

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY:  
LEARNING by SHARING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

THIRD EUROPEAN CONGRESS FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE  
EDUCATION and EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Edited by

Peter Higgins and Barbara Humberstone



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## Preface

The purpose of this congress is to bring together a wide range of practitioners and academics active within the field to share their experiences of the key themes of the congress. There is clearly a great deal to be learnt from exposure to the underlying philosophies, approaches and programmes adopted by those from other nations. As the European Union expands as a community of nations it seems fitting that this should be the theme of the Third European Congress.

The organisation of the congress itself and the publication of the Proceedings is an example of such co-operation between the 'European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning' and the UK 'National Association for Outdoor Education'. Not all countries in Europe have a national association, and in some (including the UK) there are many agencies with an interest in the sector. The development of a European Institute should provide opportunities to share experience and collaborate in the spirit of this congress.

Perhaps the strongest justification for collaboration lies in the underlying philosophy formulated by organisations throughout Europe to describe their 'mission' or 'statement of intent'. The most frequent common denominator in our field is a wish to help those we work with to develop an awareness of themselves, others and the environment (and the relationships between them) through exposure to adventurous outdoor experiences. The congress themes were selected to embrace this approach within a European context and to bring to it a critical dimension.

Not all countries in Europe, and necessarily only a selection of the agencies working in the sector can be represented. Consequently it would be wrong to think that the European Institute or this congress can fully reflect complete consensus and thereby the agreed views of the whole European outdoor community. However, this does not mean that the discussions generated at the congress and through these papers, and any agreements reached, do not have credibility. They reflect wide and substantial experience. Members of the European Board have selected the congress themes in the hope and expectation that we enjoy our exposure to diverse cultural approaches and learn by doing what we do best, sharing these experiences.

Peter Higgins and Barbara Humberstone

August 1998



**Welcoming Address - Chair National Association for Outdoor Education**

**Shirley Payne**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues and Friends,  
On behalf of the National Association for Outdoor Education, I want to welcome you to this European Congress for Outdoor Adventure, Education and Experiential Learning. It is a great pleasure for the Association to host this conference, and we have very willingly given it our support over the last year. There is much time, effort and financial backing which has contributed to the opening of such a conference. I want to thank the members of the board of the European Institute, in particular Barbara Humberstone and Peter Higgins, who have acted as liaison with NAOE and the appointed administrator of the conference Ian Lewis. Barbara, Peter and Ian have managed to overcome all the difficulties presented by the organizational demands of such a conference and brought us successfully to this day. I am - we all are - especially indebted to Rod Cole, the NAOE treasurer. Rod has acted as arbitrator, peacemaker and solver of seemingly insoluble problems. In particular, his management of the financial risks involved has been exceptionally skilful. We are all grateful to him. In my thanks to people who have made a special contribution, I want to acknowledge the help and support kindly arranged by NAOE Scotland for some of the hosting and cultural events of the coming few days. This help and support was offered freely and with goodwill, and we owe our thanks to the committee, led by the Chair, Ian Lamb.

There are many individuals to be thanked for their contribution to the quality of the conference - seminar leaders, contributors of papers - and especially yourselves for coming and taking part. I very much hope that you will all find things of interest to engage you during the conference and will go away afterwards with many thoughts and ideas to follow up in your work during the coming months. It is important that we share and

celebrate our ideas our practices and our philosophies about Outdoor Education, Activities and Training. We will gain strength and confidence from realizing that we share so many similar values and approaches and we will gain further insights from examining our differences in practice and approach.

In England, and indeed in the UK, we are at an important stage in our thinking about and our development of outdoor activities of all kinds, and the themes of this conference encompass many of the issues which we see ourselves facing at the moment. We are not a large country and over the last decade we have used up much of our space by building upon it - building industries and houses and shopping complexes. We need to do this to sustain our economy and to house and service our population. But this has meant a lessening of the space available for outdoor and adventurous activities. We have many access restrictions so that there are open spaces - moorland and woodland - that are closed to people. Other spaces which were once open parkland available to everyone for their use and enjoyment, are being sold to, or hired by, private owners in order to turn them into golf courses or leisure parks where people will have to pay to enter and use the facilities. Wherever this sort of thing happens, restrictions arise so that only those who are able to afford to pay for access can use these areas. NAOE does not believe that access to outdoor activities, adventure and learning should depend on how wealthy a person or a family is. NAOE believes in equality of opportunity. We believe that people should be enabled to enjoy outdoor activities and learn and develop from engaging in those activities regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, physical or mental ability or disability. How we enact our beliefs then becomes a challenge. We have to convince our politicians and our policy makers that such activities are life

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enhancing. They have to be convinced that outdoor activities are worth supporting and funding. We can only do that if we are able to point to social and or economic gains arising from enabling and encouraging people to become involved in various of these activities.

Because our open spaces are few and precious to us, it is vital that we examine our practices. We need to ensure that whatever we do in the outdoors does not create damage to plant or animal life. The idea of sustainability challenges our philosophy about using the outdoors. I recall as a beginning canoeist, being told by an instructor that I had to master my environment. That mastery, he told me, was what outdoor adventure was all about. It was only later when another instructor told me that I had to learn to work with my environment and not against it, to learn to read the water and use its nature to my advantage, that I realized that there was more than one philosophy about our relationship with our environment. In England we see much vandalism in the outdoors. We need to seek ways of influencing young people especially to value and respect their environment and to seek to sustain it.

NAOE has a strong belief that outdoor education, adventure and learning can have a beneficial influence upon attitudes and values. Attitudes and values not just about the environment, but about people and how they should be treated and how we should interact with and respect each other. As we learn to care for our countryside, so we learn to care for people. This development of personal values and integrity does not happen by chance. It has to be helped and nurtured. We need to invest time and energy in encouraging and enabling such development in our young people. But there is another set of values that can be enhanced by successful involvement with the outdoors. So many people think poorly of themselves and their abilities and have little confidence in themselves. NAOE is convinced of the benefit to the self-concept and

self-esteem of outdoor adventurous activities and experiential learning.

Our culture's view of human nature is that people are essentially active in shaping themselves and their lives and destiny. If this is so, then we need to allow them to learn the skills of taking decisions for themselves, of judging risks and of understanding and using their strengths to overcome their weaknesses. From a young age we need to help them take responsibility for themselves and be comfortable in the knowledge that they are able to take responsibility in a successful way. These skills need as much careful thought and planning by the teacher or leader as do the skills of canoeing or climbing, of caving or of orienteering. They do not necessarily develop naturally!

I have made much so far of the need to begin learning attitudes, values and skills early in life, and indeed what happens to our children both within the education system at school and in their out-of-school learning is of considerable importance to their future development. But learning in and through the outdoors continues throughout life and NAOE continually draws attention to the need for opportunities to be available for youth and community groups and for older people too. In the UK there is a concern for the health of the nation - indeed there has been a recent study called The Health of the Nation. There is no doubt that opportunities for outdoor activities need to be made available to everyone in order to combat some of the less healthy habits we have developed as a nation, which include too much sitting and eating and not enough exercise! We have a national health service which is staggering financially. Any government sees good housekeeping and budget revisions to be important in attempting to maintain good health care for the sick. There is much less attention paid to the benefits to be gained and the savings to be made in the long term by seeking prevention. If we could persuade our politicians of the long-term benefits of our work in the outdoors we would make great strides!

There is a need for good teachers and leaders in the outdoors. Good teachers and leaders some of whom have their career in outdoor activities, but also good teachers and leaders who engage in these activities on a voluntary basis - many doing so without any remuneration. In England, in the UK overall, there are very many hundreds and thousands of these people. NAOE wishes to find ways of supporting and encouraging these volunteers.

We are engaged in a debate about professionalism and what we mean by the term. Our definition has developed beyond calling those whose paid career is in outdoor work, whether that be in the leisure industry or in residential centres or in private consultancy, the professionals, thus leaving out all those paid or unpaid voluntary workers or workers who use the outdoors for experiential learning, development or therapeutic purposes. However, we have yet to find a definition of professionalism with which we are comfortable and which captures the essential elements of expertise, ethical practice and accountability which we would all wish to espouse. It is an important debate, and one which will never, perhaps, be entirely closed - this might be its greatest strength. However, we need to come near our definition, because so much hangs upon it. Not just our own self-respect and esteem for the work which we do, but the respect and esteem of the outside world. We need to recognise that such respect and esteem is important to the status of the work which we do, and thereon may depend our funding.

In every area that I have touched upon, there is a major conclusion to be drawn. We need more research to give weight to our convictions and beliefs. We know about the enjoyment and the adventure and fun to be had in facing the challenges of outdoor activities. We are sure of the impact that the wonder and the beauty of the outdoors has upon all those who venture out in any weather. We understand the spiritual uplift and the feelings of self-actualization which outdoor education, adventure and experiential learning give to people.

But we need to give the weight of research to these convictions in order to persuade others. It is a good time to be calling upon our researchers. There are so many diverse developments in research approaches - both quantitative and qualitative - that we can use to our advantage. If we work collaboratively and share our ideas and knowledge, then we ought to be able to provide good academic reasoning to support our work. And this is where the European Institute is leading us in this congress. What an exciting adventure we are engaged upon!

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**Culture, Diversity , National Communities and Outdoor Adventure Education**

**Barbara Humberstone, Gunter Amesberger, Peter Becker, Steve Bowles, Peter Higgins,  
Bert Keus, Jan Neumann, Jochem Schirp**

Traditionally culture in its simplest form of meaning is considered to be the shared experiences, 'shared principles of life, characteristics of particular classes, groups or shared social milieux' (Griffin, 1985:202) of specific groups of peoples. These cultures may be local, as in a school; regional, as in the Pyrenees; national, as say Scottish; or Global as Macdonald's Hamburger outlets or the Outward Bound. Even the examples given in this list suggest that the notion of culture is considerably more complex than it might at first appear. Now, in the late twentieth century, with trends in consumerism, mass communications and social movements which organise around 'race', gender, sexuality, the environment and so forth, the concept of culture has received a critical rereading. For those of us involved in and committed to outdoor education, such rereadings can only be ignored at our peril. This reconceptualisation of culture has emerged as a consequence of analyses from amongst a variety of perspectives which include the work of Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall from the British cultural studies association, various strands of feminism, Lacanian psychoanalysis and its account of identity and subjectivity and the Foucauldian concern with discourse and power. These and other developments in cultural investigation make it now impossible to perceive culture as merely a bounded, self-sufficient set of contents, customs and traditions. Whether we see this as 'good' or 'bad', there is now much 'pick and mix' about culture and we can no longer assume culture is just the representation of the identity of a community. Rather culture is now seen not merely as shared values and beliefs (eg. religion), taken for granted ways of doing things (eg. rituals) or traditional assumptions (eg. 'apple pie and motherhood'), but also the ways in which these phenomena are constructed through systems of meanings, by webs of power and

through the organisations and institutions that produce and legitimate them. Williams (1980) suggests that the interactions of these create the life worlds of social collectivities or 'elective communities' (Weeks 1993):

there is some practical convergence between (i) the anthropological and sociological senses of culture as a distinct 'whole way of life', within which, a distinctive 'signifying system' is seen not only as essential but as essentially involved in all forms of social activity, and (ii) the more specialized if also more common sense of culture as 'artistic and intellectual activities', through these, because of the emphasis on a general signifying system, are now more broadly defined, to include not only the traditional arts and forms of intellectual production but also all the 'signifying practices'-from language through the arts and philosophy to journalism, fashion and advertising-which now constitute this complex and necessarily extended field. (Williams 1980:13).

Thus culture in contemporary thought is made up of the processes, knowledges and categories by which communities are understood as such. Different communities of outdoor adventure educators will maintain some similarities across them in their technologies (modes of proceeding and practices), philosophies and categorisations, but there will also be significant diversity between each elective community. The European context within which this congress of outdoor adventure education and experiential learning is located provides us with abundant opportunity to explore, compare and possibly celebrate these different forms of knowledges and experiences both between and within nation states. But we

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need to be alert to scepticisms raised by under-represented groups about every day assumptions of culture. This congress is concerned to transcend national and cultural boundaries, whilst celebrating and learning from the uniqueness of different national outdoor adventure education cultures. It is also concerned to acknowledge and include those groups and individuals who are frequently ignored or rendered invisible in outdoor adventure education because of their 'race', ethnicity, gender, sexuality or (dis)ability. In our attempts to celebrate diversity in outdoor adventure education and experiential learning, we need to be wary that we do not make the mistake that in Britain has been highlighted by anti-racists educators of 'reproducing the superficiality of the 'saris, samosas and steel-band syndrome' (Donald and Rattansi 1992:2). That is ignoring the existing hierarchies of power and legitimation within which outdoor education organisations and agencies, like other 'elective communities', are embedded and by which prejudice and exclusion occur. As outdoor educators we can no longer make assumptions about the 'truth' of 'our' experiences in simple terms. For many of 'our' perceptions and beliefs may hide social contradictions and provide only a partial representation of reality. Taken-for-granted assumptions about what constitutes valid knowledge in the outdoor experience or about the 'application' of theories of/outdoor education for all groups of people may be misguided and even detrimental. We need to ask, how inclusive is 'our' outdoor education community? Who are those who are excluded? Why are these people missing? What is so special about 'our' outdoor adventure education that we should try to make available these experiences to 'others'. What can these 'others' bring to outdoor adventure communities that will enrich these communities? The work of the Black Environmental Network, directed by Judy Ling Wong, is living evidence that sensitive multi-culturalism in the outdoors not only makes visible the presence of other cultures, but also celebrates those differences, making connec-

tions between the rich diversity of non-human living things and the human.' We find out how vitally we can all be in touch with a remarkable world of diverse cultures and environments. Multiculturalism takes us into an adventure. It is a joy' (Ling Wong n.d.:5).

The environments within which outdoor adventure education is made available are the 'cultural landscapes' upon which groups of people have worked over time. We might be mindful of the fact that these very landscapes in which much outdoor adventure globally occurs originally was/is cared for and respected by some of those peoples who are largely missing from outdoor adventure 'programmes', such as the Sami, native Indian, aborigines, nomadic peoples, Celtic and Gaelic speakers and so forth. Pedersen (1998) reminds us how modern leisure forms, including outdoor activities, that feature significantly as a source of leisure, education and work for many people, impinge upon pre-modern cultures and their fragile relations with their environment.

This European congress is concerned with celebrating and sharing not only personal and local identities but also national and transnational communities. How nation states celebrate their nationality and relate and interrelate with each other is important when considering the impact this celebration may have upon 'others' who also make up these national communities. Nationalism, although offering a powerful sense of belonging and cultural identity, when driven by powerful self interests is always destructive. It should be remembered that extreme nationalistic ideologies become fascisms that not only exclude certain groups of 'others' but also persecute them. As Gilroy (1993:53) succinctly argues, 'We increasingly face a racism which avoids being recognised as such because it is able to link 'race' with nationhood, patriotism and nationalism, a racism which has taken a necessary distance from crude ideas of biological inferiority and superiority and now seeks to present an imaginary definition as a unified cultural community.'

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It is crucial then that outdoor educators across Europe and elsewhere take greater account of difference and diversity and look to the experiences of all people recognising that 'race', gender, sexuality, motor ability and so forth are significant in the formation of personal, cultural and national identities. As outdoor educators we can not ignore such rich diversity nor should we be complacent about 'our' philosophies and technologies in, and 'our' vision(s) for, the future of outdoor adventure education.

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**An tir, An Canan, ‘sna Daoine (the land, the language, the people):  
Outdoor Education, and an indigenous culture**

**John White**

I believe there to be a pressing need for those involved in outdoor adventure education to become more aware of the culture of the land in which they are educating. Environmental concerns have (rightly) become firmly established within our learning. It is my belief that a more complete understanding of the place of human beings within the environment is of paramount importance, to allow a more holistic approach to the way we use the outdoors. The recognition of an indigenous culture and language is a key theme to this approach, and the subject of this paper.

### **Introduction**

If I walk out of my back door, and climb the stile at the corner of the garden, I can walk up my neighbours croft (small leased or owned farm or holding). At the top of the small ‘cnoc’ (hillock) I am onto the common grazing and can see the open hill behind. Early in the year, not yet spring, it is brown, the sodden foreground is reedy, and the hill is short heather which has not yet begun to shoot. The land is not good grazing yet bears the scars of overgrazing.

To the south however on the flank of the hill between the reed and the heather is a swathe of green, and walking closer it is easy to pick out old walls, and groups of ruined cottages. This is Graulin one of many abandoned villages in the Highlands.

I find it impossible to walk among the walls and dykes of Graulin without imagining children’s voices, in spring, blending with the skylarks song. Sheep have continued using the paths first hewn then used by the families. All around are the strips and mounds of the lazybeds, the runrig fields fertilised by kelp, but all around potatoes and corn have made way for grass, reeds and heather. The more you notice the more you can

see; all over the land was once cultivated, and still around the village it is green and fertile. The poor state of the land owes much to the events of a hundred or more years ago. Ian Fraser Grigor described the ‘Highland Clearances’ as a ‘time when, in the name of progress, and for the profit and pleasure of the few, men replaced men with sheep, and then (when sheep in their turn became a liability) turned the sheep farm into deer-forests’ (Grigor 1979: 11).

The Highland Clearances have been well documented, and the interested reader could do no better than refer to the works of John Prebble or James Hunter, for honest accounts of those terrible times.

**Things looked at in isolation, become isolated...**

**Why outdoor education should be aware of indigenous culture.?**

I believe it important that an outdoor educator working in the Scottish Highlands know something of the history, and in particular the times of the clearances.

To answer ‘why’, it is tempting to resort to crude ‘emotional speak’. We climb mountains ‘because they are there’, then we should know about the clearances ‘because they happened’... However a more eloquent argument lies in the simple statement that almost nowhere in the Scottish Highlands, have the landscape, the culture, or the people remained unaffected by these times.

As educators we regularly have to justify an activity, and make it relevant to the living of those taking part, it is my belief that the whole environment should also be made relevant, and in a practical sense we should not isolate the environments we work in. A knowledge and

understanding of why the land is like it is can go a long way to removing the isolation, whether it be reasons for barren hillsides, a simple explanation of some Gaelic mountain names, or a full and perhaps emotive account of events leading to today's empty glens.

More and more it is accepted and expected that we know and can inform about the flora and fauna of an area, or the rocks that make up the landscape, it is just as relevant, in terms of both curriculum education, and to give a 'sense of place' to know and inform about the villages the rocks were built from, or the 'lazybeds' (wide mounds and furrows built to improve drainage and cultivation) that the seaweed was heaped into.

Edward Ives was writing about Canadian song-making, but his thoughts are, I believe applicable to any 'act': 'No song, no performance, no act of creation can be properly understood apart from the culture or sub-culture in which it is found(1978 from McKean undated:3).

The connection between re-creation, and outdoor education is discussed by Peter Higgins (1996) in his essay on 'Connection and Consequence'. If we are to re-create, we cannot do it apart from culture.

Iain Crichton Smith, the poet and novelist was once asked for his opinions on historians and history; 'What many people do, if they are not inside a particular culture, is choose certain facts out of an enormous number of facts and put them together in a historical fashion' (Smith from Hunter 1995:26).

This he claims is 'bad history' which Scotland has suffered from. If outdoor education is not to be 'bad education' it must at least be aware and preferably understanding of the culture it is working in.

### **'Gaelic' Culture.**

To a Gael the connection between the land, the language and the culture is so fundamental as to need no explanation, 'An tìr, An Canan, 'sna Daoine,' the land, the language, the people, is a slogan from the Highland Land League which organised mass rent strikes, and demonstrated against the police, the military and the sheriff officers in the 1880s. The slogan, still relevant today, is used as a motto by the award winning newspaper, the West Highland Free Press. My understanding of this 'Gaelic connection' is most easily illustrated in a simple model

### **Relationship between The Land, the Language and the People**

Whatever we believe outdoor education to be, it necessarily includes people, and land (I take land to be used in the widest sense of the word, to include sea and freshwater). The inclusion of another aspect, that of language, suggests a wider understanding. I believe we spend most of our time working in the upper circle of the 'The Land', but for a more complete and holistic education we should strive to work in the centre of all three circles.

Alexander Moffet, although talking about the environment as used by art, could easily be talking about the environment, as used by out-

door education: 'the discovery of the Highlands meant the discovery of a rare and stupendous natural environment, not the discovery of the people who lived there'. If we are not to treat the environment in some Victorian Romantic fashion, we must be aware of the people and culture surrounding us. The 'romantic' vision, and 'realistic' vision, as described by Moffett indicates a cultural difference. He continues: "this in turn exposes the gulf between Lowland and Highland culture....Today nostalgia rules in our culture...reducing much of our cultural heritage to the pathetic level of popular kitsch. 'this Scotland is not Scotland', cried MacDiarmid as he tried to wake us from our slumber." (Moffat from Maclean and Carrell 1986:70)

As outdoor educators we must not have any romantic notion about the environment we work in, we must strive to educate within MacDiarmid's Scotland, not believe in any 'Wilderness Fallacy', (Scottish Crofters Union / Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, 1992 from Hunter 1995:165).

James Hunter (1987:2) writes 'The Highlands of tourist brochure and the holiday cottage are not however the Highlands of the crofter' I would suggest that the Highlands of the tourist brochure is not far removed from that of the outdoor educator. An understanding of indigenous culture would help address this.

My concern is that in using the outdoors purely as tool for our own agendas, we may be missing a huge wealth of knowledge and understanding. For example a 'Gaelic culture', has a huge relevance to educating in the outdoors. It is precisely because the connection between culture and land is so fundamental to the Gael, that we should ourselves try to understand it, and will really be the crux of what we can learn from the culture.

David Craig (1996:300-301), a climber, writes in his eloquent study of rocks. 'Corries always

look to me as if they should cradle cultures...I find myself looking at each prone tablet of rock or ridge in the moor and wanting them to be doorsteps or lintels of old cottages, turf dykes round crofting townships'.

Perhaps sub-consciously Craig has recognised that the glens are empty, and is reacting to MacLennan's sad outcry of 'anyone who ever mattered is dead and gone' (MacLennan from Hunter, 1995:25). Craig continues the connection between land, people and outdoor pursuits, when he writes; 'The Diabeg crofts, on slopes of Alpine steepness, are no longer worked and the village has almost died...From here I can't see those dear places, but I know they are there, the ways across to them and back through time to my family's seasons there feel as tangible as the sequences of footholds and handholds which have brought me to this spot' (Craig 1996:303).

Perhaps Craig, and also we who love the landscapes we adventure in, are going part way to what I think is the belonging felt by an indigenous culture, a belonging so powerful as to remain through generations and the descendants of those who were cleared.

This power is described by Hugh MacLennan (in Hunter 1996:251) when talking about cleared Highlanders; 'always retaining wherever they might find themselves and however strongly they might identify with their countries of adoption, a sense of belonging still to those faraway places whose names alone, ...possess, for folk of Highland origin, an almost talismanic power'.

This power, although hard to describe, I think illustrates the connection to the land that an indigenous people have, Devlin writes about the Gaelic poet Sorley Maclean, commenting; 'This sense of landscape and attachment to a place is closely bound up with human relations, not merely with personal memories of friends and their company...but with a profound awareness of... community extended not only in place but

also in time; an awareness of all those who lived and strove and were buried in the earth, not as remote figures in a history book but as part of ones own flesh and blood' (Devlin 1986 from Hunter 1998:57-58).

Peter Higgins (1996:37) argues that a crux of outdoor education is a Re-connection with the land, 'rediscovering what is there, but has become hidden under the debris of modern living'. Surely this re-connection is a part of what an indigenous culture has inherent, and manifests itself as belonging.

I might argue that this belonging negates a certain amount of activity which we as outdoor people perhaps find necessary, perhaps as an excuse to be in certain environments. A crofter has no need to climb the Cuillin, a prawn creel fisherman, little need to cross the Minch in a sea kayak. Although my two illustrations are people active in the outdoors (crofters, fishermen) I would suggest that people with a connection to the Highlands, the sons and daughters of those fishermen and crofters, have less of a need to re-connect, or even re-create, purely because they have a sense of belonging, and the climb in the Cuillin is replaced with an occasional help at the sheep fank, or even just a wander down an overgrown and disused croft.

The belonging is as much about the people as the land, Sorley Maclean was never so much interested in where you were from but who you were from. As mentioned above, re-creation is about rediscovering. But to understand a culture is more than just learning its language and history, which has the danger of treating culture as purely academic, a study of the Sami people and tourism describes the difficulty people have in recognising a culture; 'Many people who visit Sami do not have the feeling of being in the middle of an indigenous culture. Most Sami wear modern clothes, drive modern cars, and live in pre-fabricated houses. To get a taste of an 'authentic otherness' tourists have to buy pre-arranged tours, where the Sami culture is staged' (Pedersen and Viken, 1996:82).

In the Highlands, tourists have celidhs (dances), museums and visitor centres to re-create the culture. Some examples are sure to tell an honest story, and even be educational, and help towards an understanding of a culture. I would certainly suggest some of these 'staged' tours and shows can help practically. It may be, for example, the only way a visitor will ever get to hear any Gaelic spoken. But a staged celidh is to culture, what a climbing wall is to being on a mountain, in the way that we claim the outdoors to be a powerful medium in which to educate, we should find the culture which is out there, as similarly powerful examples for our further education.

It is by design that I have used the arts in support of my argument; 'poets and writers are better historians often, than the professionals' (Smith, from Hunter 1996:26). This is in keeping with the widening of understanding I am calling for. In trying to understand a culture in more than an 'academic' fashion, we may only be able to scratch the surface from the outside. This is why I enlist the help of the poets and writers. To begin the process, I will give you a song by Mairi Nighean Iain Bhain, better known as Mairi Mhor nan Oran, or 'Big Mary of the Songs', her poetry was 'the most forceful to emerge from the land agitation of the late nineteenth century' (Maclean 1986:25), and I will ask you to imagine being in Graulin, as described in the introduction;

### **Nuair Bha Mi Og**

...Toirt, na mo chuimhn' iomadh ni a rinn mi,  
nach faigh mi 'm bann gu ceann thall mo sgeoil-  
a falbh sa gheamhradh gu luaidh is bainnsean,  
gun solas lainnteir ach cean an fhoid;  
bhiodh oigridh ghreannmhor ri ceol is dannsa,  
ach dh'fhalbh an t-am sin 's tha'n gleann fo bhron-  
bha'n tobht' aig Anndra 's e lan de dh'fheanntaig  
toirt' na mo chuimhne nuair bha mi og.  
Nuair chuir mi cuairt air gach gleann is cruachan  
far 'n robh mi suaimhneach a cuallach bho,  
le oigridh ghuanach tha nis air fuadach  
de shliochd na tuath bha gun uail, gun gho-  
na raoin 's na cluaintean fo fhraoch is luachair  
far 'n tric a bhuaineadh leam sguab is dloth,

## Celebrating diversity learning by sharing cultural differences

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s nam faicinn sluagh agus taighean suas annt',  
gu fasainn suaimhneach mar bha mi og.

### When I was Young

... It reminded me of many things I had done,  
some of which I shall not gather in until the end of my  
days-  
going to waulkings and weddings in winter,  
not with lantern light but with a burning peat;  
lively youngsters engaged in music and dancing then,  
but that time has gone and the glen is saddened;  
the ruins of Andrew's house, overgrown with nettles,  
reminded me of when I was young.

When I had walked round each glen and small hill  
where I had once lived without care, herding cows,  
with light-hearted young people who have now been  
driven away,  
descendants of native folk who were free of vanity and  
guile-  
the fields and pastures covered in heather and rushes where  
I'd often cut sheaves and small bundles of corn,  
and if I were to see people there and houses built,  
I would become as carefree as when I was young.

(Meek, D.E. (1997) *Mairi Mhor nan Oran*,  
Glasgow; Gairm from Maclean 1986:62)  
(See also Discography)

### Postscript

I asked my wife, born and brought up in the  
Gaelic speaking area of Kilmuir in North Skye,  
what she felt was important about her culture,  
she talked about land, language and people, and  
she talked about music and song, but one word  
was constantly repeated, in connection with  
these. The word was 'respect'.

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### Discography

A version of Nuair Bha Mi Og can be heard (Track 10) on  
the following Compact Disc / Music Cassette:

'Co..?' by Anne Martin (1998). Catalogue Numbers:  
WWAVECD001 (Compact Disc), WWAVEMC001  
(Cassette)

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## Does Outdoor Education Equate to Erlebnispädagogik? European Perspectives

Frank Stähler

This article presents a summary of a comparative study of interviews with 13 professionals from Liverpool and Cologne which examines common ground in outdoor education/Erlebnispädagogik by clarifying English and German terminology and concepts. It also considers possibilities for practical co-operation. The data is analysed to describe various aspects of outdoor education and Erlebnispädagogik. Results show that for the sample studied both are based on the same concept of learning, but refer to different definitions in terms of spatial facilities. There appear to be numerous reasons to support the development of international cooperation in outdoor education/Erlebnispädagogik.

### Introduction

This article reports on a comparative qualitative study I carried out in 1997 at the University of Cologne. To approach the answer to the initial question the whole of the thesis presents a wide literature review for both the UK and (Western) Germany and an analysis of thirteen interviews in Liverpool and Cologne between January and May 1997.

The underlying motivation is that understanding, even more with existing barriers in language terms, requires transparency and clarifying of the vocabulary used in the professional field. This exactly is my concern. So to start off, the terms 'outdoor education' and 'Erlebnispädagogik' are the subject.

Although both concepts deal with education=Pädagogik (Orbis, 1987: 99) they are further characterised by space (outdoors) respectively an occurrence (Erlebnis=event, occurrence, experience, adventure) (Orbis, 1987: 395). The word 'Erlebnis' implies 'Leben'=life,

vitality. Threads to follow and to tie together can be found through a clear perception of what history, presuppositions, thoughts, ideas, conditions, concepts and framework determine the terms. Unfortunately this is not the place to give a deeper insight into the study's literature review that could offer something of the broadness and richness of the terms in the historical perspective and current discussion. Instead I will focus on the answers given by professionals from the field of outdoor education/Erlebnispädagogik (OE/EP). At the end of the day these people in their working environments give OE/EP its shape and meaning. As for the further perspective of this piece of research a synopsis of their opinions, experiences and definitions can give hints for the potential implied in an internationally cooperating OE/EP.

### Fragments on Erlebnispädagogik

I expect to meet the reader's expectations by giving at least a brief insight into some aspects of the term 'Erlebnis'. In the edition 'Wegbereiter der modernen Erlebnispädagogik' (pioneers of modern Erlebnispädagogik) more than forty international authors are covered with a booklet each. To give an idea of the concept of Erlebnis I will try the impossible and summarise three authors' contributions to Erlebnis in only three paragraphs: Bergson, Dilthey and Dewey.

Oelkers describes Henri Bergson as the psychologist of international reform pedagogy. For him Bergson's philosophy of and for life has given the word 'Erlebnis' the career as the expression for the pedagogical discussion. Bergson states 'We are free when our actions derive from our whole personality, when they resemble it like at times a piece of art is similar to its creator' (Bergson, 1889 quoted by Oelkers, 1994:99). In his late work 'Creator and Development' (1907) Bergson

has presented a comprehensive theory of life as a permanent creative process. As such he has provided part of the philosophical grounds for Erlebnispädagogik (Oelkers, 1995:20) and for educators of reform pedagogy such as Dilthey.

At the beginning of the century Dilthey stated 'the priority of the spiritual Erlebnis for the methodical approach of any kind of psychology' (Oelkers, 1995:10). He describes the holistic perspective saying 'In the Erlebnis the processes in the whole soul and heart are working together' (Dilthey, 1974 quoted by Oelkers, 1995:10). Another principle of the Erlebnis is the immediateness of the experience.

According to John Dewey 'experience is perceived through the senses in the first place, then processed through the mind and that way used for personal growth' (Reiners, 1995:12). Although there is no translation to the word 'Erlebnis' there seems to be a close term that he uses, the 'consummatory experience', an experience that proceeds by itself, in its own dynamics.

More recently I find these ideas expressed in Wagenschein's suggestion to choose not only cognitive challenges but those which effect 'emotions and will, affective and sensomotor and moral and social development' (Wagenschein, 1968, quoted by Bauer, 1995:49).

### **The Study**

These are the two main hypothesises and conditions (-) to be met for their verification:

1) 'outdoor education does not equate to Erlebnispädagogik'.

- The Erlebnis is not a central factor of outdoor education
- 'outdoors' does not constitute Erlebnispädagogik

2) 'There is a high potential for internationally

cooperating youth work in the field of outdoor education/Erlebnispädagogik'.

- Potentials would be there if the learning-processes supported by both OE/EP and by international exchanges matched.

### **Methodology: Data Collection**

The method chosen is the problem centred interview (Witzel, 1985:230). Data has been transcribed during the interviews, therefore is influenced by individual style and choice. It makes a 'substantiation of reality' (Flick, 1996:194). This is part of the process to open texts as empirical evidence for interpretative procedures' (Flick, 1996:194p).

The six people in Liverpool where I began with the interviews, have represented schools, the department for education in the City Council, an outdoor centre, university, youth work and freelancing. The institutions the professionals have represented in Cologne are university, a foster home, the DAV (German Alpine Association), a school, youth work, the department for social work in the City Council, private agencies and freelancing.

The duration of the interviews was between one and two and a half hours. 14 open questions were asked.

### **Methodology: Data Evaluation**

Out of different approaches I have chosen the theoretical coding (Flick, 1996:197) as the purpose of this method is to develop a theory (or in this case find a definition) that is grounded in the subject itself.

The interviews have been categorised and summarised to construct tables that provide an 'at a glance way of noting responses and making comparisons' (Hall and Hall, 1996:201). The analysis in this thesis has been carried out in five

steps. The first step was to develop a coding paradigm based on the fourteen questions of the interview.

'What characterises outdoor education?'

This paradigm consists of five 'w-questions' (a-e) as recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1990). The first four of them later on lead to a complete definition of outdoor education Erlebnispädagogik. A new combination of all five serves verifying hypothesis no2. The paradigm as a whole is the skeleton for the definitions of the terms OE and EP:

a) What characterises outdoor education/Erlebnispädagogik? (individual approach to a definition)

(Liverpool):

b) Where does OE/EP lead to? (aims)

In the fourth step, I have used a quantitative evaluation to find the most common views on OE/EP by adding the number of answers corresponding to the axial categories and by attaching them to the first four themes of the coding paradigm. The 'core categories' that are extracted this way are the components of the complete definition of OE/EP I have been looking for:

c) Why does OE/EP work?/How does it work?

d) Where would you place OE/EP in the scientific context?

Example of core category for:

e) What do you see as the future of OE/EP?

### **Data Evaluation - Concepts of outdoor education and Erlebnispädagogik**

'Where would you place OE/EP in the scientific

The answers to all fourteen questions of the interview guide have been examined in regard to these five areas. The second step has been to summarise the answers given to the questions in the interviews. The third step has been to transform these answers into codes that have become axial categories in a table.

Example for the first theme of the paradigm:

context?' (Cologne):

The core category is: method. After extracting the core categories I have put these together to one definition. The results are:

**a) for Liverpool:**

outdoor education is a method of learning out of doors with the main aim of personal development addressing peoples' awareness by new experiences and using institutional facilities and experiential media.

**b) for Cologne:**

Erlebnispädagogik (Erlebnis-Education) is a method of learning with the main aim of personal development addressing peoples' competencies in different areas by Erleben (the act of having an Erlebnis) under professional standards and using spaces of 'Erlebnis-Quality' and institutional facilities and experiential media.

Taking into consideration the categories that have come second in priority the parallels between the two groups of professionals become even more obvious:

a) Liverpool: the active processing of the experiences; hard and soft skills; the personality of the educator

b) Cologne: development of participants' awareness; active processing; soft skills; the personality of the educator

What does now make the difference between OE and EP? The questions still seem to be, what significance does the outdoors have for EP, and what the Erlebnis for OE?

There is a common view that an Erlebnis in some settings is more likely to occur than in others. As shown in the extracts of the interviews that give definitions of OE/EP the idea of learning and the design of the learning environment are identical, assuming that the learning takes place in nature or out of doors. As a consequence, the activities here and there should bring the same results which are - Erlebnisse. How these Erlebnisse are supported and used for peoples' development is

up to the qualifications, standards and personality of the educators in charge. Even the terms used to describe these factors are identical. Therefore the criteria for the verification of hypothesis no1: 'The Erlebnis is not a central factor of OE' has to be denied.

Going back to the answers of the Cologne professionals there is a clear opinion on the role of the outdoors if understood as nature: two see nature as essential, three mention nature when talking about exceptional settings, for two the place is of no importance. This means five out of seven professionals see a very special intensity of Erleben in nature and give it a particular value. However 'outdoors' is not part of the definition the Cologne professionals have come up with. As such the other criteria for the verification of hypothesis no1, 'outdoors' is not constituting 'Erlebnispädagogik' has been confirmed. Does this mean OE does or does not equate to EP?

OE and EP as methods are both based on the same concept of learning, even on the same aims. I draw the conclusion that for the professionals that have been interviewed the only difference between OE and EP is that OE focuses on spaces 'out of doors' whilst EP can take place everywhere. It is left to the readers themselves to answer the initial question from here.

The essence of these findings to me is that development of common ground makes sense than theoretical discussions of division and terminology. OE embraces EP as well as EP including OE. Just as a Non-Erlebnis-Education would be absurd, the idea of an indoor education seems to be an artifact of school based education. There is much to discover and to learn from theory but there is just as much common ground to start cooperating from in practice.

**Perspectives of International OE/EP**

The value in developing common approaches seem even more obvious when testing the second

hypothesis. For its evaluation the categories have to be rearranged. The answers to the question, 'What does your vision of an internationally cooperating youth work through OE/EP look like?' have become categorised into subcategories and main categories. These have been related to the axial categories found in previous tables. As a result I can show how the aims and benefits people see e.g. in exchanges correspond to the means and aims they see in different aspects of OE/EP. From there it is easy to tell that there is in fact great potential for each form of educational work to benefit from the other. The criteria for the verification (Potentials would be there if the learning processes supported by both OE/EP and international exchanges matched) is definitely met and the hypothesis confirmed.

Instead of presenting the appropriate table I give a short summary of the ideas the professionals have put forward:

The function of travelling as a means of developing international understanding is supplemented by OE/EP to substantial extent. With their emphasis on action they guarantee a particular quality of contact and learning. Work camps and mutual expeditions are only two examples. Learning in and experiencing an environment with a different culture, language, rules and conventions can:

- lead to special contact with the self
- offer the chance of experiencing new roles of oneself and others
- give a strong impulse to the awareness for the self and others, caused by new tasks, possibly of very serious character
- support the learning of key competencies and life skills
- help to develop new strategies and ways in communication which again support self awareness, self confidence and social skills in

general

- be stimulating enough to reach people whose sensitivity is less developed or normally out of their reach

The concept of an internationally cooperating OE/EP would also offer the use of new or different facilities with a particular quality of 'Erlebnis'. This can even help to keep costs low. For staff potentials are of similar significance as for the participants of OE/EP programs. Apart from their personal gain their institutions would certainly profit from learning about different approaches and standards. This could be developed to opportunities of common training on an institutional basis.

I would like to be very optimistic and to think a step further than that. I believe this study demonstrates both support for and recognition of the value of the foundation of institutions for the concrete and practical support of international OE/EP programs. The potential impact in logistical, financial, conceptual, inspirational and spiritual terms should not be underrated.

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Celebrating diversity  
learning by sharing cultural differences

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## **The Picos Project: A Unique Collaboration between Environmental Research and Outdoor Education**

**Richard Lemmey**

One of the essential tenets of outdoor education is its engagement with reality. Real issues, real experiences, real risks and real outcomes. When working with issues such as self-esteem, personal and social skill this is relatively simple to achieve, but outdoor education embraces more than just these issues; the consideration of environmental impact, environmental knowledge and global issues are essential areas of concern.

The question that arises is how to engage with these more distant issues within outdoor education in ways that are real and immediate. Given that many students are drawn towards outdoor education through physical skill activity, there is then the issue of raising an awareness to an area which is not initially of primary interest. Such environmental issues are sometimes not obviously dynamic, immediate nor local.

One solution to this dilemma may be found through giving students access to an environment that is so spectacular that through being impressed with it and its people they become drawn into a more in-depth consideration of associated environmental issues. These issues may then be used as the object of a personal academic study which, given the nature of the environment, requires the application of their physical skills to accomplish. If these studies are relevant to global issues and there is the specialist expertise to interpret their results, it is then possible to draw initially unmotivated students into really enjoying work on more substantial environmental issues.

An example of how this has been achieved can be seen through the Picos Project which is a unique collaboration between an Outdoor Education Degree Course at the University College of St Martin in Ambleside, Cumbria and the Land Use Survey Group at the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology (ITE) at Merlewood, Grange over Sands.

The University College of St Martin, Ambleside Campus, (formerly Charlotte Mason College) runs degree courses for trainee teachers and other outdoor professionals. It is situated in Ambleside in the English Lake District and has developed a reputation over the last twenty years for its contribution to outdoor education. The Institute for Terrestrial Ecology is a government research station responsible for the Countryside Survey of Land Use and Vegetation Survey of Great Britain; most of its work is contract based and applied to current issues relevant to the formation of government policy; their interest in vegetation change as an indicator of climate change is a primary focus of their work.

The work of the Picos Project takes place in the Picos de Europa Mountains of Northern Spain and is focused on the Deva Valley in the Camaleno District. The Picos Mountains exemplify an area of many conflicts. Traditional farming and indigenous vegetation are coming under increasing pressure from tourism and the effects of inappropriate EU subsidy and so the value conflicts of rural planning are particularly evident in the area, especially with the setting up of an extended National Park (Farino, 1988; Rowley, 1992). The vegetation changes caused by these factors are relatively apparent (Buit and Moonen, 1993; Ligtenburg and van Rijswijk, 1996) but those caused by climate change are considerably more subtle. The significance of the area is further increased by virtue of the fact that the Land Classification of Europe is now changing to indicate a critically marginal land class emerging in the Cordillera Cantabrica, of which the Picos is a part. Such critically marginal classes indicate significant but as yet small changes in vegetation that might indicate the effects of Global warming.

The involvement of the Institute of Terrestrial

Ecology is not altruistic either. To have a group of field workers who can work simultaneously on the same sensitive area at the same time of year for an extended sequence of years, provides data that are invaluable to researchers and are certainly not available anywhere else. The project, an annual snapshot of vegetation change has led to a sequence of highly significant data.

The data are significant in that they allow vegetation change to be monitored over recent years which has been a time of accelerating change. They do have a secondary significance in that the extensive agricultural methods currently used in the valley relate closely to the methods used in Great Britain before vegetation data were ever collected. The Spanish data therefore provide an insight into management systems that no longer exist in this country. These data are of particular relevance to the study of water catchment areas and work currently being undertaken by the National Rivers Authority.

The benefits for the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology do not stop there. Many of the students on these courses have no fieldwork experience at all and so methods have to be devised for project sampling which can be used to give reliable replicable data. Simplifying methods sometimes can be more academically demanding than setting up complex systems. What has emerged is that the Picos Project provides ITE with the opportunity to field test methods under conditions using workers less qualified than those they use in the U.K. Countryside Survey, and thereby carry out failsafe testing.

The time spent in the Picos de Europa by students is usually fifteen days split into three equal phases. The first, the exploration phase, allows students to satiate their understandable appetite, given their background, for exploring the valleys and karstic scenery of the mountains. It also allows them to develop a familiarity and orientation of the valley that is vital for sampling and fieldwork.

The second phase is the group project which provides the data which contributes to the accumulating picture of the valley. Each year there is a focus and these have covered, meadows, woodlands, linear features, rivers etc. This phase is carried out under ITE supervisors who have been field testing the methods during the exploration phase. This environmental focus then leads students into project areas which catch their imagination and interest.

These personal projects form the third phase and are extremely varied depending on the interests and background of the students, the expertise of staff and availability of equipment. In recent years representatives from the Environmental Agency have also been on the expedition and, in the same way as ITE, have been testing methods. They have also been testing environmental monitoring equipment by supervising the equipment's application to students' projects.

In line with the principle of engagement with real issues the following examples of student projects illustrate the varied and often very applied nature of the work. These include:

A study of soils and rock loss from roads recently improved with EU subsidy.

A study of the flora and soil conditions in improved and unimproved meadows.

A study of seed dispersal by farm vehicles from recently accessed meadows.

A study of the use of wood related to village accessibility and development.

A study of gates as a socio-economic indicator. Species distribution studies in relation to altitude and aspect.

A study of species colonisation of isolated boulders in relation to boulder size and rock type.

A survey of tourist origin related to tourist activity.

'Expeditions' of between 40 and 50 people have visited the area for the last eight years, consequently a considerable amount of data has

been collected. These expeditions may have had an appreciable negative impact on the local environment and local population. However great care is taken to limit impact. Students are required to make their own way to the site using public transport and the use of college buses for transporting equipment is kept to a minimum. Frequently some enthusiastic students cycle all the way, either from Ambleside or the North French coast.

Whilst in the area students are made aware of the social mores of the local population, particularly in some of the more remote villages. Groups are kept small and efforts are made to interact positively with the local populations. This feature has become a highlight of the project with annual reunions with Alfonso, Franky, Comacho and the 'Goat Lady of Brez'. Socio-economic projects are particularly sensitive (in that hordes of annually repeated questionnaires might be problematical) so questionnaires are limited.

Students occasionally interpret group fieldwork as "slave labour for scientists", so an essential feature of student briefing is to emphasise how data and insights gained from the Project are disseminated. Frequently students work alongside visiting researchers who are from the Agricultural University of Wageningen, the University of Madrid, and the University of Santander and these provide fast-track routes for the research outcomes to inform current scientific thinking. The ITE staff themselves apply and disseminate the outcomes through their own work and publications and on occasions joint publications with students make for a more tangible result. The significance of the data in relation to past agricultural methods in the UK and catchment area management has increased the need for dissemination. It is hoped that a scholarship will be set up to allow more detailed analysis of the data especially those relating to freshwater invertebrate indicators of water quality.

The Picos Project is successful on many counts. It involves hard physical skills to travel in mountain areas and cognitive academic work in the planning and execution of fieldwork. The group work and working for a more distant goal provides insights that encourage consideration, foresight and reflection. An uncharacteristically early flowering of a plant or the unusual presence of a butterfly might add to the suspicion of climate change which can provide an important experience for the student.

The expedition is not without practical and academic problems. The training of students on a non-specialist course to identify unfamiliar flora and to use complex multi-variate analysis software presents challenges to the staff and to the robustness of the methodology. The choice of specialist roles by students who are then trained by experienced staff serves to reduce any possible problem.

The ethics of moving so many students and so much equipment over so large a distance is often questioned and whilst public transport or bicycles are used, in the final analysis only a subjective cost/benefit analysis can be applied. Students do sometimes stay in an initial state of superficial tourist enthusiasm despite the intention of the first phase to work this through; in these cases work has to be done to present alternative ways of seeing. Particularly effective in this area has been the involvement of the University of Oviedo whose staff have presented local insights to some of the issues of the area particularly in relation to the formation of the National Park.

A shortcoming of the expedition yet to be overcome is the lack of direct feedback of research findings to local people. This has been done on an informal basis but whilst the presence of the expedition is greeted warmly it is not perceived as being significant locally in anything other than economic terms. The sensitivity of drawing the distinction between the informed observer and

the opinionated intruder has led to some diffidence in this area given the strength of feeling on many issues.

The Picos Project is often the highlight of the outdoor courses. Visiting staff are invigorated by the enthusiasm of the students and the opportunity to explore areas marginal to their professional work. College staff enthuse at the growth and responsiveness in their students and the students themselves come away with breadth and sensitivity in their interests, but perhaps most significant of all is the nature of its pan-European collaboration.

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## 'Friluftsliv' viewed from 'the Top of Europe'

Kirsti Pedersen

### Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In Norway, friluftsliv has been recreation and adventure for civil servants, academics, and professionals for more than a hundred years. While some of its 'branches' were imported from England (e.g. climbing), others (e.g. skiing) were grounded on Norwegian culture and natural conditions<sup>2</sup>. As a reaction to a number of dramatic searches for missing skiers in the mountains, and the increasing eco-social crisis, friluftsliv as a discipline in higher education, however, was not established until the late 1960s. The subject was also grounded on the ongoing development of 'deep ecology philosophy', and as expressed criticism against the destruction of nature that was caused by industrial growth and the mechanical view of nature in the natural sciences. In addition, the subject was inspired by pre-modern ways of living, especially by the Sherpas in the Himalayas<sup>3</sup>. The polar explorer Fridtjof Nansen was another source of inspiration, not least through a speech he delivered to the young people of Norway in 1921. There he stressed 'the simple life in close contact with nature' as a counterweight to what he called a 'sick' development in society. The pleasures and enjoyments of friluftsliv would give modern people a taste of the naturalness of pre-modern times (Nansen, 1922; Faarlund, 1974a,b; Næss, 1976; Breivik, 1973)<sup>4</sup>. This function of friluftsliv as a counter-cultural movement has also been expressed in governmental white papers (see e.g. the Ministry of the Environment, 1975, 1987). However, it is not until the school reforms of the 1990s that an ecologically based education in friluftsliv has become an obligatory part of the national curricula from nurseries to teacher training. It is meant to contribute to make young people able to deal with the growing environmental challenges (the Ministry of Church, Education and Research, 1997)<sup>5</sup>.

Friluftsliv in society and as discipline is tied to historic, social, and cultural conditions and power relations. It contains inherent contradictory and ambiguous tendencies for change, it can be perceived as a result of modernisation and industrialisation, while at the same time it can be interpreted as resistance against these developments in society. The development of friluftsliv in Norway is also a continuation from pre-modern ways of life, and this might be different from North America and most European countries. Thus we can say that friluftsliv rests on two 'roots'; one in an aesthetic and adventurous approach inherited from the well-to-do people in the cities<sup>6</sup>, and another in the harvesting traditions of the rural areas (Breivik, 1978). The public's right to free access to nature and their right to harvest from this nature are basic preconditions for this<sup>7</sup>. It is therefore a paradox that friluftsliv as a discipline and social phenomenon is usually tied to the idea of one uniform and national identity, which emphasises the recreational and adventurous aspects. The old traditions of harvesting natural resources as an integrated part of people's everyday life have only to a limited degree influenced the academic understanding of friluftsliv where social criticism and ecological awareness are otherwise basic elements.

Instead of trying to define the 'essence' of friluftsliv as independent of social power structures and interests, an alternative approach would be to regard friluftsliv as a dynamic and contradictory social phenomenon. In order to analyse the multitude of practices, meanings and values which friluftsliv represents, multiple and interpreting perspectives are needed<sup>8</sup>. Inherent contradictions and ecological challenges become especially visible viewed from Northern Norway because the modernisation processes here have been compressed in both time and space<sup>9</sup>.

### **Cultural change and mixed traditions**

An ethnographic study of friluftsliv in a community located at the 70th latitude in the northernmost part of Norway identified three main types of friluftsliv. 'The gatherers' for whom harvesting from nature is the prime motive, 'the wanderers', who hike and ski just for pleasure, challenge and health, and 'the specialists'; such as salmon anglers, ptarmigan hunters, dog-sledgers, kajakers and other adventurers. A common denominator for the last, rather heterogeneous group is that the activities performed are partly new, based on specialised technology, commercial, global and very much in the focus of the media<sup>10</sup>. While 'the gatherers' exercise a versatile and seasonal friluftsliv based on the availability of local resources, 'the wanderers' represent the aesthetics of the urban (upper) middle class culture. This kind of friluftsliv is more regular; it is neither tied to the cycles of nature nor necessary gathering, it is each individual's time for leisure which is decisive. Common for the heterogeneous group of specialists is that they devote themselves to the activities to such an extent that it demands a great personal effort in terms of money, time, knowledge, and specialised skills, and this totally absorbs their lives. People do not ski, climb or snowmobile for transport or hunt and fish for subsistence but for sport, excitement, challenge, and recreation. The three types overlap and challenge each other, and the dominant national understanding of hiking for pleasure has never had the power to dominate the local culture. The traditional culture of harvesting for use has lost some of its position, while the globalized, commercialized and technology-based activities are increasing. At the same time, 'old' activities are adapted to new technology and a contemporary work-leisure division.

### **From popular and traditional upbringing to institutionalised education and research**

Conscious upbringing and training through

friluftsliv became an important aspect of bourgeoisie education towards the end of the 19th century (Nedrelid, 1993). Young men in particular should exercise different sports in the wilderness both summer and winter. In the rural areas and among the working class this was usually different; knowledge about and skills in gathering was a necessary aspect of their household economy. The younger children learnt from the older through participation, and by being given responsibility according to age and maturity. This learning of skills was close to life and nature, action oriented and gender specific. Knowledge and skills were transferred directly from mother to daughter, from father to son. While the girls were trained in housework, the boys' education was related to the work outside. The upbringing was not systematic; there was no planned progression or organised training related to theoretical or abstract categories expressed by teachers, textbooks or curriculum. At school one learnt different kinds of general knowledge such as the three Rs. Rambling, harvesting and survival in nature was learnt at home (Høgmo, 1989; Hoëm, 1976). This was not particular for (Northern) Norway but something that is well known from societies dominated by 'life in closeness to nature' in many parts of the world (Dempsey, 1993; Beyer Broch; 1984; Frykman and Löfgren, 1979).

In Northern Norway this informal transfer of knowledge and skills has been dominant up towards today, both among the Sami and Norwegians, and the concept and the discipline friluftsliv is still regarded as unfamiliar. During the last 30 years, however, people's relationship to nature has changed dramatically. Most people today do not live directly from what nature gives (Tjelmeland, 1994), and it is possible to have an urban lifestyle at most places. Children's and adolescents' traditional and self organised play in nature has got strong competition from a variety of different sources; indoor sports, video, snowmobiles etc., and their view of the world has been globalized. Young people are virtually

liberated from the harsh conditions that nature and the climate often present, and they have a freedom of choice that earlier generations have never had. The extensive changes represent both a break in and an invention of new local traditions which combines 'old' practices and 'new' equipment. Modernisation in this perspective partly means a loss of the multitude of nature experiences and competence which people traditionally mastered. But this development has made it possible to construct an understanding of one's self which changes between signifying a local cultural identity and being a '(wo)man of the world'. In other words, it is not only young people who live in highly urban societies who are alienated from nature and thereby have a need for formal education. Today there is a tendency for knowledge, which one to two generations back was part of everyone's upbringing, to become aspects of the schools' curriculum.

The institutionalisation of friluftsliv as a discipline and a field of research means that groups of 'experts' are crystallised where people used to be autodidactic generalists. While elderly local people are used to constantly finding flexible solutions to practical challenges, one who has been through a formal training scheme will more often be concerned with doing things right! Knowledge and skills become standardised. An ideal for education in friluftsliv, however, has been learning 'by doing', through mutual responsibility and reflection (Faarlund, 1974b). The concept *vegledning*<sup>11</sup> is used in order to express a democratic, inductive and critical methodology in contrast to an authoritarian and positivist approach. The concept might also express an intention to continue the popular and informal upbringing within a formal school system. Thus one tries both to preserve friluftsliv as a vibrant expression of popular culture, and to achieve safe and ecological traffic in nature.

### **Feminist critique**

Both in the Norwegian society at large and in the educational system men make up the major-

ity of friluftsliv as participants, teachers, scholars, authors, and politicians. Research, education, and nature management must generally be criticised for not paying attention neither to the gender differences nor to the male hegemony and symbolism in friluftsliv, nor for discussing how women's possibilities and influence can be strengthened. To understand how friluftsliv until recently has avoided a feminist critique, the male dominance and the gendered patterns should be interpreted as deeply rooted ideas about naturalness in Norwegian culture and history. The gendered structures, practices, and ideas are confirmed so often, and through so many situations, that they are perceived of as natural and thus become a point of reference for other ideas<sup>12</sup>. The absence of a critical feminist research and scholarly activity contributes to the reproduction of the male hegemony and to a large extent renders women invisible. There are many examples of how a male biased world view is interpreted and mediated as universal; e.g. through the many male models and heroes. There is a need to study questions such as; if the history of friluftsliv is mainly a men's story, what then has been, and is, the women's role(s)? What are women's experiences from different kinds of friluftsliv? What kinds of knowledge and skills can be drawn from women's traditions? Do their traditions have potential to challenge and renew the male dominated traditions? Finally, what are the wishes and needs of different groups of women?

The schools and teacher training have a definite mandate; they are actively to promote equality between women and men and to avoid a continuation and strengthening of traditional gendered understandings and practices. Co-education where women and men/girls and boys are trained together and get the 'same' education, has proved not to be sufficient in order to promote equality. The development of female only programs can be one strategy to empower women and girls (Pedersen, 1993a; Warren, 1996). Humberstone (1986, 1995), however, shows that it is possible

to change gender stereotypes through co-educational programs. Important preconditions seem to be that the activities chosen are new both for girls and boys, in addition to insightful education where the girls are actively encouraged. These complex relations are both nationally and locally still unexplored, however.

The great changes in the lives of (Northern) Norwegian women during the last 30 years has meant that many women have got greater room for active participation and competence in different kinds of sport and friluftsliv. The ethnographic study of gender relations in friluftsliv mentioned above shows that friluftsliv can contribute to change both women's and men's view on what is possible to do for women. At the same time it can confirm deeply rooted cultural conceptions about the unchangability of the gendered structures, understandings and practices; as if femininity and masculinity is biologically determined.

### **Local practices - global perspectives**

The deep changes in the local culture, how it relates to nature, and learning environmental ethics, are main perspectives in the study of friluftsliv that is developed at Finnmark Regional College (Rønbeck, 1985; Pedersen, 1998a)<sup>13</sup>. Through theory and practice the students experience local, pre-modern (the gatherers') traditions of moving and survival. This also includes knowledge taught by Sami reindeer herders. In addition, the education in friluftsliv includes the perspective of wandering as well as some of the more sportified specialist cultures. This way one tries to give young people and becoming teachers, support in their search for an identity, and help them build meaningful and balanced relations with nature and each other<sup>14</sup>. How to realise feminist aims is still in its beginning.

Several feminists have promoted eco-feminism as an approach to the local and global ecological crises, and to the development of outdoor adventure and

friluftsliv that combine ecological ethics with a non-hierarchical understanding of gender relations (e.g. Gerrard, 1995; Braidotti et.al 1994; Warren, 1996; Humberstone, 1998)<sup>15</sup>. Some of the eco-feminist perspectives that have been developed so far must be criticised for being idealistic, romantic and for confirming a polarised perspective on gender. One has to develop an approach that ensures (local) women's and men's needs related to the local nature, although the challenges that are faced have global significance. Several questions must be asked; what are we able to understand – and change? What are the goals? Where do we think nature stops and humanity begins? Where should we draw the line between our need for self-fulfilment and adventure, and caring for nature? Who has the legitimacy to do this? How can education in friluftsliv contribute?

### **Concluding remarks**

While friluftsliv in the mountains around the turn of the century was tourism for the well-to-do, friluftsliv as mass recreation belongs to the modern industrialised societies. The clear limits between the urban and rural forms of friluftsliv, which could be found in early modernity, are about to break down in Northern Norway at the end of the 20th century. Activities and rambling that were linked to subsistence have been transformed to recreation and sport. The socially constructed male hegemony, however, seems to be resistant to changes.

All over the world, the demand for wilderness areas, such as 'the Top of Europe', is increasing (see e.g. Price ed., 1996)<sup>16</sup>. Hardly any limits exist for where it is possible to travel, or what kinds of trips that is possible to accomplish. One does not necessary need to be specially trained or have a lot of time to reach one of the most remote parts or peaks of the world in one's pursuit of experiences and personal trophies. If only one has the money, both females and males can buy the necessary technology or hire specially

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trained guides. The problem is that there is not enough wilderness for everyone (Nash, 1982). In a local perspective, however, the “edges of civilisation”, are not seen as romantic wilderness areas. They are concrete and well known, and an integrated part of everyday life; sometimes cold and demanding, but also open, inviting and life-giving. Pre-modern life was necessarily not a paradise, and there might be conflicts between 'rural' and 'urban' people's needs for and understanding of nature<sup>17</sup>.

There are several paradoxes inherent in outdoor adventure education. Two brief examples: friluftsliv which should be the simple life in close contact with untouched nature and a counterweight to a complex society, has itself become an extremely complex reality; socially, culturally, politically, economically and ecologically (Frislid, 1983). Second, the development of education in friluftsliv and outdoor adventure seems to happen last in nature-rich areas such as Northern Norway. A northern perspective might, on the other hand, include experiences and contradictions which can be valuable for a European debate on the development of outdoor adventure, ecological education and experiential learning.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> This article is part of a doctoral degree at The University of Physical Education and Sport Studies, Oslo It is based on an ethnographic study of gender relations in outdoor education/life – friluftsliv – in a community in the northernmost county in Norway – Finnmark - located at the 70th latitude, at the beginning of the 1990s. The county covers an area of 48.600 km<sup>2</sup>, which is 15 percent of all of Norway, and has about 75.000 inhabitants - less than 2 percent of the country's population. The region has been multi-cultural for several hundred years. Approximately 20.000 people belong to the indigenous Sami population. In the coastal and fjord areas a majority of the population is made up of Norwegians and people of Finnish descent, while the predominantly Sami districts are in the interior. Due to the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf Stream, the climate is much warmer than the latitude suggests; e.g. the fjords never freeze during the wintertime. When no other references is given this article draws on, combine and develop perspectives, findings and interpretations that are elaborated in several articles and publications (see Pedersen

1993a,b, 1994, 1995, 1998a,b; Pedersen and Viken, 1996). The Norwegian concept friluftsliv is used in order to draw the readers attention to the fact that there might be cultural differences between a Norwegian (and Scandinavian) perspective and the Anglo-American concepts outdoor education, outdoor adventure and outdoor adventure-based education (cf. Bowles, 1997; Reed and Rothenberg, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> Breivik (1978) claims that friluftsliv during the 20th century in Norway was dominated by wandering more than alpine climbing However, climbing was not unknown to Norwegian mountain farmers, but then in order to search for sheep, goats, eggs etc.

<sup>3</sup>The reason why the way of life of the indigenous population of Northern Scandinavia – the Sami – did not become an inspiration for friluftsliv as a discipline is unexplored, but interesting It might be because the Sami already were too modernised as they had started to use motorised vehicles (the snowmobile in 1964). Another explanation might be connected to the personal interests in climbing that the Norwegian forefathers of friluftsliv were devoted to. In addition, the quality of the Finnmark Mountain Plateau did not fit into the dramatic scenery of what Veiteberg and Ryall (1991) call “Alpine aesthetics” that characterised the pioneers of mountaineering. The first British gentlemen who came to Finnmark to explore the wilderness for pleasure did not come to climb mountains. They introduced fly-fishing in the Alta River in the 1830s, and have ever since challenged the King of the rivers – the salmon (Nielsen, 1990, 1995).

<sup>4</sup>Despite these critical and humanistic values, a far away, challenge and skill-oriented praxis has for a long time dominated the subject, especially in the sport studies Through physical education studies in the teacher training for pre- and elementary schools, friluftsliv in local environments and children's play outdoors has been emphasised (Pedersen, 1998a). When developing the philosophy of deep-ecology, Arne Næss (1973) was also inspired by M. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence.

<sup>5</sup>In the national curriculum for elementary schools friluftsliv has been an explicit subject in physical education since 1974. So far, however, it has not got a corresponding place in the everyday praxis (Repp, 1977, 1993).

<sup>6</sup>This is a tradition where the ideals are inherited from the English male upper class, and Norwegian bourgeoisie males during the later part of the 19th century, men who had time and money to explore the Norwegian mountains for the sake of their own pleasure

<sup>7</sup>The 'everyman's right' is a cultural heritage and an important precondition for friluftsliv all over Norway This right - or privilege, allows the population to move freely

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in outlying areas both summer and winter, also on uncultivated private land. You can pick mushrooms, flowers and berries, and go fishing and hunting with only minor restrictions.

Included in the everyman's right is also the right to tent for a short period of time, and a general obligation to be considerate. This right to move and harvest natural resources is a recognised judicial principle, established in an act of Parliament from 1957.

<sup>8</sup>Humberstone (1996) argues for a similar position as she assumes that it is lacking in Anglo-American research on outdoor adventure. However, I would put even more emphasis on a need to develop a combined feminist cultural and ecological perspective that takes local culture and development seriously.

<sup>9</sup>Eg. the breakdown in the fisheries in the Barents Sea, and at the grazeland for the reindeer at the Finnmark Mountain Plateau, and the threats that the nuclear waste at the Kola Peninsula represent.

<sup>10</sup>These 'specialised' forms might more precisely be called 'sport in nature'; however, they do not need to be based on 'the principle of achievement and competition' (cf Dunning, 1995). While the concepts *friluftsliv*, *sports* and *idrett* in the Norwegian language for a long time partly overlapped each other, these concepts today represent more clearly divided cultural expressions (Faarlund, 1974a; Breivik, 1978). The relationship is complex; important distinctions between *friluftsliv* and the other two is tied to dimensions such as competition, standardisation, institutionalisation, the relationship to nature and the relationship between people. In short, the distinction between sport and *idrett* is linked to whether one uses one's own body for moving. Then it is considered as *idrett*.

<sup>11</sup>The concept might be translated with interpretation, counselling or supervision

<sup>12</sup> During the 1990s feminist research in outdoor adventure (education) is increasing in Anglo-American contexts; eg. Humberstone (1986, 1995, 1996) in the UK, and Henderson (1991) and Warren (1996) in the USA.

<sup>13</sup>So far *friluftsliv* has been developed as a subject within physical education and sport studies

<sup>14</sup>The deep changes in outdoor adventure education that according to Bowles (1997) has occurred in the Anglo-American countries since the 1970s is also well known in (Northern) Norway 'The risk-management ideology' is about to be spread to the school system. Also the tendency that Vanreusel (1995) rhetorically calls the shift from a 'Bambi to Rambo' approach is a growing challenge. New

technology and commercial interests (the market) are important forces in the increased globalisation and differentiation that happen in Northern Norway.

<sup>15</sup>No unitary understanding of local culture and traditions exists. Leisure like activities in the nature have become a key symbol of basic contrasts both within the local and national culture, and means for discourse on and negotiations about the meaning of 'local culture' and *friluftsliv* (Pedersen, 1993b).

<sup>16</sup> Since the mid-1800s "the Top of Europe" has been an exciting Ultima Thule for people from all over the world. Today development of a regional tourist industry is regarded as a national task and a hope for the future.

<sup>17</sup>This contrast between the two main forms of understanding nature is also expressed in the view of nature preservation. In the urban understanding preservation often emphasises an underlying and unexpressed aesthetic perception of nature, perceive nature as different from and in contrast to society, and is inherent in the wandering tradition. Local people have traditionally not divided sharply between nature and culture, work and leisure. In spite of modernisation - local people still stress usefulness rather than aesthetic values (see e.g. Edvardsen, 1996).

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## **The Discovery Project: A Perspective from the United Kingdom**

**Gill Spratt, Jacky McCormack and Di Collins**

### **Introduction**

In this paper, perspectives on the development of the Discovery Project, since the European Congress in Austria, October, 1996, are considered.

### **The identification of need**

#### *Images of outdoor*

Outdoor education has long been recognised as an effective learning environment for personal and social development (Hopkins and Putnam, 1993.) However, the outdoor world is male dominated and frequently has a macho image. An examination of North American climbing guides shows that many rock climbs are named in a way that is derogatory to women (Loeffler, 1996.) Furthermore evidence suggests that homophobic attitudes are common (McClintock, 1996:242). It is no surprise that Hattie et al's. (1997:46) research into the effectiveness of Outward Bound programmes noted the success of 'making men out of boys', but no mention was made of young women.

In urban parts of the United Kingdom, young women may regard the outdoors as a few trees in their local shopping parade or at the sports field. The latter may be associated with competition, possibly in a macho, hostile environment. The outdoors may be likened to a gymnasium, in which people are pushed to their physical limits, as they compete for supremacy. Media images of lithe, athletic, young woman in fashionable sports wear help perpetuate stereotypes. The opposing view of the outdoors is of a place for self development, team work, a motivator for creative work, and an opportunity for getting in touch with one's roots and culture may be alien to young women.

### **Young women's participation in outdoor education**

Not surprisingly, evidence indicates that fewer young women than young men participate in outdoor and adventurous activities (Mason, 1995). Worldwide it seems that young people gravitate towards sports giving immediate enjoyment or relaxation or a quick adrenaline burst. Young women as well as some young men may see outdoor activities as unattractive because they require a time commitment and sustained activity. They are more likely to object to using the outdoors for recreation purposes than young men, on the grounds of a dislike of the discomfort of being cold and wet, bad weather in general, and a fear of being ill or falling (Mason, 1995). 'Unattractive' waterproofs and woolly hats too are often a problem (McCormack and Spratt, 1996). Therefore, it is not surprising the use of the outdoors as a vehicle for social education with young women is problematic.

### **Young women and class**

It is also apparent that the provision of outdoor activities tends to favour young people from middle class backgrounds. Choice of physical activity reflects a middle class access to opportunity and money (Mason, 1995:81). However, Spence (1990) describes the pressures of family demands and responsibilities as a constraining factor on young women's participation. This may be particularly so for working class young women. She also suggests that young women prefer to socialise in 'best friend' pairs. Thus young women may experience difficulties in adjusting to the larger groups often inherent in outdoor education activities.

### **Young women's learning through the outdoors**

Despite negative perceptions of the outdoors, it is a valuable vehicle for social education. The writers' experience has demonstrated that when young women have been introduced to the outdoors, in general, their learning and personal development has accelerated. In addition the experience has offered them the opportunity to get in touch with their spiritual creativity and given them space for developing friendships, free from the traditional stereotyping of their home community and the reinforcement of stereotypes. For example, a young woman from an inner city tower block, visiting an ancient stone circle in the heart of rural Wales was recorded as saying that she 'heard the stones heart beating', a comment that would have been out of character in her usual environment (McCormack and Spratt, 1997). Another young woman, who participated in gorge walking, completed her diary with the words 'I felt like an explorer' (McCormack and Spratt 1997).

The group process is often powerful enough for 'the break' to be made, while freedom from external obligations of domestic duties and responsibilities facilitates the change. The experience is about a holistic self, rather than the self purely in the context of home lifestyles and social and cultural conditioning. The mother figure often plays a key role in enabling the young women to accept this freedom to change. However, in many working class families, the matriarchal figure is the stronger in terms of maintaining the home. She can give 'permission' for breaks with tradition or constrain (Dodd, 1990).

### **The Discovery Project** *Establishing common ground*

In establishing common ground, The Discovery Project's participating countries (Austria, UK, Norway and Germany) agreed four basic principles:

that young women have a right to be on their own;  
that young women, with less personal financial support are often excluded from outdoor education experiences;  
that external funding is often targeted at young men;  
that young women tend to prioritise friendships with young men over friendships with young women.

There was a belief that young women have a right to be on their own creating a young women's culture. In generic youth work, access is open to all, but some young women choose not to be part of mixed groups (Spank, 1990: 70-79). The project planners agreed to focus on disadvantaged young women who are less likely to have the opportunity to be involved in outdoor education experiences or to travel to other countries. It was agreed that the exchange element of the Project would be undertaken in residential centres rather than homes. Since for many of the group, having guests in the home would not be possible and in some cases it might reinforce negative aspects of being a young woman.

The project planners explored commonalities in funding and resourcing. They recognised that present funding is about social inclusion, that the most noticeable target groups are young men and that sensational media reporting tends to highlight the social exclusion of young men. (Franklin and Franklin, 1990: 15-16). Thus, funding for young women is often targeted at issues such as pregnancy and sexual health. This continues to reinforce the stereotypes of motherhood and domesticity.

The project planners were keen to offer opportunities for young women to share experiences and cultures as a young woman within a group of young women (Spratt, et al.1998: 174). In the United Kingdom, statutory youth work fails

to provide facilities which might counter the lure of the heterosexual relationship as being the only acceptable leisure pursuit for young women, and the only appropriate avenue to adulthood (Spence, 1990: 73-74). Young women tend to prioritise friendships with young men rather than their female peers. In searching for a male partner young women may compete and fail to develop a strong female group identity, preferring to socialise in best friend pairs (Spence, 1990: 74 -75).

### **Identifying the target group**

The target group comprised socially disadvantaged young women, who would not normally have opportunities to leave their community. For this group, package holidays often form the only opportunities for travel. These do not always offer a cultural experience. It was decided that the age of young women participating in the project would be 15-17 years, as in all the participating countries these young women are undergoing the greatest change, in terms of relationships with family, friends and others. Their compulsory schooling ends and work or unemployment begins. Their sexual awareness and sexuality may be realised. They tend to drop personal interests and underplay their skills in favour of interests associated with the projection of feminine heterosexuality (Jeffs and Smith, 1990).

### **The Southampton experience**

#### ***Funding***

Despite the Project planners' enthusiasm, commitment and organisation, the Discovery Project did not become a reality in 1998. The United Kingdom's experience of the Discovery Project involved endeavouring to navigate through the paperwork which might lead to European Funding. The intention was to enable the young women to complete the funding, thus adopting a participative style of working. However, the reality was that the task was too daunting. It seems that bureaucracy denies access to those

who are disadvantaged, perhaps through lack of confidence or lack of skills. A more 'user friendly' system would enable more communities to have access, promoting greater independence.

Local funding for work with young women is often short term and focussed. Elected members and funding 'gatekeepers' tend to prioritise work with young people at risk. In Southampton, young women 'on the street' were those identified as 'at risk'. This caused some difficulties in locating young women for the project. Moreover, women workers are often employed only on short term contracts. This and the associated financial difficulties made it difficult to work continuously with a group of young women, to enable them to develop group identity. For the project to succeed, the workers had to give of their own time. This exploitation of women youth workers caused some anxiety for the project team.

### **Characteristics of the target group**

For many young women in the target group, other issues were more important than the Discovery Project. Several were involved in child protection issues and many came from homes deemed poor by local demographic measurements. Full time education was not experienced by many of the group. Often the young women prioritised caring for younger siblings rather than seeking personal education. Social conditioning perpetuates their relationships within the domestic environment. Perhaps they have internalised the prioritising of everything before self, seeing their role as that of supporting the activities of men in their community (cf Deem, 1986 ). In a socially deprived family, support for involvement in a project such as this, may be less likely.

### **The youth work process**

In Southampton, Youth Service managers wanted the project to be on a city wide basis. Therefore, the Discovery Project did not start with a cohesive group exploring and developing their own

agenda. The project was imposed on the young women. This is not good youth work practice. Moreover, the logistics of maintaining a group in a diverse city environment and across a large geographical area, with limited staffing and financial insecurities created an impractical situation. Meetings were infrequent, and numbers attending fluctuated. There was also anxiety about the breaking with stereotypic behaviours. Prejudiced views about young women undertaking activities as a group together, were expressed and there were uninformed and prejudiced attitudes to lesbians in the group.

### **The future**

#### ***Funding***

It is important to accept reality when developing projects such as the Discovery Project. The congress brought together practitioners from many parts of Europe, many working in under funded organisations, with workers on short term contracts. The logistics of maintaining a working group across distance and time was a magnification of the Southampton experience. It was also difficult for the young women to believe that they were part of something exciting when it would cost far more than they could ever afford and the funding was not in place.

When using youth work processes with the young women It is important that the group of young women owns the project and that they take the planning forward. This task was too daunting for the young women, when the project's success was not guaranteed. Group maintenance would be more feasible in a smaller, more cohesive group who already identified with each other and their workers. In Southampton, this will mean working with a local rather than a city wide group. When adding the European dimension it may be easier initially to maintain a strong contact with one country rather than several.

### **Conclusions**

The principles underlying this project seems appropriate and relevant. However, the youth work process was underplayed and sometimes manipulated by outside interests. A less ambitious project with tighter networks would offer a stronger framework for future development. In Southampton, there are plans to develop the project with a core group of young women, who have already been introduced to outdoor education activities. It is hoped that a new European partner will be found. Steps are already being taken to identify funding. Perhaps this Congress will be the catalyst for a new discovery for the Discovery Project.

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## Outdoor Education, Environment and Women - Urban Women's Perspectives

Di Collins

Some outdoor educators describe environmental awareness as an outcome of activity in the outdoors (cf Mortlock, 1984; Barrett and Greenaway, 1995). Rose (1993) argues that the landscape is a gendered space, dominated by male interest. Furthermore fewer women than men are active in outdoor education. Despite a commonly held belief that women have a greater affinity with nature, some women feel disempowered in that outdoor space (Russell and Bell, 1996). The purpose of this paper is not to offer a female framework for adult experiential learning in outdoor education, but to raise awareness about frameworks already in existence, which may be used by both men and women as part of the outdoor education process.

### The links between outdoor education, the environment and women

Outdoor education, encompasses activities as varied as adventure education, development training, ropes courses and wilderness therapy. It is based within a broad framework, involving an interaction between self, others and environment. Mortlock (1984: 19) suggests this linkage so:

To try and develop, to the best of his (sic) ability  
*an awareness of, respect for, and love of self,*  
balanced against  
*an awareness of, respect for, and love of others*  
balanced against  
*an awareness of, respect for, and love of the environment*

This means in effect that modern man (sic) is asked to reject the arrogant concept that he can conquer Nature. Instead, he is encouraged to

accept not only that he is part of Nature, but that, he has a huge responsibility for the well-being of *all* forms of life.

Many writers have debated women's relationship with nature (cf Miles, 1988; Russell and Bell, 1996). Discussions have ranged from female being synonymous nature, to a questioning of whether this places women in a position of subordination (Soper, 1995). In the present paper my contention is that women and men are intertwined with nature, but that outdoor education is a gendered space. The potential for environmental outcomes from outdoor education experiences has been noted by many (cf Bunting, 1990; Barrett and Greenaway, 1995). However, Hattie et al. (1997:76) comment that adventure programmes have not 'capitalized on the uniqueness of their environment', suggesting that a model explaining the connections between environmental concerns and relationships with nature needs to be developed. They further state that 'research in adventure education is ready to come out of its infancy', arguing that there is a need for research into process (1997:71). This view is shared by others (cf Barrett and Greenaway, 1995). Thus, whilst a connection between outdoor education and environmental awareness might be acknowledged, it may not be valued, and research into the connections between environmental awareness and outdoor education processes have been limited. This phenomena may appear to be paradoxical within a current context of political activism (Doyle and McEachern, 1998). An explanation for this apparent lack of emphasis on the environment and environmental outcomes may be as a consequence of traditional organisational attitudes.

Karla Henderson suggest that:

traditional attitudes toward leadership and organizational structures .... will not be given up easily since they are the underpinnings of political and economic hege

mony and power (Henderson, 1996: 115).

In the present economic climate, education is responding to politicians and business people's demands for people with leadership skills, decision-making skills, team building and group maintenance skills, and a flexible approach. Outdoor education has become an industry and the search for healing in wilderness places has become organised and institutionalised. Thus, there is an emphasis on quantifying the outcomes of the experience in terms of personal and social development, whether through adventure therapy or outdoor management development (Huskins, 1996). Outcomes related to personal and social development are valued more highly than outcomes related to environmental awareness. Thus, funding agencies of these outdoor education experiences require leaders to facilitate the desired outcomes. To achieve this end, proactive facilitation styles are prominent. Gass (1995) describes these as directly frontloading, framing and indirectly frontloading the experience.

For many women these proactive approaches may be both paternalistic and irrelevant. Heidi Mack (1996:24) describes this frontloading and framing as the 'imposed metaphor model', arguing that:

not only must the instructor assess the client's needs, provide a safe physical environment, and ensure the transfer of the learning to real-life settings, but she/he 'must also provide appropriate framing and structuring of the experience for the client' (Gass 1993:226). This means an application of what might be considered a heavy and paternalistic hand in creating and directing the metaphoric activity.

Outdoor education discourses offering frameworks for practice are dominated by male writers (cf Miles and Priest, 1990; Gass, 1995; Graham, 1997). Humberstone and Lynch (1991:28) state that;

most outdoor activities have an image of male appropriateness .... Adhering to what appear to be male-generated ways of doing things may add to feelings of irrelevance which some girls may experience within outdoor education.

### **The values of reflection**

In my previous research, women on a series of outdoor education residentials were encouraged to reflect on their learning in ways appropriate to them (Ayland, 1991). The 'ritual' of group poetry writing was passed from one group to another. Their writings illustrate a consciousness of the environment and spirituality. They draw parallels between the rhythms of nature and biological rhythms:

The forces of the wild .... unknown to city dwellers  
To think of life in pace with nature's rhythms

They refer to appreciation of and respect for the environment and nature:

To watch, appreciate and respect  
We women, each in the privacy of our souls  
Are in awe of this world

They write of the restorative qualities of the environment:

Water in the canal  
Autumn colours of yellow and gold ....  
No reds  
No argument, no disorder  
All peace, all order

They had emotional space, free from the constraints and pressures of home, to reflect on their lives:

A window in the cloud.

Sadness.  
Choices ....  
Oh where can I hide?

They had the time to remember situations of  
fun and camaraderie

Catherine wheels of ice spiralling down  
the slope  
Waist deep in snow .... Bit of a joke!  
Vertically up, like walking up stairs to ....  
definitely not bed!

It is these recordings of experiences and reflections  
that may be transformational for the writers. Such  
experiences are described as peak experiences (cf  
Mortlock 1984).

rather like going through a door into another  
world, which is altogether more magnificent  
and more indescribable than normal  
living .... I felt as if I were part of the ....  
environment.

The importance of peak experiences must be  
considered in the light of urban women's experi-  
ences.

### **Urban women's perspectives on outdoor edu- cation, environment and nature**

An initial analysis of life history interviews with  
women who define themselves as urban and  
non-outdoor people confirms popular images of  
the outdoors and reveals some areas for develop-  
ment. Marilyn had had a negative outdoor experi-  
ence. For the first time she was away from all  
signs and sounds of human habitation, and feel-  
ing emotionally and physically exhausted and  
vulnerable. She said, 'I thought I was going to  
die.' For Marilyn, the outdoors means being cold,  
tired, wet and uncomfortable. Mary had grown  
up in Northern Ireland, in an area in which sec-  
tarianism and class meant that the countryside  
surrounding her town was not accessible. She  
has become over weight, is severely asthmatic

and associates the outdoors with physical exertion  
and discomfort. Alana grew up in the Northeast,  
in a town surrounded by accessible country-  
side. However, she describes herself as a couch  
potato, favouring non-energetic activities. To  
her, 'wilderness' is an emotive word, conjuring  
up impressions of isolation in a hostile environ-  
ment, and going into the outdoors means being  
uncomfortable.

However, although these women describe them-  
selves as non-outdoor people, their accounts  
reveal an affinity with the environment and  
nature. Marilyn talked about her childhood  
'escapes' through reading Enid Blyton's 'Famous  
Five'. Despite her negative experiences, she said,  
'I'll come (to Wales) and cook .... I'll just look at  
those mountains.' Mary talked animatedly of a  
stay in an isolated cabin on the Dorset Coastal  
Path, located amongst low scrub with spectacular  
views of the sea. She described it so 'peaceful, just  
looking at the sea, watching the landscape.' Alana  
recently visited Glastonbury Tor and found the  
path to the summit awe-inspiring. 'I didn't think  
I'd get there. It was magic .... A spiritual place. It  
was wonderful,' she enthused. So although these  
women describe themselves as non-outdoor peo-  
ple, and would not by choice become involved  
in traditional outdoor education activities, they  
all identify with the environment and nature on a  
restorative, spiritual level.

### **The lessons from urban women**

The experiences of these three women suggest  
that people may be discouraged by popular  
images of outdoor activities and formal, highly  
structured outdoor education processes. Many  
women prefer activities which involve inclusive-  
ness, non-competitiveness, a supportive atmos-  
phere, individual choice, shared decision-mak-  
ing, creative leadership and playfulness (Niemi,  
1990). The environmental awareness of the three  
women has perhaps developed through informal  
education processes, in which they take respon-  
sibility for designing their activities. Educators

recognise that taking responsibility for one's own learning is an indication of adulthood (cf Knowles, ), but in highly structured outdoor education processing, the facilitator may tend to take this responsibility.

Less structured frameworks of outdoor education are in existence. Gass (1995) identifies these as letting the experience speak for itself, speaking for the experience and debriefing the experience. In these, the learners take responsibility for identifying their learning needs and desired outcomes and the facilitator's role is to empower, to support. Cornell (1979) describes a simple, yet powerful, 'silent sharing walk':

When a person feels a sense of unity with the world, his (sic) feelings of harmony with other people are intensified, too. Through watching nature in silence, we discover within ourselves feelings of relatedness with whatever we see - plants, animals, earth and sky.

Which ever framework is used, Wendy Webb (1997: 394) stresses the importance of giving space for people to relate to the environment and nature.

In processing the adventure-based experience, we owe it to ourselves and the individuals that come before us to acknowledge and appreciate the profound effect that nature has on the individuals we work with. Nature has the ability to alter one's perspectives on both conscious and unconscious levels.

## Conclusions

Outdoor education may construct gendered spaces. For some women, this constrains their involvement. While the experiences of the urban, non-outdoor women suggests that formal out-

door education is not crucial to developing environmental awareness, appreciating a spiritual dimension to life and having peak experiences, it may be essential that people have first hand experiences in the outdoors. It also seems that proactive processing frameworks, in response to the male-dominated business and education worlds, may provide limited space for responding to being in the environment. There is a risk that the facilitator will feel compelled to direct reflection, thus engaging Mack's 'imposed metaphor model' (1996).

The recognition of the values of being alone or with peers in an emotionally safe environment, over which they have a feeling of control and ownership, may enable many women and men to feel comfortable about enjoying the outdoors in ways that they feel are right for them. It appears that providing for environmental awareness does not necessarily have to be structured. However, space and time has to be given for its development.

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**‘I could hold my own and that was the difference’ - gender relations  
and competence criteria in women’s outdoor experiences.**

How much do we know about how women become outdoor educators? How significant is gender in this process? A number of personal accounts have been published which consider gender issues in the outdoors (Johnson, 1990; Levi, 1991; Pottinger, 1990). Yet to date there is only one thorough study on careers in outdoor leadership which has gender as its central focus (Lloeffler, 1995). Lloeffler’s research investigated the factors facilitating and constraining women’s outdoor career development in the USA. Powerful male networks, low self-esteem, gender-role socialisation, homophobia and absence of early outdoor experiences were identified as constraints to progress. Lloeffler also noted that to become an outdoor leader one must first become involved in outdoor pursuits at a recreational level. The women in her study cited family influences, girl scouts, outdoor programmes and college outdoor activities as influential in their early experiences. Such findings are similar to much sport socialisation research in emphasising the important role of significant social systems in sporting involvement and in athletic careers (Stevenson, 1991). However, the precise role of these in the socialisation of women into the outdoors has not been fully explored. This paper is concerned with identifying issues of gender in the outdoor experiences of 12 women across the UK as they moved through the recreational level to become outdoor educators. The excerpts for this paper were obtained through in-depth interviews with women outdoor educators aged between 34 and 62. The material is taken from ongoing life history research into women’s career development in outdoor education. Due to restricted space, the work omits a section discussing the introduction of these women to outdoor activities of an informal nature and concentrates on their experiences of recognised outdoor pursuits during the school system and beyond. It is hoped that their experiences may provide some insight

into the gendered nature of outdoor education in the UK and may raise issues for current outdoor educators to consider both in the UK and across Europe.

### **School Experiences**

Nearly all of the women in this research had experienced informal activities out of doors before the age of 11. Yet it was in the secondary years and beyond that issues of gender became more significant. Of the 12 women interviewed, over one third had experienced single sex education, either at secondary or tertiary level. One woman, who went from a single sex grammar school to an all women’s PE college, specifically mentioned this as a factor in the development of her image of outdoor activities and outdoor leadership

...I only knew (outdoor pursuits) from the female point of view, believe it or not, because I came from K and it was all single sex schools ...so I went to an all girls grammar and then to an all female college, so I didn’t know men existed until I was 21...so the outdoors was doing it with females anyway so I didn’t have this thing about it being a big macho outdoor world, it never crossed my mind.

For almost all interviewees the educational context in different ways supported them being academically and physically capable. An exception was a woman from a working class background who attended a local city school. She described herself as having ‘just an average education’ where ‘the school report I got then was that I would probably be good in a factory or shop, which I thought was a bit of an insult, a bit narrow’. Other interviewees generally mentioned good facilities with positive PE teachers and

school physical activities. For one interviewee, it was her primary rather than secondary teacher who provided support for her interest in the outdoors;

I also had this very good teacher (in my last year of primary school) who also walked, so when I wrote in my story book about going up hills he knew where I meant, so it was like that support, not just from my parents but from a primary school teacher that it was a valuable thing to do.

Thus the school environment was endorsing the acceptance and value of physical and outdoor activities begun in the family. The majority of interviewees were certainly highly involved in school sport with over a third of interviewees heading towards a teaching career in physical education. Only one interviewee described herself as not sporty - 'no hand-eye co-ordination... anything with a ball, you can forget it'. Several authors have highlighted the central role of sport in the lives of physical education teachers and career athletes (Sikes, 1988; Stevenson, 1991; Armour, 1997; Sparkes, 1993). Others, however, have noted that sport and physical activity are part of masculine, rather than feminine identity (Connell, 1987; Messner, 1992). It has also been noted that, historically, schools have tended to maintain the image of male superiority in sport rather than challenge it (Scraton, 1986; Humberstone, 1994). It is likely that the positive experiences of sport and outdoor activities at school for these women were therefore influential in terms of their investment in a physical future. Outdoor education as a career choice was less well formulated at this stage. Reasons for this included a lack of awareness of opportunities, the image of outdoor leaders, a lack of self-belief and the pressure, as one woman quoted 'to go and do a degree, not to play at an outdoor job'.

For most women there were opportunities for outdoor pursuits in the school years. These came through scholarships, school LEA cen-

tres, school clubs and encouragement from PE teachers. Outdoor instructors also had a powerful influence. For five of the 12 women it seemed that the relationship built up with outdoor instructors and the images they created of women in this role were significant aspects of their outdoor experiences. One interviewee mentioned the influence of a woman teacher/instructor who 'sort of adopted me and my mate'. Such a safe and trusting relationship perhaps enabled her to progress in technical skill confidently and without feeling a conflict in identity even when her classmates thought her 'a bit mad really'. Another interviewee spoke of the image of 'freedom' and 'these adults who seemed to know how to have a really good time and who allowed you to just enjoy yourselves and do all sorts of things you would never do at home'. Two others mentioned the attractiveness of the instructors to members of the opposite sex:

and we did a taster of everything - sailing, canoeing - and fell in love with all the instructors, as you do, and I suppose that was another little factor telling me that this was really good, and I was fairly able at it, being strong aside from the sporting things that I did at school

The adolescent years are well known as a critical stage for continued sporting involvement, especially for girls (Whitehead, 1993). In saying 'as you do', of course, this interviewee means 'as girls do'. It is also noticeable that she saw no conflict between this feminine identity and the traditionally masculine characteristic of physical strength. Another woman internalised the hidden and more direct messages from her outdoor instructors to reach a less favourable career decision.

...and my ambition then was to work in an outdoor centre, you know, you all fell in love with the instructors, but they didn't have any women staff there, there was no role model to talk to, and they said well

we don't really have women here 'cause they're just not good enough and I think one time, there was one there for about a term, but you could see that she was getting a hard time of it, she wasn't, all the men were worshipped, but this woman wasn't fancied...

The image received by this woman was therefore that female outdoor leaders were neither competent nor attractive - both key concerns in adolescence. The final interviewee illustrated how the physical image of outdoor pursuits leaders was influential in the path she followed. This woman, who took a geography teaching degree rather than following outdoor education directly, noted

I think the image I had when I went to college were that these were quite burly, strong, super-fit people who were nothing like me, and I could never match up to that, and you know I had this image of what an outdoor student could do, could achieve, what the levels were in terms of achievement, and didn't actually think I fitted them and when I went to college I was rather surprised that my achievements actually did match up, but having said all that I still actually think I doubted myself for too long really

Most women interviewed were keen to point out that being female had in many ways enhanced their career prospects in terms of employer demand. However, many of their stories showed that they were also conscious of being in a minority in a male-dominated career area. This final section raises more issues concerning the gendered hidden curriculum in the outdoor experiences of some of these women as they trained to become outdoor leaders.

### **Becoming an Outdoor Leader**

To become an outdoor leader, one has first to develop skills at a recreational level (Lloeffler,

1995). In their early experiences of a predominantly male outdoor environment outside of organised educational trips several women found themselves out of their depth in situations which led them to a 'make or break' involvement decision. For these women, one chose to remain in the activity whilst two switched to pursue different outdoor pursuits. The following comment highlights a theme which was similar for all three interviewees.

I wasn't getting into the canoeing then, as I was with a bunch of lads who were canoeing a lot harder than I was and I kept getting dragged down grade 3 rivers, swimming every time...

For another woman an awareness of gender issues only became apparent once she moved through the recreational level to a leadership position. In her story she talked of the revelation when she experienced opposition to her taking on a leadership role and the realisation that she 'just worked in different ways' from the other male instructors

I should have been authoritarian and just, phew, if you can't cope with this bad luck, whereas I was far more sympathetic and (worked in a) far more encouraging way...and in the end I decided to leave this beach rescue unit because it just seemed like my ways of instructing and working with people were so criticised, and so I opted out...

Another two interviewees who pursued an outdoor education course at college were also affected by their different approach to the outdoors. This time it was in a group where there existed a significant skill differential between the men and women.

It was still male, and I still felt useless..and I got there and on the first day they went out and...we went to (a climbing crag in the Lake District) and they were all climbing really really difficult and I thought oh god

I'd told them I could climb severe and the only climb I think I'd done was severe you know and oh no, I couldn't get off the floor and it was quite a nightmare really, and there were 5 of us, 5 women who started the course and one girl left within the first week and gradually two more.

Whilst these women remained at the college, they still spoke of the more hidden difficulties associated with being in a minority on a course where much of the skill development is expected to take place at weekends with course members.

Well they used to go off climbing and things and not ask us and just come back and tell us all about the things they did and nobody even considered asking us, you know, and we hadn't got a car and we thought, sod this, bought a rack of gear and that was it then, and as soon as they realised and saw that we were quite competent things got better - I think I was quite lucky cos I could paddle, at the start my paddling skills were, they weren't brilliant but they were better than some of the chaps and I could hold my own there...

For this interviewee, therefore, the ability to demonstrate competence within a mixed environment was an important feature in her continuing involvement and enjoyment of outdoor activities and the outdoor course. The words also suggested that it was by demonstrating competence and pushing themselves forward that they were finally accepted by their male colleagues although as she noted, 'it took about a year'.

### Issues and Implications

What are the issues of gender here? Firstly, it seems that the educational system and its members need to encourage and give support for the value of outdoor activities and female physical competence. The issue of whether this is better in a single sex environment is still open for question

(see Humberstone, 1994), but the finding of a high number of women from single sex schools is worthy of further investigation and debate. Outdoor instructors should also be aware of the image they convey concerning outdoor leaders and the appropriateness of outdoor leadership for women. This is especially so when teaching adolescents who may be more susceptible to teacher/instructor influences. This paper raises issues concerned with the predominantly male environments in which women negotiate their way to become outdoor leaders. It is suggested that there needs to be greater awareness of gender relations and a hidden curriculum which may be accepting women into the outdoors, both recreationally and in training for leadership, according to their more masculine qualities such as authoritarianism, physicality and technical competence.

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**Positioning Outdoor Adventure Education in a Postmodern Society : Gender Identities,  
Gender Relations and Outdoor Adventure Education**

**Barbara Humberstone**

... when there are discussions about the different qualities women bring to climbing ahead of men ,and vice versa, I often think of Alison's (Hargreaves) approach and how her story illustrates that climbing is both beyond gender and yet still trapped b y social attitudes .(Douglas, 1998:37)

In May 1998 the international meet for women climber's was held at Plas y Brenin, Wales. In his report about women climbers' perceptions of the place of such women-only gatherings, Douglas, a co-biographer of Alison Hargreaves identifies the considerable changes that have occurred since the early '80s in both women climbers' perceptions of themselves and in some of the views of male climbers. We might wish to consider the quote above in relation to women's stories in the broader field of outdoor adventure education. We would probably question the implication of any hierarchy of qualities and rather suggest difference in qualities per se. We might even ask does outdoor adventure education transgress gender boundaries? Do women and men as categories bring different attributes to outdoor adventure? Are there greater differences amongst women or amongst men than between men and women? Are these differences biologically determined or socially constructed? Yet outdoor adventure education clearly remains in some sense embedded in traditional social understandings of men and women and their relations. OAE is still perceived by many of the general public in the UK (see Humberstone, 1994; 1996) and by some educators (Hargreaves et al., 1988) as expressing machismo images and values.

Traditional notions of what constitutes femininity and masculinity and associated expected behaviours and privileges took hold of every day thinking as a consequence of the Enlightenment period of the 18 century. The Enlightenment

tradition emerged as a 'rational' counter to faith and superstition through the exercise of reason (Harding, 1986). It also spawned in Britain the humanistic project which declared the legal entitlements of 'the Rights of Man'. Despite the demands by women to be included in these rights, they were excluded. 'Woman ' as a category became defined as 'Other' and opposite to 'Man'. Man was associated with public life, whereas Woman was symbolically aligned with Nature and birth and the private sphere. Through the construction of sets of binaries masculinity was equated with science, rationality, objectivity and Culture. Whilst femininity was equated with emotionality, subjectivity, irrationality and Nature. Feminist critique charges these dichotomising principles with undermining women's progress toward equity (Hargreaves, 1994; Martin, 1988; Ortner, 1974; Soper, 1990). Ecofeminism identifies such dualistic ideology as implicated in the continued degradation of the environment as well as the oppression of 'other' groups of people (Diamond and Orenstein, 1990; Humberstone, 1998; Merchant, 1980; Plumwood, 1993). This dualism with its associated privileging and exclusion is deeply embedded in forms of Western knowledge and may be implicated in the 'popular' perception of outdoor education as in some way 'masculine'. Yet we know that many of the values and philosophies underpinning outdoor adventure education owe much to so called 'feminine' attributes such as care for others and the environment (Mortlock, 1984). But we also know in outdoor adventure education, as in other cultural spheres of society, women are under-represented and largely invisible and this invisibility is further exacerbated by 'race', sexuality, disability and so forth (Clarke and Humberstone, 1997).

The dilemma for outdoor adventure education and for women and men is how to render vis-

ible women's experiences and acknowledge our worth, whilst not shoring up the barriers between men and women by the perpetuation of traditional dualistic ideology.

In the recent past women -only events, programmes and experiences have not been taken seriously. It has taken the recent recognition that women are missing by programme organisers and governing bodies of outdoor activities, together with frequently ridiculed women enthusiasts, to facilitate the development of all -women events. In the UK this approach has 'lagged behind' that of North America which has many women-only outdoor organisations. In Finland , for a particular group of women there is considerable concern for the hearing of women's voices but in dialogue with the malestream in outdoor adventure education. There is apprehension that women might become ghettoised as a group (see writings Seikkailu-Kasvatus 1996). Warren (1996) draws attention to women's voices in experiential education in North America (perhaps synonymous with outdoor adventure education in the UK). The importance of highlighting women's experiences she argues is because women's achievements, concerns and values are frequently disregarded or subsumed and , 'the presence of women's activities and contributions still remain under-represented in experiential literature'(pix). Pedersen (1998) critiques the male dominance at all levels in frilustsliv in Norway. She highlights the lack of attention paid to gender differences and male hegemony and charges those involved with frilustsliv for their inability to discuss how women's influence might bring it benefits. Likewise, in the UK and other parts of the continent discussions around women and what they might bring to outdoor adventure education are largely omitted (Humberstone, 1996). A significant feature of Warren's (1996) work is the acknowledgement of women's diversity. Women's stories of outdoor adventure education in the USA are told from various perspectives mediated by class, race and sexuality. This is pertinent as Feminism has been critiqued

for its partial representation largely limited to the expressions of white western middle class women (Hargreaves, 1994). Clearly Warren's intention was to make available women's experiences, but as a consequence, men are largely perceived as a homogeneous group. But we know that men's experiences are also mediated by race, class and sexuality (Messner and Sabo, 1990) and many of these men's experiences may be missing from outdoor adventure education cultures. Furthermore, as important as it is to hear, recognise and include women's voices ,and the outdoor world must make more effort to make this possible, unreflective celebration of women's experiences may be problematic. Uncritical discourse may perpetuate the man/woman dualistic ideology, becoming woman/man privileging women's diversity of experiences above an apparent male mono culture. This highlights the paradox for every marginalised group as well as women. How to affirm a particular collective experience, maintain solidarity in light of exclusion, whilst not resorting to essentialist notions of difference? Clearly the women-only climbing event referred to earlier, in my view, appears not to have yet succeeded in resolving this paradox, given Newman's (1998:3) editorial comment on the particular focus on women climbers in that issue.'I have a pat saying:'he says,' there are no such things as women climbers'. He asserts that women climbers have now become 'part of the norm'. Obviously assimilated (subsumed) into The Climbing Culture, women have become one of the lads! Nevertheless, whether it is individual women's climbing successes or the organisation of the women-only events or for any other reasons, women are now apparently recognised as succeeding as mountaineers and climbers in their own right and have gained some access to the male dominated climbing communities (which can't be all bad).

For many women , however, the world of tough physical and mental exertion may be a million miles away from their thoughts and needs. (This is probably the case for many men too). The

media image of the outdoors may deter many from venturing into the outdoors, from participating in outdoor adventure education. Not all women have access to the material resources that are available to many men. Time, money, transport as well as partner opposition may all play their part in discouraging many women from being involved in outdoor adventure education. Nevertheless, it should be noted that some women who might never have had experiences of outdoor adventure may be introduced to the outdoors through their male colleagues and partners. Unfortunately their continued engagement with the outdoors may well depend on maintaining these particular relationships. Fear of the unknown, fear of their own abilities, these are further factors which contrive to limit women's access to the outdoors. Despite such fears and barriers, the women urban youth workers who were enabled to take part in specially designed all-women outdoor experiential programmes in Wales, appeared to gain feelings of connectedness with the landscape and for some the experience not only had a profound affect upon their feelings about themselves, but also a considerable influence upon their decisions about their future actions (Humberstone and Collins, 1998). These women-only events were designed to focus not merely on physical competence in the outdoors but more particularly on the specific learning experiences made available through the outdoors by women facilitators. An important feature was the facilitation or 'leadership' style of the organisers which had much in common with the 'transformational' democratic leadership style identified in Kiewa (1998). According to comparative research on leadership styles of women and men in powerful positions in the USA, in general 'women were more democratic, whilst men were more autocratic'. We do not know whether men in general in outdoor adventure education are more inclined toward an autocratic or a 'transformational' approach in the UK or on the continent. My guess is that it depends on the circumstances and situations. My own research into teaching and learning in outdoor education

suggests that in specific contexts particular men do engage in transformative teaching styles. And it is contingent upon these particular democratic approaches that young people become more self-assured and competent (Humberstone, 1993). Education provides the basis upon which society can challenge and change not only personal self-perception and abilities (self-knowledges) but also social understandings and social relations. Outdoor adventure education is a significant media in this respect. Might it be that by only celebrating girl-only groupings and denigrating mixed-sex teaching we may be denying many boys the opportunities to develop so-called 'feminine' attributes whilst young women become more assertive and confident? Perhaps in the extremes such strategies may reproduce aggressive, masculinist, hierarchical behaviours in young women without challenging such behaviours in young men. Such strategies may well reaffirm essentialist notions of differences between men and women. Violence against women and peoples (as in war) is largely perpetrated by men. This can not be denied. Such actions represent the collapse in personal, social and environmental relations. If outdoor adventure education has anything to do with developing respect for oneself, others and the environment (Mortlock, 1984), then relations not only amongst girls and women and amongst boys and men, but also those between girls and boys and between men and women must be explored and critically reflected upon. It is my contention that in certain circumstances with particular democratic teaching approaches, outdoor adventure education can challenge young women and young men's perceptions of themselves and their relations with the other sex (Humberstone, 1990a,b;1992). But there is yet only limited evidence to suggest that in wider outdoor education contexts women's views and experiences are being included and taken seriously. This brings me back to the paradox identified earlier. How, in outdoor adventure education do we destabilise (deconstruct) traditional binary concepts of masculinity and femininity whilst affirming collective identities and maintaining solidarity of under-repre-

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sented groups which may organise around gender, sexuality, 'race' and so forth?

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**A Sense of Place:  
A Context for Environmental Outdoor Education**

**Robbie Nicol and Peter Higgins**

Three traditional approaches to environmental education within outdoor education are explored. These are acknowledged as having great value but it is argued that outdoor education can make an additional and special contribution through the development of a 'sense of place'.

**Three 'Traditions' of Environmental Education in Outdoor Education**

Within the United Kingdom outdoor profession we tend to view environmental education as a subject area within outdoor education (although specialist environmental educators would not see it this way). As such environmental education has come to be defined in relation to, and arising out of, what has been delivered within a programme of outdoor education. Environmental education therefore has a specific meaning, or range of meanings, when discussed in relation to outdoor education. Looking closely at these meanings three broad areas emerge as representative of what environmental education has come to mean for outdoor education.

**The Aesthetic Tradition**

Of all the activity disciplines outdoor education draws upon the literature of mountaineering (including by association polar exploration) contains perhaps the richest prose<sup>1</sup>. This tradition probably owes much to adventure, exploration and heightened awareness intrinsic to the experience itself, not to mention the vicarious appetite of many an armchair mountaineer. One need look no further than the carefully crafted names and guidebook descriptions given to routes (we will all have our own personal favourites) by those who are simply completing the creative act of finding and climbing them in the first place. The quality of the literature is now fully

acknowledged through awards (such as the Boardman/Tasker literary prize), anthologies, an 'Outdoor Writers Guild' and a growing appreciation amongst an increasingly diverse 'lay audience'.

Whilst the rationale behind mountaineering was that of a recreational pursuit, some mountaineers who came to work in outdoor education brought with them a particular, and special relationship linking self, activity and the environment. Indeed, the pursuit of outdoor activities as a means of self-realisation has been a constant theme in the literature. It is this relationship which forms the first historical strand of environmental education which we would like to call 'The Aesthetic Tradition'. One of the earliest and most eloquent representatives of this tradition in outdoor education was Harold Drasdo. Drasdo's experiential involvement as a climber provided him with a feeling for the activity to which he felt the goals of outdoor education should be directed. In what must now be seen as a pioneering book on 'Education and the Mountain Centres' Drasdo (1973: 16) suggests 'the climber's lonely dance is infinitely expressive. The cliff writes the choreography, the weather reinterprets it, the climber reveals himself through it in his own performance'. This sentiment will strike a chord in all climbers remembering their own moments of oneness where a collection of movements became a unity of physical and mental experience, where the climb becomes more of a flow of graceful movements than a series of physical exertions.

In the spirit of constructive criticism we would like to challenge the educational value arising from this tradition. If fault is to be found with this approach it is certainly not to do with it appeal nor value but perhaps more to do with how an outdoor educator creates opportunities

for their students to have such an experience. Its appeal is existential, that is to say, the individual who has enjoyed those experiences that Drasdo talks of will instantly relate to this relationship between self, activity and the environment but at a personal level. Colin Mortlock has, in his own way expressed similar existential tendencies. His (1984: 58) use of Schopenhauer's phrase 'Know thyself and know the world' goes to the very heart of a personal philosophy whereby enlightenment begins with knowledge of self. Perhaps the most telling aspect of Mortlock's (1984: 4) philosophy is expressed in his description of the 'inner journey' which appears at once both metaphorical and literal: 'Your success is determined by your efforts and not by your results, and you may come to realise that the most important journey is the journey inwards'.

The existential ideal expressed by both Mortlock and Drasdo poses certain problems for the outdoor educator. It is not something a teacher can teach so much as something that the pupil can experience; even then the teacher has no way of knowing quite what the pupil has experienced. From an existential perspective this does not matter. However, stand forward all those who feel they could develop a watertight case for outdoor education on an existential basis. It is our view that the aesthetic approach, as described here, can have profound influences on teachers and pupils alike though it does not lend itself well to teaching, facilitating nor description. There is a sense of randomness about such experiences but the more one engages in (say) mountaineering the more chance there is of having these aesthetic experiences. Outdoor educators can design and try to orchestrate such experiences, and successes may lead to memories which last a lifetime. However, as such experiences are essentially both random and ephemeral, success cannot be guaranteed. In summary therefore, the existential ideal is just that, an ideal, something for teachers to aim towards, always a process but never an outcome.

### **The Field Studies Tradition**

Unlike the experiential aspect of the aesthetic tradition the Field Studies approach differs in that there is a tangible body of knowledge which can be taught in a conventional sense. Many outdoor centres have field studies laboratories and provide for both curricular and informal education. Although experiential and active components play some part in this tradition it is largely dependent on understanding associated with a theoretical perspective. Although much of the work of outdoor education depends on experiential learning it would be a mistake to underestimate the significance of theoretical perspectives. Hopkins and Putnam (1993: 11) describe John Dewey as the 'high priest of experiential learning' and it was Dewey himself who believed in the unity of theory and practice (Dewey, 1963).

We would claim therefore that the field studies tradition is an essential part of environmental education and that understanding of the environment from a theoretical sense is, and should remain, a high priority. If justification is necessary to support this claim one need look no further than the criticism of environmental education by the Institute of Economic Affairs (Moodie and Kwong, 1997). In a recent publication (1997: 94) they have ridiculed the environmental movement for its 'emotionalism, hype and misinformation'. One need look no further than the controversy over the Brent Spar where Greenpeace insisted that the best way of handling the decommissioning of the rig was to have it towed ashore and dismantled. Shell, on the other hand argued that to sink it was the 'best' method. Greenpeace 'won' the debate in that they succeeded in having the rig towed ashore. However, subsequent evidence showed that the debate was poorly informed in relation to the true environmental costs of decommissioning, and the argument was based more on the effectiveness of the 'publicity campaigns' than on reason. We are not suggesting that our purpose

in environmental education should be to encourage involvement in environmental organisations, rather than we should promote an openness on all sides to the facts surrounding environmental issues. Good science should therefore be a prerequisite of environmental education, and the field studies approach promotes this. An understanding of ecosystems is the central theme of the field studies tradition and Capra (1997: 290) reasons that although 'there are many differences between ecosystems and human communities'.... 'we can learn from them how to live sustainably'. As Capra continues to reason, over 3 billion years of evolution offers evidence of such success!

However, Cooper (1996) offers some caveats warning that environmental education which focuses only on the theoretical (simply acquiring knowledge) may be at the expense of other necessary understandings. He distinguishes firstly between environmental (field) studies and environmental education. His (1996: 8) definition suggests that 'whereas the former is concerned with learning *about* (knowledge) and *through* the environment (skills), the latter emphasises learning *for* the environment and is therefore particularly concerned with attitudes, values and action' (our italics). We would suggest that the field studies approach is sufficiently embedded within the practice of outdoor education to be recognised as a tradition. The same cannot yet be said of the more expansive view of environmental education that Cooper suggests, however, it is a view that is central to this paper and one to which we will return.

### **Sensitisation - A More Recent Approach**

The third area of environmental education which has literature support is that of the 'sensitisation' packages pioneered by practitioners such as Steve Van Matre (eg 1972, 1975) and Joseph Cornell (eg 1989), adopted and adapted by many others (eg Cooper). Through sensory approaches (primarily applied through direct

experience in the outdoors) these teaching methods are devised to evoke an emotional response from participants who take part in the activities. The attraction of the such approaches to environmental education is that they usually employ ready prepared resources and are specifically designed to be fun, lively or reflective. They are particularly attractive since they can be adopted into outdoor education programmes by instructors without a science background and are often adopted without a high degree of staff training. (Some would however argue that this presents a hazard as instructor understanding may be superficial). Some educators feel that they present useful resources to be drawn on partially without necessarily using the package as an entity. However this is discouraged by Van Matre and his supporters who insist on training and the use of complete packages.

It should be noted that the production of resource packages for environmental education has now become increasingly popular with many conservation agencies, as well as those with educational interests, producing a wide diversity of well produced resources and teaching aids. Agencies such as Scottish Natural Heritage, The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and The World Wide Fund for Nature Conservation come to mind.

It should be noted that the majority of these approaches were devised in North America, initially with young people in mind and in a warm climate. This has led to some questioning of the approach, as has the fact that some of the resources employed are very specific to the activity and therefore require careful preparation. Nonetheless, and for the variety of reasons identified they are an increasingly popular form of environmental education in outdoor centres.

### **A Sense of Place**

Thus far we have suggested that the meaning and significance of environmental educa-

tion within outdoor education can be categorised within the three broad traditions of the aesthetic, field studies and sensitisation approaches. Like Cooper, however, we believe in a more expansive view of environmental education. It is a view inspired by authors such as John Muir (1992), Aldo Leopold (1968) and Henry David Thoreau (1983), all activists and outdoors people alike. It is also a view which finds modern interpretations in the work of, amongst others, James Hunter (1995), Christopher Smout (undated), Simon Schama (1995) and David Craig (1987). (These references provide a sample bibliography). Pioneering work of organisations such as the Scottish Environmental Education Council (SEEC) in this area is reflected in publications of international importance such as 'Learning for Living' (1985), 'Learning for Life' (1993) and 'Learning to Sustain' (1998). The common denominator linking these authors and is the relationship of human beings with the land. This is also the focus of arguments recently put forward within outdoor education by amongst others Higgins (1996, 1997) and White (1998) who argue that direct involvement with the landscape and awareness of cultural tradition and diversity represent an important focus for outdoor education. This is an increasing feature of our own work and research interest. This denominator (a sense of place), adds a fourth category to those described earlier.

The origins of the concept of place are to be found in humanistic geography and Meinig (1979: 3) suggests that 'place commonly refers to a definite area, a fixed location; events "take place" and we can be in a place'. Implicit within this idea is that one can feel a personal attachment to place. This concept is elaborated beautifully by Schama (1995) who traces historical, cultural and geographical perspectives. As outdoor educators we spend a lot of time outdoors and our sense of, and attachment to, place may cause us to reflect on what this attachment is. Neglect of the cultural history of a landscape by outdoor educators is a criticism levelled by

White (1998), who makes particular reference to what is lost through ignorance of as rich a landscape as that of Scotland. White draws upon the work of important commentators such as Hunter (1995) to make specific mention of the Highland Clearances, their cultural significance and their deep impact on contemporary Scottish psyche. These are themes we also elaborate elsewhere (Nicol and Higgins, 1998).

A 'sense of place' implies that the outdoor educator be in tune, at a personal level, with those social and environmental actions, both past and present, which have influenced the landscape over which they pass. There is also educational value in understanding the concept of space found in Relph's (1976: 1) recognition that 'a knowledge of places is an indispensable link in the chain of knowledge'.

In a wide ranging review and research project on the value of school grounds, Titman (1994: 8) states that the 'relationship between place-identity and self-identity .... holds considerable significance in terms of children's environmental experience'. She points to the 'development of a sense of ownership and belonging', noting that the concept of ownership is 'not necessary literal', but rather that such places are 'for me' or 'people like me'. Thus a sense of place is above all about identity. In outdoor education we have not developed this identity in relation to the places that we use to pursue our educational ideal. The outdoor literature in the United Kingdom is conspicuous by the absence of any treatment of this relationship.

### **Concluding Comments**

Whilst there appear to be three 'traditions' of environmental education in outdoor education this may disguise a variety of individual approaches. We need not confine ourselves to these three, nor indeed to the additional approach we suggest. Environmental education is developing successfully and quite independently of outdoor

education, and an eclectic approach is taken by leading organisations such as SEEC.

There is of course an understanding that environmental education does, in the final analysis strive for awareness and self-confidence in each individual that he/she should consider issues fully and develop values accordingly. 'Values education' is a developing field of educational pedagogy from which we can learn. However, we see this as an issue which should pervade all forms of outdoor education and is indeed implicit in the personal and social development orientation of most programmes.

Similarly the Scandinavian tradition of 'Friluftsliv' (Outdoor Nature Life), which promotes a strong sense of feeling 'at home' in the natural world, can inform and may deeply influence the relationship between outdoor education and environmental education. This approach cannot be covered in detail here, but see Repp (1996) for an introduction.

We suggest that there is much that outdoor educators can contribute to the environmental education of those we work with. The traditional approaches noted above have great value but outdoor education can make an additional and, we believe, special contribution through the development of a 'sense of place'. The development of global awareness and a willingness to take responsibility for individual action should follow.

We will leave the final word to Roger Smith, a member of the 'Outdoor Writers Guild' who speaks of the sense of belonging he feels in certain places such as the Cairngorm Mountains of Scotland. 'We do not choose whom we love during our lives; in a real sense, they choose us. So it is with landscape ..... it is a feeling of 'home', of caring and respect, familiarity but never taking for granted' (Smith, 1998: 148).

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Other outdoor activities, most notably sailing, have of course also inspired quality literature which has been absorbed into the outdoor education tradition. Our intention is not to exclude this but rather to focus on the dominant contribution of the mountaineering literature. Similarly art of various forms, including still and movie photography, has also made a strong contribution to aesthetic appreciation of recreational outdoor activities.

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## **Ethnic Identity and Integration in Action<sup>1</sup>**

**Judy Ling Wong<sup>2</sup>**

Identity is made up of at least two major parts—how we see ourselves and how others see us. In the first part of our lives, how others see us defines who we are, until we grow in self-consciousness to see ourselves, to see alternatives and make choices. Then into the question comes the struggle to be allowed to be ourselves as we would like to be.

For the first generation, one of the consequences of migration is the shock of suddenly being seen as unknown quantities. A framework, within which it seemed to ourselves that it was obvious to ourselves and to others who we are, has disappeared. Some central activities, which define us, can no longer take place—for example there may be no Hindu temple. One misses the warm crowded fun of traditional festivals, which define the passage of time, such as the celebration of the arrival of the Chinese New Year. It is cold, and one has never known what winter clothes may be, having come from the coasts of Kenya. People stare as if one should not be here. The transportable aspects of culture are maintained with urgency, combining with varying individual memories into the mini-culture that is without the vitality of the culture of the mother country. The culture of the mother country swerves and heaves like all cultures do, its components battling and evolving through the impact of different interpretations of contemporary concerns, and the shift brought about by every rising generation. Ethnic communities struggle to maintain who they were when they arrived, freezing many aspects of cultural identity, which were formally evolving within a mono-cultural melting pot. There are pros and cons to this. I have heard of the preservation of beautiful rituals of the Hindu wedding ceremony in the Caribbean, in a form which no longer exists in India, and which are like works of art. On the other hand, parents defining cultural identity in a restricted way may

fail to convey to their children how they would have much more freedom culturally in their mother country, so that their children may feel oppressed by the apparent unchangingness of ethnic identity set within another major culture.

### **Bicultural identity**

Children who are born in Britain, but who have parents, whose country of origin is not Britain, face a very different scenario. For every one of us, for the first four or five years of life, the family is the world. Going to nursery or to school is the first experience of culture shock. Much more so if English has never been spoken at home. These young ones wordlessly experience a version of the sense of isolation, disorientation and bewilderment that their parents encountered. Children, phenomenal absorbers of new knowledge and experience, adaptable to all change, are now confronted with a bicultural setting for life. The struggle begins—how they are seen by their parents and the ethnic community, how mainstream population sees or does not see them, the to-ing and fro-ing between different cultural worlds of home and school. As self-consciousness emerges, the crisis of choice to be who one wishes to be marks their entire lives.

In the area within which the Black Environmental Network (BEN) has focused its work, which is to enable ethnic community participation in the mainstream environmental movement, we have observed how contact between the mainstream population and ethnic communities create a new stage for the definition of ethnic identity.

Our work has two main strands. The first is to stimulate ethnic community participation in the environment. The second is to enable the mainly white personnel of the mainstream environmental organisations to work with awareness, and

effectively with ethnic communities. We have, through our work, observed that, significantly, for too many members of mainstream population, there is no concrete image of persons from distinct ethnic communities because there has never been any contact. This terrible gap needs to be bridged, because within any organisation who we include and how we go about our work is dependent upon what we know. Distorted, piecemeal, sensationalised and extreme pieces of information, usually gleaned from mass media, hamper the ability of the most open project officer of goodwill to communicate comfortably with members of the ethnic communities. Much of our work is about enabling environmental personnel to meet ethnic groups without being riddled with mythical fear, without being paralysed by the collective guilt of negative historical relationships, but to look forward to an encounter with confidence and interest, to relax into the discovery of accessible alternative human frames of reference. In other words, to enjoy what is in the main common ground, and to see differences, that is, 'who we are ourselves' for the first time.

For many ethnic groups, the entry into environmental participation has been an experience, which has allowed themselves to re-define themselves. They can choose to take up the powers of expression and assertion that comes with entering onto a wider stage. Even on single countryside trips, we have had reports of how groups came to feel 'less isolated', and of having 'more possibilities in their lives'. There is an important sense of being allowed to claim ownership of this country, in which they live and work. Groups from Sheffield have visited North Wales, groups from Bradford, the islands of Scotland-the map of Britain becomes a reality. Incidents take issues onto the agenda. Take the encounter of a white warden with a group of 13-year-olds from the Vietnamese community who had left the streets of London for the first time. This group had never seen sheep before and their enjoyment of wildly chasing sheep will leave a big question mark in his mind about

the relationship of the urban population to the countryside for a long time. It may spur him into action, to realise that a nature reserve close enough for a day trip from London has a huge role to play in the lives of many people, and that the fact that where the reservation is situated happens to be where hardly any ethnic groups live, is neither here nor there with respect to the possible programme of his outreach work. The presence of ethnic faces in the predominantly white countryside too confronts villagers and farmers with taking into account the reality of ethnic communities,

New forms of environmental projects have emerged, which make a contribution to the present urgent global/local theme of the environmental movement. The cultural garden, in which plants from different countries represent the presence of ethnic communities, has been replicated in many forms in schools and community centres throughout the UK. Many aspiring cultural interpretations have emerged to re-awaken our emotions and enrich our relationship to nature and our enjoyment of experiencing nature. I cannot forget how a small group of Moslem Bengali women, who started a small allotment, said that what meant most to them as they worked is the fact that their feet are on soil, in contact with the earth.

Contact between the mainstream population and ethnic communities in the few examples given demonstrates how only contact can release the opportunity for the definition of ethnic identity to be fully activated within society. This full activation of the process of the discovery by the mainstream population and the ethnic communities is integration.

Who we are, as how we are seen and how we see ourselves, evolves, shows itself in particular forms in points in time, and evolves again, as all cultural identities do. We can reach for diverse dynamic ethnic identities only through full participation in all aspects of British society. Within

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this participation, we and our children will clarify for ourselves who we wish to be because we and everyone else are in touch with the full range of choice. We look forward to this engagement.

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**Notes**

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<sup>2</sup>.Judy Ling Wong FRSA is the Director of the Black Environment Network, an organisation established to promote equality of opportunity within the ethnic community in the UK in the preservation, protection, and development of the environment. She has worked extensively in the arts, and in psychotherapy and community involvement. Her continuing preoccupation is an integrated approach to environmental participation, bringing together different fields and sharing cultural visions. She was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in recognition of her contribution to contemporary environmental thinking.

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**Sharing Cultural Differences-The Ethnic Issue or the Issue of Collective  
Humanitas in Outdoor Adventure Education Today?**

**Steve Bowles**

**'Pre-Amble'<sup>1</sup>**

During the 2nd European Congress of 1996 in Spital, Austria, ethnic issues were brought forward as one issue among many that were available for European funding and that appeared to be one aspect of the work of outdoor adventure Educations (OAE) that might fit a project between Nation States. In this there was little talk of Humanitas and there was little talk concerning the actual situation we all live in and work from. The main drive-force was, beyond doubt, finance from Brussels. Money and the so called 'appropriate-ness' were paramount. After the congress such worldly 'things' quickly came under a critical eye and such a driving-force became, rightly I think, suspicious. We ended up by trying *not* to make a project that was ready-made. We agreed by majority, if not by a full consensus, to 'Let the Ethnic Youth Speak for Themselves'! This was quite different from letting Brussels speak for itself. Many of us felt it wrong for us to merely follow in idle fashion the whims of a Eurocentric system of law and order when we had a project theme of OAE for ethnic issues. We tried to allow a certain freedom to be activated and we tried to refrain from setting down the rules on tablets of stone to be then passed *down* to ethnic groups as if it were a normal white, middle class and male school curriculum for the conforming uniformed students. But it must be said that this was not easy and the project did not get started. Eduard Lindeman, one of the the working colleagues of John Dewey, and the *situation* based learning way was the name of our game, so to speak, for any modernist curriculum would be oppressive and supportive of the status quo and it would then be like George Ritzer (1993, 1998) would call a 'McProject', 'McEducation' or, even worse maybe, like a McAdventure! As Loynes (1996) has well warned us all about - we must not lose

sight of the humanistic ball. But the project did not get started. Maybe this was a good thing in terms of Humanitas. This especially so when outdoor adventure activities have a reputation that is not so admirable in terms of really sharing, happily, cultural differences. According to some writers much of OAE has been attached to imperialist and colonising cultures. Some have made projects from the military way which was supposed to 'bond' people. Others have a value-base as *fear*. The scene is simple. First get the 'subject' scared and then begins the process towards 'behavioural change'. In fact, it is undeniable that OAE has sometimes been a supportive force of imperialistic acts of oppression and has been typically classified as 'white, male and middle-euro-class'. Those not into that kind of thing have either not joined the OAE team (Why should they have joined anyway?) or have deliberately avoided it at all costs (which from many an ethnic perspective was surely a very good choice). So the group in Spital have no project, as of today, but, it may be said that we have not failed. In this we may live again in hope - with and for Humanitas. As Professor Rex said then, in Austria, we must take care of our basic assumptions and our starting points of reference. Ethnicity is not to be seen as a 'deficit'. Nor, might we add, is 'it' (ethnicity) to be seen as anything demanding a valorisation! Ethnicity is socially constructed. What follows is really a follow up to that congress in Austria. There I was asked, quite correctly and directly, by one person the question - 'What is ethnicity and what is race?'. Perhaps she wanted a definition! I nearly sang her a song after Bob Dylan where the words went - 'I don't wanna classify ...or crucify you, all I wanna do is baby be friends with you'. But then, then, after many days of intense work, I could only answer with one word that had, I thought, the power to make others think hard. I answered with the word - '*Being*'.

I meant then as I intend here and now to ask for a respect for human well-being for I believe that if such is uppermost in our thoughts and actions then we may do little harm. I am then slightly romantic and if this be so then I make no excuses for that. What then are we to do with the half made and half finished project of 'Let Ethnic Youth Speak for Themselves' ? These few words below are meant as a bridge between two congresses where maybe some 'horizons may be fused' together through radical sharing process that may only be called a participative humanitas.

### Sharing Cultural Difference <sup>2</sup>

According to Michael Jackson and Coca-Cola we ( we who are into the 'Real Thing' that is) are all sharing cultural differences today in the globalised world where time and space and identity may be imploded. Where real differences are denied, in fact, but where the image value of good 'taste' ( appropriate behaviour) is that of the 'winner' in a fragmented world. The 'tasty' Coca Cola meets McDonalds and Disney and we amuse ourselves to death, as has often been said. To learn from the different ways of Romany or Sami or from the nomadic-like 'New Age' travellers is hardly what the professional OAE person really means when talk is about the 'Sharing of Cultural Difference' !!! What are the powers of definition here? But here we at least have a start. The question might seem to be - 'Who is OK to share with and which differences are OK? Who benefits and who advertises it all ? Kurt Hahn would have taken us all back to the Bible and the text 'The Good Samaritan' if we had asked this 'wrong' question. Who is thy neighbour ?-*Being* .The point is this. There is always a pre-knowledge with our value-bases and there is always the need to be reflexive and critical of our pre-knowledge bases of each and every interpretative act we make - this especially so when we are educators. Another point is that the identities attached to gender, ethnicity and other 'tribal' units may fail to really become

enabled to change things for to do that there has to be some form of social identity as a collective reality. The only collective identity for Coca-Cola worlds are those that actually fragment and alienate. But, first a structure must be made to *clear a space for the voices and to keep open the possible communications. Nothing comes if such structures are not designed to be opened.*

### A Democratic Structure <sup>3</sup>

To talk democracy may well seem to be a impossible task for a usually self-centred OAE today. But, I mean here a real radical democracy as the best traditions of OAE and experiential educations have always aspired to and with. That is a participative democracy and where the learnings are *with* and *for* democracy and through democracy not 'about' and not 'of' democracy. A.S.Neil of 'Summerhill' might be a good English example. But from the traditions of the USA come some dire warnings that demand our attention today as much as ever they did before according to a recent lecture by Noam Chomsky about education and democracy and John Dewey. Chomsky (1994) has no illusions and asks people to avoid the 'easy way' which is that of what Thomas Jefferson called the 'Aristocratic'. We are better to take the difficult path which is the 'Democratic' way ahead although there are powerful pressures that will work against us all in this difficult way. I quote Chomsky, who quotes John Dewey.

Power today resides in in control of the means of production, exchange, publicity, transportation and communication. Whoever owns them rules the life of the country, even if democratic forms remain. Business or private profit through private control of banking, land, industry reinforced by command of the press, press agents and other means of publicity and propaganda, that is the system of actual power, the source of coercion and control, and until that is unravelled we cannot talk

seriously about democracy and freedom.  
( Chomsky on Dewey, 1994)

With those words from Dewey and the 1920s we might first question ourselves, in the heady days of the western-standardised version of a so called 'turn of the century' ( whose calendar do we talk about here - certainly not that of most of the world !), about our structures. To 'Let Ethnic Youth Speak for Themselves' asks first for a structure of activeness and participation. A radical corner needs to be made for such voices to be heard in a normalcy of the 'Culture of Silence'. This especially so when over 50% of our young people do not vote in representative democracies of the west preferring to let the coca-cola market unite the world ! This is one of the very big stories for any OAE work today. This is our new protest for free 'access' because before such access is made strong through a structure of participative democracy there can be no *sustainability*. This means a *praxis* and an education with and for the life process. It demands change! Sustainability must not be seen as something maintaining the status quo for if that is so then ethnic youth will never have a voice together with and for *humanitas*. And we will merely try to enforce a conformist adaptation upon 'them'. We need then critical as well as instrumental rationalities. For this democratic structure of work must be wanted, planned and made together ( shared that is) in the midst of powerful forces that will 'naturally' try and deny it all. John Dewey remains significant in this sense.

#### **Social Rationalities 'with and for'<sup>4</sup>**

Taken that a structure may be enforced and encouraged we may think again about the actual sharing processes involved with so called ethnic youth or, for that matter, human beings generally. Sharing and learning? We might say with reasonable justification that all real learning and real education is a process of sharing and such is the hermeneutic heart and soul of com-

municative action. I take here my help from what is sometimes called the 'Hermeneutics of suspicion'. In the so called 'Enlightenment' past talk of democracy and *humanitas* has been rightfully criticised as being a mere mask for oppression. Even 'Reason' has been shown to have a complex power that denies respect for the 'Other'. Nietzsche asked us to think what 'truth' might look like if it were 'made' by women. Equally pertinent here is the fact that the revolutionary quests towards totalising meta-narratives like liberty, equality and fraternity have, when put into practice, been acting 'as if' they were each opposing forces where any one seemingly denies the 'other'. This was an issue for the Paul Ricoeur and Richard Kearney interviews, for example, and for Ricoeur we needed to find a 'political discourse which would not be governed by states, a new form of society guaranteeing universal rights yet dispensing with totalising constraints .' ( Ricoeur, 1984 : 33) Can we say that 'Sharing Cultural Difference' is a mere totalising affair with invisible meta-narratives? Ricoeur would say a yes to this so long as this was left in a non-reflexive mode and left without a critical interpretation. We share difference from a position of pre-knowledges attached to order and to the past. We help make difference, that is, before we share it. Likewise we help 'make' ethnicity before we may de-construct it in order to create a sharing of cultural difference! But de-construct it we must if we are not to be 'idle' and dedicated followers of fashion. As Jacques Derrida might claim - to deconstruct is not to destruct but to become aware and activated in a process of becoming. This applies to eurocentric logic and 'Reason' too. As Derrida (1982) said , a 'white man's' reason and a 'myth'; also, ' ... the myths of his own idiom , for the universal... which he must still wish to call reason.' ( Derrida, 1982 : 213 )

Might we call this an education as life and as life peradventure ? The ever-present 'risky' act handled as it were. Harold Drasdo (1972) would have found a 'place' for being happy with

this situation for he said quite clearly that the 'outdoors' might help in some way such critical positionings from a 'sanctuary' where it was possible to be different and to look at 'things' differently. To be critically reflexive, that is. We are, says Ricoeur, 'always re-defining what has already been defined' ( *ibid.* : 23). Here we have a crucial issue for us and OAE especially when this seemingly never ending story may lead us into a potentially nihilistic pragmatism where if it works then all is OK. To cut a very long story short Ricoeur says that we need to find a new set of active links between the spirituality of life and the sciences of life and he gives us the following advice:

The challenge today is to find alternative forms of social rationality beyond the positivistic extremes of both state socialism and utilitarian-liberal capitalism ... For a genuine social rationality to exist we must refuse to allow the critical and interpretative functions to be reduced to the calculative... Therefore we need a third dimension of language , a critical and creative dimension, which is directed towards neither scientific verification nor ordinary communication but towards a disclosure of possible worlds. This third dimension I call the poetic. The adequate self-understanding of (sic)-man is dependent on this third dimension of language as a *disclosure of possibility*.

( *ibid.* : 34, and, 45 with my emphasis )

### **In-Conclusion then <sup>5</sup>**

I may ask first that a participative democratic 'active-ness' is essential for any respectful sharing of cultural difference which is to really *matter*. But even then this is not enough for we must also critique ourselves and our structures of work that are always, in some way a kind of meta-narrative against being *with* the other. Until we may have this 'active-ness' we may never really share the natural being with and for the

other as the primordial moral act. Where existence 'meets' essence! OAE has shown, so far, a recent and heavy 'turn' towards the calculative and instrumental pragmatic rationality where the 'means-ends' schema has been the main menu on display. If we are to really share cultural difference and 'Let the Ethnic Youth Speak for Themselves' within an educational setting then many of the issues that I have tried to briefly outline should and ought to be attended with. We must respect the critical and the interpretative rationalities more and that is really the main point of the Kurt Hahn idea of the biblical story the '*Good Samaritan*'. To end up I may 'clash' three texts that display one and another form(s) of the adventure journey with life itself. The question will be, then, what comes out of this 'clash' of texts. Possibility = ? where adventure is one language of possibility,

They all had something in common, however different they were ... this in itself was beautiful ... a unity and an association.. Humanity ... the last and the greatest reward of the journey. ( Hesse, 197: 71 )

The culture of an organisation can influence its productivity, and there is reason to believe that the same cultural dimensions that account for high performance in business account for high achievement in schools ... The current interest among western organisation about this topic stems from studies linking culture to business productivity, spurred largely by increasingly effective competition from Japan and other Asian nations .(Gaziel, 1997 :311 )

... mainstream research practices are generally and unwittingly implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race and gender oppression. (McLaren, 1995 : 231)

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> These end notes are given as possible follow ups and pointers in the general sense. This first section cites

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Ritzer. It is to his 'Thesis of McDonaldisation' that I refer which is strictly related to the ways of Weberian rationality - issues of predictability, efficiency, calculability and the de-humanisation processes that are claimed to correspond to these accelerating aspects of life. This section also looks to Eduard Lindeman and here what is stressed is his work on education that denies ulterior motives or material rewards or diplomas and so on - the point is to begin from the situation and do this for humanistic ideals in a world that is in conflict. This is quite different from a 'Vocational' market-led education. For just two examples of the many critiques of an oppressive OAE see Beedie (1995), Humberstone (1996).

<sup>2</sup> In this section I am, of course, decrying the consumer-identity that is led by capitalism and built upon image value rather than concrete human existence in the real world. One very interesting and different view comes from those that see capitalism as declining and where there is a new chance for a postmodern togetherness or a total shambles. See, for example, Bauman (1993;1995) or see for another interpretation Kennedy (1998) for just two examples.

<sup>3</sup> In this section I emphasise John Dewey and his democratic and educational work that is necessarily, like Lindeman, an expression of social conflicts. But it must be added here that I do not emphasise the 'other' Dewey who has sometimes been seen as too 'scientific' or not critical enough of the social relations of definition. ( see C. Wright Mills and John Dewey debates in Tilman, 1984 and more generally see Tiles, 1991 ). I also use Noam Chomsky and by doing so I intend only to emphasise his democratic and anarchic evaluations with no reference made, rightly or wrongly to his language theories. For both Chomsky and Dewey I add, in the next section, what I think to be an antidote to their work in general.

<sup>4</sup> In this section the work of those like Jurgen Habermas and Martin Heidegger is, of course, implied throughout. So too that of Hans Gadamer. But this section can be read and, I hope, understood, for this is the intention, without specialist recourse to the wider issues/ writers involved. If anything a link in this text is also a classic link of Max Weber and Karl Marx through the George Ritzer expressed here. This is important to state here in terms of logic which is, for me, one of the main problems. Any pure and linear or total logic is denied here, preferring inference and 'mix'.

<sup>5</sup> The idea of 'active-ness' is taken from Arne Naess ( 1989), Gunnar Breivik (1995) and Friluftsliv generally and the term is meant to help us get away from the idea of 'activities' which are often just techniques in a social vacuum sitting in plastic with H<sub>2</sub>O. When the

idea of the primordial act with morality is used I take this first from Emmanuel Levinas (1969) and later Zygmunt Bauman ( 1993; 1995). I have tried to work with such terms a little, and I hope humbly, in my own text found in Lehtonen ( 1998). Kurt Hahn has been mentioned quite centrally here and I believe that much of his work has been sometimes mis/represented in anglo-american countries and Hahn deserves a re-evaluation of sorts today ( see Telemaki, 1998).

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## Some Ideas on Adventure and Learning

Desmond Rubens

The paper draws on findings from a qualitative research study on links between outdoor education, adventure and learning. Respondents' narrow and broad conceptions of adventure are developed in order to provide a link between the concept of adventure and the field of educational psychology. Implications drawn are firstly, that there exist sound empirical educational justifications for adventurous teaching approaches, secondly, a broad conception of adventure can encourage a mastery approach towards learning and thirdly, that possible problems exist in programmes where a narrow conception of adventure dominates. A role for effort in helping students construct their self-image is promoted.

### Introduction

This paper draws on a literature review and develops conceptions of adventure which were put forward by respondents in the course of a qualitative study which formed part of a dissertation ("Outdoor Education, Adventure and Learning - A Fusion") for a Masters Degree in education.

It is the case that the outdoor education literature has made surprisingly little use of current theorising or empirical findings from educational psychology. Accordingly, it seemed appropriate to begin to address this deficit, using the educational psychology literature to illuminate practice and to provoke development within the field of outdoor education. In this paper, theory on motivation in learning is used to promote a mastery approach by students towards learning. The use of adventurous approaches to learning is explored.

### Implications of Respondents Conceptions of Adventure

#### *Further Developed Conceptions of Adventure*

This section develops respondents' conceptions of adventure. This will assist in the process of determining firstly, the values of broad and narrow conceptions of adventure; secondly, examining some problems with narrow conceptions of adventure; and thirdly, describing strategies for promoting an alternative, effort based view of the self-concept within outdoor education. Broad and narrow conceptions of adventure were distinguished in discussion of respondents' conceptions of adventure (Diagram 1). Briefly examining the broad view of adventure, it is noted that effort and responsibility are major dimensions. Both of these dimensions have been identified in the educational psychology literature (Ames, 1992; Blumenfeld, 1992; Dweck, 1986) as having an important role in motivating students. The role of these dimensions will be further explored. First, however, it is necessary to complete the 'missing' dimensions of the narrow conception of adventure.

If we refer to Diagram 1, it will be seen that the narrow conception of adventure is incomplete. The two absent dimensions can be deduced by making a comparison with the equivalent dimensions of the broad conception. The completed diagram is shown below as Diagram 2.

The new diagram has a different purpose from the first diagram, which was designed to capture and present in an analytical fashion conceptions of respondents. The current diagram is designed for the purpose of acting as a tool to reflect on outdoor education practice and to act as a 'bridge' across to the psychology literature. As with any model, the goal of providing a clear explanatory framework necessarily involves some simplification of the complex picture that emerges when practice is examined in detail.

### ***Ames' (1992) Review of Motivation Literature***

Turning to look at important implications of psychological studies of classroom learning for the field of adventure (or outdoor) education, two points are to be made. Firstly, these findings can inform practice within the field of outdoor education; and secondly, some dimensions of the practice of Adventure Education can transfer across to practice in the classroom. Thus, there is potential for an integration of classroom and

outdoor education approaches. In order for the reader to gain the full benefit of these findings, a brief synopsis of Ames' (1992) summary of research on classroom motivation is required (with a focus on areas relevant to outdoor education).

It is accepted that classroom environments influence students' views about the nature and purposes of learning (Ames, 1992; Dweck, 1986). It is thus possible to construct learning environments which influence students' orientations towards learning. Ames (1992) distinguishes two major contrasting goals that students adopt towards learning. Firstly, students may adopt a mastery goal towards learning. This type of goal is associated with an orientation towards learning characterised by the belief that outcome (or achievement) and effort are directly related. Associated orientations are a motivation to learn, attempts towards understanding work (rather than rote learning), and a desire to improve competence. Secondly, students may adopt a performance goal towards learning. This type of goal is associated with an orientation towards learning characterised by the belief that outcome (or achievement) and ability are directly related. Associated orientations are viewing learning as a method of achieving 'public' recognition coupled with a concern with feelings of self-worth. Learning is more likely to be of a surface nature (Entwistle, 1994), with less focus on understanding and more on rote learning. Further, because of the student's concentration on the self-concept, expenditure of effort in achieving a learning goal is seen to threaten his/her self-concept. This may happen because, if expenditure of effort does not lead to success, then the student's ability is called into question. Therefore, students who adopt a performance goal towards learning are reluctant to be seen to be involved in expenditure of effort.

Ames (1992) outlines three structures within the classroom affecting motivation or orientation towards mastery or performance learning. These are firstly, classroom tasks, secondly

evaluation and recognition and thirdly, authority. Instructional strategies associated with these dimensions are described below. Strategies identified here are intended to orientate the student towards a mastery (as opposed to a performance) orientation towards learning.

*Tasks:* novel or diverse; challenging.

*Authority:* students participating in decision making; making “real” choices where decisions are made on *effort*, not *ability*, requirements; developing responsibility and independence.

*Evaluation and recognition:*

focusing on individual improvement; teacher making private evaluation (not public, which focuses on *ability*); recognising *effort*; encouraging the view that mistakes are part of learning.

The motivational patterns which are associated with the above instructional strategies are:

- Focus on effort and learning
- High intrinsic interest in activity
- Attributions to effort
- Attributions to effort-based strategies
- Use of effective learning and other self-regulatory strategies
- Active engagement
- Positive affect on high effort tasks
- Feelings of belongingness
- “Failure-tolerance”

### **Implications from Motivational Research for Adventure Education**

There are three major implications to be drawn from motivational research.

### **Empirical Justifications for Progressive Teaching Approaches within Outdoor Education**

The first implication to draw is that the above perspectives have been authoritatively researched. Extensive empirical evidence demonstrating that classroom structures (or teaching approaches) affect students’ orientation to learning is referenced. Because there has always been a lack of empirical evidence underpinning theories of outdoor education or experiential education (Wichmann, 1995), this research evidence is particularly to be welcomed. To support the notion that empirical evidence in the field of experiential education is limited, it is noteworthy that recent publications on adventure (and experiential) education (Dyson, 1996; Wurdinger, 1995; Warren, Sakofs and Hunt, 1995) draw largely on thinking either from within the field of experiential education itself or from long established educational thinkers, such as Bruner, Dewey, Piaget and Rogers. While the contributions of these thinkers is important, their theories have not gone unchallenged (Boden, 1979; Meadows, 1992). Yet recent developments within the field of educational psychology offer much in the way of empirical evidence to support the progressive teaching approaches espoused by experiential (and outdoor) thinkers and also by the great majority of the respondents of this study. Therefore, it cannot be emphasised too strongly that outdoor educators should investigate modern research from the field of educational psychology in order to locate empirical evidence for the justification of their teaching approaches.

### **The Use of a Broad Conception of Adventure to Encourage a Mastery Orientation towards Learning**

The second implication is that as educators, we should be attempting to orientate students towards a mastery, rather than a performance, orientation towards learning. We can attempt to do this in our teaching approaches by encouraging the use of a broad conception of adventure

of the type described by the respondents in this study. A brief consideration of both the dimensions of the broad conception in conjunction with Ames' (1992) strategies will show that there is much that can encourage students' towards a mastery orientation towards learning through the use of adventure. Firstly and most importantly, students must be encouraged to consider an effort based strategy towards achievement of goals. According to Ames (1992), a sense of student's self-worth can be linked to his/her effort, rather than his/her performance. As an example of the value of effort based approaches to the self-concept, it is notable that children who hold to an effort based view of the self-concept cope better with failure. Dweck notes that:

retraining children's attribution to failure (teaching them to attribute their failures to effort or strategy instead of ability) has been shown to produce sizable changes in persistence in the face of failure, changes that persist over time and generalise across tasks (1986 : 1046).

By adopting an effort based strategy towards achievement, students' theories that learning goals can only be attained through their ability are challenged. This is facilitated by providing students with tasks which are challenging and novel, therefore stimulating students' interest. Students should also be involved in decision-making and have responsibility devolved to them. The broad conception of adventure is a powerful method of encouraging this approach to learning.

It is therefore arguable that there is a place for activities in outdoor education programmes where achievement depends on students' efforts. An example of an activity where this is the case is hillwalking, or a journey through wild country.<sup>1</sup> In searching for a metaphor to demonstrate the usefulness of effort as a learning strategy, success in hillwalking can be employed. Such activities requiring high effort are thus justified as a strategy

in orientating students towards the adoption of mastery learning goals. Processes of review and transfer can be used to assist in helping to change students' orientations.

### **Possible Problems with a Narrow Conception of Adventure**

The third implication from motivational research to be drawn is that when the narrow conception of adventure is examined, possible difficulties can be detected. For example, if the narrow view of adventure leads students to focus on their ability to perform rather than their requirement to apply effort as a way of achieving tasks, then this may encourage a performance orientation towards learning.

This is not to say that high challenge, low effort activities are not worthwhile. However, careful consideration of these programmes is indicated. Public evaluations of performances by educators should not be over emphasised, (which may not be easy in high profile activities). Success should not entirely be attributed to ability, but also to effort. Responsibilities should be devolved if possible towards students.

The inference of the above is clear. If an outdoor programme is made up entirely of high thrill, low effort, short time scale activities with little responsibility devolved to children, then however much fun the programme may be and however much recreational value it may have, the educational value must be questioned. Furthermore, if programmes develop performance orientation patterns among children, such programmes may even be counterproductive.

### **A Note on the Self-concept**

The improvement of students' self-concept is one of the major justifications of outdoor education programmes and was noted by a majority of respondents in this study. Few would argue that this is a worthy aim. However, it is the case that

the self-concept is not generally well understood. For example, one inference drawn from recent theory is that it is now no longer acceptable to hold to a unidimensional view of the self-concept (Fox and Corbin, 1989). Yet depictions of the self-concept by educational establishments often treat this concept unproblematically.

A major justification for including high challenge activities as part of an outdoor programme is to increase students' self-esteem. However, drawing on the above discussion, it would seem that outdoor educators should refrain from encouraging students to equate improving their self-esteem with their ability. Rather, we should encourage students to perceive of themselves as being successful and competent through application of effort. On a slightly different note, Rutter (1985) gives a powerful justification for designing programmes where student success is based on student autonomy where the outcome is improved self-image. While his example is dated, the inference is clear. He gave the example of institutionally reared girls who were significantly more likely to 'plan' a good marriage where they had had good experiences and success at school "perhaps because their school success had given them a self-image of people who could control their own destinies" (1985, p. 363). The implications from Rutter (1985) are clear; schools make a difference to students' life chances; it follows that the potential of good outdoor education or outdoor adventure programmes in helping to achieve these improvements for students is persuasive. It is the case that such programmes are likely to be based on broad conceptions of adventure.

In considering the above both within outdoor education and in relation to benefiting classroom learning, rather than focusing on students' high performance successes, we should rather consider the application of effort and the devolution of responsibility in helping students to construct positive self-images.

### **Concluding Comments**

To reiterate: it may be possible to transfer (Gass, 1985; 1993) the concept of effort (or persistence) as a learning strategy. Dweck (1986) suggests that students who have learned persistence in the face of failure will generalise this attitude across tasks. No one in this study had considered applying the transfer of persistence as a learning strategy, but these theoretical considerations suggest that it may be worth considering (Blumenfeld, 1992; Dweck, 1986). It is reasonable to believe that it may be as, or more, successful as a learning strategy than attempts to improve the inadequately understood and much promoted self-concept.

Finally, on adventure, Dewey provides us with a fusion between adventure and learning when he stated that 'all thinking involves a risk. ... the invasion of the unknown is in the nature of an adventure.' (Dewey, 1917 : 174). Thus, when individuals participate in the most enlightened forms of adventure education, the adventure can be both a metaphor for learning, and also a learning experience in itself. The potential, highlighted in this study, of the role of adventure education in promoting positive orientations towards learning is consistent with this enlightened approach.

### **Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> The more complex example of the expedition could equally well have been chosen.

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### **Some Conceptual Ideas from the Perspectives of the 'Modernised Body'**

**Peter Becker, Gunter Amesberger, Steve Bowles, Peter Higgins, Barbara Humberstone, Bert Keus, Jan Neumann, Jochem Schirp**

In almost every country -from Finland to Italy, from Britain to Czechoslovakia-social and educational institutions have been founded that work with the basic elements of experiential learning and challenging adventure activities. Some countries-as the UK or Norway have longer traditions, in Germany they have been put aside because of historical reasons. But in recent times the mentality all over the European countries seems to be equally open enough, to follow the principles of experiential learning and outdoor activities more intensively. This quickly spreading development asks for explanation. Therefore we should cast a short view on how modern societies treat the body.

Although the enlightenment promised to liberate the body from the control of the soul the liberation has not been realised by far. When we observe daily life in modern societies we notice that even a contrary development has taken place: The body has become subject to restrictions that are stronger than ever before. No matter how we reconstruct the development of society: As a process of disenchantment and rationalisation according to Max Weber, or as the process of the increase of civilisation according to the theory of Norbert Elias, or as an interplay of the various forms of suppression of the internal and external nature as in the 'Dialectics of Enlightenment' by Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer or - last but not least - as the successive increase of disciplinary powers, as in Michel Foucault's work - each theory emphasises the expansive success of an extensive rationality and discipline that both control the body and its desires more and more. The following examples should give further evidence.

Modern life has become so complex that individuals are forced to develop rational methods and strategies to manage their lives successfully. Consequently spontaneous, uncontrolled or

egotistical desires and expressions of the body must be suppressed. Individuals can only cope with the complex demands of modern societies if they develop self-restraining behaviour patterns. Thus the self-controlled character is obliged to follow particular 'virtues', which are for example the capability to suppress desires, the constant orientation towards the future, the capability to bear disappointments or the rational coping with all kind of shortages. All central organisations of society such as schools, factories, administration or the military forces follow these 'virtues' of a (methodical)-rational life management.

Technical developments and progress bear the tendency to make the body superfluous in modern life. This effect can be observed for example in factory work, where machines replace the body with its physical power and skill. But we are also inclined to exclude physical labour from the organisation of our daily life. For instance in our housework physical labour is reduced to the turning of a switch or the pressing of a button. In many cases machines are extremely superior to human skills. Thus human beings have become their antique and error-prone appendage.

Developments in communication technology have made physical presence almost superfluous. Home banking, video conferences, screen-shopping or working at the home computer indicate how codes and chips substitute physical presence. Individuals are transformed into a bundle of data. In the production of a virtual reality the body solely serves as a carrier of data devices. People who work with computers can stay indoors - at home or at their office - with no need to meet interactional partners. Consequently body language and sensual elements are systematically excluded although they are an essential part of human communication. Whenever hard- and

software are the tools of communication the human body is reduced to minimum action. Our body has not been made for the high speed on the highways of data.

Developments in the pharmaceutical market make it possible to manipulate almost any physical state through chemical intervention. By taking drugs individuals can reach sleep or wakefulness, high performance or relaxation. Drugs are used to eliminate symptoms of physical pain or to regulate 'natural' physical conditions arbitrarily. People who take drugs treat their body like an instrument and try to adjust it to an individually planned course of events. For modern societies this behaviour is very attractive and useful.

The above described social developments can be summarised in a simple formula: 'More and more mind and discipline with the consequence of less and less body and spontaneity'. The advantages of neglecting our anthropological heritage are obvious. Since problems that arise in modern society have become increasingly complex, the solution strategies must increase in complexity at the same time. Solving complex problems means that typical physical reactions such as slowness, emotions, sensuousness or inaccuracy must appear as obstacles, that hamper the steady acceleration of the rational solution process. If we accept that modernity makes life more complex and rational, we can understand why the physical aspect of life must lose influence successively.

The modern way of life has its price. The winnings, that have been accomplished through the described developments are indisputable. But we can not have the benefits of technical progress and a high standard of living for nothing. To all appearances we have to pay a high psycho-social price, since it seems as if the suppressed body strikes back at society with symptoms that cause irritation such as aggression, stress, illnesses, excessive consumption or addiction. Either the somatic undercharge or the cognitive overcharge, they both cause counter-reactions.

The decline of physical experience in our modern world produces emptiness and monotony. Thus individuals look out for compensation. We are certain, that individuals - especially adolescents - pursue risky activities because they want to experience their physical capabilities. By this they not only gain back the feeling of physical competence, but also compensate their feeling of powerlessness, which arises from their low position in the social order. Since aggressive physical action is directed against obstacles, feelings of self-competence and control will result, when the situation is mastered. During the actions intensive emotions like thrill, hatred, fear, tension or pride are stirred up, which convey the impression of an authentic life. At last the body is no longer reduced to a pro thesis for cognitive operations but is experienced as a source of action.

Modern life confronts people with excessive cognitive demands and exploits their resources. This leads to a new panorama of illnesses and physical disorders that affect adolescents and adults equally. Germs as a disease-causing agent have been replaced by all forms of stress. Today stress leads to eating disorders, allergies, high blood pressure, aggression, nervousness, poor concentration, stomach troubles or depression. Adolescents try to tackle the symptoms by taking drugs and medicine without medical advice; the consumption of drugs increases steadily.

When active, physical counteraction is impossible, individuals often opt for passive resistance by taking drugs. Drugs are used as an artificial aid to produce a desired physical condition. Taking refuge in an artificially produced 'physical paradise' is an attractive option against the demands of everyday life. In the worlds of artificial paradises modern 'virtues' such as deferred gratification and self discipline are suspended. In his imagination the drug user can easily forget his deficiencies. Meanwhile industry has com-

mercialised the search for adventurous activities by offering various adventure trips and adventure sports. The growing market for adventure goods and the commercialised esoteric body concepts not only promise unique physical and spiritual experiences but make us believe we live in a culture of emergency. Of course the consumers do not live in a state of emergency. For them the possession of adventure equipment rather has an aesthetic meaning. They use it as insignias to present a certain life style. We believe that the rising interest in organised and industrialised adventures is also a reaction against the constant suppression of the body.

In the past few years all sorts of centres and organisations for outdoor activities and experiential learning have been founded. More or less they did not or still do not know each other. But their work - despite their cultural differences and national significance - is similar. Compared with the above described processes of somatic deprivation and desensualisation of experiences, they stand for a very different approach to the world, which does not reduce the complexity of life on a cognitive dimension only. For example in opposition to mere intellectual learning methods they organise intractable learning situations in natural environments. Often these risky or unpredictable situations challenge the individual and the group to find creative solutions. It is expected that the mastering of unpredictable and risky situations and the reflection of results have a positive effect on the development of the personality, foster the sense of community and promote the trust within a group. Experiential learning - consciously or not - grants the body and its senses a far greater importance than it has ever received in most other social contexts. Educational programmes that involve the body and the senses accept our anthropological heritage, since they realise that somatic, emotional and sensual experiences belong together and for that reason should be considered and improved equally. Meanwhile outdoor activities and experiential learning play a role in recreational, educational, therapeutic or

counselling settings.

The recollection of our physical potentials must not be misunderstood as the re-enchantment of our world, that helps us to forget the present development of rationalisation and technology. A fundamental return to an 'authentic body' must remain a desire and will never come true, although some positions opposing the enlightenment suggest the contrary. Nothing will liberate us from our integration in society, not even the idyllic, natural, unspoiled or passionate body. We feel responsible for the development and distribution of a concept that takes care of the interests of the body. In this case we need a kind of attorneyship for a 'somatic rationality', which is not interested in regimentation, but in a balanced challenge and demand of the somatic dimension. The identity of the European Institute must emerge from this task, as well as from its aims. These aims are set out in the Institute Website (<http://www.eioaee.org>).

In brief they are constituted by the following main considerations; a systematic approach to the collection and dissemination of knowledge and skills; a consideration, development and synthesis of professional approaches; the encouragement of research and projects across European countries; support for programme improvement and personnel exchange; the exchange of knowledge and practice through a variety of methods and media; and the encouragement of historical reflection which can provide for a fuller understanding of current situations.

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## **Outdoor Adventure Education: Learning by Sharing Cultural Differences**

**Peter Higgins, Gunter Amesberger, Steve Bowles, Peter Becker, Barbara Humberstone,  
Bert Keus, Jan Neumann, Jochem Schirp<sup>1</sup>**

The following text has been prepared by members of the Board of the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning. Much of it is drawn from the 'Statement of Intent'<sup>2</sup> of the European Institute. It describes a variety of approaches to outdoor adventure education and suggests that these have much in common. Cultural and geographical influences are explored.

### **The Vision**

Outdoor adventure education is both a means of educating holistically through the use of the outdoors as a medium and a common response to disassociation within society. European collaboration will enrich our practice in addressing these issues to the benefit of all.

The European Institute promotes the exchange of knowledge, experience and techniques appropriate to the development of outdoor adventure education, and intends, through collaboration to develop initiatives and projects, to enhance provision across the community.

In the UK the National Association for Outdoor Education (NAOE) has for many years adopted a similar approach but within a national rather than international framework. This is mirrored in other nations.

### **Outdoor Adventure Education - Many Dimensions**

For most people who read this there will be an extensive list of reasons to educate out of doors. Outdoor educators generally believe in the value of direct experience as the most effective form of learning. As the 'real world' exists outside the classroom then the case for education out-of-doors is, of course, already made! The term

'experiential education' is often applied to this form of education and has for a long time been accepted as a valid approach to learning. For a review of its long history, its protagonists and antagonists, from Aristotle to recent times see Kraft (1984). There have been a number of important proponents this century (eg Friere, Montessori, Rogers) but perhaps the most influential has been Dewey (1963).

Experiential educators believe that it is this process of learning to learn without attenuation which leads to the development in the individual of a mature view of education. In the end all of us must take responsibility for our own learning. If we do not do so, forms of behaviour become embedded and we become reluctant to change, despite what new information coming our way tells us. This leads to pre-judging situations. Literally prejudice. We lose confidence to adapt to new situations and instead fall back on our preconceptions.

Amongst many working in the field there will be agreement that a good outdoor educational experience will provide a wide variety of learning opportunities. At times one form of development may find more emphasis than at others, but there is often the potential for intellectual, physical, emotional, aesthetic and spiritual development to take place (eg see Higgins, 1997; Smythe, 1998). The mix will vary from individual to individual and from time to time (eg see Crowther, 1988).

Early in the development of outdoor adventure education the possibility of educational outcomes beyond physical recreation and health were recognised. Though these remain important, the value of outdoor adventure education for personal and social development has become a major justification (for example see a recent review of literature by Hattie et al, 1997).

Further developments throughout Europe have reflected national inclination, cultural trends and political influences. The result is that in some nations there tends to be an emphasis placed on, for example, environmental awareness, community development or therapeutic use of the outdoors.

In the context of this Congress all these themes are relevant as they are expressions of cultural difference and there is clearly much to be gained from sharing these experiences.

### **Agreement on the Common Ground**

Over the past two years or so members of the European Institute have spent some time in discussions which have led to the development and publication of a 'Statement of Intent'. In order to do so we have had to take account of our different cultural influences and reflect on the development of outdoor adventure education in Europe and elsewhere. In fact the use of the term 'outdoor adventure education' may seem a little odd to some, but it is employed in an effort to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

There are many views as to exactly what outdoor adventure education is. This is not only to be expected in such a broad subject area, it is to be welcomed. Individuality of approach reflects individuality in learning. Internationally the same variety is reflected in cultural diversity. There is, however a great deal of common ground and most practitioners would agree that the process comprises most or all of the following elements.

- The educational intention is to stimulate personal and social development. Those who work in this field have learning aspirations for their students beyond physical recreation to the academic, aesthetic, spiritual, social and environmental.
- The themes of outdoor, adventure and education are all important to some

degree in the process, which should not simply be recreational, nor should it take place without at least some experience of the outdoors. Adventure in this context implies that there is a 'journeying out' (a move onto new ground) to embrace the experience.

- The process engaged in is that of learning 'experientially'. To maximise the effect, the experience should be direct rather than mediated, with the facilitator acting as a guide rather than in the usual formal capacity of a teacher. It should be noted however that most experiential educators also emphasis the importance of theoretical understanding for complete educational experiences (see Dewey, 1963).
- The result of this approach being applied in the powerful context of the outdoors is that many report the experience to be effective as a means of personal and social development, and in increasing awareness of community and environment. The approach is useful in some circumstances in raising awareness of gender and equal opportunity perspectives (cf Humberstone, 1993).
- Whilst some aspects of the experience may involve the use of settings in which there are apparent or real hazards, the physical and emotional safety of the client is protected through appropriate professional standards.
- The natural environment is usually 'the workplace' and professional standards must be applied to ensure its protection from overuse. Outdoor education programmes should also encourage participants to develop respect for the environment.
- As a result of this experiential process, participants should take increased responsibility for their own learning, and consequently develop increased con-

confidence in their own judgment and ability to direct their lives.

- The role of individual or guided reflection on these experiences is now considered to be of great importance. Whilst there have been a number of recent proponents (eg Priest, Greenaway) we would direct the reader to two recent reviews which assess the research and emphasise the case (see Barrett and Greenaway, 1995 and Hattie et al, 1997)

This approach is applied to a broad range of client groups. For example, a school may use a residential outdoor experience to encourage students to draw together a wide range of academic disciplines, whereas a therapeutic worker may focus on developing self-esteem through increased responsibility in a small group.

In educational terms the issue is whether a modern, primarily intellectual form of education is adequate for proper development of the individual, or whether some direct form of educational experience which encourages awareness of self, others and the environment is more appropriate. In therapeutic terms the issue is whether outdoor educational and adventure experiences can address some of the personal and social difficulties encountered in modern society.

The following represents the three main areas within which outdoor educational activities take place:

### **Outdoor Activities**

In a sense the development of outdoor education may be seen as a consequence of those who took part in adventurous activities themselves appreciating the potential for personal and social development, and both formal and informal education (eg Loynes et al, 1997). In all the discussion surrounding educational value, curricular links etc, it is worth remembering the uncomplicated joy to be found in

simply taking part in the activities, and participating in an 'adventure'.

The traditional activities which seem to be used most for educational purposes are hillwalking, rock climbing, canoeing, kayaking, orienteering, sailing and windsurfing. However, activities such as gorge walking and abseiling seem to be even more popular. The degree to which activities are discussed and reviewed to enhance educational outcomes may be very variable (see Barrett and Greenaway, 1995 and Hattie et al, 1997).

### **The Social Context**

Societal change appears to be ever more rapid and many individuals experience a sense of increasing disconnection from society. There is a widespread feeling of a loss of control and lack of influence; themes noted with concern by psychologists such as Freud and Jung. Outdoor adventure education has the unique ability to address many of these issues, engaging people with place and community in a lasting way.

Additionally there is increasing evidence of social dissatisfaction, particularly amongst many young people. The tension is generated by a mismatch between the demanding nature of our complex consumer society and our ability to cope with and find fulfilment within it. In today's society there appears to be little acknowledgement of the importance of physical activity and the desire to face 'testing' or 'risk' situations. In some young people this tension is expressed in various forms of behaviour which cause great anguish for many individuals in our society.

Outdoor educators and therapeutic workers use the outdoors to bring their clients back to an involvement with adventure and the natural world and through this process seek to effect some attitudinal and behavioural change (eg Hopkins and Putnam, 1993 ; Barrett and Greenaway, 1995).

### **The Environmental Context**

For many 'the environment' seems to be detached from their own personal experience, simply something which environmentalists and politicians argue about. Environmental issues are however of increasing importance in the political agenda, and due recognition has been given through Local Agenda 21 commitments made subsequent to the Rio Summit. Unfortunately the international significance and immediacy of this agreement may be obscured in its name: 'Local' is intended to imply each nation, and '21' means for the century beginning in less than two years!

The trend towards urbanisation and a form of living which is not connected to the land nor the natural world leaves us with an inability to experience the elements which support life on Earth. Outdoor educational experiences can provide opportunities for direct contact with the natural world, leading to reacquaintance with these processes in an experiential manner not possible in the classroom or home. Without the opportunity to draw upon such experiences our opinions and values are formed in isolation and our attitudes and actions may be only partially informed. In this area outdoor education has strong links with environmental education and the developing field of 'multiple intelligences' (Goleman, 1997). These links could be developed to the benefit of all.

In addition the outdoors seems to be used increasingly for specific purposes such as 'outdoor management development', 'adventure therapy' and 'intervention for those with criminal tendencies'. Although these have not been formally addressed in the preceding analysis the principles remain the same. The use of the outdoors, frequently for challenging adventurous activities forms part of many such programmes. In a sense these can be considered as specific forms of 'personal and social development' and thus conform to the model described above.

### **Cultural Differences**

It may be a function of cultural differences that this term appears to have many different meanings! Perhaps the most conventional use of the term would imply differences between nations. However within nations and across national boundaries cascade cultural differences between those who speak different languages or live in different regions. Religious or other ideologies, ethnic origin, gender etc can and are all considered as cultural differences. All such 'differences' imply variety and thereby add to the richness of experience we can all learn from. This theme is explored in more detail in the chapter by Humberstone et al (1998).

### **Cultural and Geographical Influences**

The proliferation of terms used to describe our work is symptomatic of cultural and geographical influences. Space does not permit the provision of an extensive list of terms, their definitions and 'translations' into other languages. Rather it seems appropriate to explore several of the key terms as examples.

#### **Outdoor Education**

This is the term most used in the UK and reflects a primarily educational focus. It may also be due in part to a desire amongst practitioners to assert the value of the subject within the school curriculum. This is reflected in the fact that (although provision has declined in recent years, primarily as a result of tighter financial budgets) a number of schools throughout the UK have employed outdoor education teachers and many schoolchildren have some experience of outdoor education at a residential outdoor centre. Whilst programmes vary in their content there is usually some focus on 'adventurous' outdoor activities and/or some programme of environmental education or field studies. Many of these justify themselves on the perceived personal and social developmental outcomes which result from the experiences. Substantial efforts have been made to link these into the wide range of educational curricula.

### **Erlebnispädagogik**

This term is widely used in German speaking nations to describe an approach to education in the outdoors. According to Stähler (1998) writing in this publication, there are very strong similarities with outdoor education. Whilst there is no direct translation, Stähler states that the term implies education (Pädagogik); occurrence, experience or adventure (erlebnis); and life/vitality (leben).

### **Friluftsliv**

This is a concept which is essentially Norwegian. The term implies 'feeling at home in nature' (Repp, 1996) and is very familiar to most people in Scandinavia, the majority of whom will also take part in some form of activity such as skiing or orienteering. It seeks, through an experiential approach to a simple way of living, to help people rediscover the natural world as the true home of our cultures. As such it is well rooted in what is essentially an environmentally focussed awareness of the landscape. For further elaboration of the concept and what it can offer outdoor education see Repp (1996) and Tellnes (1992).

There are a number of agencies which operate across national boundaries and which have involvement in the field. The most obvious of these is 'Outward Bound'. This is a trademark for an organisation which has commercial interests in a number of countries throughout the world and which uses the outdoors primarily for forms of personal and social development.

The 'Scout and Guide Movement' also operates in many countries and makes extensive use of the outdoors in the development of qualities in young people which lead to a 'service to the community' approach.

In America the Association for Experiential Education has a particularly strong influence

on the approach taken. Whilst the organisation is a national association for the development of outdoor adventure education it has substantial international influence.

Whilst these and others operate within the field, they are organisations and are therefore less likely to offer a basis for philosophical development of an understanding of the nature of outdoor adventure education than an exploration of the terms 'outdoor education', 'erlebnis' and 'friluftsliv'.

### **Limitations**

The organisation of a conference on the theme of 'sharing cultural differences' reflects the fact that a wide variety of approaches exist across Europe. Furthermore it is implicit that the wide diversity of philosophies and methods of providers within each nation will derive their own approaches from national tendencies to favour one approach or another, and from work they may be aware of from international journals, magazines and fellow professionals throughout the world.

The European Institute is a very young organisation (founded in 1996) and board members make their contribution on a purely voluntary and unpaid basis. The network of contacts is, quite naturally limited by the present composition of 'the board' and their contacts. Consequently there are at present few members from Eastern and Southern Europe.

### **This Congress**

The arguments in favour of this congress are clear. Any progress in the harmonisation of views on the nature of the subject area, research which might be of value, the development of collaborative projects and recognition and funding by the European Union will take place over years or even decades. This is to be

expected as we work in a very young field and the nature of our work is easy to misunderstand.

## Celebrating diversity learning by sharing cultural differences

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Philosophies, issues, government support, funding arrangements and social, cultural and educational circumstances all vary as do the words we use to describe our work. Nonetheless it is important that we do work together to achieve our aims. Indeed this is one of the key messages we hope those we work with in our day to day programmes will learn and adopt. In moving forward it will be vitally important that we are prepared to take a very broad and sympathetic view of the approaches taken by our colleagues from the many nations of Europe.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Chris Loynes contributed substantially to the original draft Statement of Intent (Higgins and Loynes, 1997). Much of the original text is included in this paper and is re-published with permission.

<sup>2</sup> The full text can be obtained from the secretary of the European Institute or found on the European Institute website.

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