

The Fourth International Outdoor Education Research Conference

Outdoor education research & theory: critical reflections, new directions

Beechworth, Victoria, Australia,

April 15-18, 2009

Program Outline



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Organising Committee

Kathleen Pleasants, La Trobe University, Bendigo
Dr Andrew Brookes, La Trobe University, Bendigo
Alistair Stewart, La Trobe University, Bendigo
Dr Lesley Hodgson, La Trobe University, Bendigo

Academic Committee

Associate Professor Andrew Brookes, La Trobe University, Bendigo
Associate Professor Søren Andkjær, University of Southern Denmark
Dr Mike Boyes, University of Otago
Dr Mike Brown, University of Waikato
Professor, Noel Gough, La Trobe University, Bendigo
Professor Barbara Humberstone, Buckinghamshire New University
Kathleen Pleasants, La Trobe University, Bendigo
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Welcome

On behalf of the conference academic committee welcome to the fourth international outdoor education research conference, and the second held in the Southern Hemisphere. For those attending one of these conferences for the first time a special welcome. Seven years after the first, I think we can say that Barbara Humberstones' vision is resolving into a tradition. Her original initiative was driven by a need for a research-only outdoor education conference that was truly international.

We have tried to build a conference on which the focus is research and researchers, and not tied to some particular vision of the conference organizers. We have not asked our plenary presenters to provide keynotes, and we have asked facilitators to ensure each presentation is timed to allow you to move between sessions if you wish after any single presentation. We don't require you to stay with our groupings of presentations. We have no practitioner workshops, and we have discouraged papers that aim to inspire or cajole.

The focus of this conference is on understanding, and if necessary critically analyzing outdoor education, through research. We hope you can see that intention realized in the program. We hope you can also see realized our attempt to be international in a way that extends beyond a national conference to which international presenters are invited. Outdoor education is a western construct, so we probably have not succeeded entirely, but I hope you can see our attempt to internationalize outdoor education by seeking international perspectives rather than seeking to franchise something developed in North America, Australia, or western Europe.

Many of you have travelled a great distance to get here, and many will have wondered whether the resources consumed are warranted. That is not something for me to answer; I merely invite you to make the most of the opportunity to meet in person, to experience this environment, and to remember that in the end research is about making a difference.

Dr. Andrew Brookes

***Associate Professor, Director - Research and Quality,
Centre for Excellence in Outdoor and Environmental Education
La Trobe University Bendigo***

Introduction

Welcome to the fourth in this series of International Outdoor Education Research Conferences. The title of the conference, 'Outdoor education research and theory: critical reflections, new directions' invites us to continue the process of critically reflecting on our practice and intent. We hope that this conference will build on the journey begun in 2002 at Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, where we considered the question, 'Whose Journeys? Where and Why?'

The current conference brings together a diverse delegation from around the world with wide-ranging notions of outdoor education and outdoor education research. The program has been structured to provide a forum for stimulating, informative discussion and energetic debate through both formal and informal opportunities to share research methods and findings, explore issues and ideas, meet new faces or reacquaint with old ones.

I wish you all the best for a productive and rewarding conference.

Kathleen Pleasants, Organiser

Registration desk

The registration desk will be located in Kerferd Room 1B. It will be open at the following times:

Tuesday 14 April 2009	4.00 – 7.00 pm
Wednesday 15 April 2009	8.00 – 10.30 am
Thursday 16 April 2009	8.00 – 9.00 am
Friday 17 April 2009	8.00 – 9.00 am
Saturday 18 April 2009	8.00 – 9.00 am

If you cannot locate someone to help you on the registration desk at any time, please seek out Kathleen Pleasants or a volunteer.

Name badges

Your name badge should be worn at all times, as it is your identification and entry to all sessions and functions. The plastic cases will be recycled so please return them to the registration desk at the end of the conference.

Social functions & meals

Full registration (including Early bird & Student/Concession rates) includes all morning & afternoon teas, lunches, conference dinners and entertainment. Day registration includes morning & afternoon tea, and lunch for the day.

Please note that dinner is not included on Friday 17th following site visits.

There are a number of cafes, restaurants and hotels located in and around Beechworth. Please see the information on 'Eating out in Beechworth' included in your conference pack for details.

Web access during the conference

Wireless internet access is available from the main conference venue at no charge. A cable connection is also available from the Linnaker Building at no charge, however you are required to provide your own cable. In addition, there are two computers located in the conference centre that are available for delegate use, along with a printer.

Conference Paper Review Process

Authors wishing to have their paper peer reviewed and included in the conference proceedings must submit the full paper by 15 May 2009. Earlier submission is welcomed. All papers will be peer reviewed by the academic committee or referees nominated by the committee. Acceptance of papers will be notified by 31st July 2009.

More details will be published on the conference website at:
http://www.latrobe.edu.au/oent/research_conf_2009.htm

Submission guidelines

Papers are to be submitted electronically via e-mail attachment (in Microsoft Word format) to ioerc2009@latrobe.edu.au. Please make sure your submission conforms to the requirements of the APA 5th formatting and referencing system.

Papers must be submitted in English (these will remain in the English of the author, e.g. UK English, American English, Australian English). Papers should normally be between 4000 and 6000 words in length. Please do not send hard copies unless requested. Appropriate photographs and/or artwork should also be submitted electronically. Manuscripts that greatly exceed the word limit will not be reviewed, as they would not be considered publishable without considerable revision. A separate cover page which contains the author's name, address, phone, fax and e-mail contacts should be included with the submission. A biographical statement, detailing the author's current position or professional affiliation, research interests, and a contact address for correspondence is to accompany the manuscript.

It is the author's responsibility to ensure that articles contain original work and do not breach copyright. Further, the author is responsible for obtaining permission to reproduce all copyright material (for example, newspaper articles or cartoons).

(Adapted from The Australian Journal Of Outdoor Education, Contributor Guidelines)

General inquires should be forwarded to:
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Email k.pleasants@latrobe.edu.au
Phone: +61 3 5444 7801
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Excursion Options

We are pleased to offer a range of excursion options that we hope will enable delegates to explore the region and engage in collegial discussions. All excursions include the option of a packed lunch, however you may wish to take advantage of the opportunity to sample some of the delicious local fare. Alternatively you might like to undertake an exploration of the area at your own pace.

Tourist information is available from the registration desk and more detail can be sourced from the Beechworth Tourist Information Centre located at: 103 Ford Street, Beechworth.

Telephone: 1300366321

<http://www.beechworthonline.com.au/>

Beechworth Rail Trail

Enjoy cycling along one of Victoria's premier rail trails. Approximately 94 Km of sealed path has been built over the disused railway line from Bright to Wangaratta. The Beechworth Rail Trail follows a gentle gradient that makes it suitable for all ages and levels of fitness. We will take a packed lunch and stop in to visit some local culinary attractions, perhaps a berry farm, cheese-makers or winery.

Costs: Snacks & purchases along the way

Places available: 10 (La Trobe bicycles) Unlimited BYO bicycles.

Mt Buffalo Explorer

Experience the stunning Mt Buffalo plateau. Take a packed lunch and spend the day exploring a prime example of an Australian alpine environment via moderate-level bushwalks. As this is an autumn walk in the alps you will need to bring a sunhat, raincoat with a hood, warm clothes, beanie (warm hat), gloves, sturdy shoes, water bottle and day pack.

Costs: Morning &/or afternoon tea.

Places available: 18

Mt Buffalo Rockclimbing/Abseiling

Take a packed lunch and enjoy some of the world-renowned climbing on offer at Mt Buffalo. Depending on the experience and enthusiasm of the group this excursion will include either rockclimbing or abseiling.

Costs: Morning &/or afternoon tea.

Places available: 10

King Valley Food & Wine Exploration

Sample some of the delights of the King Valley on a bus tour of local wineries, olive growers & cheese-makers.

Costs: Lunch & snacks along the way. Wine & cheese purchases.

Places available: 10

Self-guided Beechworth Tour

Take the day at your ease and explore the Beechworth Historic & Cultural Precinct.

Additional costs: Purchase your own lunch & snacks along the way.

Costs: \$13.50 Precinct ticket available from the Tourist Information Centre (valid for 2 days)

Places available: Unlimited

Delegates

Hanif Abdul Rahmin, Zhenghua Secondary School, Singapore
Michael Adams, University of Wollongong, Australia
Alexandra Albert, Outdoor Links e. V., Germany
Soren Andkjaer, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark
Johan Arnegard, Stockholm University, Sweden
Mike Atkinson, CPIT, NZ
Erik Backman, Stockholm University, Sweden
Carol Birrell, Australia
Genny Blades, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
Mike Boyes, University of Otago, NZ
Andrew Brookes, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
Mike Brown, The University of Waikato, NZ
Eric Brymer, Queensland University of Technology, Australia
Margie Campbell-Price, University of Otago College of Education, NZ
Fiona Cameron, The Outdoor Experience, Australia
Cathryn Carpenter, Victoria University, Australia
Wayne Cotton, University of Sydney, Australia
Philip Crumpler, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
Børge Dahle, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Norway
Caroline Daisy, Bishop Heber College (Autonomous), India
Ben Dupuche, Penleigh & Essendon Grammar School, Australia
Charles Freer, Birrigai Outdoor School, Australia
Shayne Galloway, Otago University, NZ
Prerna Goel, La Trobe University, Australia
Beth Gompertz, University of Plymouth, UK
Noel Gough, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
Tonia Gray, University of Wollongong, Australia
Dave Gurnett, Exmoor National Park Authority, UK
Javad Hatami, University of Tabriz, Iran
Susanna Choon Mei Ho, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
Colin Hoad, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
Lesley Hodgson, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
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Sunisa Kongprasit, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
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Maureen Legge, University of Auckland, NZ
Liz Leorke, YMCA Victoria, Australia
David Low, Avondale College, Australia
David Lucas, Ohio University, USA
Alison Lugg, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
Leif Magnussen, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Norway
Andrew Mannion, Whitefriars College, Australia
Nerida Matthews, Victorian Curriculum & Assessment Authority, Australia
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Brendon Munge, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia

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Marie Nichols, University of Plymouth, England
Val Nicholls, The Wilderness Program, Australia
Hideaki Nishioka, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
Kathleen Pleasants, La Trobe University Bendigo, Australia
Tom Potter, Lake University, Canada
Lou Preston, University of Ballarat, Australia
Tony Robinson, La Trobe University, Australia
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Brian Wattachow, Monash University, Australia
Andy Williams, Trinity College University of Wales, UK
Chung-Chi Wu, National Pingtung University of Science & Technology, Taiwan

Abstracts

Hanif Abdul Rahman, Zhenghua Secondary School

The Effect of Outdoor Education on Students' Social Emotional Competencies Development and Engagement in Classroom

It has been commonly accepted that Outdoor Education (OE) produces positive effects in participants due to exposure to adventure programmes and activities intended to build character through enhancing self-discovery. While most OE programmes in Singapore schools takes the form of trekking and camping, not much has been done to study the effectiveness of a school-based regular weekly programme on secondary school students. This TLLM Ignite! study investigated the effect of an 8-week OE programme, each lesson lasting an hour within the school's secondary 3 Physical Education (PE) curriculum, on the development of Social Emotional (SE) competencies – Self Awareness, Self Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Management and Responsible Decision Making. As Bruner (1966) advocated through his Constructivist Theory, the emphasis of learning is placed on the student rather than the teacher. Students learnt by fitting new information together with what they already knew and understood, thereby constructing his own conceptualizations and solutions to problems. Through Experiential Learning, these experiences took on added meaning in relation to other experiences. All these were then conceptualized, synthesized and integrated into the individual learner's system of constructs which he imposed on his physical and social environment. 40 students (22 from Express and 18 from Normal streams; 23 male and 17 female) underwent this OE programme, with an SE questionnaire being administered before and after the programme. Supported by interviews on students and teachers, as well as students' weekly reflections, results indicated that the programme yielded the said desired outcome, which also supported students' engagement in classroom.

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Michael Adams, University of Wollongong

Sharing space: experiential education and sustainability

Scholars from a number of disciplines have examined concepts of resilience and adaptive capacity in environments and social systems subject to change. Geography is by definition concerned with those same issues - the interactions of people and environments: 'the study of earth as the home of people' (Yi-Fu Tuan). Outdoor education typically links outdoor activities, personal and social education and environmental education. This paper brings together thinking from the long tradition of experiential education - 'fieldwork' - in geography, with research on adaptive capacity, to examine the contributions outdoor education may make to contemporary social and environmental needs.

If sustainability and equity are critical social goals in a world of accelerating change, we all need skills for responding to and interacting with uncertainty, as well as knowledge about appropriate ways to respond. Factors that increase adaptive capacity – the ability to engage with change without loss of critical functions - include learning to live with change and uncertainty; nurturing diversity; and using multiple types of knowledge for learning (Folke, Colding, and Berkes 2002). Learning outdoors highlights the need for sharing space – with each other, and with the other inhabitants of the planet. Effective outdoor education can contribute significantly to enhancing these capabilities.

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Alexandra Albert, Outdoor Links e. V.

How sustainable are outdoor professionals at work? Two methods of finding out how green and clean our programme, work place and staff are.

In times of globalisation and climate change it is a must to work sustainably in the outdoor work field because it depends on an intact nature. There are many research projects about environmental education and how we can teach people to live sustainably. However, there is hardly any study, manual or instrument which helps outdoor providers and educators to integrate and to communicate sustainability within their company and organisation. CSR-Reporting is something many of us refer to the big ones, to companies such as Adidas, Wall Mart etc. But CSR-Reporting is possible within every work place, independent on how many people work there. The presentation shows how the German Association for Sustainable Tourism has introduced CRS-Reporting in mainly small membership companies, a method which we from Outdoor Links try to transfer to outdoor professionals. The second method is a sustainability leadership training which was developed by a German Master student. We have adapted this training as a method to improve the sustainability competence of participants during the reporting process. Both methods lead to more transparency and show directors, staff and customers how sustainable the own work is and what must be improved. In addition, many participants have realised a need for changing their own way of living by having joined the reporting and training project.

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Soren Andkjaer, University of Southern Denmark

Outdoor Education in New Zealand – a cultural-analytic and comparative perspective

Analysing and understanding ones own culture is never easy, and the main challenge is to focus on and question everyday phenomenons which seem natural and not to reproduce ones own perspective. Cultural analysis and analysis of configurations together with a comparative cultural perspective seems to be relevant methods.

This presentation intends to give a general view, understanding or interpretation of Outdoor Education in New Zealand – seen from an outsider's perspective and with comparative perspective to "friluftsliv" in Denmark and the Nordic countries. The presentation is based on a comparative and qualitative case study (Ragin, 1992) of friluftsliv in Denmark and Outdoor Education in New Zealand. Friluftsliv and Outdoor Education are understood as socio-cultural constructs which develop and differ in time and space. The theoretical framework is the ethnological cultural analysis (Ehn & Lofgren, 2001) combined with the theory and analysis of configurations (Eichberg, 2001), using interviews with leaders and participants (Kvale, 1994) and a series of observations of practise (Spradley, 1980) as methods.

The study points out central cultural characteristics in Outdoor Education in New Zealand according to time, space, energy and personal relations. Friluftsliv in Denmark is traditionally closely linked to traditions in Sweden and Norway (Tordsson, 1993). However in Denmark today we experience more categories or settings within outdoor education (Andkjær 2005) with simple life in nature (enkelt friluftsliv) and adventure being two dominant trends. The study identifies differences as well as similarities between the cultures of friluftsliv and Outdoor Education and discuss the results using theories of late modernity (Giddens 1994, Beck 1992).

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Johan Arnegard, Stockholm University

Pedagogical implications in relation to participation in and pursuing outdoor adventure sports.

Who is involved in outdoor adventure sports? Why are they engaged in activities that demands such great hardships and risk-taking? What do they get out of it? The objective of this paper is to examine deciding factors for participation and to discuss experiential qualities perceived in these activities using cultural sociological and phenomenological theory.

Narratives from Swedish participants regarding their backgrounds and earlier life experiences can clearly be linked to their preference for outdoor adventure sports. An embodied capacity to master this practice and that which in the performance is experienced as especially attractive seems to be a result of a long learning process. Consequently a readiness to seek challenging tasks and the value and meaningfulness to exert oneself and to struggle can be seen as a habitus or disposition deeply “engraved in their bodies”.

Research data further indicates that among the participants there is a notion of a very special quality of experience, something central for them in the making of meaning from experience. This is expressed as a deep sensation of “awareness in the present”, being “one with nature”, “totally focused and in control of the situation”, an intensive and pronounced feeling of joy and happiness – a flow experience. The fact that they can choose the path and increase the degree of difficulty themselves – and simultaneously balance this new challenge with increased capacity so that they are engaged at the “right level” – provide favourable conditions for a stimulating and successful learning process in itself.

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Mike Atkinson, CPIT

Are they prepared? Training opportunities and qualification requirements for teachers' of outdoor and adventure education

Outdoor and adventure education within New Zealand secondary schools has a long and established history. The training pathways that outdoor and adventure education teachers' have taken has changed over the last 20-30 years and it is therefore important to understand the key components of what the teachers perceive is needed to determine whether current qualifications and training are at a suitable standard. This qualitative research is framed through establishing the many benefits of outdoor education, the legal obligations a school has, all within a society that is increasingly risk averse. For teachers and schools this research found that there needs to be an awareness of teacher isolation and the drawbacks for students of a strong vocational focused outdoor programme. For the outdoor industry this research found that there is a need for establishing lower level industry awards than is currently available and that the outdoor industry needs to adopt different assessment methods that encompasses previous experience and training pathways.

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Erik Backman, Stockholm University

Teaching friluftsliv in a Physical Education context – Swedish PE teachers on factors framing a teaching practice. (work in progress)

There are several factors influencing the process of transforming the content and the goals-to-achieve in educational policy into teaching practices. In Sweden, a theory represented by educationalist Ulf P. Lundgren, describing these factors in terms of frames, has been developed some decades ago. This theory has its origin in the educational sociology of Basil Bernstein. Based on the value assigned to friluftsliv (or its Anglicised similarities, outdoor recreation or outdoor education) in the national Swedish Physical Education (PE) curriculum, the aim is to analyse and discuss how PE teachers in Sweden experience the possibilities of teaching friluftsliv with reference to conditions framing the teaching practice. Based on the

social stratification of outdoor experiences among children and youths, illuminating conditions for teaching outdoor practices in school contexts is of particular importance. Drawing on qualitative interviews with 12 Swedish PE teachers, the study indicates that the teaching in friluftsliv is experienced as an obligation, but its teaching practices are indistinct and difficult to separate from the sports-activity-discourse dominating PE. The teaching in friluftsliv is expressed as the PE teachers' guilty conscience; an expression of powerlessness to change a condition of insufficiency. The organisation of time for teaching; the economical resources and the location of the school are factors significant for the realisation of the teaching in friluftsliv. The pupils' and teachers' knowledge and socio-cultural biography; support from colleagues and parents; and dominating cultures on the school are also expressed as important. The educational consequences of the framing impact among these factors will be discussed.

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Carol Birrell, Tonia Gray, University of Wollongong Free Range Teenagers: Are they hard wired for risk?

New research in neuroscience adds empirical insights to longstanding issues in outdoor education and ecopsychology. Discoveries of extended neuro-plasticity, brain development and experiential effects on autonomic systems (stress, endocrine and emotional) all provide insights to complement field-based observations of outdoor education practice. For example, research in the brain sciences offers a window into organic processes behind post-traumatic stress and behavioural disorders in youth and adolescents. These discoveries have obvious relevance for outdoor education and wilderness therapy and demand a re-think of the modus operandi of these fields.

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Genny Blades, La Trobe University

What's love go to do with it?: shifting from 'doing' to 'being'

Outdoor education research has explored the notions of connectedness, of community, and of caring. In practice also, it does provide the conditions for those qualities of experience to exist. However, does outdoor education place limits on this? For instance, just by prefacing the 'doing' of an activity can focus the attention on outwardly directed 'hard' skills, thereby creating conditions that are, as James Hillman (1990) describes, an 'entrapment' of experience, which reinforces a sense of separateness or a duality of self and other. We are living in challenging times where this 'Cartesian duality' is fatefully flawed and as educators, paradoxically, this becomes an incredibly significant 'teachable moment'!

In this paper the experience of 'being' is prefaced in order to open up to a compassionate and loving sense of approaching what we study and teach. Implications for pedagogy are explored and possibilities are raised around the use of intention and language. In relation to a research paradigm, this notion of 'being' or its ontological dimension, as Reason (2003) pointed out, implies that "...it is not just our reality that is participative, but the cosmos itself that is a participatory process" (p.3).

It was Martin Buber (1970) who coined the phrase "love is a cosmic force" and the notion of 'I and thou'. Drawing on areas such as archetypal psychology and the mytho-poetic aspects of transformative learning, as well as applied practices drawn predominantly from Deep Ecology, this paper explores the position of 'love' as central to outdoor education experience and pedagogy.

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Mike Boyes, University of Otago**Oldies in the bush: a case study**

Natural outdoor environments offer unique opportunities for people of all ages to become physically active, psychologically engaged and socially networked. There are well documented health and lifestyle benefits of physical activity for the elderly including the prevention/delay of common chronic illnesses, improved functional ability, reduced possibility of falling, and longer independent lifestyles. Cognitive benefits also accrue such as higher cognitive performance, better memory and a positive effect on negative emotions such as depression. In addition, opportunities for social interaction are enhanced. The natural environment has benefits of its own such as: influencing longevity, restorative effects, stress recovery, feelings of satisfaction and wellbeing, health benefits from exposure to natural sunlight, the improvement of sleep quality, and higher attention performance.

This presentation examines the experiences of the participants in the Third Age Adventures Programme based in Timaru, New Zealand. The programme provides a challenging opportunity for people over 50 to immerse themselves in outdoor physical activities in the wilderness areas of the South Island. The regular trips range from day walks and bike rides to multiday backpacking journeys on the great walks. So just how does the interaction of physical activity, a wilderness area and a supportive social group effect the health and wellbeing of the participants? The research outcomes of this case study will be presented and interrogated.

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Andrew Brookes, La Trobe University**Family travel around Australia as vernacular outdoor education**

Every year hundreds of Australian families take their children out of school to travel “around Australia” for anything from a few weeks to more than a year. Most would not describe their travels as outdoor education, but all have chosen to withdraw, at least to some extent, formal schooling in order to undertake an extended outdoor experience. This paper presents some results from a research project that examined the practice of extended family travel within Australia from an outdoor environmental education perspective. The study of vernacular outdoor education provides some insights into both the potential, and limitations, of outdoor environmental education.

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Andrew Brookes, La Trobe University**A research perspective on cultish aspects of adventure education**

Few if any adventure education researchers have linked adventure education with the recruiting practices of alleged cults, and the methods of cult de-programmers, although some authors outside the field have treated such links as almost self-evident. Adventure education research has tended to regard adventure education as partly defined by positive educational goals, which might seem sufficient to place a firewall between it and programs that look like adventure education but have different goals. However, educational intentions might not be enough to separate adventure education from the debates and traumas that have been associated not only with cult recruitment and “deprogramming”, both of which are subject to intense debate and criticism, but also with the troubled-teen industry, which, particularly in the USA, which has not only received considerable exposure through the BBC “Brat Camp” programs, but has also been subject to intense criticism. This presentation describes a project to examine some clear links between adventure education and some of the more troubling aspects of cult recruitment and troubled-teen programs (including instances of abuse and death), and why adventure education research has seemingly been blind to links that some outside the field see as obvious.

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Mike Brown, The University of Waikato

Out of the head and into the world: Situated perspectives on learning

A persistent challenge for outdoor adventure education (OAE) is the extent to which the learning experiences of students effect change beyond the immediate environment. In efforts to justify the value of OAE, theorists have argued the importance of transferring skills/knowledge to other life situations and have advocated various approaches to facilitation that supposedly enhance transfer. To this effect, OAE activities are often highly contrived and structured to develop metaphors which symbolise “real learning” that has meaning beyond the immediate context. A result of an emphasis on personal development as an OAE outcome is that the situated nature of learning is ignored - emphasis is placed on the individual as an autonomous agent who is capable of applying new learning to “real-life” contexts.

This presentation investigates the possibilities made available by understanding OAE from a situated perspective. Consideration of OAE students as participants in a highly orchestrated community of practice places learning, and observable change, within a sociocultural frame rather than as a function of cognitive development within the individual. This position takes seriously the claims made by practitioners of “seeing evidence of change” and researchers who raise questions about the validity of “generalised truths” and constructivist learning assumptions by placing greater emphasis on the social and cultural context in the learning process.

Moving beyond constructivist conceptions regarding the “internalisation of learning” and the student as an autonomous and independent learner who is able to transfer knowledge across diverse contexts has implications for existing OAE pedagogical practices.

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Eric Brymer, Queensland University of Technology, Cathryn Carpenter, Victoria University, Wayne Cotton, University of Sydney, Tonia Gray, University of Wollongong

Ecological Leadership: Outdoor Education as leadership development for tomorrow’s leaders
Given today's focus on the state of the environment, this presentation will examine the role outdoor education plays in the development of generic leaders who have a positive relationship to the natural world. Three questionnaires (Transformational Leadership – MLQ; the New Ecological Paradigm; and the Connectedness to Nature) were administered to 83 international outdoor leaders with the implicit aim of assessing the nexus of transformational leadership theory and outdoor leadership. The findings are an appropriate platform for understanding outdoor leaders’ ecological viewpoints and perspectives and the connection to the development of generic, transformational leadership skills. Finally, the workshop will unveil a model that may add further insights into leadership, and how the field may better prepare leaders for ecologically sound work in the outdoors and beyond.

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Margie Campbell-Price, University of Otago College of Education

Closer and Often – Developing “on the doorstep” learning experiences outside the classroom in secondary teacher education.

Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) has been an established part of the teacher education programme for all students preparing for teaching in secondary schools, at the University of Otago College of Education (UOCE)*. However, a review of the qualification in late 2008 led to a restructuring of the course. This presentation intends to shed light on the initial phase of an action research project about redesigning the course to “do more with less”.

The restructuring has allowed some fresh thinking about strategies to evaluate and use sites and resources “on the doorstep” for learning experiences encompassing all teaching subjects.

The overall aim of the course is to develop a readiness and confidence in beginning teachers so that they will incorporate learning experiences outside the classroom regularly, sustainably, safely, and link them effectively to classroom learning.

In addition to introducing the process of redesigning the course, this presentation will also discuss the challenges and strategies to align differing course delivery with the same learning intentions for two cohorts of students on two campuses - one group using a residential camp in a natural environment, and the other experiencing a non-residential urban based programme.

This research project is a work in progress – the redesigned course will be delivered for the first time in June 2009. While this presentation will focus on the initial stage of the action research project, it will outline the proposed future stages.

**The University of Otago College of Education is located in Dunedin, New Zealand. A smaller cohort of students is enrolled in the secondary teacher education programme in a campus in Invercargill, New Zealand.*

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Daisy Caroline, Bishop Heber College (Autonomous) Perception Level And Impact Of Environmental Education Among Rural And Urban School Students

It can be daunting to reflect on the sheer magnitude of environmental dilemmas that confront us today, but with these problems also come countless opportunities for devising creative solutions. These solutions direct us to use the resources in better sustainable ways, develop guidelines or policies for the use of the commons and understand the environment basically. The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) is now under way. This underscores the significance of environmental education. The term is often used to imply education within the school system, from primary to post-secondary. However, it is sometimes used more broadly to include all efforts to educate the public and other audiences, including print materials, websites, media campaigns, etc. To prepare a module of environmental awareness package a prior knowledge of the existing awareness level among the target group is essential. The present study focuses to assess the impact and importance of informal mode of environmental education in creating environmental awareness and to enumerate the awareness level among rural and urban class XI students of selected schools at Tiruchirappalli, India. The author prepared a special slide show on environment, presented and assessed the impact by questionnaire. The study found out that there is no significant difference between the two domiciles regarding pre test awareness level about the environment. The post test awareness level also does not show significant difference between the two groups. However there is significant increase in the understanding about the environment after the education program.

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Cathryn Carpenter, Deakin University, Fiona Cameron, The Outdoor Experience, Jesuit Social Services Alien space transformed into healing places

In an increasingly anthropocentric technological world, young people are becoming more alienated from the natural environment. Researchers and practitioners are concerned about the impacts of disconnection from nature and remain convinced that contact with the natural environment is beneficial and crucial to health and well being (Maller et al 2008).

The significant role of the natural environment within The Outdoor Experience (TOE), Drug and Alcohol program for urban 'at risk' young people is the focus of this paper/presentation. Incorporating participant observation of numerous programs and interviews with 30 participants and 10 staff, this paper explores the participant's changing perceptions of the role

of Nature in their lives. The diverse roles the environment is perceived to play, clarifies the changing relationships people develop with natural places as they work towards increased health and wellbeing.

This small study indicates that as marginalised young people develop a stronger sense of themselves, they seem more able to care for 'external' factors such as the environment. Increased time and experiences within the outdoors enables the young people to start to appreciate their own abilities and strengths, as well as an understanding of the characteristics and value of the natural environments around them. The role of the environment frequently changes (Martin P. 2004), from being an external irrelevant and alien space, to a more meaningful place that supports and enhances personal change.

Intentional use of natural places within a Drug and Alcohol treatment program provides young people with a range of healthy experiences which can continue to sustain them long after they have left the specific natural locations (Carpenter C, et al. 2008).

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Børge Dahle,

“The (great) joy of living in a nature friendly way” –The Stetind- declaration

“Friluftsliv” is the Norwegian free air (outdoor) life tradition based on nature friendly values. It is “a life - rich in ends, simple in means”. The roots of the friluftsliv tradition run much deeper than the outdoor recreation trend in North America and other parts of Europe. While the outdoor tradition was always part of Norwegian life, the popularity of “friluftsliv” grew as somewhat of a resistance movement towards modernity during the romantic era. Friluftsliv has always been about recognizing the need to live in harmony with nature and that “nature is the true home of culture”.

This presentation introduces a project to put into practice on an international scale lessons learned from Norwegian eco-philosophy research and several smaller scale action research projects.

Our main intent with this project is to create an understanding of a nature friendly way of living and to highlight the implications of living that way. We wish to show a variety of alternative nature friendly ways of living while focussing on the joy that stems from a nature friendly way of life, hence our project's title, “The joy of living in a nature friendly way”.

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Shayne Galloway, Otago University, Alan Ewert, Indiana University, Graeme Galloway, La Trobe University

Environmental Desirability Responding: Theoretical Predictions and Measurement

Environmental Desirability Responding (EDR) has been described as a general tendency of individuals to respond to items on an environmental-based questionnaire or interview designed to measure attitudes and behaviours about the natural environment in a way that reflects a perception of social or political correctness (Ewert & Galloway, G. 2006). To measure the presence of EDR, an 18 item instrument, the Environmentally Desirable Response Scale (EDRS) was developed (Ewert & Galloway, G. 2008). The EDRS comprises three factors identified as Self-Deception— Assertion of Positives, Image Management, and Self-Deception—Denial of Negatives. If EDR is a correctly identified construct its presence may influence how findings of much of the research done in environmental attitudes and behaviours involving self-report instruments is interpreted.

To provide an initial measurement of EDR using the EDRS, a sample of 153 students from a university in New Zealand were queried pre/post a 7-day outdoor education experience

(tramping) as part of their undergraduate degree. The focal instrument in this study was the New Environmental Paradigm (Dunlap & Van Liere, 1978; 1984). Two major research questions were examined in this study: (1) is EDR present in this current study sample and (2) can EDR-driven theory predict specific attitudinal responses as a function of sex, age, types of focal instrument questions (i.e. biocentric or anthrocentric), and level of outdoor experience. Findings of this study are described with the presentation concluding with implications concerning the use of the EDRS and the presence of EDR in environmental-based and similar outdoor education attitudinal studies.

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Prerna Goel, La Trobe University

Who am I? A teacher's journey in the process of facilitation

Working as a facilitator, in the outdoor and classroom environment, many a times, I found myself leading and controlling the reflective sessions. I wanted students to engage in the discussion by sharing their inner most fears, thoughts, emotions and feelings with the group. Yet, I remained detached from them. Was that because I felt the power that was bestowed on me due to my position, knowledge and experience? Or was it because I was afraid that it would make me vulnerable in front of the students? In his book, "The Courage to Teach" Parker Palmer (2007) emphasizes that "good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher" (p. 10). Based on this premise, my paper explores the following questions: What role fear plays in the process of teaching? Does power and authority stems from the fear of being vulnerable and fear of rejection? In the absence of fear, when a teacher decides to be her/his true self, does the relationship between the student and the teacher strengthens? And does this true self increase the connectedness between the student and a teacher?

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Beth Gompertz, University of Plymouth

Earthwalks: experiential learning for pedagogical practice.

The principles of experiential earthwalk activities and flow learning will be introduced and the use of earthwalks with undergraduate student teachers both as an experiential pedagogical medium in higher education and as a tool for their own pedagogical practices in schools in the UK and Czech Republic will be described. Benefits, especially in the areas of environmental awareness and observation skills as well as opportunities to develop language, will be discussed and commonalities and differences between the two countries' practices will be critically evaluated. The paper will be based upon comparative research of experiential earthwalk activities in the UK and Czech Republic (involving interviews with students) in order to examine purposes and perceived impact on students' learning.

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Noel Gough, La Trobe University

Complexity reduction in outdoor/environmental education: by whom, for whom, and in whose interests?

Between the mid-16th and late-19th centuries most Western scientists were preoccupied with studying the material structures of simple systems. Since then, much mainstream scientific inquiry – in fields as diverse as molecular biology, neuroscience, nonlinear thermodynamics, atmospheric physics, psychology and cybernetics – has examined the informational structures of complex systems. Yet there is no mention of complexity as a key scientific concept in Australia's recently released National Science Curriculum Framing Paper, and the word 'complex' appears only in passages that reinforce reductionism, such as, '[t]he natural world is complex but can be understood by focusing on its smaller components' – a guaranteed way of misunderstanding many 'natural' phenomena.

Complexity invites us to understand our worlds and selves as open, recursive, organic, nonlinear and emergent, and to be suspicious of understandings that assume mechanistic predictability and control. Understood as a complex system, education requires inchoate gaps between 'inputs' (policy, curriculum, pedagogy) and 'outputs' (learning, identity) – they are sites of emergence not gaps to be 'filled' by positive knowledge. Knowledges and understandings are not pre-existing 'objects' for representation or performance in education but, rather, emerge through educational processes. Individuals/identities also emerge in/through educational processes in unpredictable ways. Thus, our sense of 'purpose' in education should not only encompass qualification (the transmission of knowledge and skills) and socialisation (the insertion of individuals into existing social, cultural and political orders), but should also include concerns for the 'becoming-present' of unique individuals.

Nevertheless, many educators seek predictability and control through various practices of complexity reduction, including those that work prospectively (by reducing initial variables) and retrospectively (through backwards selection of particular trajectories). For example, assessment retrospectively validates some learning trajectories and invalidates others but, because education is a recursive system, the anticipation of assessment also reduces complexity prospectively.

In this paper I will examine a number of theoretical, historical, practical and political dimensions of complexity reduction in outdoor/environmental education. Where, how, and to what extent is complexity reduction achieved in outdoor/environmental education? How can we make it visible? Who benefits from particular forms of complexity reductions and who does not?

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Dave Gurnett, Exmoor National Park Authority Environmental Education and National Parks, a case study of Exmoor

My research seeks to add the dimension of innate dispositions to the discussion of teaching and learning outside the classroom, drawing on a biophylic approach to environmental education that theorised the experiences I regularly observe with children on Exmoor. Exmoor is an area designated as a National Park in the South West of England.

My emergent model of real experience environmental education involves emotional attachments, both positive and negative, as 'arousal increasing devices' (Swonke, 2000) to hold children's attention so that a memory germinates. This accumulative model can be returned to at any stage of learning and is my academic conception of how we can influence the learning of our school communities within the National Park. As we see most children many times during their schooling, we hope to reinforce our messages allowing children to progress within the model.

Through the application of a multi-method approach involving over 4000 children, I suggest that real experience environmental education within Exmoor National Park Authority does affect children's memories in the short and long term. However, whilst the experiential component is key to unlocking the imaginative and intellectual door and despite the overwhelming belief in care for the environment from the children in my surveys, there is still a gap between belief and action. The fact that nearly all the children believed Exmoor to need no more care leads me to suggest that whilst our education service creates memorable experiences, perhaps environmental degradation is a more suitable site to provoke action.

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Javad Hatami, Eskander Fathiazar, Farhad Khoshnava, University of Tabriz
The Role of Ecological Education in Chemistry and Biology Textbooks in Iran

Ecological education have been considered early decades seriously. That is really international topic for safe life. Environmental education is universal demand that involved all of the people in the world and one of the parts of developmental program in the countries. Educational systems can be very useful about the ecological and environmental education, especially by the suitable content in the textbooks. This research have been analyzed content of the chemistry and biology textbooks in high schools and investigated teachers' views about environmental education in West Azerbaijan province. This research has been considered ten main ecological topics in this paper.

The obtained results show that the educational system of Iran has not paid enough attention for ecological concepts in the textbook. Therefore our research's result suggested that the educational system of Iran should involve the ecological concepts like pollution, ozone layer, the role of human and animals in the environment, etc, in chemistry and biology curricula.

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Lesley Hodgson, Alison Lugg, La Trobe University
How should we teach environmental literacy? Critical reflections on virtual teaching and learning experiences.

This paper will serve two purposes. First we describe a first year environmental literacy unit taught in the Centre for Excellence in Outdoor and Environmental Education and the findings of research into student perceptions of their learning. Secondly, we will discuss issues and questions arising from the findings in relation to recommendations from higher education research on teaching and learning for environmental and sustainability literacy development. Questions will address the imperative for environmental literacy in contemporary Australian society and the nature of knowledge and skills needed in this context. We will examine the roles of online learning and experiential learning, and hidden curriculum associated with both. The paper will conclude with suggestions for future curriculum development in relation to environmental literacy.

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Susan Houge, University of Otago & Queenstown Resort College, Ken Hodge, University of Otago, Mike Boyes, University of Otago
Reversal Theory and Flow: Optimal Experiences in High Risk Recreation

Although high risk recreational pursuits are gaining popularity (e.g., Lyng, 1990; Shoham, Rose, & Kahle, 2000; Stranger, 1999), many leading theoretical paradigms within high risk recreation literature (i.e., the Adventure Experience Paradigm) lack predictive power and depth. Flow Theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975) and Reversal Theory (Apter, 1982) are two general psychological models which offer theoretical bases from which to understand both optimal experiences (e.g., flow) and non-optimal experiences (e.g., fear and anxiety) in high risk recreation. Despite theoretical similarities, previous research has not evaluated high risk recreation flow experiences within a Reversal Theory framework. Specifically, the concepts of 'serious' (i.e., telic) flow and 'playful' (i.e., paratelic) flow have not been empirically documented in existing literature. Therefore, a sequence of two studies sought to evaluate these constructs of optimal experience via (1) qualitative interviews with elite, high risk recreation instructors; and (2) via a prospective, mixed-methods field study utilising head-mounted cameras with novice riversurfers. The presentation will outline the phasic nature of various flow experiences (e.g., antecedents and outcomes) based on case studies.

Implications for theory (e.g., Flow Theory and Reversal Theory) and practice (e.g., mental skills usage/ pre-performance states) in high risk recreation will also be discussed.
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Barbara Humberstone, Ina Stan, Buckinghamshire New University
Well-being and Outdoor Pedagogies

Society today is inundated by a multitude of messages regarding the risks and dangers that affect the youngsters, with media constantly talking about the ‘cotton wool’ kids and ‘the obesity epidemic’. A social panic has been created by the media, which ignores the positive outcomes of risk-taking, sensationalising risks, focusing on the dangers of the world. Linked with the ‘obesity crisis’ is the notion that society wraps children in ‘cotton wool’ such that they are denied opportunities to play outdoors for fear of accidents. Research has shown that negotiating risks and relating them to individual capacities is essential for the development of children and their ability to learn from their mistakes and become aware of their personal health and safety. Body image plays an important role in relation to the well-being of children, and their participation in physical activities as part of outdoor learning. This paper is based on a pilot study that explores young children and their significant others’ perceptions and experiences of risk and safety, in the current ‘obesity crisis’, looking particularly at the ways in which experiences of outdoor learning affect the well-being of children. Using an ethnographic approach the research examines how parents, teachers and children define well-being, and how being in the outdoors affects pupils notions of well-being. The paper investigates if and how OPA could contribute to the physical and emotional well-being of children in the context of the ‘obesity crisis’.

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Yasunori Kameoka, La Trobe University

An investigation of Japanese outdoor education: A case study of Mt Koya

This study selected 12 current Japanese outdoor education practices in Mt Koya, Wakayama (three each from elementary school, high school, local group and public event) through which to examine social and cultural dimensions of Koya outdoor education. Mt Koya was chosen because of its World Heritage cultural landscapes, its geographic uniqueness and its ancient religious wisdom of nature worship fusing Shinto and Buddhist philosophies. In order to establish a Japanese outdoor education philosophy and improve the provision of outdoor educational practice, the idea of a reconstructed Japanese view of nature and of the particular relationship between Japanese local culture (huudo) and Japanese outdoor education was considered central to the study. Adopting unobtrusive research methods, the data revealed that a distinctly Japanese style of outdoor education is emerging in some cases, particularly at the local and regional level, even though in general Japanese outdoor education is still influenced by imported culture and ‘universalist’ principles. A critique of these principles and practices, based on one Australian outdoor educator’s (Andrew Brookes) perspective, provided the logical framework through which to challenge the old and look to a new sense of place and meaning and dimension of experience in contemporary outdoor education practices. Japanese society is undergoing many changes, none less than in education, tourism and appreciation of the natural environment. The possibilities for outdoor education in Koya are therefore encouraging. It is evident from the results of this study that community-based education, nature-based tourism and world heritage studies are all shaping a new approach to understanding and relating to the particular cultural landscape, and thus have a vital role in reclaiming that uniquely Japanese aesthetic and attitude towards nature.

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Peter Kellett, University of South Australia
Incorporating Indigenous knowledge into a tertiary outdoor education program. Some initial findings of the process at the University of South Australia.

Outdoor education field trips in Australia take place on what was, and sometimes still is, Aboriginal country. While much traditional knowledge about country has been lost since colonization, much is still held by the traditional owners, and represents a different way of viewing and relating to land.

Following a review of Indigenous content in the University of South Australia's outdoor courses, a deliberate practice of incorporating Aboriginal knowledge into outdoor courses and field experiences was introduced in early 2008. Wherever possible this has included the active involvement of Aboriginal people and communities.

This paper analyses student responses to this initiative, using a combination of group debriefs, learning journals, photographic records and questionnaires. Some initial findings are discussed and some future directions indicated.

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Mah Ngee Lee, Sam Tet Secondary School, Siew-LuanTay-Koay, Nanyang Technological University, National Institute of Education
Connecting Overseas Community Service-Learning Expedition and Development of Personal Capabilities in Youths

This paper examines the impact of successful coping during the overseas community-service experience on the personal development of youths in Singapore. The participants in this study were 428 youths who were selected to participate in overseas community service-learning projects in several developing countries in South-East Asia, China and India. In order to explore how particular individual and environmental factors serve to promote resilience and positive development in the youths, this study is based on Marzano's self-system approach and Bronfenbrenner's ecological-transactional system theory of behaviour. This study hypothesized that youths who participated in the overseas community service-learning expedition would continue to develop as a result of interacting forces with different levels of ecological contexts

Specifically, this paper sought to examine the coping abilities of the participants prior to the service-learning experience and to determine the correlates of coping abilities with the positive outcomes, namely, the development of civic attitudes, competence skills and sense of self. Coping abilities of the youths were found to be positively and significantly related to civic attitudes and competence skills. The authors conclude that it is important to make service-learning an explicit training and educational goal in order for educators to facilitate the building of coping abilities in youth. In short, youths can appreciate the value that service-learning can bring in character development and in shaping early commitment to civic involvement.

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Maureen Legge, University of Auckland
E noho marae – shaping outdoor education through direct Māori cultural experience

This paper illustrates how three to five day marae field trips in Northland, New Zealand, created opportunities for both student teachers and myself to experience 'culture' as a source of learning in outdoor education. My research represents the study of lived experience

situated in my role as a Pākehā woman teacher educator while I have worked towards including a broader experience of Māori culture in the curriculum content of New Zealand pre-service physical education and outdoor education teacher education. Using an autoethnographic narrative I portray the essence of my experience and understanding as a teacher educator. I identify my practice context and role with Māori cultural experiences; situate the context of my work in outdoor education (and physical education) teacher education; illustrate my 'slant' to teaching through experiential learning in a marae-based context in partnership with Māori outdoor educators; show facets of student cultural experience on the marae; and reveal how various outlooks of the tangata whenua and Pākehā cultural and teaching expertise come together to inform and shape the students experience of Māoritanga I highlight the cultural experience of marae field trips in New Zealand because I believe they are unique opportunities to support cross cultural understanding and because other educators may be uncertain of taking similar steps in the face of an indigenous culture.

E noho marae to stay on at a marae

Marae traditional New Zealand Māori meeting ground

Pākehā non- Māori New Zealander

Māori indigenous people of New Zealand

Tangata whenua local Māori people

Māoritanga Māori culture

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**Liz Leorke, YMCA Victoria, Sue Cotton, ORYGEN Research Centre
A therapeutic approach for residential campsites working with mental health groups.**

Advances in psychopharmacology improve symptom outcomes for people with mental illness however, functioning and social participation can still be affected. The success of preventing further episodes of mental illness for an individual requires a mental health system that broadens a medical crisis focus, to include recovery and strengthening functional capacity (Rickwood, 2005). Alternative models such as outdoor adventure programs encourage engagement and increase functioning.

The challenge for residential camping professionals has been the translation of concepts such as functioning and social participation in outdoor adventure programs and demonstrating the relevance of the camp experience (Henderson, Bialeschki & James, 2007). The focus of this paper is to introduce an outdoor adventure program model that is currently being piloted in Victoria, Australia. YMCA Victoria, in partnership with diverse sector representatives has created a model that provides an adjunct to existing therapies for a young adult's (18 -25 yrs) and adults (26yrs+) recovering from mental illness. Partners in this venture include: Department of Planning and Community Development (Sport & Recreation Victoria), ORYGEN Research Centre, Australian Camps Association, Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council, Mind Australia, ORYGEN Youth Health, St Vincent's Mental Health Services, St Luke's Anglicare and Department of Human Services Mental Health and Drugs Division.

Utilizing the expertise of mental health services and residential camping providers has delivered success on many different levels. The Strengths Model (Rapp and Goscha, 2006) recognises the importance of utilizing community resources for the recovery of mental illness. Through partnerships that foster a shared responsibility, individuals are provided with an experience of the outdoors and adventure, designed to improve social participation and functioning.

Preliminary outcomes & evaluation of the outdoor recreation program collated by ORYGEN Research Centre will be presented, along with insights from developing a therapeutic approach for mental health groups accessing residential camping programs.
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David Lucas, Ohio University

Outside The Classroom and Outside the Country: Undergraduate Research Outside the Familiar Context

In this paper, the author compares and contrasts the results of qualitative field study projects designed to provide undergraduate learning while also collecting cultural data. The author led students to various international field research experiences employing interviewing, focus groups, plenary sessions and observations. Engaging the research method folkography, students recorded the voice of marginalized participants from the target populations in order to create narratives describing cultural realities based on the perceptions and cultural accounts provided by respondents.

Traveling from the classrooms of Ohio University, located in the heartland of the United States, professor and students engaged in folkographic research projects in the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Vietnam, Great Britain, Hong Kong and Australia. Using the data gathered on student experiences, learning, and field work, the author reveals the successes and struggles of academic research with undergraduates outside of the classroom in new and unfamiliar contexts. The author draws comparisons about the students' reactions to the various learning contexts and contrasts the problems encountered.

In folkographic projects, the research team must arrange a location for debriefing, writing narratives, housing, and meals. Additionally, teams engage the Internet to report daily results of the research. The paper reviews the student reactions to the consequences of outside learning including confronting different languages, customs and diet. Of particular interest: the account of the US students traveling to Australia in search of the Man from Snowy River. This paper reveals the efforts of US undergraduate students performing field research outside of their context, country and comfort zone.

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Leif Magnussen, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences (NIH), Department of Physical Education (SKP)

Try this! The role of copying and imitation in a seascape of learning.

Where, why and how is copying and imitation a part of outdoor learning processes? And are copying reckoned as an inferior learning process in comparison to learning "all by my self"? "Try this!" is a part of the research project "Learning from Friluftsliv" (Magnussen 2008), an ethnographic study of causes that may influence adults in their outdoor learning in a non scholastic learning environment (Wackerhausen 1997). The project is based on the theoretical framework of "communities of practice" (Lave 1997; Wenger 1998), apprenticeship and "learning landscapes" (Kvale & Nielsen 1999; Kvale & Nielsen 2003; Nielsen & Kvale 2003). By using the metaphor "seascape", one moves the object of inquiry from the individual towards the context and the community in which the learning occurs.

The data collection is done by participant observation in seakayak communities in south eastern parts of Norway in winter, spring, autumn and summer in 2007/2008. Documentation is done by research diaries, pictures (stills and video) and internet articles (connected to both gatherings and communities that the researcher has participated in) and in depth interviews of (25, 18 male and 7 female) "masters" and/or highly proficient seakayakers.

Outline of relevance:

Project's aim is to describe learning processes "out of doors", and to increase our understanding of how skills in this environment is learned (or not learned). There is a focus on (learning) communities.

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John Maxted, Eastern Institute of Technology**Bush solitude: Simple in means, rich in ends?**

A richness of literature promotes the many virtues of a nature-based solitude experience, yet such work is almost exclusively centred on the experiences of adults. So what of the experiences of younger people alone in the bush, especially when their 'solo' is part of a school programme and thus not freely chosen? Arising from a doctoral project utilising hermeneutic phenomenology as a guiding framework (van Manen, 1997), this presentation provides insight to the lived experiences of nine schoolboys (age 13-15 years) placed alone in the New Zealand bush for a period of two days and two nights; an experience embedded near the end of a five month outdoor education residential experience. Whilst solo proved to be a widely individualised time, deeper lived experiences of participants proved challenging to capture. Adolescent grunts and silences permeated solo conversations and interviews, presenting a somewhat ineffable quality of experience. That said, moments of apprehension, separation, fear, boredom, and loneliness clearly predominated over experiences of enjoyment or pleasure for most participants. Solo was certainly not the profoundly introspective, life-centering, or nature-connecting time that the outdoor education literature is typically upbeat about. A structured series of reflective writing tasks provided opportunity for deeply personal insights to emerge, but these were not common. Prior apprehensions and stories pre-solo may have contributed to the experience generally being endured rather than cherished, though perceptions changed quickly post-solo to viewing the experience more positively.

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Gregg Müller, La Trobe University**Building outdoor education experiences that are natural history focused – what the students say about their learning**

Student-centred learning emphasises the situational aspects of the student as a critical factor in their learning. The places that we take students and the activities they undertake there comprise one cluster of situational factors that educators have control over, and which also have a substantial influence on student learning in a natural history focused program. This paper examines university student responses to a particular activity (a natural history focused 6 day bushwalk) in a particular place (Gariwerd) and time (spring wildflower season), and the factors that they report affected their learning about nature. The results have particular relevance for those developing nature-focused outdoor activities for trainee teachers and leaders.

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Marc Mullins, City of Greater Geelong Brian Wattchow, Monash University
Re-telling the Snowy River: Exploring connections between river guides, the experience of place, and outdoor education.

This presentation reports on a research study into the lived experience of river guides working as educators on the Snowy River - southeastern Australia (Mullins, 2007). Outdoor education programs often hire leaders who are also credentialed guides for a range of reasons: to manage safe passage of the group downriver, to provide technical training, and to meet the educational objectives of the organization that the program participants are drawn from. The river guide-as-educator is often left to navigate through this set of contradictory demands (Martin, 1999; Payne, 2002). This research reports on evidence drawn from a series of phenomenologically based interviews (Seidman, 1998) with three guides, each one having a long history of working with educational groups on the Snowy River. It reveals how they balanced a sense of attachment to the Snowy with the needs and desires of the program participants and their host organizations.

The presenters discuss how the guides acted as adventure role models, privileging the novel setting over a sense of place and focusing on their 'client's' comfort gained through technical skills acquisition. The guides expressed a culture of 'service'. It was also found that the guides had a sense of belonging and care for the Snowy River accrued through a layering of many experiences. As a result they sometimes guided in ways that responded to the particulars of place, thus questioning their own adventure and service practices. The tension between these two findings provides an empirical basis for understanding the possibilities of, and limitations to, a place-responsive pedagogy (Cameron, 2003; Wattchow, 2005) for the Snowy River.

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Erik Mygind, University of Copenhagen

A Comparison of Children's Statements about Social Relations and Teaching while Being Taught in the Classroom and in the Outdoor Environment

Two teachers from Rødskilde School in Copenhagen were allowed to move their third grade teaching into a forest every Thursday for three years. Thus 20% of regular teaching took place in an outdoor environment. The purpose of the present study was to ask the children how they experienced lessons in the classroom and the forest settings. Therefore, two almost identical questionnaires including a total of 26 statements and adjusted to each context were completed by the children four times from 2000 to 2003. Further, in the forest questionnaire three specific statements were added about the outdoor environment plus one question about their choice of playmates during breaks at school and breaks in the forest. Ten statements were categorized as "social relations", 14 statements as "teaching" and finally two related to "self-perceived physical activity". A significant difference ($p < 0.001$) was found between the school/classroom and the outdoor environment when scores from all four questionnaires (2000-2003) were summed. The category "social relations," ($p < 0.001$) the category "teaching," ($p < 0.001$) and the category "self-perceived physical activity" ($p < 0.001$) showed significant differences. It is concluded from the present case study that the combination of classroom and outdoor teaching, over a three year period has a positive effect on the children's social relations, experience with teaching and self-perceived physical activity level.

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Olivier Naria, Université de La Réunion

"The stakes of sustainable development for trekking and equestrian outdoor in a French ultra-peripheral region: the case-study of La Réunion. Proposition of tools and methods for the analysis of insular spaces"

Because of its geographical situation, geomorphological configuration, and particular climate, La Réunion offers the possibility to practice in optimal conditions a large number of nature sports all year long. It is very rare to have in a same region the possibility to get such spaces in many varieties to practice so many activities. Because of such potential, the development of nature sports took a new dimension during the last years beyond the space of sport to be involved in tourism and leisure.

In this paper, we will show that pedestrian and equestrian trekking has the best development because of the natural space of the island and the many spaces to practice this activity. La Fournaise volcano and the Sand Flat, the Cilaos and Mafate circus, or the Written Roc are magical places wellknown by worldwide trekkers, protected recently by a National Park, and currently in a list to be in the World Heritage from UNESCO.

Aware of this exceptional potential, the main actors, such as Office National des Forêts (ONF), Commissariat à l'Aménagement des Hauts (CAH), Maison de La Montagne, Comité Régional de Randonnée Pédestre (CRRP), and Comité Régional de Randonnée Equestre, and local collectivities had favored for 30 years the development of this activity with the goal to valorize the Réunion mountains.

The objective in this paper is to demonstrate that pedestrian and equestrian trekking is in the heart of Réunion territory because it became the main touristic activity for the local and sustainable development.

The methodology is based on a qualitative analysis of maintenance guides and participative observation of the structures. The study scope includes the different island territories (five local regions and fifteen collectivities) in which nature sports are practiced at different levels. It includes also the concerned actors (135 interviews) who act in nature sports, tourism, long-term development, and for consumers of nature sport leisure.

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Val Nicholls, The Wilderness Program

Quiet Time: A sense of solitude.

The opportunity for structured experiences of solitude in nature, through the inclusion of Solo, has gained empirical credibility as a significant component of contemporary outdoor and adventure programming. Within this context solitude is most frequently defined in terms of physical isolation and communicative separation.

This paper extends the understanding of solitude as an objective condition and reports on findings from a qualitative study using a grounded theory design that explored the internal and subjective 'sense' of solitude that participants in a challenge based wilderness therapy program associated with the concept of Quiet Time

The findings identify Quiet Time as a 'sense' of solitude independent of needs for physical isolation or communicative separation. Quiet Time was defined by four co-occurring subjective and internal conditions: a sense of being alone; focused attention; a positive mind frame and a personal time perspective. Typically brief and participant initiated, Quiet Time included experiences of "being alone together".

Participants utilised Quiet Time to respond to nature, reflect in a ruminative manner, or to relate in authentic and heartfelt conversation. The outcomes of Quiet Time influenced positively on participants' immediate experience and processing of the wilderness therapy program.

Among a number of outcomes found to extend beyond the duration for the camp was, for some, the taking up of the habit of Quiet Time as a deliberate self-help and life enhancing strategy.

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Kathleen Pleasants, La Trobe University

Learning from a review of research

In a recent study, I examined the purposes and roles of reviews of research within the field of outdoor education by reflecting on one example of this genre, namely, A review of research on outdoor learning conducted by Rickinson, Dillon, Teamey, Morris, Choi, Sanders, and Benefield (2004). The study drew on a range of parallel and intersecting conversations about the purpose and role of reviews of research in education to highlight a lack of debate about reviews of research, and more particularly, the role of research within outdoor education. I contend that this silence illustrates a continued and concerning divide between research and practice.

In this presentation I will explore the landscape of research in terms of its role in developing ideas, contributing to bodies of knowledge, highlighting silences, and challenging taken for granted assumptions. I will share some of my understandings of the functions and potential for research in outdoor education that have grown out of this study and how they might be useful in addressing critical questions about the achievements of outdoor education research, its progress, and current and/or emerging challenges.

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Lou Preston, University of Ballarat

Scrutinising the “I” in Outdoor and Environmental Education

Recently, there has been a shift in Victorian Outdoor Education (apparent in curriculum documents and in the literature) from a focus on personal development to a greater emphasis on environmental sustainability and human-nature relationships. In this paper, I explore Outdoor Education’s personal development ‘roots’ (in the form of character building and improved self esteem) and how these influence recent attempts to incorporate a broader environmental perspective into Outdoor Education theory and practice.

How students make sense of this ‘greener’ Outdoor Education has been a focus of a longitudinal study I conducted at the tertiary institution in which I teach. Drawing on this study I highlight some continuities between Outdoor Education as self improvement and Outdoor Education as environmental. Even though, at first glance, environmental perspectives may appear to be at odds with individualism, I am interested in how ‘the environment’ often gets recuperated by students into a focus on the individual. I conclude by considering some of the challenges Outdoor Educators face in trying to interrogate the “I” in Outdoor and Environmental Education.

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Tony Robinson, La Trobe University

Learning for life?

Engaging the interest of the typical 14 year old adolescent is never easy. To do so in the context of a traditional curriculum in a traditional classroom is doubly difficult. The Year 9 Learning for Life program at Gilson College attempts to break this nexus. The extent to which it is successful is the focus of my doctoral studies. It is an investigation of an Experiential Education program at a mid-sized privately operated school in the north-western suburbs of Melbourne.

The study describes the program in question, and seeks understanding of how this program transforms its participants through analysis of selected qualitative and quantitative data. The presentation is a report on some initial findings of this study and the possible implications.

Initial findings include:

- Positive relationship development between students and teachers;
- Improvement in self confidence;
- Advancement of independence;
- Value of integration of aspects of the curriculum;
- Need to identify and implement meaningful assessment;
- Some implications:
- Questions about the use and function of, ‘skilled specialists’;
- Importance of integrating theory and practice;
- Priority to develop meaningful assessment of outdoor education;

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Wynn Shooter, Monash University, Karen Paisley, University of Utah What We Know About Trust in Outdoor Leadership

Trust in a leader may play a critical role in the outdoor adventure education process and influence course outcomes. As a social, cultural, moral, and political phenomenon, trust is central to our interpersonal interactions. In outdoor adventure education, the absence of trust in one’s leader may result in unrealized goals and a lack of productivity (Kramer & Cook, 2004). Alternatively, authors report that trust in a leader can positively influence cooperation, productivity, teamwork, learning, motivation, and commitment (Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Rotter, 1967; Tan & Tan, 2000). Further, since the outdoor leader is a highly influential course component (e.g., McKenzie, 2003; Sibthorp, Paisley, & Gookin, 2007), it is important to understand how outdoor leaders can establish healthy, effective trusting relationships with participants and thereby create emotionally safe and beneficial social milieus that support the attainment of desired outcomes. Therefore, the purpose of this presentation is to provide a structure for understanding why participants might choose to trust outdoor leaders. Although such an explanation is currently lacking within the outdoor education literature, cross-disciplinary trust literature has developed substantial clarity surrounding the concept of trust and the role of trust in organizational contexts. This presentation will consider the cross-disciplinary trust literature in light of its contributions to outdoor education, and will discuss the results of three empirical studies of trust in outdoor leadership that have been conducted by the author. The three studies will be used to present a model of trust and trust development that will offer an explanation of trust in outdoor leadership. Broader implications of trust and its role in outdoor adventure education will be discussed.

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Deirdre Slattery, La Trobe University Bushwalking and the sacred: an environmental history case study

The proposed paper explores an environmental history episode that illustrates ideas central to relationships between outdoor education and land.

In the 1940s disagreement broke out between two arms of the organised bushwalking movement in New South Wales. It paralysed that movement’s political role in the future planning of Kosciusko State Park (as it was then). On one side was the NSW Bushwalking Federation, led by Marie Byles, a Buddhist Sydney solicitor with substantial nature conservation and bushwalking and mountaineering credentials. On the other was the senior statesperson and veteran political activist of NSW bushwalking, Myles Dunphy. They argued over the future use of Kosciusko State Park: should significant ‘wilderness’ areas be zoned as

places for nature alone, sacred places unvisited by people? Or should they be protected for the use of the fit and hardy few whose tastes and skills could take them there?

Byles argued an 'all or nothing' position: either everyone had rights of access, or no-one, on the grounds that nature had intrinsic rights separate from human pleasure. Dunphy took a more utilitarian view: as he wrote to Byles in 1945, he did not see any incompatibility between bushwalking and nature conservation 'despite what scientists say', and he argued for the unique and necessary benefits to people of a 'pristine' nature experience.

The paper will explore the philosophical and political assumptions that underlie both positions and briefly reflect on them from a modern Outdoor Education viewpoint. From what perspective does Outdoor Education contribute politically to ideas and decisions about the land it uses?

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Heidi Smith, University of Tasmania Learning from Real Life 'Extraordinary' Outdoor Leaders

As we enter a new phase of being in the world, we are experiencing change at an ever increasing rate; faced with new challenges, traditional theories of leadership in isolation are proving to be inadequate, in particular when describing highly successful leaders in a number of sectors (business and management). My research explores the essence of 'extraordinary' outdoor leadership, through an investigation into the lived experiences of six peer-nominated, 'extraordinary' outdoor leaders across Australia. Emerging from this research is a conceptual framework that links: a) contemporary theories of leadership (Transformational Leadership, Authentic Leadership and Spiritual Leadership); b) traditional outdoor leadership theories; and c) the leadership of these six 'extraordinary' outdoor educators. Insights gleaned from the research thus far have implications for how individuals approach their own leadership, as well as the development of leadership in outdoor education professionals.

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Callie Spencer, La Trobe University Outdoor education outcomes of long distance bicycle touring: an exploration of student learning experiences on the Great Victorian Bike Ride

There has been a recent challenge for outdoor educators to assess their choice of activity to the appropriateness for the new sustainability-focused outdoor education goals instead of mindlessly sticking to the guns of tradition. Bicycle touring is a non-traditional, under-researched outdoor education activity, which has the ability to offer unique learning environments and outcomes. This study is an exploratory phenomenological study of student experience on the 9-day, 4000+ rider Great Victorian Bike Ride. Van Manen's (1990) themes (spatiality, relationality, corporeality), and a new theme of technoality were used as a framework through which to create a phenomenological description of student learning experiences. From the range of the students' experiences, notable learning experiences included learning social skills and how to live and participate as equals in a community of 4000 diverse members. The space created by the ride and the freedom given to the students by the teachers gave the students control over their learning both physically and socially. Although the Great Victorian Bike Ride did not offer the students a typical "wilderness experience" as heralded by many outdoor educators as a staple for developing student care for the environment, the community building aspects of the ride have great potential for sustainability education. This paper concludes that bicycle touring offers the students a breadth of experiences unparalleled by any of the typical outdoor education activities. Further consideration of the addition of bicycle touring as a viable forward-thinking outdoor education tool for students of 2009 is clearly warranted!

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Ina Stan, Buckinghamshire New University
Control as an Educational Tool and Its Impact on the Outdoor Educational Process

Research studies conducted on classroom interaction discuss issues of control and power in formal education, which are also of great importance and relevance to the field of outdoor education. This research has uncovered a strong desire on the part of the teachers to control their work situation and to maintain classroom autonomy. However the issues of control and power are not limited to the indoor classroom, but rather they appear to be also present in outdoor education, where the facilitator is put in a position of power, controlling the learning experience of the participants. This paper will examine how order and instructions are used, on occasion, in an outdoor educational setting in order for the facilitators to take control over the activity and achieve their own disciplinary goals. The paper is based on a PhD study carried out at a residential outdoor centre, involving primary school children, their teachers and the staff at the centre. The research took an ethnographic approach, using participant observation and semi-structured interviews to collect varied data. The findings revealed that the controlling approaches adopted by some of the facilitators interfered with the outdoor learning experience of the pupils, which had a great impact on the outdoor educational process to the extent that at times, the desired learning outcomes were not attained.

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Alistair Stewart, La Trobe University
Windows onto other worlds: The role of imagination in outdoor education

Imagine its 1852, you have just spent five months sailing half way around the world in a crowded, leaky ship and landed at Melbourne, Australia. You have come to this new land with hope of striking it rich on the goldfields of central Victoria. But first, you must purchase your prospecting tools, camping equipment and mining licence and walk 150 km to the diggings.

The role of imagination in outdoor education has received only passing attention. What opportunities might imagination offer outdoor education? How might one understand the life of a gold miner in 1852, or the geological, ecological or cultural influences on a landscape without use of one's imagination? The ecologically catastrophic settlement of Australia by Europeans could be described as a failure to engage imaginatively with the nature of nature in the 'new' land. The conference subtitle 'critical reflections, new directions' implies, I believe, an imaginative process; how might one contemplate new directions without being imaginative? In this paper I will review the research on imagination within education and explore some implications, possibilities and 'new directions' for outdoor education.

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Jo Straker, CPIT
The outdoors' – What does it mean to outdoor educators?

Outdoor educators play a central role in constructing and perpetuating meanings about 'the outdoors'. Yet what does 'the outdoors' mean to outdoor educators? Being outdoors is the fundamental point of difference for outdoor education yet despite a diversity of programmes and aims; there is a tendency to treat 'the outdoors' as something everyone agrees is the same. A review of literature reveals that, as in other western societies, outdoor educators in Aotearoa New Zealand have often not explicitly articulated the roles that 'the outdoors' plays in their practice. It would appear that it is the activity and not the setting that defines outdoor education practice and this leaves the outdoors 'outside' 'out there' and not adequately explained in terms of its role in the overall outdoor education experience.

The purpose of this PhD study is to give voice to the experiences of outdoor educators and understand how their understandings of 'the outdoors' has influenced their practice. This research is significant in that gaining an understanding of how meanings of 'the outdoors'

shape outdoor education practice, in both enabling and constraining ways, has implications for the outcomes of outdoor programmes and for how outdoor educators might approach 'the outdoors' as an explicit rather than assumed topic of study.

This presentation highlights the importance of understanding 'the outdoors' in outdoor education and examines the methodological perspective of narrative that is being used in this research.

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Glyn Thomas, La Trobe University, Tom Potter, Lakehead University, Pete Allison, University of Edinburgh

A tale of three journals: A study of papers published in AJOE, JAEOL and JEE between 1998 and 2007.

We provide an analysis of refereed papers published in the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education, the Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning, and the Journal of Experiential Education over the last decade. We developed a framework to classify the papers in terms of the authors' affiliations, the type of papers published, the context they address, and the foci of the papers. Authors from the US published most extensively across all three journals followed by authors from Australia, UK, Canada, and New Zealand and the JAEOL had the most balanced mix of author nationalities. All three journals demonstrated a trend towards a higher proportion of research-based papers and suggestions for the continued development of the emerging research culture are provided. To conclude, we suggest areas that may be fruitful foci of exploration in future research.

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Glyn Thomas, La Trobe University

Rethinking Outdoor Leadership Training: What have we been missing?

Outdoor leadership training programs have for the last two decades has been primarily shaped by texts from the USA (Martin, Cashel, Wagstaff, & Breunig, 2006; J. Miles, 1987; J. C. Miles & Priest, 1990; Priest & Gass, 1997; Priest & Gass, 2005; Prouty, Panicucci, & Collinson, 2007; Schoel & Maizell, 2002; Schoel, Prouty, & Radcliffe, 1988). These texts have predominantly focused on the skills and theories relevant to the practice of outdoor leadership, but there are aspects of effective outdoor leadership practice that seem to be omitted. My research exploring the theories and practices of facilitator educators in Australia and New Zealand provides a perspective on what may be missing from both these texts and from programs preparing outdoor leaders. My research used interviews and participant observations with seven facilitator educators who provided facilitator training programs for people working in the education, community, or business sectors. The facilitator educators also focused on skills and theories but two important dimensions of their programs seem to be less evident in outdoor leadership training: person-centred facilitator education and critical facilitator education (Thomas, 2005). In this paper I highlight the need for outdoor leadership training programs to focus on developing outdoor leaders with higher levels of self-awareness, and a stronger understanding of the political nature of leading groups in the outdoors.

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Sue Waite, University of Plymouth

Outdoor learning for children aged 2-11: perceived barriers.

The UK government is beginning to recognise value in learning outside the classroom after a period of concentration on raising narrowly defined standards through didactic teaching methods, but barriers to outdoor learning appear to remain in practice. This paper draws on a

recent study of outdoor experiential learning opportunities, examining attitudes, practice and aspirations of practitioners and children in educational and care settings for children between 2 -11 years within a rural county of England. Data collection methods included a largely quantitative survey sent to all 1933 settings for care or education of children aged between 2 and 11 in the county and rich qualitative case studies of five settings representing different types of provision for the early years.

Practitioner and pupil perceptions of the barriers to implementation of a resource which is widely believed beneficial will be presented. The paper will critically evaluate the apparent differential value and uptake of outdoor learning opportunities at different ages, in different provision and across the curriculum. Barriers to implementation expressed by practitioners will be explored alongside the values that children appear to attach to outdoor learning. The paper will suggest some possible implications for policy and practice in the field of outdoor learning for early and primary years.

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Sue Waite, University of Plymouth, Julie Evans, University College Plymouth: St Mark and St John, Miles Opie, University of Plymouth. Marie Nichols, University of Plymouth

Methods for exploring how pedagogies are shaped in outdoor contexts.

The main aim of our Economic and Social Research Council funded research is to consider the ways in which children are given opportunities to shape their learning in outdoor environments. Undertaking observations and interviews, we intend to explore what teaching and learning in outdoor contexts for children aged 4-6 are like.

This paper will focus on the development of innovative qualitative methods to try to capture data without destroying the delicate balance between child, teacher and the places they inhabit in their teaching and learning. Research on the detail of pedagogical practice in essentially mobile situations is currently under-developed and often relies on post-hoc self-report. Our methods intend to capture pedagogy 'on the hoof'. We will share some early indications of how these methods might help to shed light on how place, teacher and child intersect in co-constructing pedagogies within outdoor contexts.

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Sarabjit Singh Wallia, La Trobe University

Challenge by choice: A sojourn at the intersection of challenge and choice.

How does ability to choose not only the challenge but also the level of participation, affect the ultimate learning? A meta-analysis of research in outdoor education by Hattie, Marsh, Neill and Richards (1997) reveals that, due partly to voluntary participation, adults on adventure education programs experienced more positive impact when compared to youth.

My research explores the principle of challenge by choice highlighting that Challenge by choice is not a toggle switch where participants make either-or decisions about participating (Frank, 2001). The literature suggests that, for a participant to have a real choice two things need to happen. First, the facilitator and the group need to be supportive of a participant's right to choose. They need to understand a participant's fears and reasons to do less or more. Second, there need to be real alternatives to the task of the day.

Further more research shows that factors like fear of failure, peer-pressure and self-esteem influence a participant's choice about their level of participation. The environment that we as facilitators build on our programs lays down the structure of social rules. According to Frank (2001) the goal is to create an atmosphere where each participant feels physically and

emotionally safe. If participants perceive the environment to be safe then they feel comfortable in taking risks, such as making mistakes and trying new ideas.

My research goes on connect the dots and show the relationship of challenge by choice with a participant's movement along the 'edge' of his or her comfort zone, and also examines the need for us as facilitators to look for alternatives to putting participants out of their comfort zone and instead work on creating safe environments which help participants in extending their comfort zone while being inside the edge.

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Wei Ching Wang, National Chia-yi University, Chung-Chi Wu, National Pingtung University of Science & Technology

Does Early-life Outdoor Education Matter? The Influence of Hikers' Early-life Outdoor Experiences to Their Environmental Behaviour

Recreationists' environmental behavior has been regarded important in the field of outdoor recreation. In this study, we try to figure out if early-life outdoor experiences affect one's environmental behavior. Everyone has some outdoor experiences in their childhood and adolescence. These experiences could be having picnic with parents, going camping with friends, or watching videos on Discovery Channel. Do these experiences have influences on one's environmental behavior?

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of hikers' early-life outdoor experiences to their environmental behavior. Data were collected by questionnaires from 500 hikers aged above 18 at Da-Kung Trail in Taiwan with 433 valid questionnaires received (response rate=86.6%). Based on the results, we divided outdoor experiences into four categories, including: personal outdoor experience, organizational outdoor experience, media and education program and negative environmental events. It is found that hikers' early-life outdoor experiences could significantly predict their environmental behavior. Among those four categories, "personal outdoor experience" and "media and education program" were two effective predicting variables.

Based on the results, it is suggested that children and adolescence should have more opportunities to involve in outdoor activities as well as to receive relevant information via media and education programs. Therefore, we recommend schools and educational institutes not only to provide more indoor educational information, such as books, videos or lectures about environmental knowledge, but also provide more outdoor activities and education programs for students and their parents.

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Brian Wattchow, Monash University, Mike Brown, The University of Waikato
Researching the Pedagogical Practice of Place in Outdoor Education

Research and writing into the pedagogical practice of place has emerged as a significant sub-theme in Australasian outdoor education literature (see Brookes, 1993, 2002; Stewart, 2003, 2004; Preston and Griffiths, 2004; Wattchow, 2006, 2007; Brown, 2008; Payne and Wattchow, 2008). This presentation provides a review of this literature coupled, with the broader discourses of place, and focuses on two foundational themes: (1) the phenomenological foundations of the place experience, (2) the connection between person and collective identity and place(s).

The presentation draws upon the theoretical development of relevant place studies over the last 40 years in Human Geography (Relph, 1976, 1985, 1992; Seamon, 1979, 1992, 2004; Tuan, 1974, 1977), phenomenological philosophy (Casey, 1993, 1997; Abram, 1996), cultural studies (Seddon, 1997; Park, 1995, 2006) and sociocultural learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 2003). Collectively, the perspectives offered through these disciplines provides

a means of critiquing some contemporary approaches, both theoretical and practical, in outdoor education pedagogy. Whilst raising key questions regarding versions of outdoor education which place an emphasis on the self, others and the environment. The presentation moves beyond critique and looks at planning, implementation, and evaluation of place responsive outdoor education programmes.

Examples from recent place responsive programmes in outdoor education in Australia and New Zealand will be discussed.

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Andy Williams, University of Wales

Widening Access to Higher Education through Outdoor Education: Research into the Impact of a 'Taster Course'.

Widening access to higher education has become a cornerstone of UK government policy in the last ten years (DfEE, 1988). A key strategy in support of this is for HEI's to offer 'taster' courses targeted at specific groups currently under-represented in higher education. This project investigated the impact of a ten day 'taster' course of higher education outdoor education on one of the hardest to reach social groups, who have traditionally been excluded from higher education – unemployed, male, parents. Data for the study was gathered via participant observation, informal discussions, individual and group interviews and open-ended questionnaires. Results suggest barriers to participation for this under-represented group are significant and long term, and cannot easily be overcome by the governments preferred strategy of short term 'taster' courses. In contrast, a longer term, broader and more realistic view of the potential of 'taster' courses is advocated. Such a view moves beyond the statistics of increased representation as an indicator of the success of 'taster' course interventions to highlight issues of community engagement, self esteem, sustainable recreational lifestyles and basic skills support, as more meaningful and realistic measures of success for the individuals involved.

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Chung-Chi Wu, National Pingtung University of Science & Technology, Wei-

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Predicting the Benefits of Outdoor Adventure Education Programs

Introduction

Building on previous studies, several variables were mentioned as the salient factors to bring out the benefits for outdoor adventure education programs. The purpose of this research was to further investigate the key factors that could significantly predict the participants' perceived benefits of outdoor adventure education.

Methods

Samples of this study were 136 students participated in a series of outdoor adventure education programs including PA games, challenge ropes courses, orienteering and hiking. In order to predict the participants' perceived benefits (including life-effectiveness and group cohesion) of outdoor adventure education, following predictors for benefits were included in the questionnaire packet: 1) participants' willingness to change; the characteristics of 2) kinesthetic imprint, 3) encouraging for adventure, 4) social support, 5) mastery experience, 6) facilitation as well as 7) debrief and reflection for experiential and adventure learning. The software of SPSS 12.0 statistics package and multiple regression analysis were used.

Results

Using a stepwise forward regression model, three variables entered the first equation for predicting life-effectiveness. The predictive equation would be written:

$$Y(\text{life-effectiveness}) = 0.98 + 0.25X(\text{encouraging for adventure}) + 0.27X(\text{social support}) + 0.19X(\text{mastery experience}).$$

As for the second equation for predicting group cohesion, four variables entered. The predictive equation would be written:

$$Y(\text{group cohesion}) = 0.22 + 0.37X(\text{social support}) + 0.25X(\text{encouraging for adventure}) + 0.22X(\text{debrief and reflection}) + 0.17X(\text{willingness to change}).$$

Discussion

According to the results, both the variables of “encouraging for adventure” and “social support” were important when predicting the outdoor adventure education benefits (life-effectiveness as well as group cohesion) in this study. These above findings also provided important theoretical and practical implications.

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Steven Wu National Pingtung University of Science & Technology, Chang-yang Wu, National Pingtung University of Science & Technology Evaluating the Effects of Five-day Outdoor Adventure Education Summer Camps on Primary School Students

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of an outdoor adventure education summer camp. Participants were 60 primary school students joined in the five-days camp programs including a series of outdoor adventure education activities such as PA games, challenge ropes courses, orienteering, kayaking as well as rock-climbing. The self-edited scale was used to evaluate the effects. Paired- Samples t test was took to examine the pre-test and post-test scores of scale. According to the results, students participated in this summer camp promoted themselves in “interpersonal communication”, “life effectiveness” and “self concept”. Also, the researchers made some suggestions for the following research and future planning for summer camps in the hope to make this research more contributive.

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