefits for both males and females within the profession, and the social perception of the profession itself. The unachievable masculine hegemony influences the behaviour of both men and women within the profession, for both continually have to maintain and justify their beliefs in accordance with it – men are just as much victims of trying to maintain the socialised masculine norm at the expense of rejecting feminine traits. Their position is viewed differently, because they do not seem to be sacrificing as much as their female counterparts in order to conform to the masculine norm, however they too are a victim of the discrimination they latently support.

I believe that the profession itself will benefit from a greater social awareness and understanding of what it tries to achieve. The lessening of the ‘macho-masculine’ image will entice a greater audience toward it, and will assist in developing leaders who value and promote many diverse masculine and feminine characteristics in their participants and themselves. Through this, I believe that not only will there be an increase in the number of women entering the profession, but the amount of people interested in beginning careers within it.

Making this Research happen

To investigate these concerns, I decided to utilise qualitative data collection tools that compliment a narrative inquiry methodology. After investigation, I found that narrative inquiry upheld ideals similar to those I personally value within the experiential nature of the outdoor profession, and drew upon the sociological areas of knowledge, dialogue and narrative, research with which I was already familiar because of my prior completion of a writing/communications major. According to Bell (1999), quality data collection utilising narrative inquiry is only possible through the formation of trusting relationships between researcher, participants and fellow participants. This is a reflection of Bill Proudman’s writing on experiential education, past president of the Association for Experiential Education, who believes that, ‘the experiential process can best be described as a series of critical relationships: the learner to self, the learner to teacher, and the learner to the learning environment’ (Chapman, McPhee & Proudman, 1995, p. 241). These relationships fostered by the researcher/facilitator I see as responsible for not only ensuring participant engagement, but also participant empowerment through different modes of encouraging ownership of the experience (for further information, Chapman, et. al., 1995; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Doecke & Malone, 2002). Consequently, I am anticipating being able to extend and improve upon my facilitation skills through the selection of this method of inquiry.

One of the greatest difficulties I believe I face is the incessant niggle at the base of my brain as to the actual consequence of my research. This, coupled with my personal feeling of isolation within this dispersed community, has been enough to make me doubt my own intentions, and the relevance of the project I have undertaken. Is this a common feeling for all researchers within the profession? Or a symptom of first time jitters? I am nervous of the potential for this study to find nothing.

However, by collecting stories of experience, and the personal and professional aspirations of women currently undertaking an outdoor professional education, I believe that even if what I do find does not support my hypothesis of a latent masculine hegemony being responsible for the lack of women pursuing the higher realms of the outdoor profession, I believe I will learn the unique histories of eight female professionals-in-training, whose varied experiences may open my eyes to a plethora of ideas that can pave the way for future study within this young research community of outdoor education.

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Biography

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Student Perspectives' on the Impact and Transfer of the Camp Mallana Experience: A Case Study

Dave Johnson

Abstract

The research project I am undertaking aims to examine the student perspectives' on the impact of an eight-day Outdoor Education program. This paper presents an overview of my study, the methodology used and data collection process. It contains some brief excerpts from the data to provide an insight into the student responses. The paper also aims to tell the story of what it is like to be a postgraduate student undertaking a Research Masters and highlights some of the challenges they are likely to encounter.

Introduction

As Outdoor Educators we need to ask ourselves, are we making a difference? Are we making it happen? Do students leave our camp or school program with the idea that, 'it was a bit of fun camping, now lets get back to real life', or 'that was a real eye opening experience which had lessons extremely relevant to the rest of my life'. This study will research student perspectives' on the impact of an eight-day Outdoor Education program.

The program used for this study is Camp Mallana that is attended by Year Ten students of Wesley College Melbourne. The Camp is aquatic based and involves a five-day expedition that includes two days kayaking, two sailing and a beach walk day in-between. The Camp Mallana 'journey' aims to improve personal development, social and teamwork skills and build an appreciation and awareness of the environment through the successful completion of this expedition.

Due to the author's position of running a current Outdoor Education program this study will provide a unique, first hand approach into the student perspectives' of what kind of an impact the Camp experience has on them. The case study method has been chosen to provide rich and detailed accounts of the student perspectives' of how this outdoor experience actually effects and influences participants. Through interviews with past participants in the program this study will also provide new research into the transfer and longevity of Outdoor Education messages.

Research Overview

The following four sub-questions outline the scope of this research project.

- (1) Why teach Outdoor Education?
- (2) How does learning and teaching in the outdoors best takes place?
- (3) Can a significant impact be demonstrated on student perspective towards the outdoors and life?
- (4) How long does this impact or influence (if it is demonstrated) last?

Through qualitative research methods the study will examine if the students' perceive any leaning or change has occurred as a result of the program. The project will highlight what

experiences facilitated any impact or change and therefore provide an insight into what makes an Outdoor Education program or camp an effective educational experience both for the individual and the group. If, as a result of the Camp Mallana experience, an impact has occurred and lessons have been learned, then this study will examine the transfer and longevity of this learning when the students return to their 'normal' life.

Currently there is considerable professional literature in the area of the impact and outcomes of Outdoor Education programs (Cope, 1994; McKenzie, 2000; Martin, 1996; Nichols, 1994). I believe further insight and understanding would be provided by research with the emphasis on the students' perspective. Meta analysis in the Outdoor Education field has been done by Hattie, Marsh, Neill and Richards (1997) and Cason and Gillis (1994) that highlights the fact that more research needs to be completed in the areas of transfer and longevity in Outdoor Education.

Much of the literature from the last decade is outcome based and has aimed to promote and justify the inclusion of Outdoor Education in our school curricula (Richards, 1997, Gray, 1995, Neill, 1997 and Davidson 1998). In Australian secondary school curricula the emphasis in Outdoor Education has recently shifted beyond justification to the finer points of teaching in this subject area. Questions are being raised such as, should objectives reflect an adventure and personal attainment approach, or a more environmental community based outlook? (Lugg, 1999, Priest, 1996).

Research is one means of establishing credibility in the area of experiential and outdoor education. In an article on experiential research Bocarro and Richards (1998) state:

The importance of quality research should not be underestimated as it can help legitimise and convince people from outside the field that experiential education is an effective medium to learn and affect positive behavioural change (p.102).

Reliable systematic research is vital to the field of outdoor education as it not only builds a knowledge base but also improves understanding and performance of all those involved in this field. This research is critical in justifying the educational value and inclusion of outdoor education in schools curricula.

Methodology Overview

The qualitative research method selected as a basis for this project is the case study. The study adopts a multi-method approach by also using the grounded theory model for data analysis and interpretation. The case study methodology is well suited to the diverse subject area of Outdoor Education. Researchers such as Miller (2001), Bramwell, Forrester, Houle, Larocque, Villeneuve and Priest (1997) and Gordon, Harcourt-Smith, Hay and Priest (1996) have all used the case study in a variety of experiential settings as it provides the opportunity for each participant to express their unique position and outlook on the experience.

The case study method is suited to this project as it focuses on not about what the teacher observes or what the camp staff assumes happens, but what kind of impact the students' truly believe occurs as a result of 'their' camp experience. Cohen, Manion and Morrison support this type of in depth analysis 'Case studies strive to portray 'what it is like' to be in a particular situation, to catch the close up reality and 'thick description' of

participants' lived experiences of, thoughts about and feelings for a situation' (2000, p.182).

The case study method has been chosen as it offers a 'holistic perspective' that is important when examining the aims of this research project. This method allows exploration of the research questions in great depth and with a humanistic approach. Case studies are accessible and 'reader friendly' they appeal to a wide audience, are realistic, 'down to earth' and allow the reader to draw their own conclusions and generalisations. (Burns, 1997).

Reliability and validity may be seen as a weakness of the case study method of research. In order to achieve reliability and validity this research project aims to be thorough and precise in its work and minimise the opportunities for bias through the use of reflexivity, peer review and the use of triangulation. This research project uses two types of triangulation, data triangulation by using multiple data sources such as semi-structured interviews, participant observation and a facilitated de-brief, and methods triangulation by using elements of both the case study and grounded theory methodology. Garst, Schnieder and Baker (2001, p.44) also recommend the use of multiple methods as are being used in this study, 'Multiple methods (interviews, surveys, journals and observation) assisted in verifying study results'.

Because a case study is often a single and sometimes quite specific case it becomes difficult to generalise the results. Punch (1998, p.153) states 'A common criticism of the case study is its generalisability: This study is based on only one case, so how can we generalise?'

This study is clearly looking at the student perspectives' of the Outdoor Education experience that occurs at Camp Mallana. It would be wrong to widely generalise the results from this study to other areas. However they are very suitable in the context of this research project. As Richards (1997, p.249) states:

...small numbers of subjects, studied by qualitative methods such as case studies may provide very deep and rich insights into those particular participants, although it may be dangerous to extrapolate these insights too far to others (p.249).

Data Collection

There are a number of tools or instruments that may be used to gather data within the case study framework. By using a variety of research tools the reliability and validity of the study improves and there is an increase in the opportunity to obtain in depth responses. Burns (1997, p.374) states that 'The use of multiple sources is the major strength of the case study approach... Multiple sources allow for triangulation through converging lines of inquiry, improving the reliability and validity of the data and findings'.

When looking at the student perspectives' of the impact and longevity of Outdoor Education, data gathering tools such as participant observation, facilitated de-brief and a series of interviews will be used to collect relevant and accurate data. This research proposal has been designed to fit as closely as possible within the normal program at Camp Mallana in order to produce realistic and valid results.

The study involves six students who were randomly selected using a method outlined by Thomas and Nelson (1996). The students chosen are not meant to be a random sample from the wider population, just of the class of thirty used in this case study. This random selection strengthens the validity of the study ensuring there is no bias on behalf of the researcher selecting students' best suited to the projects outcomes. The six students will partaking in a series of semi-structured interviews that aim to examine student perspectives' of the Camp focusing on three commonly assumed outcomes of Outdoor Education, personal development, teamwork and environmental learning. The interview format also aims to provide scope for the students to provide rich in-depth personal accounts of their Camp experience.

The researcher in this situation is also the teacher in charge of the Camp. During the normal course of the Camp he will be observing and taking notes on student behaviour. A facilitated de-brief is another standard part of the Camp, this reflection and discussion session is held after the students return from their five-day expedition and will be audio-taped for future reference. The de-brief along with the participant observation will be used as a form of triangulation to validate the results of this study.

To further investigate the transfer and longevity of any learning which may have occurred whilst on Camp, six students who attended Camp Mallana 12 months ago, will be chosen at random to participate in a one on one interview with the researcher in the same circumstances.

Analysis of Data

One of the major challenges of this study will be to put together and make sense of the variety of data. As Jimenez and Bergin (1998, p.5) state 'In order to promote credibility to the research, an accepted method of analysis within the qualitative paradigm is a necessity'. For this study the most suitable approach to achieve this credibility is grounded theory.

The grounded theory approach is a qualitative research method that was originally developed by Glasser and Strauss in the 1960's. A grounded theory is one that emerges from the generation, interpretation and analysis of a particular set of data, gathered from a particular area of study. The researcher begins with a wide area of study and through their systematic data collection, and use of a coding system, what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). Hernandez-Gantes et al.(cited in Jimenez and Bergin 1998, p.5) view grounded theory as 'an appropriate framework for understanding student voices and experiences'.

Undertaking Postgraduate Research

My path to the Outdoor Education field seems to be quite common. Upon completing a B-Ed P.E Degree I embarked on several years of travel including a wide variety of teaching and learning experiences. I found my passion to be the outdoors and the most influential learning experiences those that involved challenge and 'hands on' application.

After two years of teaching in a relatively stable Outdoor Education position I decided to continue in this field I needed some more formal qualification. Several inquiries later I chose to pursue a Masters Research Degree with Monash University. This fitted in with a

work schedule including weeks off and school holidays however it has required some juggling with family life.

The first year provided a solid background in the Outdoor Education subject area through the literature review, and to my surprise I discovered that it wasn't experimental but experiential learning I was practicing! The diversity, knowledge and research that had already been done and was still occurring in this learning area came as a surprise to me. The more I pursued the relevant philosophies and ideals of experiential education the more it made sense to me and confirmed and consolidated what I had always believed the process of learning and education to be about.

The Research Methods subject was harder to work through due to the less interesting nature of the subject matter. However I could see it was providing the background knowledge and understanding required to develop research methods that suited my project. Writing up and putting together the ethics form seemed a matter of jumping through the appropriate hoops, but this process helped clarify my research questions and aims.

As I worked my way through each phase of the research I could see a definite pattern emerging. For me the research process involved collecting journal articles, reading texts, and surfing the web. I would then submit what I considered a relevant and finished piece of research material to my supervisor. This writing would then come back to me with lots of comment, redirection and focusing in on the research question. I would re-gather my thoughts do another stint in the library and the process would repeat itself.

At one stage I believed I was ready to proceed with my ethics application and quite sure of my work and methods. I was then involved in a meeting with my supervisor and a fellow academic who systematically pulled my ideas to pieces and began steering me on another course. As I watched them scribble notes, draw diagrams circles and arrows all over my work, and talk in a language I was having trouble deciphering, I was adding up the hours a simple change would take me to implement into my work. Along with this was lots of positive feedback and the realisation that with each step I was learning more about a subject area I truly believed in. Still being involved in a Camp helped with my research as it gave me a direct link to the effects and positive impact the work I was studying can achieve.

Being directly involved with the Camp and school I hoped the data collection phase would be quite simple. After my first attempt at arranging a series of interviews I soon realised it would not be easy. Teachers at the school may have good intentions but are far removed from the Camp situation and have little direct contact with the staff. It proved to be quite a challenge and took a lot of leg work and phone calls to get the school and parental consent for what was to take place. At one stage I arrived at the school (three and a half hours drive away) as previously arranged to conduct interviews and the teacher informed me she hadn't had a chance to even hand out the forms yet and was not happy with the random selection of the groups. I quickly discovered the more you can do yourself or the less people you have to rely upon the better.

Once I had the students at the Camp the research project went well. Things I had given little consideration to such as the effects on the program of weather, blue green algae, fires and staff sickness threatened but caused only minor change to the 'normal' camp

routine. The interviews went well and improved as my experience and rapport with the students developed. Initially a lot of responses seemed geared only to the positive and didn't always match the situations I observed in the field and recorded in my participant observation notes.

Interview

It got pretty frustrating at times, cos we were all really tired and sort of mouthed off at each other, that was finished by lunch, it didn't really last...I coped reasonably well, I guess, I mean I didn't cope worse than anyone else.

Participant observation notes

Several of the group members had really had enough they began abusing each other and the nature and purpose of the Camp. This continued quite a while and they were not happy until we reached our destination.

As the students encountered more challenging circumstances and felt more comfortable in an interview setting their responses were a more accurate reflection of what I saw happening and the participant observation notes.

I absolutely hated that, I got all shrivelled, I couldn't move, I got freezing and I just felt really uncomfortable, and there was nothing I could do about it, to control the situation because of the weather.

The next phase of the research project is to analyse the data, draw some conclusions and began the write up of the rest of my project. The data contains the whole range of responses from the one-word answers to the responses you need to cut short.

On personal development;

I've just thought that at camp its made me feel a lot stronger for the future like in my future life, the whole thing being away from home and the comfort zone, its like you are setting a mould and I've got a lot out of it, I feel much stronger and gutsy.

On teamwork

Yeah I thought that was good, that was one of the main things I was looking forward to and now I know some people that have been in the class for like a year now and in just a few days I have grown to know them better than I have all year. So I thought that was important to know other people I didn't know, it probably will make the class environment better I think, and the upcoming Monday will be a lot more enjoyable than the rest of the days we have had as a class. Yes it will just make it work as a better team.

On environmental learning

Probably the most important thing is, don't take it for granted its not always going to be there at the rate we are going, its degrading day by day, yes just make an effort, not just this country, clean up the world and try and get it together. Because its only here that you can see your fate, just like we said today it is not in the city

where you are going to see it, its going on out here. So it is good to come out here and see it for yourself.

On transfer and longevity

Well I think like the camp helped me for the future for when I'm out of my comfort zone again and its going to happen many, many millions of times in the future. And its times like these when you are young that help you deal with it in the future. So its just like doing everything you are told and working really, really hard, that all helps, and just the little things.

It's hard to know where the 60,000 words of data actually came from and then to sort through them seems a monumental task. However I now know how the process will evolve, more reading and research, a write up that I think is ready, then its return with more changes re-direction and focus. As Benjamin Franklin said 'Energy and perseverance conquer all things'.

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Biography

David Johnson (B.Ed. P.E) is the Teacher in Charge of Camp Mallana, A Wesley College Outdoor Education Camp that is based on the Gippsland Lakes in North Eastern Victoria. David is currently in the third year of a distance education part-time Research Masters and can be contacted on (03) 51566336 or email johno&ali@net-tech.com.au

Action Research: An Inquiry into Extended Stay Outdoor Education School Programs (ESOESP's) for Adolescent Boys Education.

Dale Hobbs

(Dale's full paper appears in the peer reviewed section of the proceedings)

Student Perceptions of the 'New' Victorian Certificate of Education Outdoor and Environmental Studies Curriculum.

David Axford

In this study I am attempting to evaluate the evolution of VCE Outdoor Education to Outdoor & Environmental Studies and its impact on student satisfaction. The different forms of outdoor education- outdoor recreation, adventure education and environmental education will be defined. Benefits that students receive from studying outdoor education will be discussed. Experiential education will be discussed as pedagogy that the outdoor educator might utilize to engage pupil's interest.

Outdoor Education has evolved during the last century from camps programs and extra-curricula offerings to the concept of outdoor education to be understood as having specialist knowledge and expertise and therefore to be offered as a distinct curriculum offering. The advent of VCE Outdoor Education can be seen in this light:

“The primary aim of VCE Outdoor Education is understanding the relationships between humans and natural environments. These relationships are explored from biological, social and cultural perspectives” Board of Studies, 1994.

With changes of perceptions from outdoor recreation or adventure education towards the environmental basis of outdoor education this evolution continued with the review of the VCE in the latter stages of the 1990's. A climate of subjects overlapping, student workloads and cheating prompted the review. The result was a determination by the Board of Studies that Environmental Education would be split into Environmental Science and a merger of its humanities based components with Outdoor Education creating Outdoor and Environmental Studies to commence in 2001. The new study was to ‘offer a unique course which did not overlap with the VET course, or VCE Environmental Science, Geography or Biology’ (Gleeson, 2000, p7). When writing about the new study Gleeson (2000, p7) stated “That which has changed is the overarching philosophy of the course and the inclusion of Environmental Studies curriculum.” Within the new philosophy the teaching of skills, as aligned with outdoor recreation courses, is not a direct learning outcome but rather students are expected to acquire practical skills for safe outdoor travel and living. This philosophical underpinning of the course brings the study more into line with Martin's (2000) concept of critical outdoor education.

“Critical outdoor education is distinguished from outdoor recreation and adventure education by its deliberate focus on educating participants for environmentally sustainable living”

This focus on environmentally sustainable living is the mainstay of Unit 4, The Future of Outdoor Environments, and appears in teaching points and knowledge in other units. An aim of the study is to develop respect for the outdoor environment and a concern for its conservation. Therefore the emphasis on excursions into the outdoors changes, with students required to establish links to historical and current views towards the environment and the impact these views have had and continue to have on the environment. The human-nature relationship and its evolution is an important facet of the study.

Action in travel through the outdoor environment is married with reflection about that environment. Paulo Freire states:

“That action without reflection is mere activism and creates unauthentic forms of existence, while reflection without action becomes mere verbalism, idle chatter, or an alienated and alienating blah” (cited in Kraft, 1987, p13)

This strong connection between action and reflection should promote greater understanding of the environment, our place in nature and of ‘Self’ amongst students.

- *Experiential Education.* Experiential Education is the most common model used by educators in these fields, even those who have not studied this model will tend to utilize it unconsciously. “Experiential Education is a model of education based upon a philosophy in which experience is the basis for learning.” (Cope, 1994, p. 2). Carver (1996, p. 10) develops the idea of four principles of pedagogy for experiential education –
- *Authenticity-* programs provide meaningful experiences within the context of the student’s own life. The activities undertaken and consequences for these are believed to be relevant to their lives.
- *Active learning-* students are physically and/or mentally engaged in the process of learning. Students need to develop their own answers to the challenges presented.
- *Drawing on student experience-* educators utilize the experiences that students bring with them and those that are shared by participants in the activities.
- *Providing mechanisms for connecting experience to future opportunity-* providing formal processes whereby students reflect on their participation in activities or their roles in the group make these experiences more relevant to future endeavours.

Joplin (1995) states that experiential educators have two responsibilities to the design of their programs: providing an experience for the learner, and facilitating the reflection on that experience. This emphasis on reflection that both Carver (1996) and Joplin (1995) is supported by the educational philosophy of Friere (1973) where the learner is exposed to both active learning and reflective time to internalise that learning.

To facilitate design of courses by teachers Joplin developed a five-stage model the ‘action reflection cycle’. In the focus stage the problem or learning task is presented to the group. This is a preparatory stage and guides without giving solutions to the action to be completed. As the name suggests the action stage involves attempting the task. Action could involve many forms, from climbing a cliff to preparing an assignment. Whichever form chosen, the individual, or group, needs to be challenged. “Challenge must be there,

but the challenge must not be so difficult that the student can not succeed.” (Kraft, 1985). The concept of self-efficacy supports this view where the challenge is matched to the individual to ensure personal growth. Support is provided by the instructor or other group members to assist the group with their efforts, a caring environment provides the best support. This allows the flow of all ideas and broadens the possible solutions offered by the group. Feedback acknowledges accomplishments and provides information to help extend learning from the task. The debrief is where the group reflects on the learning and accomplishments of the task and they organise and assimilate the learning with previous experience. Thus experiential education is a dynamic balance between action in the world and reflection upon the world.

This model differs from the rationalistic approach of information transfer from teacher to learner adopted by most modern educational institutions:

“For one has only to call to mind what is sometimes treated in schools as acquisition of knowledge to realize how lacking it is in any fruitful connection with the ongoing experience of the students-how largely it seems to be believed that the mere appropriation of subject matter which happens to be in books contains knowledge. No matter how true what is learned to those who found it out and in whose experience it functioned, there is nothing which makes it knowledge to the pupils. It might as well be something about Mars or about some fanciful country unless it fructifies in the individual’s own life.” (Dewey cited in Hunt, 1995, p).

In this quote Dewey firmly places himself on side with the exponents of experiential education. However, while Dewey believed in the importance of experiences he did not believe all experience were necessarily educational. For experiences to be educational Dewey includes the principles of interaction and continuity. Interaction refers to the ability of the participant to balance the environmental and internal aspects of the experience. Whilst, continuity refers to the place the experience has in further learning or positive development of the individual. Keeping these principles in mind the requirements of an experience to be educational might be: “individuals need to be involved in what is being learned; learning through experiences inside and outside of the classroom, and not just through teachers is vital; learning must act and live for the present as well as the future; learning must assist learners in preparing for a changing and evolving world” (Kraft,1985 paraphrasing Dewey’s work cited in Gass and Priest, 1997, p14).

Since experiential education involves the learner in the educational process the learning should be more effective. “...that learning will happen more effectively if the learner is as involved as possible, using as many faculties as possible, in the learning; and that his involvement is maximised if the student has something that matters to him at stake.” (Crosby,1985 cited in Cope, 1994, p). The use of the outdoors in experiential education often provides challenges where the student perceives his/her life is at stake. Reflection on these moments can provide very personal and effective learning.

As our understanding of what we mean as Outdoor Education in the teaching profession become clearer, people will redefine it. Martin’s (2000) concept of critical outdoor education does this and involves the need to increase the environmental focus. This focus

on the role of people in the ecosystem and understanding the environment is a strong contrast to the goals of adventure education and outdoor recreation as outdoor education streams. Rather than a definitive statement for Outdoor Education, courses could be re-named so that greater understanding of the content could be purveyed in the name. To a degree the new VCE study Outdoor And Environmental Studies does this. The term Outdoor Education is too generic and largely depends on the reader's experience to what their personal definition is. Encouragement of educational institutions in Australia to use terms like Adventure Education and Outdoor Recreation would further fragment the term Outdoor Education but leave less doubt as to the primary objectives of these courses.

Methodology

The research I am going to undertake looks at the student's concept of what outdoor education is. Their ideas will be compared to the current VCE course's objectives and an evaluation of student satisfaction with the course will be made. Year 12 students will be interviewed using focus group interview as this will provide an atmosphere where the student can feel more relaxed to express their view rather than feel constrained by student/teacher interaction. Year 12 students were chosen as they had the opportunity to study all four Outdoor and Environmental Studies Units, though some will, of course, have only studied Units 3 & 4.

“Focus group interviews are a ‘many-to-one’ activity, where the researcher interacts with a group of people in order to understand why they think the way they do about particular topics and issues”(Hillcoat, Forge, Fien & Baker, 1995, p163). This qualitative research technique enables the researcher to generate data about the participant's opinions and feelings about their satisfaction with the content of the course they have studied. The scope of the research will limit the data collection to one secondary college and this will influence the ability of student opinions and feelings to be generalized but will make the task more manageable.

The group dynamics may be one negative influence on data collection utilizing focus group interviews with dominant person(s) dictating their opinion and monopolizing the discussion. Group dynamics can encourage some members to adopt extreme positions that are not really the positions that the group has at all. It is more difficult to develop lines of interesting thought in a group than in an individual interview. Another negative of the study is the inexperience of the researcher in this field. However, focus group interviews, as previously stated, should allow more freedom in the generation of ideas amongst students in the study group.

Difficulties encountered in post graduate studies

The course work portion of the masters by research was the easiest to complete with definite deadlines and a stable working environment. Factors that have impeded progress in the research phase of the task are;

- Shifting house
- Changing employment

- Time limitation with work and a family are difficult to overcome without the extra workload of establishing the new domicile, painting, gardening and the associated jobs that come with the changing environment.
- Changing schools has meant that energy that could have been directed to study has been directed to establishing new networks and teaching materials.

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Biography

(None supplied)

Friendship as a part of Learning within Outdoor Education

Graham Wells

This paper is critically reflective in its nature. That means whilst reflecting upon my past experience, I am seeking to draw together some theoretic ideas on learning and friendship. In turn I want to put them in a practical context that has been a part of my teaching practice.

Generally Outdoor Ed. (Outdoor Education) is a form of teaching and learning that involves 'being away'. Usually, this is being away from ones usual natural surroundings, where the natural world is experienced more directly than usual. Consequently, Outdoor Ed. is characterised by journeys, often an odyssey, travelling through the bush and exploring open spaces or natural areas, perceived as wild and remote.

For many of us, travelling and exploring through the bush has its own intrinsic reward, however from a learning perspective, the benefits or rationale of Outdoor Education for School students, have been associated with aspects of challenge and adventure. More recently this has included aspects of community and a connective relationship with the environment.

While this is very general, there are indeed many more specific forms of Outdoor Education, each with their own intrinsic worth.

For this workshop I'll be referring to the camps program at Gippsland Grammar. This is a compulsory program from Years 7 to 9. Usually there are 2 or 3 camps per year and often these are mixed gender groups, from 6 through to 14 students. These groups were formed from a larger School academic or class group. On almost all of the camps, we are either under tarps/bivvies or using tents. We also usually cooked and ate as a group.

On each camp there was a core staff of a teacher/co-ordinator and several Outdoor Recreation trainees. The core staff team, are in turn supplemented by several student leaders (Year 10 or 11) and several Outdoor Ed. Graduates. At all times there is an effort for staff to link the camp and School experience. But, rather than discuss what has worked well at Gippsland Grammar, I'll try to define some of my ideas on friendship and learning. I'll try and put the theory in context, or practice, a bit later.

Ideas of friendship can include many types. Given that concepts of friendship are shaped by our experience they will vary. However many concepts are similar to the following forms:

- Respect,
- Shared or common experience, achievement,
- Commitment and/or loyalty,
- Positive and enhancing, un selfish,
- Ethically good.

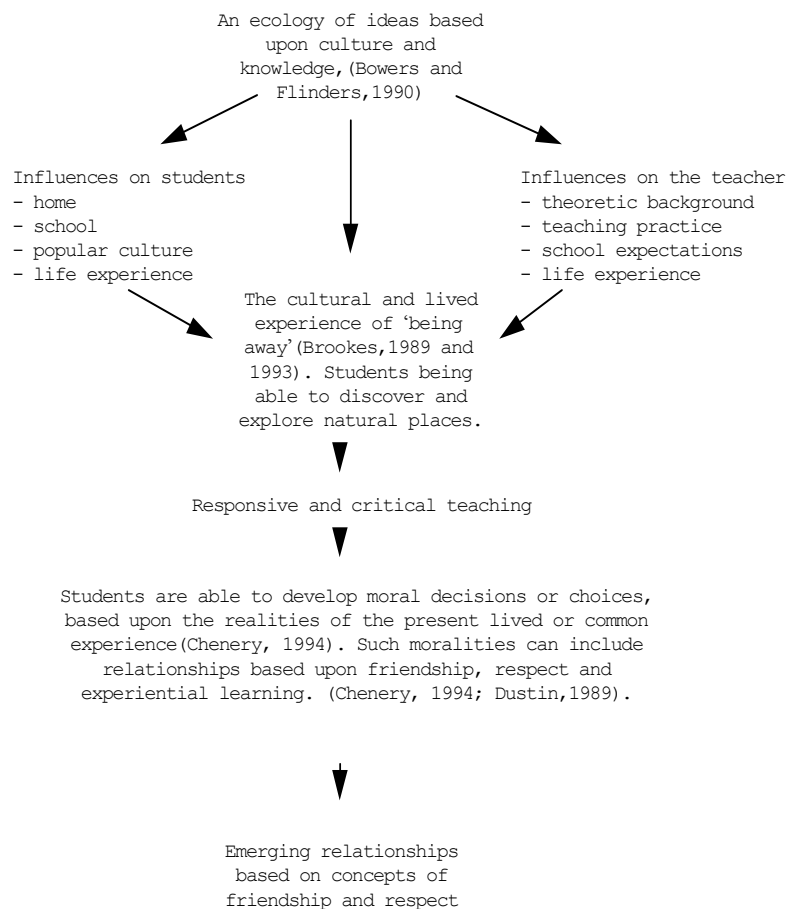
There are probably many other points, sub categories and so on. For me, concepts of friendship lie in notions of respect and common experience. It is the notion of learning

taking place on a shared or common journey. When and where the journey finishes becomes unimportant. The success or outcome is in the doing.

Examples may include working through the difficulties walking up a steep hill, laughing and sharing stories over dinner or finding a swimming hole and relaxing. Concepts of friendship may also include being amazed by or impressed by the particular beauty of a place, so that ones view of the natural world becomes closer to that of a respectful friend.

For my purpose, the various concepts and forms friendship are unified in that they are positive and or enriching. In this sense, friendship is not destructive or in any way demeaning.

As teachers I would like to think we have an understanding of what we are trying to teach. I put together the following diagram several years ago and have modified it with the emphasis on friendship and respect:



A model for developing concepts of friendship and respect.

(Figure 1)

Assuming that we do have a critical understanding of our own teaching practice, and that as teachers we take on a role as ‘gate-keeper’ for our student’s knowledge, there is a subtle balance of teaching style that will encourage students respect and learning. I’ll call this finding our ‘teaching voice’.

It is beyond the scope of this workshop to present some sort of grand unified theory that distils a way for new and experienced teachers to find their own voice. However recognising ones strengths and maintaining a professional outlook do help. For me the critical thing is being sincere and genuine. Put simply, this is not being someone else, just being ourselves.

Whilst talking about building a relationship with streeties (street kids in inner city Melbourne), Tim Costello makes some relevant observations:

Each year there have been more people coming for lunch. We decided that we didn’t want to become just a soup kitchen that focused on the efficiency of the number of meals delivered and the keeping of neat statistics. The streeties wanted friendships, not client-professional relationships. The vision we had was of out ream having lunch together at open table; we wanted to extend hospitality, inviting and respecting other who had joined us. (p. 85, Tips from a travelling soul-searcher, 1999)

As Outdoor Ed. professionals I would like to think that by coming to this conference we are attempting to challenge, improve and raise our standard of education delivery. In effect many of us, like Tim Costello’s team, are good at what we do. However, as Tim alludes too, if friendship is an important part of our educational objectives, then we too need to transcend what may seem to some as a clinical client – professional relationship to a professional relationship that is based on mutual appreciation and respect. Like the street kids, our students also want a relationship based on trust and mutual respect.

I can’t empirically prove this, and I am unaware of any qualitative or quantitative research studies to the effect, but from my teaching experience, an environment of friendship and respect often accompanies meaningful learning.

So far I have highlighted teacher student relationships. This is because I think that if friendship is going to be a part of learning then the teacher must be a role model. As a leadership team on camp, we had an emphasis on selflessness. This doesn’t mean that everything is done for students; rather we (students and staff) work together. Another way of describing this is ‘working with people’, to achieve an outcome. Certainly when confronting safety issues there is a need to be very directive, otherwise when the consequences are not so serious, decisions can be made in consultation with others and in recognition of the worth in other ways of doing things.

Examples may include dinner prep., cleaning up or loading a canoe or rafting trailer and so on. As much as possible the camp is a ‘level playing field’. Consequently, things such as meals, often take a lot longer to organise, and its amazing what a bit of garlic and chilli sauce will do to salvage a ‘wrecked’ meal, however these are times when a lot of learning and talking takes place. Whilst talking about food, as a staff, we don’t eat till all participants have got their meals and been accounted for.

Other ways of fostering a camp culture based around friendship and respect includes having very few rules and rosters (outside normal School expectations). It also can mean encouraging students to give things their best and respect each other and the world around them.

Back at School, camp groups are organised back at School in consultation with year level co-ordinators to break up School peer groups. Through the camp experience, students are encouraged to make new friendships and work through perceived peer group differences. While I would like to say there is no bullying, put downs or other forms of bullying are not tolerated. We have been lucky that there has been a lot of support from School, and that behaviour that demeans anyone is not accepted at all.

What really makes a significant difference to the program is the way that the School's Peer Support program has extended into the Outdoor Ed. program. In effect, older students take on a role of being an Outdoor Ed. Leader whilst on camp. These were mostly Y11 students who had completed several weeks of Peer Support training an Outdoor Leadership course based upon parts of the Victorian, 'Bushcraft and Mountain Leadership Course' (BMLC).

Most of the time the student leaders assist School staff members, however some of the more outstanding student leaders sometimes take on a leadership role for a small group. This raises some supervision and duty of care issues that I am happy to discuss later. Though I can say that in the past 8 years there have been no incidents that have harmed or hurt students with older student leaders.

Where student leaders have been successful, lies in their enthusiasm and genuine desire to give their best. This inspires younger students, who in turn try to emulate the behaviour. In practice this may include playing under a waterfall, down climbing a caving ladder (note that experienced teaching staff belay on caving ladders), taking a turn at washing pots or even offering some encouragement.

As I inferred earlier, while using our own separate identities and teaching repertoire, many of us are probably already doing these things. In other words we are walking in similar directions, accepting our various different pedagogical styles. A small, but important part of part, of this coming together, of theory and practice, is an ability to share with all, a smile and a sense of fun. For me this is but a simple but reassuring catalyst for mutual respect and ongoing friendship.

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Biography

Graham Wells has been leading and co-ordinating Outdoor Education camps/courses for the last 12 years. This year he is teaching English, but will probably still have some involvement with Outdoor Education in the future. He can be contacted at Gippsland Grammar on 03 5143 6388.

Section 4:

Non Refereed Conference Presentations - Abstracts

Abstract - Outdoor Education and the Abandonment of Time

Mike Boyes

Abstract

This presentation begins by examining the multiplicity of ways that people can experience time in their daily lives. A critical evaluation is then undertaken to examine if any of these can be truly abandoned in the context of an outdoor education experience. It is proposed that clock time may be one such element that could be abandoned in a relative sense. The implications of this are explored in relation to practise.

In the second part of the presentation, the context is set of a group on a canoe expedition pausing for lunch beside an old gold miners hut on the banks of a river. The possibilities that the past, present and future are merged in such a situation are discussed. A theoretical framework is established including the work of James (the specious present); Treisman (time perception and internal biological timing mechanisms); Bergson (the multiplicities of the past and the present); and DeLeuze (transcendental time). The implications for outdoor education as a learning medium are discussed.

Biography

Mike is a senior lecturer in outdoor education at the School of Physical Education, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. He holds a number of outdoor instructor awards and is the immediate past chairperson of Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ), and a current board member of Outdoors New Zealand (ONZ).

Life ownership through 'Extreme Sports': Views from the edge

Eric Bymer

Abstract

The phrase 'Extreme Sport' has developed into an all-encompassing umbrella term for those activities that are traditionally associated with 'adrenalin junkies' (Lambton, 2000). Participation in this type of activity has been considered as the expression of a death wish (Slanger & Rudestam, 1997: p. 355) and individuals were emotionally unhealthy (Ogilvie, 1974) or crazy (Groves, 1987). However, sensation seeking studies have indicated that extreme sport participants achieve similar scores as general sport participants (Slanger and Rudestam, 1997; Goma, 1991). Studies on personality seem to be consensus with regards to extreme-risk individuals being more relaxed and less

governed by super-ego than the general population (Breivik, 1996; Magni et al., 1985). Extreme sport participants seem to demonstrate lower anxiety than the 'average' population (Magni et al, 1985) but not necessarily significantly lower than high-risk sport participants (Slanger and Rudestam, 1997). High self-efficacy has also been found (Slanger and Rudestam, 1997). Extreme sport participation has been linked to both intense positive forces (Farley, 1991) and negative forces (Hunt, 1995). Comparisons have even been drawn to compulsive/impulsive behaviours (Celsi et al., 1993). It may be that an understanding of the empowering, self-efficacious and goal directed nature of extreme-sport participation could be of benefit to the CI field. This paper aims to present insights into the link between the meaning and nature of extreme sports and continued participation. Preliminary investigations have indicated enhanced spiritual, psychological and emotional well-being through participation in extreme sports.

Biography

Eric Brymer is the Executive Officer of the Outdoor Recreation Industry Council of NSW (ORIC). He is a PhD scholarship holder at the University of Wollongong and his thesis is entitled "Being and Becoming an extreme sport participant".

Tonia Gray is a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of Wollongong, a reviewer and former editor of the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education, and on the review board for the Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning.

What has service quality got to do with outdoor education/recreation programs?

Gary Crilley*, Sue Mikilewicz** and Bruce Hayllar***

Abstract

Would more information, on how the attributes of adventure education programs interact to achieve program outcomes, enable educators to tailor programs to maximise their effectiveness? (McKenzie 2000, p. 19). After a review of the international literature, McKenzie (2000) reiterated that a major question remains, '...which program characteristics are important to achieving positive program outcomes?' (ibid, p. 25). Complementing this challenge of McKenzie (2000), a review by Neill and Gray (2001) of the first five years of articles in the Australian Journal of Outdoor Educators led to a recommendation for more challenging critiques of outdoor education, and for more theory-building (ibid, p. 62).

This paper provides an initial response to these challenges. First, results of empirical research involving 11 program sites and 2,470 respondents are presented to validate previous research identifying important service quality attributes of the residential camping experience ([Mikilewicz, 2000 #456]. Second, while this research is based around, and supported by outdoor residential campsite staff, it does not suffer from being driven by researchers '...embarrassingly over-enthusiastic about OE...' (Neill & Gray 2001, p. 62). Third, research from services marketing is presented as a potential contributor to theory building in outdoor education and recreation programs.

The aim of the paper is for outdoor education and recreation practitioners, and researchers, to consider the implications of clearly identified attributes of service quality for Australian residential campsites and the strong relationship they have with the respondents' satisfaction with their camping experience, their behaviour intentions, and advocacy associated with the camping experience.

Biography

*Director, Centre for Environmental and Recreation Management (CERM), and Senior Lecturer, University of South Australia.

** Research Assistant, CERM.

*** University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

Adventures into Language™

You've read the book: Now let's live the adventure

How to use adventures in the outdoors to bring Australian literature alive

Bill Coutts and Catherine Jenner

Abstract

You are a year 5 or 6 student ... venturing into an unfamiliar natural place with nothing but a day pack. You escape from a flood, flee from a bushfire into a 100 m long hidden cave, shift to a different time, find a secluded campsite in the bush where you cook on open fires, toilet in the bush and sleep out under the stars, catch yabbies for breakfast and much more... . Sounds like fiction, right?

Well, not exactly. You have read about it in a book but this is so much more! It is your very own real adventure and you write your own story about your experiences as you go.

Adventures into Language programs are natural world experiences based on Australian children's books. Accompany Outdoors has developed three such adventures for years 3 - 6 students (and there are more in the pipeline). In this workshop we will explore the 'why's', 'what's' and 'how's' of Adventures into Language Programs.

Participants will finish with a framework to develop their own program or simply with an imaginative working model of experiential education.

We recommend that you read Jackie French's 'Walking the Boundaries', to prepare for this workshop (we will refer to this book as a template for the concept), and bring along an Australian Story which you think would translate to a great outdoor experience in your area.

Biography

Bill Coutts (M.Ed. B.P.E. Dip.P.E. Dip.T) is the Managing Director of Accompany Outdoors. He brings a wealth of experience and expertise to outdoor based programs. Bill has worked in outdoor based education through three decades and for 13 years was the Director of an Internationally recognised Field Centre belonging to a large Adelaide independent School. Bill has worked with people of all ages from Primary School through to University students and adults. Bill is passionate about sailing, his granddaughter and changing the world!

Catherine Jenner (B.Ed.Sec.P.E.) is an Outdoor Educator teacher with 5 years experience at Accompany Outdoors. Cath is a School Manager and co-ordinates Adventures into Language, Earth Education Programs, and Indigenous Perspectives in the curriculum. She makes time to journey in wild, beautiful places, to investigate the art of living simply and sustainably and to cook with reckless abandon.

Accompany Outdoors is a private provider of experiential learning; Primary and Secondary School Outdoor Education, Corporate Training and Study Tours. Our school clients include many of Adelaide's well known Independent Schools.

"This is as good as it gets":

Women's Stories of Joy in the Outdoors.

Annie Dignan

Abstract

There can be little doubt that people can experience the intense emotional feeling of joy while spending time in an outdoor environment. However the literature that examines that experience is both sparse and limited in scope. In particular, there appears to be a void in understanding what inspires feelings of joy. Research is further complicated by the difficulties of translating those experiences into an academic context.

This paper presents the findings of, and the methodological issues raised within, a Master's thesis that explores *Women's Stories of Joy in the Outdoors*. This project examined, through narrative inquiry, the *sources* of an episode of joy that occurred while in a natural environment. Specifically I engaged in focussed conversation with several women as a means of exploring one episode of joy that they experienced in the outdoors. My aim was to develop an understanding of the factors that contributed to that emotional experience.

This paper will also discuss the difficulty of conveying a story of joy within the written form, a context complicated by the limitations of the spoken word in adequately representing participants experience. To this end my methodology ultimately confronts the blurred boundary between fiction and non-fiction.

Biography

Having been an Outdoor Educator for a number of years I have returned to university and I am currently undertaking a Masters in Physical Education at the University of Otago.

Westminster School and the Round Square

Bradley Fenner

Abstract

The Round Square is a worldwide association of approximately 50 schools from a dozen countries, all of which are committed to the educational philosophy of Kurt Hahn. Hahn founded Salem School in Germany and Gordonstoun School in Scotland, as well as being the inspiration behind the Outward Bound movement and the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. My paper will outline the Round Square philosophy, the reasons for Westminster School joining this group and the activities and benefits which have resulted from this.

Biography

I have been Principal of Westminster School since the beginning of 1999. Originally from Victoria, I have taught in four states, as well as in the United Kingdom. I have been involved in outdoor education in various ways at all the schools at which I have worked and have a particular interest in the educational philosophy of Kurt Hahn and the Round Square.

Outdoor Education for Emotional Intelligence Outcomes

Graham Dodd and Scott Polley

Abstract:

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is loosely described as the ability to perceive, understand and control emotions. Unlike intelligence there is evidence to suggest that emotional intelligence can be enhanced with experiences and knowledge. Personal development has been one of the stated rationales for outdoor education and development of EI may be one way that it might achieve this. Based on the work of Salovey, Goleman, Mayer and others Swinburne University has developed an Emotional Intelligence test. This test was applied to a group of University students prior to and four weeks post attending an elective four day camp as well as a control group that elected not to attend camp. The results demonstrated that there was no significant change in EI for either group over the period of time stated. However, students that chose to attend camp had a higher average EI score than those that chose not to attend camp.

Biography:

Graham Dodd is a Senior Lecturer at the University of South Australia, Division of Health Sciences, lecturing in Physical Education, Growth and Motor Development, Coaching. He is currently completing an Educational Doctorate.

Scott Polley is a lecturer in outdoor education at University of South Australia.

The Role of Control in Cognitive Behavioural and Adventure Based Anger Management Interventions.

Robert Elmer

This paper examines whether ‘over controlled’ and ‘under controlled’ hostile offending individuals exhibit differing outcomes as a result of a cognitive – behavioural (CB) and an adjunctive experiential learning intervention. Anger scores of 48 young male offenders with a history of assaultive or hostile behaviour were evaluated pre and post a CB intervention using the STAXI (Spielberger, 1998) assessment tool.

Results indicate a significant interaction in outcomes for high and low control offenders. Low control offenders showed significant reduction in state anger and anger expression, with an increase in anger control over the pre - post CBT measures.

High control offenders showed little reduction in anger during the pre post CBT measures but did show a tendency to increase anger expression and decrease anger control. This is commensurate with predictions that such ‘overcontrolled’ offenders would ‘get in touch’ with their angry feelings during the CBT course.

Results following the adjunctive experiential learning rehearsal (JOURNEY), which was specifically designed to target overcontrolled hostile offenders, indicate significant reductions in state anger and anger expression, while continuing the trend for a small reduction in anger control.

Implications for the assessment, application and evaluation criteria for individuals undergoing CB therapy and other interventions are discussed.

eXtreme choices-**Early Interventions in Health**

David Holmes

Abstract

‘eXtreme choices’ was developed within the Department of Human Services by The Second Story division of Child & Youth Health, and Youth Adventure Recreation Services (YARS) an initiative of Family and Youth Services (FAYS). eXtreme choices is a nine week voluntary program for eight young men aged 14-15 years who have

experienced difficulties with structured learning and who want to develop skills to make healthy choices in their lives.

Delegates attending this presentation will gain an understanding of the extreme choices program, how it fits within service delivery for an agency working with 'at risk' young people, along with evaluated data from past 'eXtreme choices' programs.

Objective and Purpose of 'eXtreme choices' are:

To encourage young people to explore health and social issues within the context of their lives, toward making positive health and lifestyle choices that have relevance to their individual environment and culture, which lead to a reduction in 'at risk' behaviour along with re entry to school, community and family.

The program was initiated as a strategy to engage a population group who are one of the least likely to have access to health services, and who display behaviour that can be considered 'at risk', unhealthy or even on the fringes of offending.

As such, 'eXtreme choices' has relevance to a broad range of agencies and specific populations within the 'at risk' client group.

The program encourages participants to:

- Develop an understanding of anger;
- Develop a repertoire of skills for choices that have healthy outcomes;
- Discuss the influence of alcohol and other drugs for themselves, within their family, and within their community;
- Experience a range of positive risk taking through the use of adventure based activities; and
- Develop a range of choices to actively avoid involvement in the juvenile justice system.

The 'eXtreme choices' program is a collaborative multi-modal response to a range of needs and issues that present during adolescence. These modes include Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Primary Health Care, Health Promotion, Wilderness therapy and traditional group work.

'eXtreme choices' does not seek to isolate single 'at risk' issues, as it is unlikely that a young person will demonstrate one 'at risk' behaviour. Rather, the program seeks to involve young people in recognising all of the issues they face and learn to make informed choices about how they will confront them.

'eXtreme choices' is not therapy based, but it does have therapeutic value. It has been designed to engage young people and to provide a structured learning environment. 'eXtreme choices' aims to highlight the ability of young people to make their own decisions and to participate in that process with a sense of equality.

'eXtreme choices' aims to engage adolescents in mainstream community activities. It does this by assisting clients to be successful in such activities, where previously fear of failure may have presented barriers to participation.

This nine-week program incorporates a four-day wilderness experience and provides a structured learning environment. Instead of rules, participants and staff work within four principles- Respect, Safety, Law/ Lore, and Participation.

These principles guide the program and are used by participants in decision-making, which contributes to the sustainability of the outcomes.

‘eXtreme choices’ is a voluntary program and promotes self-reliance of participants. The program is community based and is co-ordinated with agencies that can support participants in a sustainable way, post program.

Biography

David Holmes, Community Health Worker

The Second Story- Child & Youth Health

57 Hyde St, Adelaide, SA 5000

Ph: 8232 0233, Fax: 8232 4247

holmes.david@saugov.sa.gov.au

Has traditional outdoor education practice reached its ‘use by’ date?

Alison Lugg and Terry Gaechter

Abstract

The purpose of this session is to challenge the adventure activity model that still dominates much outdoor education practice in Australia. We are interested in exploring the rationale and justification for including activities such as rock climbing, white water paddling and cross country skiing in Australian outdoor education programs. We draw on research and personal outdoor education teaching experience to argue that, as commonly practised, such activities may not be the most appropriate way to achieve stated educational goals. We refer to ecofeminist and social ecology principles to suggest alternative outdoor education practice which may offer a stronger educational rationale for working with people in Australian outdoor environments. The session is intended to be interactive so participants should be prepared to share ideas and experiences.

Biography

Alison Lugg and Terry Gaechter are lecturers in Outdoor Education at LaTrobe University Bendigo

Program Evaluation for Examining and Improving the Effectiveness of Outdoor Education Programs

James Neill

Abstract

Program evaluation is often used as a means of examining program effectiveness, staff competence, and demonstrating specific outcomes to funding agencies and program clients. But a lot of time programs have difficulty achieving such evaluation processes due to vague outcomes, inappropriate measurement tools, and a lack of support in areas that fall outside of personal expertise. This workshop will engage participants in a series of processes that will help them design effective program evaluation methods for their specific programs, as well as alert program staff to resources for accessible tools that can aid in program evaluation processes and outcomes.

Biography

James Neill currently teaches in the Outdoor Education program at the University of New Hampshire, USA, and is the editor of the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education. Previously worked at Outward Bound Australia as an instructor and research coordinator.

Recent Findings, Current Trends, and Future Directions in Outdoor Education Research

James Neill

Abstract

This session will provide an overview of recent findings, current trends and future directions in outdoor education research. Recent findings include better-than-ever knowledge about the effects of outdoor education. Current trends are towards developing better understandings about the causal, underlying processes in outdoor education, as well as towards broadening our conceptions about what outdoor education really is and the multiple ways in which it can be used. Future directions include the need for creative collaboration between outdoor education organizations, peak bodies, and academic institutions.

Biography

James Neill currently teaches in the Outdoor Education program at the University of New Hampshire, USA, and is the editor of the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education. Previously worked at Outward Bound Australia as an instructor and research coordinator.

How to Get Published in Outdoor Education Journals

James Neill

Abstract

Academic journals offer a professional meeting place for current ideas and knowledge. The process of having your writing published can be daunting, yet can also be stimulating and rewarding. It is vital for the growth of outdoor education that new writers, as well as old hands, are nurtured and encouraged in the development and publication of their ideas. This workshop will demystify the journal publication process. Practical journal writing guidelines and handy strategies will be offered, plus up-to-date information will be provided on current trends in the publication of outdoor education material around the world.

Biography

James Neill currently teaches in the Outdoor Education program at the University of New Hampshire, USA, and is the editor of the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education. Previously worked at Outward Bound Australia as an instructor and research coordinator.

Re-connecting with nature

Amma Griffiths & Lou Preston

Abstract

This session will report on findings of a collaborative action research project focussing on student recordings of personal reflections on connections with place. The study involves students in a unit of a Graduate Certificate of Outdoor and Environmental Education course spending time (at least four separate experiences) in a place of their choosing. Each experience is framed with a different but particular purpose in mind and students record their feelings/learnings using a variety of forms.

In this workshop we will summarise student findings on how they engaged with 'their' place and levels of connections that were made. We will explore different ways of connecting with nature and strategies for improving connections through journeying in outdoor programs.

Biography

Amma Griffiths and Lou Preston lecture in the Outdoor Recreation Leadership Program and Graduate Certificate/Diploma of Outdoor and Environmental Education in the School of Human Movement and Sport Sciences at the University of Ballarat.

‘Thirty five years at the coal face’ – or – ‘Is it time to get a real job’

John Wilde

Summary

A light hearted look at working in the Outdoor Education industry over 35 years.

John Wilde began instructing in the outdoors on a casual basis whilst studying as a teacher, majoring in Ceramics. (Just for the record this was in the ‘60s). His first teaching position incorporated both these talents, teaching ceramics and outdoor education. A stint working for a commercial operation in the South of France was followed by a year studying Adventure Education under Colin Mortlock.

In Australia he has taught Outdoor Education for the Catholic Education Authority in Tasmania, been executive officer for the Victorian Board of Canoe Education and Director of Outdoor Education at the following establishments, Launceston Church Grammar School, Geelong Grammar ‘Timbertop’ and for the last 16 years Canberra Grammar School.

This light hearted slide show has two perspective, firstly historical, from lathe and canvas canoes and kayaks and hauser laid climbing ropes to our modern day plethora of plastics and innovations.

The second is more serious and looks at the joys and the pains of the industry, from the sight of a wonderful sunsets, to the satisfaction of seeing a group of students gain their goals, to the death of a close friend and colleague whilst working with a group of students.

Along the way a number of strategies to cope with the stresses and strains of the industry will be discussed.

In short this is a practical guide to surviving in the industry over an extended period of time and perhaps achieving you own goals in the process.

What is this thing we call the outdoors?

Robyn Zink

Abstract

Little outdoor education literature explores the space that outdoor education occurs in. Most often the outdoors are treated either as a backdrop for all of the things that occur within outdoor education and/or as a space that is ‘other’ than the space we normally inhabit. This paper explores some of the discourses that allow us to think about the outdoors in these ways. There is a particular focus on the implications that creating the outdoors as the ‘other’ has for outdoor education, both as a space that works to affirm

dominate social and cultural discourses and as a space that allows for possibilities of asking different questions of these discourses.

Biography

I am a PhD student at Otago University, Dunedin, New Zealand. Through the methodological lens of feminist, post-structuralism I am examining students' experiences of outdoor education and how some of the assumptions that underpin outdoor education influence and shape these experiences.

My contact details are:

School of Physical Education

Otago University

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Dunedin

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Email. rzink@pooka.otago.ac.nz

Appendices

“Schools Like Us” Workshop

Sunday 13th April 2003: Westminster School

Delegates

DJ Dubose (Pine Bluff); Rebecca Collett (Glengarry); Mark Newnham (Ballarat & Clarendon College); Stephen Jelley (University of Newcastle); John Quay (University of Melbourne); Mark Turk, Greg Smith, Steven Roiter, Lindy Correloup (Camp Fairbairn OEC); Malcolm Gilbey (Scotch College WA); John Wilde (Canberra Grammar); Damian Boicos (Trinity Anglican School); Phil Harrison (Iron Bark); Chris Furminger (Tihoi Venture School); Jay Henderson (Xavier College); Alistair McArthur (Odyssey Consultants); David Smithwick (Lauriston Girls – Howqua); Dale Hobbs (Prince Alfred College)

AGENDA		
8.45am	Meet in the Foyer of the Murray Centre Auditorium. From the main entrance (Alison Ave) the Auditorium is located on the left hand side, opposite the Chapel	
9.00am	Welcome	Dale Hobbs
9.10am	Introductions <i>All delegates will be given the opportunity to introduce themselves (personal and professional).</i>	All Delegates
10.10am	Break	
10.30am	The Community Experience <i>What makes residential outdoor education unique?</i>	DJ Dubose
11.15am	Outdoor Education Hours, Pay & Conditions A collaborative exercise to determine what we all believe is fair and reasonable?	David Smithwick
12.00pm	LUNCH	
12.45pm	Research into Residential Outdoor Education <i>Is there a need for research in residential outdoor education?</i>	Dale Hobbs
1.30pm	Establishing a New Outdoor Centre <i>What is the pathway to achieving the reality of establishing a new centre? How do we best go about doing this?</i>	Jay Henderson
2.15pm	Break	
2.30pm	How Do We Measure Value Added?	Kris Furminger
3.15pm	Curriculum & Residential Outdoor Education <i>Is there a universal curriculum to residential outdoor education? What are the links we make with the main Campus? What can we share?</i>	Mark Newnham
4.00pm	Where to from here? The future of the “Schools Like Us” Group	DJ Dubose
4.30pm	Close	

Social Agenda!		
5.30pm	Depart Westminster School for Mount Lofty <i>View of the city and hills of Adelaide. A mini bus will be available to transport delegates for the evening.</i>	* This social function is optional for all delegates. We welcome all members and their family to join us for the evening.
6.00pm	Pre Dinner Drinks – “Eagle on the Hill”	* Purchase from the bar or BYO wine (\$8 charge per bottle)
7.00pm	Dinner – “Eagle on the Hill”	* Main meals range in price from \$15 to \$25
10.00pm	Depart for Westminster School	



International Outdoor Education Research Conference

La Trobe University Bendigo, Victoria, Australia, July 6-9, 2004

**Connections and Disconnections: Examining the reality and rhetoric.
International perspectives on outdoor education theory and practice.**

Call for Abstracts

Outdoor education often claims to foster relationships with self, others and the natural environment. But there are also disconnections; perhaps between outdoor experiences and everyday lives, home and remote settings, or between theory and practice. How can research contribute to understanding the tensions between such connections and disconnections?

This symposium aims to focus on the role of research in exploring how the field addresses its claims. It will ask: With what kinds of relationships and knowledge is outdoor education concerned? How important is the cultural and geographical context or the pedagogical process in developing such relationships? What is the role of broader social, cultural or education theory in understanding outdoor education? What are the connections between theory and practice and what are future directions for the field?

The conference builds on the International Conference held at Buckinghamshire-Chilterns University (UK) in 2002 and aims to foster an international community of researchers whose work critically examines outdoor education theory and practice. By bringing together researchers and potential researchers it offers the opportunity to share research methods, findings and issues.

Conference Structure:

The conference will be structured around paper or poster presentations and discussion forums. Special interest group meetings and excursions to local outdoor environments will also be included.

Abstracts:

Abstracts of no more than 150 words should be submitted to:

Alison Lugg at La Trobe University Bendigo by October 31st, 2003.

Please complete the Application for Paper/Workshop/Poster Presentation form.

Notification of acceptance and guidelines for papers: November 30th, 2003

Conference Proceedings:

Papers due: March 1st, 2004

All papers received by March 1st, 2004 will be published on CD (please nominate if you want your paper peer reviewed). Selected papers will be published in a special edition of the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education.

Connections and Disconnections: Examining the reality and the rhetoric. International perspectives on outdoor education theory and practice.

International Outdoor Education Research Conference.

La Trobe University Bendigo, Victoria, Australia, July 6-9, 2004.

Application for Paper/ Poster Presentation.

Name:

Institution/organization:

Position (in institution):

Postal Address:

Email address:

Contact phone no:

FAX no:

Title of paper / poster (please circle one)

Paper to be peer reviewed? YES / NO (Please circle one)

Abstract (up to 150 words)

Email, FAX or post this form to Alison Lugg by **31st October, 2003**

Email address: : a.lugg@bendigo.latrobe.edu.au

Phone: +61 3 5444 7320 FAX: +61 3 5444 7848

Postal Address: Department of Outdoor Education and Nature Tourism, La Trobe University Bendigo, PO Box 199, Bendigo, Victoria 3552, AUSTRALIA

Excerpt from Application to Environmental Protection Authority for assistance for the 13th National Outdoor Education Conference to be a 'Waste Watch' event

Environmental goals for the event:

- To minimise the environmental footprint of the conference and provide a blueprint to enable future conferences (both state and national) to be Waste Wise.
- To make it easy for participants to be involved in recycling during the conference.
- To assist venue operators and trade show exhibitors to reduce waste.

Actions taken to date to minimise waste

All organising committee correspondence is conducted electronically via email. This has included the call for papers (sent out) and abstracts (received) from presenters. Any papers required in hard copy are printed on paper previously used on one side.

The Graphic Designer has been instructed to utilise paper with recycled content for the Conference Program. Distribution networks have been contacted to identify exactly how many copies of the brochure will be required so the minimum quantity can be printed. It will also be produced in pdf format for electronic distribution wherever possible.

Venue owners have been advised that we aim to be a waste wise event and their cooperation is required. Both Westminster School and the Adelaide Shores Function Complex are supportive of the concept and keen to be involved. Westminster School has its own kitchen and dining room facilities providing crockery that can be reused during the conference. However they currently do not have a recycling program in place.

The conference audience are all users of the environment and strongly support the concept of waste minimisation. One of the scheduled workshop presentations is on this theme:

Calculating the environmental footprint of your Outdoor Education program - Richard Smith

Richard is an adjunct lecturer in Science and Environmental Education at University of South Australia. Richard presents a model for students and staff to calculate the environmental footprint of an Outdoor Education program or experience borrowing from environmental education. Ways of reducing the footprint and tracking these improvements are discussed.

Conference proceedings will only be supplied on CD-Rom. Presenters will be asked not to provide hard copies of their papers.

We propose to take the following actions as part of our waste management plan:

- Enter an agreement with Westminster School to:
- Encourage composting of food waste wherever possible
- Select foodstuffs with minimal packaging

- Plan menus to avoid unnecessary waste
- Provide recycling bins to segregate wastes
- Display signage to encourage waste minimisation and recycling.
- Conduct a waste audit during the conference

The Conference Dinner will be held off-site at Adelaide Shores Function Centre. This is a relatively new venue, which already has some waste minimisation strategies in place. However they are keen to work with us assess their current practice in order to make further improvements. We will provide a shuttle bus service from the conference venue to the dinner to minimise the use of private cars.

In addition we would like to provide conference participants with a refillable thermal mug that they can use for the duration of the conference and as a trigger to remind them to be waste wise after they leave and return home. This would be in place of disposal cups provided for morning and afternoon tea breaks.

We are investigating providing the conference kit in a recycled or reusable material (eg cardboard folder, calico bag) and providing reusable nametags.

During the conference there is a dedicated tradeshow and display session. Contracts with exhibitors will require them to be waste wise. They will be advised of the exact number of attendees to minimise the preparation of handouts, to cut down on waste.

We believe participants would be receptive to any initiatives that are presented and advocates of these strategies after the conference. During the conference waste wise messages will be incorporated into the program of events and environmental savings communicated to participants at the close of the conference.

A Conference report will be produced which documents the strategies used to make the conference a waste wise event. The outcomes of these actions will also be reported on. This report will be provided to the next National Conference Organiser, but equally importantly provide the blueprint for future annual state conferences held by the Outdoor Educators Association of South Australia.

Assistance required

In order to undertake the actions outlined above, OEASA seeks financial assistance from the Waste to Resources Committee. We believe that for a small injection of funds many benefits can be gained. Each of the participants at the conference will take away the messages and lessons learnt and convey them to a much broader audience. They are already sympathetic to environmental initiatives, and ensuring this event is as waste wise as possible will provide them with additional up to date information and strategies to ensure their outdoor education programs, activities and events are also Waste Wise.

INFORMATION STATEMENT FOR DELEGATES

Dear fellow Outdoor Educationalist,

March, 2003

My name is Jon Sadler and I am a Lecturer in Outdoor Recreation at Charles Sturt University, Albury . I'm the Chief Investigator of this project titled EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PURSUITS.

The data will be used for the adventure recreation training and education community for further research and for possible ways forward to improve the environmental and ecological components of adventure recreation programs.

Focus group participants

The focus group interview will last approximately 45 minutes. The objectives are to discuss the main purpose of adventure recreation and how education and training does and should reflect this philosophy. The relationships between environmental education, the levels of environmental literacy and adventure recreation will also be discussed.

All information will be used entirely in confidence, unless written consent has been given by specific research participants where names or photographs may be used.

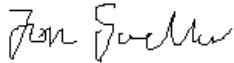
THE PROPOSED DATES AND TIMES WILL BE:

17.30 – 18.15 evening group on Tuesday, April 15th

8.00 – 8.45 breakfast group on Wednesday, April 16th

Hoping that you can oblige in this doctoral research.

Regards,



Jon Sadler
Lecturer
Charles Sturt University

NOTE: Charles Sturt University's Ethics in Human Research Committee has approved this project. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Executive Officer:

The Executive Officer
Ethics in Human Research Committee
The Grange
Charles Sturt University
Bathurst NSW 2795

Tel: (02) 6338 4628
Fax: (02) 6338 4194

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PURSUITS

Principal Investigator(s)	School or Research Centre	Qualifications	Phone
Jon Sadler	EIS/Johnson Centre	B.Sc.(Hons), Grad. Dip, Cert. Ed., M.Sc.	19764
Rosemary Black	EIS/Johnson Centre	B.Sc.(Hons), Grad. Dip, M. Natl. Res., PhD.	19983

Address to which correspondence should be forwarded	PO Box 789, Albury, NSW 2640		
Proposed Dates of Collection Focus groups	From: March 31st	To: May 30th	
Interviews	From: July	To: October	

1. RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1.1 Research Question or purpose of project (*briefly, and in lay terms*)

Traditionally, education of the natural environment gravitates towards education and learning in four different contexts according to the various specialists' viewpoints:

- The social scientist's view of nature and its spiritual values;
- The natural scientist's view of nature as an ecosystem;
- The adventure recreationalist's view of nature as an outdoor playground;
- The traditional adventure educators view of nature as personal and social therapy; and
- The recreation and tourism operator's view of nature as a market destination

These different perceptions of nature may be operationalised within the same spatial arena. However, in terms of providing educational experiences and training, the premise is that the professionalisation of undergraduate training, together with the drive for a quality standards approach to adventure recreation tends to focus on the tangible and functional benefits, such as qualifications and accreditation. In so doing, the research question asks is environmental literacy or a greater understanding of nature as a natural and social science compromised?

1.2 Outline the research design and/or the nature of the project

Phase 1

- Focus group interview(s) with a sample of representative stakeholders: Peak bodies; national park authorities resort management committees; education and training organisations; and tour operators

Phase 2 (Dependent on data processed in Phase 1)

- Telephone and/or face-to-face individual interviews with representatives from peak bodies, training and education organisations, and main programme providers.
- Mail-out and/or face-to-face questionnaires to group and individual outdoor adventure recreation participants.

1.3 Outline the value and benefits of the project (eg. to the participants, your discipline, the community, etc).

This research aims to concentrate both on behavioural and socio-demographic profiles, and the knowledge, perceptions and attitudes of participants, and the education and training providers in adventure recreation in the context of the Australian alpine and sub-alpine

areas. It focuses on ‘environmental literacy’ or the knowledge and the ways of gaining meaning of the natural environment. It is anticipated that the project will benefit the industry by providing an appraisal of the structural approaches towards training and education in adventure and the relationship to their coverage of environmental literacy and understanding.

1.4 Despite the value and benefits of the project, outline the burdens and/or risks (if any) of the project to your research participants and/or other people (eg. painful and unpleasant procedures, invasion of privacy, physical/psychological/mental stress, possible embarrassment, anxiety, discomfort, etc) and the details of how the Principal Investigator will respond to such risks (eg. will counselling be available for research participants?).

None. All participants will be contacted on a voluntary basis, and will not be coerced in any way to disclose information that is personally or corporately sensitive. There will be no physical stress involved.

2. PARTICIPANT DETAILS

2.1 Give the number of intended research participants:	Appox.	1,440
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