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# INTRODUCTION

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From 9. till 13. September 2000 the 4<sup>th</sup> Eurocongress of the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning took place in Rimforsa in Sweden. 90 participants from 14 countries were given the opportunity to discuss 5 days “Other Ways of Learning. Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning in School and Youth Work“.

By choosing the title of the conference “Other Ways of Learning” we intended to focus attention on two developmental tendencies of the educational system, which can be found in nearly every modern society.

1. The development of modern societies is closely connected to the principles of a cognitive-instrumental rationality, which urges the individuals to control natural processes as well as their own behavior. By rationally balancing aims and means, both nature and individuals are forced under the logic of a rationality, which makes the world and its inhabitants calculable and disciplined.

In this context school takes over the function to prepare the pupils to take over the idea and methods of the above mentioned rationality and to build up an intrinsic motivation in order to follow its principles, when having left school. Classes, methods of teaching, subjects of instruction and the whole organisation are so much coined by instrumental rationality, that all other world approaches are pushed to the margin of school life.

What we blame in this context is not this kind of rationality, which is very helpful to solve problems of complex societies as ours‘ and which is necessary for their survival, we blame however the nearly total neglect of other approaches to the world, as for example the one, which considers more bodily and sensual dimensions. Psychoanalysis and developmental psychology have shown that besides the development of the cognitive-operative dimension, the development of sensuality, corporeality and emotions is in the same way important for a succeeding life. “Other Ways of Learning” includes ideas, substances and methods of a world contact, which emphasizes aesthetic-sensual perception, “knowledge” and experiences and furthermore follows the Pestalozzi-formula of the three Hs: the head, the heart and the hand. In this context the Swedish colleagues took the chance to show us in various workshops and excursions their idea and concept of “Reading the Landscape“.

As long as school is organized the way it is now, other organisations like youth work should feel responsible for the neglected dimensions. In cooperation with schools they can take care, that children and youth will find good conditions to unfold their potentials both the cognitive and the sensual ones.

2. School processes are organized due to the principles of selection and achievement orientation. They award and honour primarily efforts, which were produced independently. Because of this organisation there is always a group of children and youth, who will not come up to the standards of the classes, they simply fail. One consequence can be unemployment. Quite often and nowadays more often this failure is compensated by aggression, violence and drugs. Obviously scholarly powerlessness can be transformed into power either actively by aggression or passively by using drugs.

Also in this context youth work can try to break these fatal connections in a kind of recovering socialisation. With the help of the integral approaches of outdoor education and experiential learning one can try to correct the deficiencies which school has provoked. However we should not overlook that this possible help is only a kind of compensation and not a change of the ill-making structures of schooling and school life.

These were our reflections before we invited outdoor educators, school teachers, youth workers, lecturers and university teachers to Rimforsa at the beautiful lake Åsunden and at the river Strågåån not only to discuss and debate the benefits of the outdoors, the adventure and experiential learning, but also to go crayfishing, to watch carefully Ture’s bee-hive, to find the yellow kantarell and the brownish Karl Johan, which are the mushrooms of the season, to ship along the Kinda canal to watch the ducks and the birds of passage and to see the mighty elk, which one group actually did.

So the board wants to thank again Anne-Charlotte Nilsson and Anders Szczepanski and especially Ture Göransson for the wonderful days they have arranged for the 90 participants. Also we want to thank the City of Linköping, Linköping University and the Community of Kinda for their financial support, which made it possible to organize the conference in Rimforsa.

*On behalf of the Board  
Peter Becker*

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PETER BECKER

# BEING FAITHFUL TO THE PAST IN THE FUTURE

## The Adventure as a Medium to Regain a Lost Approach to the World

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*The true paradises are  
the lost paradises  
M. PROUST*

Do not trust any thought, which was not born in free nature. This advice the philosopher Friedrich NIETZSCHE who despised any sedentary work, gave to the readers of his *Ecce Homo*. Do sit down as little as possible he invites them, because every prejudice is born within the guts – so was the believe of the master thinker of German Philosophy in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sitting he carried on is the real sin against the Holy spirit (NIETZSCHE 1936, 530)

Long before NIETZSCHE in 1621 the English theologian Robert BURTON – himself a very stay-at home and bookworm – had already expressed a suspicion against the learned profession. Reading and learning while always sitting leads to prostration, gout, rheumatism, indigestion, farting and consumption. While craned over the books the stomach and liver are unprovided. As a consequence thick and black blood is generated which then causes unhealthy complexion and melancholy – the well known open sore of all bookmen and poets.

A touch of this misery of sitting scholarship also lies upon libraries. The huge amount of books, which enclose the written wisdom of all cultures are stored in endless book shelves which are placed in rooms which are lighted up by artificial light. The books are covered with dust and spider-webs. They smell mouldy, their pages are yellowish, damp-stained and read to pieces. The air in libraries is close and you can feel the weariness which spreads when you breathe this air for a longer time. Books make short-sighted, they paralyse and they substitute something which can't be substituted. So the stuffy air, the gloomy light, the short-sightedness and the resignation to a supplement all taken together create a bookworld of monstrosity.

I believe that this sort of critique which is directed against experiences, which are drawn from books only, also makes up the philosophical background of our Congress here Rimforsa. Partly it belongs to the concept

of the two cultures – the humanities one side, the natural sciences on the other. The title of the Congress “Other ways of Learning. Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning in School and Youthernwork“, as well as the workshops which our Swedish colleagues have prepared for Monday reflect this critical tradition. Even bringing together school and youth work is in part a hidden critique of the misery of the contemporary bodiless, unemotional and unsensational schools. This conjecture I would like to confirm with some examples.

The title of the Congress “Other Ways of learning” implies on the one hand that there are several ways of an other learning besides the one, which is dominant and on the other hand it implies, that the dominant kind is worth to be criticised. Otherwise the other ways would not be mentioned. And so a short view on school-classes reveals a sort of learning that systematically tames the lively bodies of the young children and transforms them into the prototype of the sitting bourgeois. By the way, the massproduction of stools and chairs for the members of every social class and the broad expansion of schools happened nearly at the same historical time – which was the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

At least 6 times 45 minutes per day sitting on a shank-high level without moving, at least 6 times 45 minutes per day attentively listening to a subject matter which also follows the same 45 minutes division of time and not its own inner logic, nothing to say about the children's needs and interests. Young bodies which step by step have forgotten their emotions and senses together with the exact division of time guarantee for an easy learning process, which can be forced if necessary.

In the same measure and time as the school assimilates the pupils to the type of *Homo sedens*, who is able to regulate and control his emotions and needs on his own, the book has started its victorious campaign through the classrooms. Even before the world has been seen, smelled, tasted, heard or touched the schoolbooks present the general order and the universal laws and rules, which the scholarly philistines believe to be behind the forgotten sensuous and bodily reality. The schoolbooks transport a knowledge, that is no longer attached to the sensuous experiences, which the individuals have gathered in contact with the concrete world. Their printed

knowledge is free of subjective elements, it doesn't care about contexts and it can be used according to the necessities of a technical-instrumental rationality.

Under this premise the twirling, gurgling, trickling, murmuring, oozing, rushing, the luke-warm, the ice-cold, the seething hot, the refreshing or the reflecting water, the water whether as rain, snow, tears or hail is subsumed under the chemical formula of H<sub>2</sub>O. Or the typical feelings of the heat of a summernoon, of the severe cold of a winter's day, the feeling of the cool hours of the night, of the genial air of springtime, the feeling of the mild autumn sun or of the sultry air right before a thunderstorm breaks loose – all these feelings are transformed into the abstract volume of a lead-pile, the changes of which can be registered on a scale. The intensively threatening feeling of a breathless silence becomes not more than a noise-level of 30 decibel. And a last example. The impressive starry constellation of the Pleiades – the beautiful daughters of Atlas and the sea-maid Pleione, who were placed at the sky by Zeus in order to protect them from the pursuit of the inflamed hunter Orion, who – as we all can see at the nightly wintersky has not given up his successful pursuit – these Pleiades are nothing else than an open cluster of stars, which was catalogued by MERCIER as M45 in a distance of 420 light years. Mother Pleione is merely a gasball of the 5<sup>th</sup> magnitude, which changes its light permanently and which flings away rings of gas in irregular intervals.

In these losses of the sensuous and bodily parts of subjectivity we can find again the steady process of civilisation, which characterises all modern societies. The more the society needs technical-instrumental rationality in order to master natural processes and to solve problems of high complexity, the more it must take under severe control the resistant, disturbing, slow, sensual, conative – in short the bodily, vital and prerational parts of the individuals. These parts are only than accepted when they are of any help improving the capacity of rational problem solving.

While growing up the individuals must repeat this “underground history” (HORKHEIMER/ADORNO 1969) of regimenting their bodies, emotions and senses – during the process of their own socialisation.

We allow the children to be followers of Ptolemäus but when they enter school at the latest we want them to distrust their obvious perceptions and become followers of Kopernikus. For the pre-school child the sun is allowed to rise every morning. During the day he moves along the sky and at the evening he is allowed to go down in the west. The child at school must give up this perception and he/she must learn that the change of night and day is caused not by the sun, but by the rotating move-

ment of the earth although the movements the child can see at the sky say something different.

This koperican switch has a correspondence in the psychology of learning. It is supported by PIAGET's theory of the development of cognitive structures. On their steady way to mastering the world with logical-operative concepts and objective intelligence the children run through different phases of development. The function of these phases is to bring the children every time nearer to the final stage: which is the application of the operative intelligence. To describe this function of the 3 prephases the pedagogue Horst RUMPF (1991) has used the words of a supporting rocket which becomes useless when a certain aim or altitude of flight has been reached and the next phase takes over. As RUMPF has shown, PIAGET conceives development as a process, in which the formal operations of intelligence, which are used more and more to analyse the world out of an objective distance are separated systematically from the sensuous, non-conceptual, concrete, experiential approach to understand the world.

If we follow psychoanalysis, then something rather important is separated or even lost during this process. Due to the psychoanalyst LORENZER (1981, 1986) the experiences which arise from the visible, audible, tangible, smellable and tastable perceptions and impressions constitute the solid bedrock of subjectivity, on which identity and autonomy are build upon. Even later when the child has learned to handle the language, this sensuous layer remains the basis for a conscious life-practice. LORENZER even believes, that the underdevelopment of the sensuous-symbolic area and the overemphasising of the other area quite often leads to an unrestrained aggressiveness.

In front of this background the attempts of the school to compensate the loss of sensuous experiences by reimporting instructional materials like coloured films or pictured textbooks are more than helpless. Talking about nature and being in nature are two different things. To talk about the water, the wood and its trees, about the trouts in a brook, the lily in the valley or about the daffodils, to look at a film about a meandering rivulet and its ecological zones or the demonstration of a stuffed fox cannot compensate the practical and sensuous approaches to nature and its phenomena.

By sure most of the activities which we subsume under the title of ‘Other Ways of Learning’ and which we are going to learn and discuss here are suitable to help children to use their five senses to get into contact with nature and world. By means of adventurous activities for example the Homo sedens can be changed into an Homo viator, who is on his way, to discover the world with his five senses. Let's take the example of canoeing down a river with changing currents and a lot of rocks for sev-

eral days. Within this time a huge amount of situations will come up, where the sensuous elemental qualities of water can be experienced. There will be a kind of water, which flows very quick and nearly without any resistance. It spends the joy and pleasant sensation of gliding along the brook without efforts, there will be a kind of water, which suddenly presents a big stopper or a deep fall, which swallow the bow of the boat, which takes the breath away and causes problems of control and the need of quick reaction, there will be a kind of water between the rocks, which allows dancing down the river between them and which presents the canoeist with a lot of thrills, there will be a kind of water, which was calm and smooth, but which after a long cloud-burst suddenly changes into an enemy who has to be fought with all means and senses, there will be a kind of water, which is nearly standing, reflecting the canoeist and his boat narcissistically while rocking it smoothly and spending release after a tense action, there will be a kind of water to prepare the evening soup and the morning tea and which is used afterwards to clean the dishes and there will be a kind of water, which spends refreshment and a feeling of being new born after a day's hard canoeing. These different qualities of water - they all result from different contexts and from different sensuous needs. The adventurous action breaks off the above mentioned subsumption of all kind of waters under the chemical formula of H<sub>2</sub>O. In a certain way it gives back to the water the richness of its different qualities.

Or take the wind that blusters, whispers, whistles, howls, sweeps, the wind that freshens up and the one, which tears the foam out of the waves, making it nearly impossible to keep the sea-kajak on course, the wind that lends a soft voice to the fir trees, a rustling voice to the oaks and a fluttering voice to the birches, the wind that nurses the campfire, the one that sends us the shrieks of the grey geese, before we realise their formations at the sky, the wind, that brings the smell of the lime-trees into our tent or the wind that makes music with the branches and twigs of a tree like an Aeolian harp, sometimes woeful sometimes homely – all these winds are different from the movement of the air, which is registered with an anemometer and which is explained as a levelling up of pressures, which takes place between a region of high atmospheric pressure and a region of low atmospheric pressure.

I do not give these examples in order to start a reenchantment of our rationalistic world. And I do not even try to find a sort of salvation and better life while being in nature nor do I want to use nature to criticise the logical-operative rationality. I am far away from that. It would be too foolish to criticise this kind of rationality considering the huge amount of knowledge and techniques it has developed to master the problems of our daily lives. With these examples I want to remember

that besides the instrumental rationalistic way to explain the world, there is another way to get into touch with the world. The adventure for example as part of this approach always reminds us, not to forget it. Going into the woods, into the mountains, onto the stormy sea and onto white water and mastering the upcoming problems and resistances with body and senses seems to be premodern. But it is also a visible bodily exhibition of a world approach, which has been pushed aside by the process of civilisation in favour of rationalistic patterns of thinking and acting. With this demonstration the adventure is a hidden critique of that, what modern societies have done to the body and his five senses. It faithfully takes the part of that, what has been lost. In doing so, it practises historical recollection or – if you don't mind – it writes a sort of bodily historical anthropology. It's existence reminds us that none of the moments of our ontogenetic or phylogenetic past is lost forever, if only the present takes it up.

This knowledge however is not free from a kind of sadness. If the adventure brings forth an approach to the world, which was accepted in former times it shows at the same moment that this approach will not be accepted as a real relevant life-practice within a measurable time. For the school it remains to be a garnish to loosen the classes, for society it remains to be a helpful regression to compensate unreasonable demands.

If schools because of their aims and organisation are not able to give room enough to develop bodily sensuous faculties and if we are convinced that these faculties are important for the growing up of children, than other institutions should take over the business, which is required. In the country I come from schools begin to open. They have started to look out for cooperations with organisations existing in the surrounding community. As long as school structures will not change fundamentally I think it would be a good compromise if schools cooperate with youth work.

Youth work seems to be suitable in particular because it has different ideas about the growing up of children than school has. In its work childhood and youth are no phases the kids must get through quickly only to become adults. Instead they are independent life spans with their own patterns of needs and interests. Youth work does not follow the typical time division, which underlies the school classes. Time doesn't run out. This makes it possible to apply slower and resistant ways of learning, digressions are welcome and projects are usual. Out of the totality of its approach follows, that not only cognitive aspects but also emotional, sensuous and practical aspects are taken into consideration, seriously. Head, heart and hand are demanded likewise. This could be the reason why adventure activities are one of the favourite activities of youth work.

If school and youth work cooperate than the contribution of youth work should not only be the garnish. Both institutions must plan the classes together. From such a concerted planning a social room of learning could arise, which for a short time at least could reconcile both approaches to the world – the instrumental – rationalistic one and the bodily sensuous one.

We now have 4 days to discuss these other ways of learning and the necessity of the cooperation between school and youth work. This opportunity would not exist, if not 3 persons would have taken over the difficult business of arranging this congress. Two years ago it were Ann Charlotte Nilsson and Anders Szczepanski, who have agreed to shoulder the troubles of organising this meeting. On half the way Ture Göransson joined them. All who ever have organised a congress know what a hell of a lot of work they have done. With great skill Anne-Charlotte, Anders and Ture have arranged the conditions for our 4 days meeting. In view of their great commitment the board would like to express it's thanks to them and to all who assisted them.

We also want to thank our institutional hosts. The university of Linköping, especially the Centre for Outdoor and Environmental Education have supported this congress financially and materially. But also the financial supports of the City of Linköping and last but not least of the community of Kinda have made it possible, that this congress can take place. Many thanks to all of them for their help.

I have talked about two ways to get in to touch with the world – the instrumental-rational one and the bodily sensuous one. It would be nice if the theoretical and practical activities of the next days will succeed to reconcile them – at least for the short time of our congress.

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JUHA SUORANTA

# FROM THE HUMANISM TO THE BIOPARADIGM IN (ADVENTURE) EDUCATION

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## The humanistic project of the Enlightenment is alive

Let me start by quoting one of my favourite thinkers Michel Foucault. In his meditation on Kant's text titled "What is Enlightenment?", Foucault writes as follows:

*Kant seems to me to have founded the two great critical traditions which divide modern philosophy. Let us say that in his great critical work, Kant posited and founded this tradition of philosophy that asks the question of the conditions under which true knowledge is possible and we can therefore say that a whole side of modern philosophy since the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been defined and developed as the analytic of truth. But there exist in modern and contemporary philosophy another type of question, another kind of critical questioning: it is precisely the one we see being born in the question of Aufklärung or in the text on the Revolution. This other critical tradition poses the question: What is our actuality? What is the present field of possible experience? It is not an issue of analysing the truth, it will be a question rather of what we could call an ontology of ourselves, an ontology of the present.*

It is in this spirit of an ontology of ourselves and the present that I will try to speak and pose my questions. My starting point is the notion that, as it seems to me, the essential trend of 21st century is to go beyond the humanistic world-view of the Enlightenment. The big question, almost a larger than life question, is just how is this going to happen.

In general terms, the Enlightenment can be defined as two events: first, as a withdrawal from nature and mov-

ing to a second nature which is cultural and technological; second, as defining human freedom in a new way, that is, human beings and their existence, apparently free from the chains of nature and culture.

From this perspective the message of the Enlightenment has reached a point in which the human's role in nature and culture – being a creature that creates nature and culture – must be re-evaluated. Based on the Enlightenment, this second transformation in the historical narrative of civilization can be called a transition from the humanistic definition of the human and humanity towards the bioparadigm. The bioparadigm is a biotechnological definition of the present era. There begins to be more and more impressive empirical examples of a bioparadigm in front of us and among us. I am sure I do not need to remind us here that both definitions of culture whether humanism- or bioparadigm-based are human-made cultural constructs trying to capture the essence of the time and being.

What is actually meant by the bioparadigm, is the unforeseen revolution of the world order caused by human actions. The bioparadigm refers to the historical phase of defining the human and humanity in which it is more and more problematic to draw a theoretical or a practical distinction between biological and artificial life and to discriminate between so-called natural and so-called artificial objects and action. In the literal meaning of the word, the bioparadigm describes a situation in which, and I emphasize this, *all life* is made subject to variability, design, and calculation (see also Heiskala 1996).<sup>1</sup> The current forms of simulation culture, digital technology, lead the way: they challenge the relation between human-made cultural nature and the so-called first nature that, by definition, is independent of human being. The issue here is an event in which human actions result in both separating and bringing together human and na-

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<sup>1</sup> The word 'bio' could be replaced with the word 'cyber'; 'paradigm' could be replaced with 'culture,' 'perspective,' or 'matrix.' The reason for using just the word 'bioparadigm' is that it is more general than all the other possible compounds (e.g., 'bioculture' or 'cyberparadigm') in that it depicts the on-going and partly ended revolution in the shared seeing of reality. In this sense, our concept resembles the other of Kuhn's (1970, 175) two implications for using the concept of paradigm: "it stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community." In the context of this text, the bioparadigm is defined by a community of media artists and researchers, biotechnicians, philosophers of the mind, educators etc.

ture, the natural and the artificial, and in a new way forming hybrids and cyborgs.<sup>2</sup>

It is good to remember that human beings have always built their relation to reality on certain technique(s) and media, and in this sense it might be argued, that the bioparadigm does not differ from other history. However, a fundamental change has taken place in this relation. In his analysis of human's relation to the world, Hans Jonas (1997) discusses the fundamental change in the importance of yesterday's technique as compared with the present ones. Earlier, the mediated relation of human to the world referred to the necessity of survival, and the attainment of certain immediate goals that did not defy the order of nature which was considered eternal. Today, in the form of modern technologies, *tekhne* has become a tool for human being's unlimited advancement and progress that is constantly going beyond the earlier limits of bare necessities.

The most significant – if also the strangest and most threatening – step beyond bare necessities is applying *tekhne* on human beings, that is, *adding human beings to the list of technological objects*. According to Jonas, human beings have always made their lives by subduing the conditions. Except for birth and death we have never been helpless. Now even the questions of life and death have become negotiable cultural issues, subordinate to technical skills. The bioparadigm is thus characterized, on the one hand, by calculating rationality and expansion of control; and on the other hand, by increased unpredictability of life.

There are several everyday examples of the bioparadigm (cf. Jonas 1997, 118-122; Ritzer 1996, 161-175) ranging from seemingly innocent propaganda and media power to seemingly threatening genetic control:

- INFORMATIONAL CONTROL: The digitalization of communication, media integration, virtual interfaces and simulations. There must already be a plethora of 3-D-computer games which give a real feeling of experience and take players to joyful adventure.
- GERONTOLOGICAL CONTROL: Medicalization of society, drugs (that affect organisms and the psyche), artificial organs, body sculpting through plastic surgery, fetal diagnostics. An absurd, but still revealing, example comes from Los Angeles tourist guide (Lonely Planet): "Body sculpting isn't just for the famous in this town, although being rich certainly helps. Cosmetic suegons performing liposuction, facial sculpting, buttock lifts and other services are

waiting to transfrom you..... Hair implants are only the beginning; tummy tucks, biceps enhancement and pectoral implants will surely attract the mate of your dreams."

- GENETIC CONTROL: Genetic technology: genetically modified food, genetic manipulation of animals and humans, genetic therapy, gene sales and cloning. Some researchers and moral philosophers, like the Archiatre of Finland, Risto Pelkonen, have suggested that in the future there will be "genetic paradises," and places where international regulations on using genetic technology can be circumvented, genes of "the bold and the beautiful" sold, and illegal cloning possible. To give an innocent everyday example. Newspapers in the US are nowadays loaded with advertisements which seek egg donors with preferred criteria such as height 5'6" or taller, caucasian, S.A.T scores around 1300, academic examination and an age under 30. Is this not a new form of racism? The extensions of the bioparadigm have raised debates in the press. In the fall of 1999, *Die Zeit*, for example, has been a forum for heated discussion on the meanings of genetic technology. The catalyst of the discussion has been Peter Sloterdijk, a philosopher, who claims that fetal diagnosis and genetic technology are just extensions of the screening process in the educational system. In the US, the question of what will prevent turning democratic decision-making or elections into such a "selection" has been raised. In other places, Finland for example, the same issues of biotechnology versus humanism have been raised.

According to the idea of Enlightenment, human nature is the same everywhere and at every time. It is through rational discussion and reasoning that people and societies can find the right goals for themselves as well as the effective ways to reach these goals. It is reason that makes emancipation and progress possible by stripping humankind of mythical thinking (cf. Berlin 1979; Habermas 1987, 166-173). The central achievement of the Enlightenment is the idea of a modern democracy that penetrates all levels of society; it applies to universal human rights and community rights as well as to individual rights (Malmberg 1999, 81). In addition to its social and technological achievements, on the other hand, the Enlightenment has brought about – often accidentally – phenomena that could not have been anticipated. Chance and unpredictability are the important equalizers of human action: they force us to check all special plans and even return us to the rank and file (Jonas 1997, 107). The critics of the Enlightenment emphasise that as we turn Galilei's telescope from the

2 A cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a being in science fiction and social reality, a symbiotic merging of organic life and technological systems (Haraway 1985, 1991; Dumit & Davis-Ford 1998). Consider diverse implants or just mobile phones or computers. They make us all cyborgs in a sense that they are extensions of human as Marshall McLuhan has stated.

cosmos to the smallest particles of nature, we also increase the risk of these unknown and these unanticipated outcomes.

Furthermore, on this double bind of humanism – the dialectics of the Enlightenment – is based with the 20th Century ideal of a self-taught and self-regulated learner; as well as the entire humanistic educational philosophy that aims at clarifying a human's relation with the world. Its mission has always been finding ways of influencing, for example, human behavior, characteristics, and learning capabilities. In this sense adventure education could be considered as a long hoped for child of a collapsing modernity; in a word, it could be argued as fulfilling its promise by its intervention and prevention programs in dealing with such modern social problems as drug abuse (is there any other sort of use?), unemployment, violence etc. Rather than emphasizing these vital social issues as a way of legitimizing the usefulness of diverse outdoor practices and the professionalization of adventure education, I would like to stress that we have reached a line where pedagogy and educational philosophy, must face an issue that, in the past, has been mainly just speculated on; namely, whether or not we can influence human features in dramatically new ways.

The dilemma of modern education has been between providing 'bildung' and edification and responding to the needs of the society and the labor market. In the future, the question is whether it will be increasingly uncomplicated to genetically determine how individuals will be educated: who is going to be working in slavery on a mobile phone in sweat shops, and who is to become a celebrated top scientist or artist, or adventurer on the top of the world. The old questions of educational philosophy about freedom, necessity and choice have been shown in new light by the latest biotechnological and biomedical research. The informational or genetic control of behavior (cf. examples above) may lead to the expansion of medical treatments to areas where they promote controlling the society (Jonas 1997, 120).

When talking about the ease of control, we should consider the seemingly innocent example of the increase in the consumption of stimulants and anti-depressants such as Prozac. On the other hand, we should bear in mind Michel Foucault's (1988, 176) metacriticism of medicalization and his suggestion of establishing a hospice and stimulation center where the terminally ill or desirous of death could go for a week or a month to enjoy life, using medicine as they wished, and then disappear as if they never existed. Elderly people are not so much afraid of dying, but to be hospitalized under unhuman circumstances.

## Natural history of learning and human perception

In the early 20th century philosophy there was a firm tendency to purify science of metaphysics. Logical empiricists wanted to simplify scientific language by going back to elementary sentences that describe perceptions and logical combinations of these sentences. This thinking was based on the myth of a given reality: according to this idea, there are certain given sensory data that form the basis of knowledge. Later, in anthropology and psychology, for example, it was realized that perceptions always include abstract matter; in other words, they are theory- (Hanson 1969), culture-, and practice-laden (Pihlström 1997). This idea was introduced already in the 1700's by Kant in his transcendental philosophy. However, his idea might have been ignored on the grounds that if theory is constantly intertwined with perception, it is a precondition that needs no special attention.

The central idea of Kant's 18th century Copernican revolution in philosophy is that we never reach reality as it is but always as it is interpreted by our minds. We merely know that a world of things exists, but we can only reach the world of phenomena that is constructed by the restrictions of our minds. In other words, Kant's idea was that we reach the world as mental representations, but we cannot reach the object of these representations. One of the most interesting questions, at least to me, is to try to find out, are there other ways than cognitive-based learning; and if there are, how do we know about them, how do we tell and write about, that is, conceptualise them, and, finally, how do we teach about them? Is adventure education one way to go beyond so-called epistemological fallacy?

The human mind is forever bound to the same conceptual or linguistic system of categories characteristic of the species. This can be called the universal reason of the Enlightenment or the "transcendental subject." According to Kant, time, space, and causality are permanent categories of the human mind that are essential for our perception. In *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant (1969, 180-187) discusses the restrictions of perception which enable the application of the pure concepts of understanding. Kant also provides a foundation for the universal assumption that people who have grown up in the same culture see reality in much the same way and that the forms of perception are shared.

In the anthropological sense, it is the culture that teaches us the hidden principles which we use to organize our everyday life. The general categories that affect everyday life are coincidence, conventions and traditions as well as rational decisions (Allardt 1995, 10-11). However, in the bioparadigm there are essentially no guaran-

tees that such Kantian categories of perception would continue to be the basic conditions of the human world order. It is on this that the claims of the revolutionary character of the bioparadigm, in terms of, e.g., educational and medical philosophy, are based.

Biotechnologically enhanced learning might mean an injection into the tissue, a pill under the tongue, electricity into the synapse, a microchip implant under the skin (see Warwick 2000), a nano-sized machine into the vascular system. This kind of learning might take, in Kantian terms, a human's, inborn or characteristic abilities for learning into new and unknown areas.

Similarly, as other primates show signs of the mechanisms of human biological development and cultural activities, we can think that the human being, as a biological and cultural creature, will continue to develop further; in this sense, education always resembles an experiment (Kauppi 1990, 29). The question is who will control that experiment in the future?

One answer comes from Bill Joy (2000), a cofounder and Chief Scientist of Sun Micro System. Joy claims that new technologies give us power to remake the world. The combination of genetics, nanotechnology and robotics "open up the opportunity to completely redesign the world, for better or worse: The replicating and evolving processes that have been confined to the natural world are about to become realms of human endeavor." According to Joy the whole idea of the bioparadigm, that of redesigning the world, so essential to education, is based on two dreams. The first dream is the idea that intelligent machines can do our job for us, allowing us to live in earthly paradise without any burdens. The second dream is that we will slowly replace ourselves with our robotic replicants and thereby achieving immortality by the downloading of our consciousnesses. But as Joy states, "on this path our humanity may well be lost."

As well known, the idea of humanity is a contested terrain, and as educators we should be ready to tackle Joy's questions very seriously. We still need to think that *just saying no* is a valid option<sup>3</sup>.

It is, thus, important to note that education based on social norms, traditions, and conventions does not necessarily increase human's possibilities in the most optimal and effective way. In terms of optimality and effectiveness, it is the bioparadigm that answers all the calls for rationalizing human action. However, the ideas of rationalizing education are rarely taken to their logical end:

controlling behavior, stimulation, and producing desired learning results with medicine.

The bioparadigm will help in completing rationalization in several areas of human activity, including education, work, and leisure. Rationalization is required for the effectiveness, countability, predictability, and control of human action and of the (wo)man-made technological and social systems (Ritzer 1996). It is the culture of the bioparadigm that can provide better ways for solving all these questions. In this sense, the future will reawaken the utopias and dystopias of the total control of human action, but also, a re-awakening of the paradoxes, the unpredictabilities, and the counterstrategies of that control condition will be evident (Ritzer 1996, 162, 177-203).

### On the Kantianism-breaking nature of the bioparadigm

Kant saw the intelligent subject, first and foremost, as pure consciousness; thus, he described the structures of the subject as the only conditions for an experience and a world. In this case, transcendental philosophy meant that objects were formed from within the reflecting cognition. The thinking subject carries, in his or her experience, the model for perceiving and analyzing the world and the essential structural characteristics of a world taking shape.

The problem with Kant's enlightened philosophy is that it is burdened with the preconceptions of a Cartesian rationalism that differs from empiricism. He makes the problematic presumption that reason is an eternal standard that is a precondition for all experience by all rational beings. However, according to the central presumption of the bioparadigm, the essential categories for thinking, perceiving the world, and adapting to it must be seen in wider terms than Kantian rationality. The reciprocal relation of human or any other living being to the world is based on far more complex connections than rationality. In his analysis of the early writings of Walter Benjamin, Martin Jay (1999, 179-180) notes his criticism of Kant: Benjamin tried to go beyond Kant's way of restricting experience to what is filtered through the synthetic *a priori* functions of understanding.

A different scientific tradition and different kind of thematics have led to similar arguments. According to Daniel Dennett (1997, 72-75), who has studied the philosophy of the mind, our considering of the nerve system as merely a data processing system is an error<sup>4</sup>. In a rough sense, both living organisms and various techni-

3 I want to thank Steve Bowles for reminding me of that option!

4 In terms of the history of learning, it is interesting that Dennett's ideas that rise from the analytic tradition and a materialistic starting point converge with the arguments of, on the one hand, physical philosophy in the phenomenological tradition (e.g., Merleau-Ponty 1993, 73-78) and, on the other hand, science of philosophy in the tradition of critical theory (cf. Jay 1999).

cal instruments can be studied as communication and control systems that interact with their surroundings. In these systems, most of the interfaces (between the outside world and the system) rely on one or more feeders that feed information to the “processor” of the instrument or organism.

Essentially, the information feeders, processors, and modems can be replaced with other similar ones and transferred from one system to another. They are what is called task-oriented instruments. Human beings, too, have certain specialized parts that can be replaced, such as artificial organs and instruments that help the organism to function. Matters become more complicated when we start talking about the human mind. Compared with machines and less complex life forms, the control system of more complex life forms such as human beings and mammals is extremely refined; their nerve systems can make millions of decisions simultaneously around the organism. From this point of view, the mind of a more complex life form is not located in any one specific place as it is often thought.

In terms of the bioparadigm and criticism of Kantian thinking, Dennett’s insight is central: the history of the human species before the current perception of the mind and cultural history is the history of single-celled organisms, fish, molluscs, reptiles, and nerve systems. Millions and billions of years connect the history of the human being’s biological evolution with the history of other living beings; therefore the human body knows much more about the world and other living beings than we dare to think. As Nietzsche writes: “There is more sagacity in thy body than in thy best wisdom. And who then knoweth why thy body requireth just thy best wisdom?” (1891, First Part, Chapter 4).

## From the humanism to the bioparadigm

The transfer from humanism to the bioparadigm can be described and exemplified through the previously mentioned control mechanisms: the informational, gerontological, and genetic. Seen from the other angle, the bioparadigm has two dimensions.

The first dimension is that biotechnology goes into the body and becomes an artificial part of the control system of an organic living being. At its simplest, we can think about a task-oriented instrument or a piece of wire in the auditory organ that restores lost hearing or even helps a deaf person to hear. Or think of those with an organic heart disease who without medical technology most likely would have died even just 20 years ago.

The fusions of artificial instruments and organisms are called cyborgs. The mechanization can be either inside or outside the cyborg; those equipped with an artificial

heart, an insulin pump under the skin, or an artificial pacemaker belong to the first category. The bioparadigm is crucial in maintaining their life. An outside connection to the bioparadigm can be seen in, e.g., various simulation environments (cf. the third stage). One professor of cybernetics, Kevin Warwick (2000), is tapping into his nerve fibers to conduct an experiment with an implant that will send signals back and forth between his nervous system and a computer. He is planning to record and identify signals associated with motion, pain, and emotions.

The second dimension of the bioparadigm is the triumph of biotechnology. It is in this field that the previous questions must be faced: to what extent can human control life? In the philosophy of biotechnology, self-evident cultural truths are problematized: in terms of chemicals and signals, what is natural, what is artificial? It is known, for example, that the natural chemical processes of the brain produce substances that affect the biochemical mechanisms of the organism in ways similar to narcotics and psychopharmaceutical drugs. In a Foucauldian tone it can be suggested that “raising self-esteem pharmacologically might help a person to express oneself and thus balance the power of the bold and the brazen in our future society” (Korpi 1999).

There is currently much heated discussion about the bioparadigm (cf. footnotes 3 and 4). According to the critics, the development is reductive: it simplifies, restricts, and represses the human being. On the other hand, technology-freaks praise the progress and keep developing their innocent techno-utopias. At the same time, in secret laboratories all around the world scientists experiment with cloning human embryos and mixing human genes with those of a chimpanzee.

On the one hand, critics keep repeating their horrid visions of computers watching over (wo)men as well as their hopes for a nation of freedom governed by (wo)man. On the other hand, we should remember to ask who is watching over whom; moreover, what is controlling one’s own life, i.e., human freedom, if it is not an illusion created by the Enlightenment.

In his book *Tiede ja Ihmisjärki* (“Science and Reason“), Finnish philosopher and humanist Georg Henrik von Wright quotes Einstein: “the tragedy of the modern human is generally in that he or she has created for him- or herself living conditions that his phylogenetic development is not up to.” Von Wright continues: “must this be a permanent tragedy. Considering how slow evolution is, there is a risk that human cannot adjust to the changing living conditions in time before he or she is doomed as a species.” From this perspective virtual reality is an example of a medium that overloads our senses and diminishes our ability to live; the bioparadigm is a double-edged sword.

## 21st Century Avant-Garde

The Romantic rebellion of humanism is characterized by a will to see through the eyes of the strange and unfamiliar other, to be somebody else than the ordinary everyday self. The desired forms of “otherness” have included race, gender, and sexual preference.

As we enter the 21st century, the significance of the forms of human otherness are changing. Now the desire is to see through the eyes of another species. The utopia of the bioparadigm is to change the human being into a cyborg, a new animal species. Biometaphors are also playing an important role in film, music videos, as well as the Internet. At the same time, biotechnology is being used to develop virtual reality systems and the information technology industry is doing serious research in hypodermic communications media. Moreover, new media interfaces are often modeled on nature.

In the bioparadigm, the desire for otherness is not necessarily directed toward the phenotype of the human species; rather, the avant-garde desire to otherness is redirecting itself toward the genotype of the species or totally outside of human species. Thus, the utopia seems to be “the desire to see through the eyes of an ant which could be made possible with a “genetic capsule.” It is easy to imagine various educational and social political visions, targets and goals, in terms of making people more adapt, acceptable and willing to obey to the capitalist regime.

In this very basic sense the world view of the bioparadigm fits the world view of new hyper capitalism like a glove fits the hand. They share the same *ethos* and *logos*, so to speak. To use Joy’s (2000) words: “We are aggressively pursuing the promises of these new technologies within the now-unchallenged system of global capitalism and its manifold financial incentives and competitive pressures.”

### Tomorrow we will succeed...

So far our characteristic physiological mechanism has regulated our sense perceptions and experiences. Thus, the transfer from humanism to the bioparadigm means another Copernican revolution. Synthetically speeding up the evolution is a significant step in the field of technique. On the one hand, the new cyber- and biotechnic extensions of the human body might signify the genesis of a new species. On the other hand, we might think that we have come to the end of the enlightened and romantic humanism which put emphasis on the human being. There is no reasonable answer to this question, but the ideas discussed above can lead to either conclusion.

The latter conclusion is suggested by studies on the genetics of learning: human being is a complex learning

machine that interacts in complex ways with her/his/human environment. Geneticists (cf. Portin 1999, 47) seem to think that, compared with other animals, human genes have something special that makes them life-long learners. According to some genetics studies, however, the difference between human genes and other animal genes is only a gradational one.

We are still prisoners of both our culture and our species. Very slowly evolution is changing the typical characteristics of our species. In cultural interaction, we can learn to look from the point of view of another culture, often gradually and learning unconsciously as cultures interact and change. What the natural sciences, including medicine, are most interested in changing are not the epistemic preconditions of our culture, but the superhistorical, biologically structured preconditions of humankind. Nobody yet knows or may ever know whether this current stage is but an attempt to reinvent the human being, an idea introduced by Dr. Frankenstein.

Almost 30 years ago, B. F. Skinner (1972, 5) called for a technology of behavior, but found that “a behavioral technology comparable in power and precision to physical and biological technology is lacking.” However, what might help in fulfilling Skinner’s utopia is the bioparadigm and its characteristics discussed above. Rather than a mere technology of behavior, the fulfillment would mean a more thorough *biopedagogy*, i.e., direct chemical control of the prerequisites for learning.

Even if we talk about the bioparadigm, the enlightened tradition of humanism reminds us of its existence in the fact that humans have the ability and obligation to search for reasons for their actions. This search is deeply rooted in Western culture. Furthermore, the questions of the transfer from humanism to the bioparadigm are also social and cultural in result, and therefore should be analyzed in the discourse of the social sciences.

In the paper I have focused on the revolutionary change in human’s relation to the world. The importance of this transfer demands focus on such issues as exercising social power, the symbolic opposition between the elite and the people, intellectual racism, (cf. Bourdieu 1999, 44-45) as well as the nature of suffering: if we want to understand and relieve unrecognized pain in the world, we must study how beings live, not their brain (Dennett 1997, 160).

Biological and technological questions always end up being a part of people’s life-world – or the social semiosis. The issues of the life-world are always educational. It is not out of the question that soon we might have, among us, cloned children who are created to answer somebody’s unfortunate needs and unrealistic edu-

cational goals. It is essential that the theory of education is not only focused on scientific planning, but that it also pays attention to the ethics and moral values of the good life.

The bioparadigm forcefully questions formal schooling: why make children sit in classroom when we can use digital-bodily teaching machines and possibly, even, pharmacological means for directing learning? In the bioparadigm human beings make the world an educational laboratory and their life an experiment conducted in this laboratory.

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ANDERS SZCZEPANSKI

# WHAT IS OUTDOOR EDUCATION?

## The Didactic Implications of Learning on the Context of Landscape

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This paper describes the process of acquiring knowledge in outdoor environments. 'Hands-on' and 'minds-on' activities are related to the concept of Outdoor Education, the epistemology of which will be discussed in a pragmatic-hermeneutic perspective. The didactic issues will, thus, be interpreted in terms of human expressions, i.e., traces of human activity in the cultured landscape, as well as in terms of nature itself, i.e., phenomena independent of human beings, or traces of natural forces. This is a way to expose human understanding in meaningful situations, outside the written culture, with direct access to the phenomena. The epistemological and methodological views of Outdoor Education in Sweden and the Nordic context will be scrutinized and linked to an ideological/historical perspective, in which man's relation to the physical environment is described. I will provide an overview of empirical studies that indicate certain positive effects on preschool and school children of an extended use of outdoor space for educational purposes, effects that are connected with health, motor development and concentration. Finally, I will describe the status of Outdoor Education as a field of higher learning and as a research discipline in Sweden. There are good reasons, on both epistemological and didactic levels, to pay attention to the multitude and the pedagogical possibilities of the outdoor space in meaningful learning. An extended pedagogical activity in the outdoor space results in a more vivacious educational perspective, in concrete environmental work departing from direct experiences that will give the children, students and teaching staff unique knowledge.

### Part I

#### THE LANDSCAPE OF SWEDEN – GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

In terms of surface area, Sweden is the fifth largest country in Europe. The 'Cairn of Three Countries' in the north, where the borders of Sweden, Norway and Finland meet, is at the same latitude as northern Alaska, and Skåne in the south is at the same latitude as Moscow. The distance from north to south is nearly 1600 km, which means that there is great variation in the cli-

mate between different parts of the country. Because of the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic, however, the Swedish climate is much milder than that of other places at similar northerly latitudes. More than half of the land surface is covered by forest, mostly conifers except in the most southerly parts. Sweden's forests are second largest in Europe after Russia's. Almost a quarter of the country is mountain, and marsh. Arable land - open cultivated country - makes up only 7% of the land surface. Lakes, of which there are about 100 000, cover a larger area, almost 9% of the area of the country. The Scandinavian mountain chains run north south and form the border with Norway. In the south of Sweden there is an area of high plateau, the Småland uplands.

#### NATURAL RESOURCES, INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY

Sweden has extensive natural resources in the form of its forests, iron ore, copper, lead, zinc, gold, silver, uranium and water power. Oil and coal reserves are very small. In a century, Sweden has developed from an agricultural society to a highly industrialized one, in which the service sector is more and more dominant. Of the country's almost 500 000 companies, 300 000 are one-person enterprises and a high proportion of these are in the service or construction sectors.

It is a characteristic of Swedish business, and particularly manufacturing industry, that a small number of large companies account for a very high proportion of employment, production and exports: 0.3% of companies - 1 600 in number - have over 200 employees. Swedish industry is over 90% privately owned. In practice, the state runs the post and the railways and has large holdings in mining, power and shipbuilding. In recent years, former state industries and state-owned companies have been incorporated or privatized to some degree. Tourism is a major industry in Sweden and has seen steady growth for many years. Tourism generates about 100 million kronor per year, (about 12 million USD). This means 3.2% of GNP and it provides employment for 235,000 people.

## HISTORY

Sweden has been inhabited for at least 12,000 years. The core of Sweden as we know it today - Svealand and the counties of Östergötland and Västergötland - emerged as a unit under a single king during and after the 12th century. Birger Jarl founded Stockholm in the year 1250. The embryonic structure of state and law-making that was introduced by the kings of the Folkunga family between 1250 and 1363 was an important first step in the building of the nation. In 1350, Sweden implemented a legal code covering the whole country. Under King Gustav Vasa, his sons, and, above all his grandson, Gustav II Adolf (1611-32), the foundation of national administration, law, military organization, education and other social institutions were laid. The Swedish kingdom's expansion in the Baltic began at this time. By the middle of the 17th century, after the victory over Denmark and successes in the Thirty Years War on the European continent, Sweden could regard the Baltic as a Swedish Sea. The Great Nordic War, which involved all Nordic countries, began in 1700. The victory of the Russians at the Battle of Poltava marked the fall of the Swedish Baltic Empire.

The 1809 reform of the Swedish constitution led to a reduction of the monarch's power and the rising control of the Parliament. The loss of Finland and the possessions in northern Germany were compensated for by the union of the crown with Norway, which lasted until 1905. Now Sweden began to look inwards and accepted its position as a small state on the periphery of Europe. The long and laborious process of economic development started about the middle of the 19th century, with educational and agricultural reform, the building of canals and railways and the beginnings of industrialization. This was the foundation of the welfare state of Sweden of today.

## GOVERNMENT

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary form of government. According to the constitution, all authority rests with the people. Its representatives are the 349 members of parliament, the unicameral Riksdag,

The Riksdag decides on all legislation and on the annual state budget. It approves the choice of a Prime Minister and through a vote of no confidence with the support of 50% or more of members can dismiss a government or force an individual minister's resignation. The Prime Minister is the head of government. The role of the monarchy is representative and symbolic. Since 1994 general elections have been held every fourth year.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Nature Conservation

A well-known scientist, A.E. Nordenskiöld, followed the American model by proposing in 1880 that national parks be created which would maintain the natural landscape as it was before humans entered the scene. The breakthrough, led by the German professor of botany, Hugo Conwentz, came in 1904. A nature protection committee led by the academy of Sciences was given the task of investigating a Nature Protection Act and in 1909 the choice of protected areas were made.

Sweden has a very comprehensive network of protected areas, consisting of reserves and parks, while only a few new national parks have been created in modern times. Between 1964 and 1998 only fifteen new national parks have been established, whereas the number of reserves has grown to over 1.350 in the same period. The difference between a park and a reserve is that the park consist of a bigger area with a higher level of protection.

### Outdoor Recreation

Making provision for outdoor recreation is one aspect of nature conservation. It is important, for example, to protect and provide information about the common right of access to private land. (Sw. 'allmansrätten'). This term was first used at the end of the 19th century. Today it means that we have certain rights but also obligations when we are on other people's land and water. The main rule is that the countryside must remain undisturbed and undamaged. This special Swedish tradition makes it possible for us to go almost anywhere in the Swedish countryside. The need for information about these unwritten laws has increased tremendously in recent years. Many immigrants and foreign tourists are not accustomed to this concept.

### A comprehensive term

The term outdoor recreation is relatively new and its meaning has been extended as our society has been transformed. The most frequent definition is: *Leisure time spent in the countryside to enjoy nature, be physically active and relax*. On average a Swede devotes about nine per cent of his everyday free time to outdoor recreation (1983). Most kinds of outdoor activities are counted as recreation, regardless of whether one uses one's muscles or gets help from a motor, or whether the activity affects nature or not. Outdoor recreation is, in fact, a comprehensive term in common use in Sweden.

## Recreational capacity

Planning for outdoor recreation in protected areas can be carried out without taking other land use into consideration. Sweden has more than 1,350 nature reserves and about half have been created for outdoor recreation. Fears of damage caused by overuse sometimes raises the question of how much wear and tear reserves can stand. There is also the issue of overuse and disturbance that the people who visit the reserve will tolerate. The term 'recreational capacity' has been coined to describe nature's ability to provide outdoor pleasure.

## Sustainable development and Agenda 21

Agenda 21 was an outcome of the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and is a document of world wide agreement with focus on man's relation to the global Earth. In the autumn of 1996, the Ministers of Environment from countries in the Baltic region met in Saltsjöbaden, near Stockholm, to discuss the development of an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea. The high-level political meeting hosted by Sweden in May 1996 has created a political framework for sustainable development in the Baltic region. One important element of the Rio agreements was the emphasis made on the importance of local work for sustainable development, with various groups in the community taking part. It is at the local level that Agenda 21 activities have achieved their greatest impact in Swedish society. All 288 of Sweden's municipalities have embarked on Local Agenda 21 work. The municipalities are working to involve and inform local stakeholders, citizens and, their own organization and operations. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are playing an important part in Swedish Agenda 21 work by supplying ideas and disseminating knowledge and involvement. The 'bottom-up' perspective in Agenda 21 work has proven successful. Swedish Agenda 21 activities have mostly been developed locally and transmitted upwards in the political hierarchy. The common platform for outdoor education and Agenda 21 is to create understanding for the dependence of nature for man in the society.

## Part II

### **OUTDOOR EDUCATION – Literary education and sensory experience. Perspective of the Where, What and Why of learning in the context of landscape.**

Outdoor Education is a thematic and interdisciplinary field of research and education in the natural and cultural landscape arena. Through thematic studies and ac-

tivities in the landscape, Outdoor Education tries to animate the often abstract concepts of the scientific disciplines, and thereby create a local historic, ecological, and social sense of place amongst children and young people (Dahlgren, L.O. & Szczepanski, A. 1997). Practical knowledge is mastered through authentic activities in authentic contexts.

From this perspective, one way of bringing text-based learning in educational settings to its original meaning of gaining knowledge about the surrounding world rather than rote learning of the text itself, is to reclaim reality (the landscape) as a learning environment. This is one of the reasons for Outdoor Education. In this context, Outdoor Education becomes an important complement to theoretical or text-based learning. Research has demonstrated (e.g. Marton et al, 1997), that the traditional learning environment created within the educational system has some serious deficiencies. Knowledge becomes superficial and thereby temporary and does not make the significant contribution it could to individual development. The notion that learning should take place in a certain location at a certain time (the classroom situation) does not seem reasonable when considering the massive research on failure to understand central concepts in e.g. economics, (Dahlgren, 1997), biology (Brumby, 1979), physics, (Johansson et al, 1985), and the alarmingly high frequency of superficial conceptions of learning (e.g. Purdie et al, 1996, Lonka & Lindblom-Ylänne, 1996)

It may be assumed that these problems could be handled by including the natural and cultural environments more often in education. We should expand and deepen our knowledge of outdoor education's effects on learning and attitudes. Landscape architect and researcher Patrik Grahn (1997) refers to research indicating that 'the most creative environments for learning are unstructured and variable environments'. But to what degree does the physical environment determine people's actions? Research has only started, says Grahn. Later, we will return to some research results that encourage increased use of the outdoor environment for pedagogic purposes.

Today, significant resources are spent on research into contemporary social problems such as violence, drug abuse, and alienation from one's own existence. We suspect that a more profound knowledge of Humankind as natural creatures, gained through personal experiences and insights in the natural environment, can contribute to reducing this feeling of alienation. Whether this is the case or not, and how these effects actually take place, are yet to be revealed. Increased research is needed that concentrates on describing (for example) the natural experience's pedagogic effects and how to promote them by developing pedagogic methods.

In outdoor education, feeling, action, and thought are united. The result is a pragmatic, consequential and action-centered pedagogy created by and based on a practical context. This educational approach emphasizes the holistic and even the aesthetic qualities of experience of the outdoor classroom's physical environment. This is a sharp contrast to science, which often dismantles reality into pieces. Furthermore, the aesthetic experience contains artistic forms of expression and creative activities such as play, sports, handicraft, drama, music, and art. A methodological connection between the two approaches in our educational organizations would create a more living conceptual knowledge base. We must also clarify and visualize our pedagogic roots in educational history by bringing forward advocates of education in practical contexts. These contexts put greater importance on the road to knowledge through the sensory experience. We can take heed to these wise words: 'Even a thousand words cannot leave the impression of a deed' (H. Ibsen). By the time of the 'school garden education movement' in 1917, the pedagogic significance of gardening was already brought forward in the three concepts of knowledge value, beauty value, and educational value. 'Free social interaction in the school garden gives the teacher an opportunity to get to know better and more profoundly the characters of his disciples, than in the classroom and behind the teacher's desk'. In *The Education of Man*, Friedrich Fröbel (1782-1852), states that: 'Children learn to love and appreciate nature, and they do this best by spending time amongst it'.

An additional sphere of influence for outdoor education is connected with environmental issues as a part of education and the establishment of an environmental perspective. Contemporary ideas of sustainable development in different fields of activity presuppose a deep and elaborate awareness of the conditions of Man's interaction with the environment. To assure that today's newly gained environmental awareness in 'the spirit of compost-modernism' does not become a verbal parenthesis, we must also increase pedagogic activities that visualize and clarify our relations with the landscape. In other words, we must align pedagogic activity in outdoor learning contexts with natural and cultural phenomena in our local environment.

Some interesting questions of practical pedagogic nature relevant to this might be:

- What can be done in the outdoor classroom rather than doing it within four walls?
- What effect does it have on understanding reality?
- How can knowledge of nature, culture, and society penetrate the rooms that for so long have been considered the core of education?

The belief that learning occurs only in a specified time and place (the learning environment of the classroom) is

as incorrect as believing outdoor education to be the only road to knowledge. In all subjects in school/pre-school, and in the natural and cultural sciences, we can identify many and clear relationships with the Swedish landscape, literature, arts, and music.

Today, massive pedagogic research exists from studies of learning situations in classrooms, and yet pupils graduate unmotivated and indolent, and socially, literally, and ecologically illiterate. Ellen Key, (1849-1926) Sweden's most translated educator, talked of 'soul murdering in schools'. She fought for an alternative pedagogy and field studies where the starting point for learning and knowledge was the real world.

The outdoor classroom as a learning context should therefore receive more attention concerning research funds, teacher's training, and governmental grants. This is needed for creating schools for tomorrow's learning, unbound by place, where the information and communication technology and outdoor education can unite in meaningful learning (Dahlgren & Szczepanski, 1997).

A connection to this is to increase motivation by supplementing the classroom situation with 'the extended classroom'. In this respect, the playground, schoolyard, nature, culture, and society becomes as important a learning environment as classrooms and other rooms. Experiential understanding is relational in character. A child gains understanding from uniting what is seen, heard, felt and interpreted from earlier experiences. Interpreted in a pragmatic-hermeneutic perspective, outdoor education tries to illuminate: Where do these relationships exist? Do they exist in the indoor classroom, the outdoor classroom, the landscape defined by nature and culture, or in a combination of these locations? These questions are central to outdoor education practice.

In the didactic situation, the appearance of disorder (the unstructured meeting the uncontrolled) in outdoor education, gives a 'flow experience', and thereby portrays learning as a process that creates order from disorder.

The same journey into the unknown (unstructured) and back to the known, constitutes the core of the hermeneutic interpretative philosophy. By regular and planned revisits to reality, we are reminded of the actual character of text-based learning: to create images of reality based on the text. In this awareness of the limitations of language and texts, there is also knowledge. Therefore, in both outdoor education and in my interpretation of the hermeneutic tradition, the process of reflection becomes a reflection of linguistic dialogue as well as in action.

The classroom walls constitute 'a third layer of skin' that separates us from nature, culture, and society - the systems of the real world for which the classrooms try to

prepare us. Outdoor education tries to shift the perspective and the division to the playground/schoolyard and the surrounding landscape as learning environments. Dewey (1859-1952) argued that we develop through practical experiences by doing things ‘under the skin’.

The pragmatic (action-centered) educational philosophy, of which Dewey was an advocate, viewed education as a continuous reconstruction of experiences. In his concept of ‘learning by doing’, reasoning is connected to action.

In its methodological perspective, outdoor education becomes an important tool that can animate the intentions of the curriculum. In turn, the messages of places create contexts and understanding in meaningful situations accompanied by and learning from a fellow-discoverer teacher. This puts further demands on the teacher’s competence in pre-school and compulsory school, e.g.:

To view the scope of the outdoor environment as a learning environment

- To work thematically and inter-disciplinarily
- To work with whole entities where self-confidence is secured as the outdoors becomes classroom and textbooks
- To see the outdoor classroom as a complement to the indoor environment
- To be able to work in teams with problem-based learning

At school, learning still relies heavily on texts (literary knowledge), an increased amount of digital texts and virtual reality, and less and less on first-hand experiences. This is a methodological problem, and a challenge in which outdoor education can assist us. The fundamental idea is to create more opportunities for concrete experiences in the outdoor classroom. Ingvar (1997), expresses the significance of our senses:

‘It is necessary to spend time outdoors for our brains to be stimulated by the flow of sounds, light, shapes, and colors that nature offers. We need the outdoor stimuli for our hearing, our vision, and our skin, e.g. singing birds, whispering winds, sunlight reflections and shadows, moisture and fog, and the colors of flowers and insects. The growth of our brain cells depends on this special stimulus nature offers. Especially at ages 3-6, when the energy flow in the human brain is at its greatest’ (ibid. P 89).

In the reality of the outdoor classroom, we often encounter situations that are brimful of sensations: tastes, sounds, and moods. With this pedagogy, we can clarify and visualize for children in pre-school/compulsory school, processes and cycles that are not visible in our hi-tech ‘plugged-in’ society. Here are some examples of such thematic activities that animate knowledge, inte-

grate nature, culture, and technology, and create a sense of community in the shape of analogue codes, and do not merely become digital codes (Code as a system of symbols for meaningful communication):

- From soil to dinner table - the garden and the farm
- From spruce seed to paper - land use then and now
- Water wheel and energy - life in lake and sea
- Life on leaves and in soil - organisms of environmental cycles and compost
- Forgotten older technologies - food, housing, and fire
- The sun and the wind as energy sources
- The city and city parks as classroom and textbook

Outdoor education and outdoor recreation can make us experience the living conditions and problem solving abilities of early Man. In nature’s learning context, members of a group become dependent on each other. This contributes to personal growth, increased self-confidence, and an ability to trust others. Perhaps the health pedagogic perspective also is one of the most important methodological tools for working with outdoor education. The sensory education’s road to knowledge demands a bodily meeting, where the frame of reference of our sensory capability, which has evolved for millions of years in a ‘forest landscape’, becomes stimulated. One of the main reasons for learning in, and from, reality is that it offers chances for experiences, and very likely also prevents learning without reflection. The advantages of learning in outdoor environments are that many senses are activated and it creates a firmer sense of social community.

The concept of outdoor education conceals very concrete and hands-on methods that can be illustrated by the thematic activities for animating knowledge that was mentioned earlier. Outdoor education as a method gives us the chance to secure a sort of ‘tacit knowledge’, where words are not enough. A central goal of this pedagogy is to create, by activities and experiences in the outdoor environment, knowledge and close relationships to nature, culture, and society. Outdoor education wishes to emphasize the importance of the direct view, ‘the fingers-in-the-earth perspective’, where the intentionality (directness of action and thoughts) in its didactic context is related to the outdoor classroom as a learning environment.

We may talk about outdoor education as a process of learning for the whole body, ‘hands – heart – head’. For a teacher in outdoor education the essence is that he or she is willing to learn from experiences in different contexts outside the classroom (the formal learning environment). Experiences and reflections from this direct authentic situation is outdoor education

## Part III

### OUTDOOR RICHES FOR ALL-AROUND DEVELOPMENT

#### □ What does research have to say?

Today, thanks to Swedish, Nordic, and international studies, we have a considerable amount of knowledge of the positive effects that spending time outdoors has on health, creativity, and ability to concentrate. Some examples are:

- Foliage in the schoolyard generates more creative play behavior - both in the green areas and on artificial surfaces (e.g. asphalt). The schoolyard foliage is a springboard to organized visits in parks and nature outside the schoolyard; such visits are not so common at schools without green areas. These are all findings by Lindholm (1995), who concludes that although places create activity, schoolyards are some of our most neglected outdoor environments. Planned and used correctly, the schoolyard can create opportunities for aesthetic experiences, motor activity, and learning and reflection - not least importantly from a developmental psychological perspective.
- Spending time outdoors has positive effects on motor activity, ability to concentrate, and health - in young people as well as old. This has been demonstrated by research leader Patrik Grahn of the same department in empirical studies of the outdoor environment at pre-school. He shows 'that the most creative environments for learning are unstructured, variable environments'. The positive effects of spending time outdoors are also supported by brain research (Gottfries and Bergström, 1992) and educational research on multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993).
- Some knowledge of nature must be collected outdoors. British researcher Wendy Titman (1994), who has received international attention for her work, 'Special People, Special Places', establishes this in her work. Titman has also observed the clear-cut connection that exists between the schoolyard's design and children's attendance, attitudes and behaviors.
- In a dissertation on urban childhood, performed in a modern suburb outside Lund, Bodil Rasmusson (1998) establishes children's need for space and diversity of surroundings. The physical environment 'speaks' to the children, and sends 'signals' of different possibilities and lack of possibilities in respect of the child's needs. The dissertation illustrates the contrast between the need that is conceived for the child, and the child's own perspectives and world of experiences.

## Part IV

### ACADEMIC OUTDOOR EDUCATION IN SWEDEN

Linköping University, with the Centre for Outdoor Environmental Education, (web site <http://www.liu.se/esi/>) has created a network and stronghold for outdoor education in Sweden. Within post-graduate education in Education, a 5 credit points course (corresponding to 5 weeks of full-time study) is offered, and there are also a number of 5, and 10 credit point courses at Bachelor level, (i.e. 20 and 40 credit points) of the basic teacher education. Work is in progress to start a profile program in outdoor education and Masters degree which opens the door for a new academic field of education and research to start in the new millennium in Sweden.

Academic education in this field, specializing in outdoor recreation (20 credit points at bachelor level) is given at the Institute for Sports and Health at Örebro University. The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Alnarp/Uppsala, Karlstad University, Kristianstad University, Umeå University, and Luleå University of Technology also offer courses of 5 – 10 credit points in related fields (outdoor recreation/outdoor education/school garden education).

As an academic field of knowledge, outdoor education still has a weak position in the country. Could it be the educational culture's heavy 'Lutheran sediment' that hinders us in Sweden and the Nordic countries, where conditions would be excellent for developing the questioning vein of outdoor education and outdoor recreation?

This paper is an introduction about Outdoor Education in Sweden and Nordic contexts and all its contributions constitute an important indication of its necessity. Here, we see a co-operative extension in networks between universities and practitioners in the Nordic countries, Baltic states and Europe and all over the world making the scope of educational activities and joint research work wider, and at the same time, more profound.

### Concluding reflections

We would like to conclude with some provocative lines as practicing outdoor educators, since research within this field is still in its infancy, and it is our task to expand our knowledge of the pedagogic conditions of experiential learning in the outdoor classroom.

In the classroom 'cave', pupils are sitting 'chained' to their desks, staring at white boards or computer screens full of vertical, horizontal, diagonal and curved lines. These are combined to put extremely limited verbal labels on practically everything that exists outside the

classroom walls. This is why the first-hand experience of outdoor education becomes an important base for intellectual thoughts. It counter balances the university campus, a place where indoor learning takes place as a preparation for indoor care-taking. In the heavy cultural sediment of this educational culture, we are educating new, ecologically illiterate generations. In our interpretation of hermeneutics and neo-pragmatism, knowledge is more than that which can be formulated. The tacit knowledge is the foundation of our culture, and the breeding ground of visual knowledge. This is best described as that which exists in the tension of a muscle, in the scent of an apple, in the rhythm of a body, in the sense of proportions, in the richness of language beyond the correctness of grammar and the thesaurus. In this educational perspective, we focus on the place of learning, it's Where. The landscape is here just as obvious an interpretative environment as the classrooms of pre-school/compulsory school, the libraries, and the virtual classroom.

## We need the whole body

*Eyes can see, ears they hear  
But hands know best how it is to touch.  
Your skin knows best when somebody is close.  
You need your whole body to learn.  
The brain can think and maybe understand,  
but your legs know best how it is to walk.  
Your back will know how it feels to carry.  
You need your whole body to learn.  
If we are to learn the basics about our planet earth  
then it is not enough with words.  
We must be able to get in close.  
You need the whole body to learn.*  
(Unknown Writer)

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# THE MEANING OF “FRILUFTSLIV”

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## Introduction

In my work at the department of Physical Education and Health at the University of Örebro I have the great advantage to work with outdoor life, or in Swedish: friluftsliv, in theory as well as in practice. Years of reflections emerging from reading a lot of papers, theses and articles, on the subject as well as ideas emerging from experiences and conversations with my students during practising different kinds of outdoor activities have resulted in some kind of a credo of outdoor pedagogy. My intention here is to declare my beliefs and ideas concerning the possible meanings of friluftsliv in the modern western society of today and the pedagogic potential of friluftsliv. I will use the Swedish term friluftsliv as it has a special meaning in the Nordic countries. The word consists of three words: fri - free, luft - air, liv - life. I will use the term in the following meaning: Friluftsliv is to travel and live in close contact with nature where the main purpose is to make experiences.

## The stone age human in the industrial society

For more than 90% of the time humans have existed on this earth we have lived as a part of nature as hunters and as gatherers. This epoch is the only one in the history of humankind that has been long enough to make any impression in our genes. This means that our inborn capabilities; physical, mental as well as social, are made for managing a life in a small group in the wild.

For these early people nature and culture was one unit; there was no difference between the world of a human and the world of nature. People were part of nature just as evident as the birch, the hare and the wolf. This very direct and apparent dependency on nature created religious beliefs that prevented people from wasting the natural surroundings. If people did so, the culture would be extinct or people had to move or dramatically change the way of living. For these people nature was animated, it had a spirit and was holy. The spirits of nature ruled the occurrences in nature and it was therefore important to have a friendly relationship to the “other side“, or else the spirits could punish humankind, which could mean empty stomachs and a lot of trouble.

Some 10 000 years ago a most dramatic change in the history of humankind occurred, people became settled and started to cultivate the earth. This change made it possible to collect valuable things (this had been quite uninteresting to our nomadising ancestors) and to own became the ruling norm in agricultural society. This resulted in hierarchical society with a structure of power based on richness. The other big change was that nature was parted in a good and a bad part. The good nature was the cultivated earth, and the domesticated animals that supplied people with food, protection and clothes. The bad nature was the threatening, uncontrolled wilderness from where the seeds of the weed came, the insects who destroyed the crops, the elk who grazed from the fields of oat and the wolf who killed the sheep.

The latest epoch in the history of man is the industrial society. In our struggle for a more comfortable life we have succeeded in creating a society where we live our lives almost totally separated from nature. Using science as a tool for taking control of nature. The rational and wide knowledge of the functions of nature has made it possible to rule nature and direct it in a way that suits the desires of humans. Therefore we can sit warm and safe within our four walls without any worries about beasts, the stormy weather or how to get food on the table. We also know that there are resources in the society to help us if we get in trouble. With this security as a base the main strivings in society is to ever increase the convenience by an increased material standard presupposing an ever-increasing economic growth. Faster and more efficient appears to be the key words in the development of the industrial society and the ruling norm seems to be “to own more“.

Of course it must be considered a good thing that we now quite easily can cure diseases that used to be lethal, that we now have resources to take care of the weak and poor, that everybody can go to school and that we can choose from a variety of cultural expressions and so forth. But there is another side of the coin.

First we must ask ourselves what it means now that we have lost the contact with nature. Not more than 100 years ago a majority of the people in Europe, every day, literally speaking, stood with their hands in the soil and with their own senses experienced the ecological reali-

ties for life on earth. But our dependence on nature is just as strong today as ever it once was in the days of the hunters and gatherers. Maybe there is a risk that we fail to see this dependency while we speed up the development of the society.

Secondly the modern project has also implied a separation of the human and other living creatures in our minds. Natural science has objectified nature and in the most extreme cases made the living beings into soulless machines. This has made man and nature two totally separate units and has created an absolute border between man and nature. An important question is : in what way has this effected our ethical relationship with nature.?

We must also ask ourselves in what way the development of the society has effected (wo)man and the health of the (wo)man. On the one hand we have been able to dramatically decrease diseases that have been related to poverty, bad nutrition and sanitary defectives, on the other hand we have created health problems connected to our welfare; we do not exercise enough and we eat too much. But the great threat to our health today is connected to people's psychosocial situation. Problems that are related to stress, alienation and lack of meaning in life are among the most widespread health problems today. Maybe the cause of this is that the external development of the technology and the structures of the society are so much faster than the possible internal changes in our minds and souls. Maybe people are left behind by their own creation, which could imply that we do not only lose contact with nature but also with our own culture and our history, leaving humankind in an existential vacuum.

## The Values of Friluftsliv

It is in this historical perspective we can understand the meaning of friluftsliv in the society today. Friluftsliv can be looked upon as the our last contact with nature. It can be considered as some kind of lifeline which still makes it possible for us to experience, with our own senses, the living systems surrounding us. Friluftsliv also means an experience of a way of living radically, different, from our every day life. Actually it is quite strange that people by their own free will go out in the wilderness when they don't have to and carry a heavy luggage, eat strange food cooked on a primitive little stove and sleep on the hard ground in a small tent without heating - when the main purpose of the development of the society was to make life as comfortable as possible! The only reasonable explanation why so many people regularly choose to live an outdoor life must be that there are a number of values in outdoor life that are not

possible to experience in the same way in our ordinary lives.

What values are we talking about? When people, from a deeper perspective, describe the meaning of a meeting with nature the following values are frequently occurring:

- ❑ In nature we can experience peace and we seek for the silence and the stillness to recreate our strength. The impressions we get are interesting in a restful way.
- ❑ In nature there are also the opposite, the excitement and the challenge. This search for adventure is often connected with very extreme and dangerous activities but to most of us there is enough challenge to make a trip in a canoe in a quite calm river or take a walk up in the mountains following the marked paths. Maybe we also like to take a little Sunday stroll in the forest nearby partly just because there is an uncertainty in the outcome, there might an elk standing on the path around the next bend! Nature is unpredictable.
- ❑ No matter what we seek in our outdoor life the situation is real and possible to understand. Compared with our every day life it is a simple reality where the demands and our needs are clear and distinct; when we are hungry we must eat, if we get tired we must rest or sleep, to get further we must ford over the mountain stream and so forth. More and more of our spare time is otherwise occupied by watching other people living our lives; laughing, crying and playing in the television, movies, magazines and books. Friluftsliv is about living a very real and obvious life where we, with our own bodies and our own senses, experience hunger, pain, tiredness, joy and happiness. We meet ourselves in a different way than in our everyday lives.
- ❑ Being an anti-pole to our everyday life nature is a place of refuge where we can get a sense of freedom. The open air is without any closing wall and only the sky as a limit gives you a physical feeling of freedom. But you are also mentally free from constraint. This contributes to a feeling of a free choice in every situation: " I can take this way or that way, I can eat now or in an hour and I can sit here and just relax in the sun or ski to the top of the mountain". The concrete reality also gives you a direct feedback if your choice was wise or not.
- ❑ Being together and the feeling of communion is another value of great importance in friluftsliv. It might be sitting around the fire with your own family experiencing a great feeling of affinity. In other cases it can be a more direct need of close co-operation in a small group in more adventurous activities.
- ❑ Meeting free nature is a central aspect of many peoples outdoor-experience. Free nature means that na-

ture consists of something living, a system of life that the human can not control. Meeting nature is a way to experience yourselves belonging to an entirety with a special meaning. This entirety is today often spoken about in ecological terms but it can also be of a religious kind. Maybe this is about a feeling of affinity and reverence with life and the living creatures on earth. Our ability to feel love and affection for the living things becomes a source of power.

These values could be looked upon as intrinsic values of friluftsliv. I think that these kinds of values are the main reason why people want to live outdoor life in their leisure time. And I think these values should be the basis in the pedagogic use of friluftsliv. However, in my opinion, it is, in most cases the good use and effects of friluftsliv that has been the basis (and accordingly has been decisive) for how friluftsliv has been treated for instance in school. I think there are several problems connected to this way of treating friluftsliv. First, there is a great uncertainty if and in what way friluftsliv fulfils the expected purposes. The connection between experiences in nature and environmental awareness or health seems to be quite complex and associated with a number of circumstances and conditions. And one could argue: if there are other, more simple and certain ways to fulfil these purposes, why friluftsliv? I also think the friluftsliv runs the risk of losing its soul (inner meaning) if we use it as an instrument.

## How and What to do?

If the values mentioned above are going to be expressed in the friluftsliv, and will be available for the participants to experience, it remains a great concern both of how you do it and what you do. In my opinion the clue is to let the friluftsliv speak for itself, to catch the inner meaning of friluftsliv. Therefore I think it is important to strive for a friluftsliv where you:

- ❑ participate in the life of nature, live as if you were a part of nature, not to disturb but without being an passive observer,
- ❑ put the meeting with nature in focus and not the activity, the activity must be seen as way to get in touch with nature,
- ❑ create situations where the meeting with the different aspects of nature becomes as obvious as possible, in an humble way meet something greater than humankind, some thing people cannot control, therefore it is important to experience the troublesome aspects of nature as well as the bright and beautiful ones,
- ❑ see the individual, personal experience as central, look upon the human as a sensitive and sympathetic subject experiencing nature, an experience of the

forms, colours, moods and shades of nature, a nature full of meanings and messages,

- ❑ have a freedom to make your own explorations and you are able to form your own personal emotional relation with nature,
- ❑ have time to experience and where you try to create a rhythm which gives you peace, a rhythm where our inner rhythm of rest-activity, hunger-satisfaction and so forth is able to harmonise with the rhythm of light-darkness, sunshine-rain, warm-cold and so forth (and not being ruled by clock or your agenda),
- ❑ let the simple things (and the accordance with nature) rule when you choose activities and equipment, making us feel as close to nature as possible.

The task of the leader or teacher is to guide the participants by creating situations, converse, inspire, make different choices and their consequences apparent and if necessary lead the group if the problems exceed the ability of the participants.

## To offer a quality of life

Friluftsliv being done in accordance with the statements above can be looked upon as an aim itself. The important thing is not the effects of friluftsliv or if it is useful in any way. To experience the values inherent in friluftsliv is simply a quality of life. Of course, friluftsliv in this way is not considered as a quality of life of everybody. When friluftsliv is used in educational purposes it therefore must be treated as a way to offer a possible quality of life, to give people a chance to experience the values of friluftsliv. For those who accept the offer, the meeting with nature can be an important part of their life with a deep influence on their quality of life. Nature then appears to be a refuge where we can escape from our complex reality, the chaos of the society and the problems at work or school. The friluftsliv counter-balances our everyday-lives and gives us an existence in harmony.

This way of friluftsliv can be looked upon as a culture of its own. A culture which is a reaction against the industrial-society and a criticism on the way the society has been developed. In friluftsliv we can experience another sort of life, a life based upon other values than the values ruling our modern society. In nature we can get another perspective on our society and everyday-life. From this point of view we are able to question them. An important aim in friluftsliv is to show alternate values of life. The simple but yet rich life, close to nature appears to be an ideal, something we should try to imitate in our everyday lives. We can ask ourselves: if I feel such a great satisfaction when living friluftsliv, should not the values of friluftsliv have a bigger influence on my everyday-life? And should not these values be the basis in the development of the future society? In this way friluftsliv can be

an important source of inspiration in changes of our lifestyle as well as changes in our society to enhance the quality of life!

Maybe a deepened relation to nature also can offer the lost human of our time a place in entirety and a new sort of “ecological identity“. A deeper feeling of coexistence and affinity with the living earth could also result in a change in our ethical relationship with nature, an ethical standpoint, leading us towards a lifestyle and a development of the society in greater harmony between the human and nature.

### **Friluftsliv at School?**

In my opinion there is a considerable pedagogic potential in friluftsliv. It is hard to be unaffected by an activity that so obviously involves your body and mind as well as your soul. An important question is however if it is possible to use friluftsliv of this kind at school today. Are the teachers able to see the unique of friluftsliv or is it just looked upon as useful and wholesome activity among others? Have the youth of today the ability to appreciate the peace and quietness in nature or are they used to the fast and spectacular impression from the new entertainment-technology? Are there necessary requirements regarding time, money and organisation? Is there a will to try?

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URBAN BERGSTEN & JAN SEGER

# OUTDOOR EDUCATION IN RELATION TO LEADERSHIP AND GROUP PROCESSES

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Traditionally, due to geographical and historical circumstances, outdoor education has been an important part of the PE curriculum in Sweden. Outdoor activities generally require extensive organisation and resources and it is therefore particularly important that planning and realisation are carefully conducted.

The two projects, presented here, emanate from the notion that outdoor education constitutes an excellent arena for an inter-disciplinary approach involving the learning of skills and integrating knowledge from other subjects like biology, environmental issues, history, geography etc. Furthermore, the projects stress the possibilities of using outdoor education as a setting for understanding organisational and group phenomena. Traditionally, physical education and sports tend to focus on the **product and the skill**, whereas our purpose is to present a model of broadening the learning frame by involving learning outcomes such as **the process and the awareness**. These are considered in relation to personal development, organisational and group dynamics (including leadership style) and integrated into the established design and structure of the outdoor education curriculum.

## I

The first example emanates from two outdoor education courses for first-year students from the Coaching Programme, the Teacher Programme and the Health Promotion Programme.

At the beginning of new classes at the University College the first semester starts, after about one week on campus, with a five-day course in outdoor activities. The course involves hiking, canoeing orienteering, climbing, swimming and survival techniques. These skills are presented in an environmental and ecological context. Geographically, the course is pursued along an old Viking trail, inviting historical, cultural and physiological comparisons. For example, pulse registrations are made during canoeing and hiking, from which the students easily can understand why the Vikings preferred water as a means of transportation.

Six months later, the same students participate in a two-week course in the Swedish mountains focusing

on skiing skills. Here, integration efforts include biomechanical aspects of skiing techniques, physiological considerations for survival in arctic surroundings, the history of the Lapps and their style of living, and aspects of meteorology and geology. During both periods the students live close together. In an attempt to make the students conscious of leadership and group dynamic processes, they are exposed to lectures, role-plays and sessions where these processes were emphasised.

In a study conducted during the Viking hike the students are instructed to pay attention to the processes within the study group, i.e. to have an *intra-group focus*, and they are encouraged to reflect upon their own behaviour: fear, anger, loneliness, degree of influence on others, etc. After the hike the students individually estimated the effectiveness of their own study group using a standardised questionnaire. On the basis of this individual estimation, each group, lead by a teacher, carried out a discussion with regard to each group's effectiveness, including a discussion focusing on each participant's own contribution to the group work. Half a year later, the winter course formed the next step in developing organisational competence of the students. The same students together with five teachers spent two weeks, twenty-four hours a day, in the Swedish mountains, thus constituting a **model organisation**, within which numerous organisational and group phenomena could be observed and analysed. In addition to developing skiing and teaching skills, the purpose was to increase the awareness of the students concerning phenomena of organisations and individual and group behaviours and dynamics. Preparatory lectures on campus were given concerning concepts such as open and closed systems, mandates, organisational boundaries and leadership defined as a relationships. The **model organisation** was defined as an **executive group**, consisting of the five teachers, a group of '**middle management**', consisting of ten students with special responsibilities like lodging, equipment, travel arrangements etc. The remaining students constituted the rest of the working model organisation. The entire model organisation was structured with dimensions and frames similar to organisations/companies in contemporary society.

During the stay up in the mountains the students were divided into five skiing groups based on skiing skills, with one teacher per group. Another group setting was the seven cabin groups, consisting of students sharing the same cabin. None of these groups corresponded to the study groups from the autumn course. On three occasions 'open' executive meetings were held, where each cabin group appointed two observers with the task to listen and report back to their respective cabin members. The executive group discussed openly problems and delights from the previous day and information and suggestions concerning the coming days. The purpose was to illustrate the work of the executive group. During the three-day backcountry skiing trip every student performed the task of leading the group for half a day. Back at the hotel each group met separately to discuss sources of joy/difficulties, every student's own contributions to the group, examples of leadership situations etc. Finally, a meeting was arranged for all groups, where organisational fantasies were elucidated (i.e. the rumours and fantasies that are prevalent in all organisations). Each group reported what had happened in their own group and how they had perceived the work and incidents in the other groups. Furthermore, three female and three male groups were formed and gender aspects were discussed (for example, observation of 'typical' male/female behaviour, the fact that the executive group were all males – what would have been different if female teachers had participated?).

## II

The second example comes from an elective course for third-year students. Twelve female and twelve male students participated in the course which started with a five-day formal leadership training course (LMDC; Leadership and Management Development Course). Briefly, this course deals with tracking and handling conflicts, communication, giving effective feedback, understanding group dynamics and leadership styles. The remaining four weeks consisted of working in outdoor education projects including learning new outdoor activity safety skills like CPR, rescuing in kayaks etc. Each of the four projects had an external project client and four of the students volunteered as project leaders. The reasoning behind this was to illustrate the difference between standard 'group work' and 'project methodology', where the emphasis is on leadership training by leading and feedback. The project groups were constantly encouraged to discuss the issues of leadership and group dynamics in their respective groups while working with their projects. The four projects were *Outdoor Cooking, Survival Techniques, Water- Safety for Children, and Kayaking and Disabilities*.

Each project was reported back to the client during a day out of doors, where students from other project

groups constituted the training group. In addition, each project group handed in a written report to the project client. At the end of the course, every student received individual feedback of her/his work and contributions over the five weeks.

To conclude, we wish to stress that outdoor education curriculum consists of a multi-disciplinary core, based on cultural, behavioural and natural sciences, in addition to obvious qualities like recreation and aesthetic dimensions. Taking part in outdoor activities stimulates social competence and personal growth, and we also believe that outdoor education constitutes an excellent learning arena for understanding group and organisational processes and providing leadership training.

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KLAS SANDELL

# THE AMBIVALENT SENSE OF PLACE IN OUTDOOR, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ADVENTURE EDUCATION

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'Adventure' is often associated with tourism, travel and new experiences. In spite of the environmental arguments for 'eco-tourism' etc. at the same time it could be noted that tourism and travel are linked to serious environmental problems, like the use of fossil fuel and heavy use of material resources. This could be compared with 'environmental education' which could be seen as a way of highlighting our linkages to nature, landscape and resource use, involving the need for a deepened 'sense of place'. Very often this involves the use of coming back to the same place many times, e.g. at different seasons. Even though, many of the current major environmental problems are complex, diffuse, global, uncertain and not easy to detect on a local and concrete level, often a more sustainable development is associated with local adaptation and small-scale, (i.e., a 'territorial') development strategy. In democracies, public understanding, motivation and inspiration are crucial for a long-term acceptance of an effective environmental policy, and perhaps a concrete territorial affinity is here a necessary mental prerequisite. Out of these different perspectives, a number of crucial questions could be raised with regard to the tensions between the sense of place in outdoor, environmental and adventure education. For example, if a sustainable development strategy involves continuity and sense of place – what about the role of adventure and outdoor activities being a part of global instant travelling? Is a change of the role and the content of adventure education an important 'target' for environmental education? If we could talk about a Nordic outdoor life tradition characterised by simplicity and popularity (including e.g. the public right of access to the countryside) to what extent could this be seen as a source of inspiration for a closer linkage between outdoor, environmental and adventure education?

### See further in e.g.

Sandell, K. 1998. The Public Access Dilemma: The Specialization of Landscape and the Challenge of Sustainability in Outdoor Recreation -In: Sandberg, A.L. & Sörlin, S. (eds.), Sustainability –

the Challenge: People, Power and the Environment. Black Rose Books, Montreal, pp. 121-129.

Sandell, Klas 2001. The Non-establishment of a Kiruna National Park 1986-89: A Discussion of Tourism, the Right of Public Access and Regional Development. -Paper presented at the Kiruna session of the Travel & Tourism Research Association (TTRA) Conference 'Creating and Managing Growth in Travel & Tourism' April 22 – 25, 2001, Sweden.

Aronsson, Lars & Sandell Klas. 1999. Ort, Turism och Nachhaltigkeit: Ortszugehörigkeit und Ortslosigkeit als Aspekte eines konzeptionellen Rahmens für einen Tourismus mit Beispielen aus Schweden (Place, tourism and sustainability: Place attachment and placelessness as aspects of a conceptual framework for sustainable tourism with examples from Sweden). -In: Turismus Journal, 3 Jg., Heft 3, s. 357-378.

*Further discussions, informations and references with regard to these questions could be found in e.g. the following texts in English and German by the author:*

Sandell, Klas 1998. The Public Access Dilemma.: The Specialization of Landscape and the Challenge of Sustainability in Outdoor Recreation – In: Sandberg, A. L. & Störlin, S. (eds.), Sustainability – the Challenge: People, Power and the Environment. Black Rose Books, Montreal, pp. 121-129.

Aronsson, Lars & Sandell Klas. 1999. Ort, Turism och Nachhaltigkeit: Ortszugehörigkeit und Ortslosigkeit als Aspekte eines konzeptionellen Rahmens für einen Tourismus mit Beispielen aus Schweden (Place, tourism and sustainability: Place attachment and placelessness as aspects of a conceptual framework for sustainable tourism with examples from Sweden.). – In: Turismus Journal, 3 Jg., Heft 3, s. 357-378.

Kaltenborn, Björn; Sandell, Klas & Haaland, Hanne In Press. The Public Right of access – Some Challenges to Sustainable Tourism Development in Scandinavia. – Article to be published in the J. of Sustainable Tourism.

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ERIK MYGIND & MIKE BOYES

# OUTDOOR ACTIVITY PATTERNS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS IN NEW ZEALAND AND DENMARK

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The purpose with the present study was to examine New Zealand and Danish physical education students outdoor activity patterns and to compare differences across cultures. A questionnaire was written in English by the authors and then translated to Danish in order to validate the understanding and interpretation of the questions. Data were gathered from 270 first year PE students at three Danish universities offering physical education (Odense, Aarhus and Copenhagen). The New Zealand sample was 241 from the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand.

Differences in educational traditions were noted. The New Zealand first year students were on average 5 years younger. Significant higher mean age and more available money among Danish students seem to influence the choice of outdoor activities, especially those not accessible in Denmark like winter activities. Overall, the students in New Zealand and Denmark enjoyed an abundance of outdoor activities and used a variety of natural places. Generally, the New Zealand students participated more frequently in outdoor activities compared to the Danish students. This observation might reflect the differences found in demographic profiles and the New Zealand students' stronger perception of being an 'outdoor person'.

Friends and family were the most influential agencies of socialisation into outdoor activities with no difference between the New Zealand and Danish students. The four most important factors that motivate involvement in outdoor activities among females as well as males were in priority order: experience of nature, physical challenge and action, social relations, and psychological challenge and action.

The study may be seen as a baseline source of data for ongoing research and to inform theory and practice for tertiary physical education courses including outdoor pursuit components.

**Keywords:** Physical education students, outdoor activities, socialisation, demographic profile, frequency, time and solo experience.

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BARBARA HUMBERSTONE

# HEGEMONIC STRUGGLES IN OUTDOOR ADVENTURE EDUCATION?

## A Question of Gender and Difference

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The provision of Outdoor Adventure Education (OAE) and what young people experience as a consequence is clearly influenced by a variety of factors. OAE is inscribed in a range of ways by broader structural issues. It may on occasions embody hegemonic modes of masculinity, and therefore can be read in terms of gender and sexuality, it is also inter-twined with discourses around social class and ethnicity.

There is clearly a struggle over dominant 'philosophies' and ideologies in the 'outdoor' world. What appears as The North American 'way', which attempts to promote its mode of 'delivery' and philosophies from behaviourist perspectives in splendid isolation from social and cultural theories, is perpetuated through the vast tracts of works of perhaps only one or two white males. Often silenced or ignored,

are the voices and practices that challenge these dominating ideologies. In this presentation, I attempt to locate OAE in broader social and cultural contexts, examining possible struggles within OAE, but also those without in which forms of OAE may provide a counter-culture to that provided frequently through sport and schooling. Arguably, the provision of OAE outside of schooling, made available through other agencies such as youth organisations and/or specialist outdoor providers may provide alternative messages and values. As Peter Becker suggested in his introductory speech, youth work may have different understanding of young people's needs and the opportunity to provide different contexts from those available within schooling.

In a sense, taking a critical stance within OAE (through critical self-reflection or /and critical analyses of the field) can be seen as problematic. For much of the philosophies and ideologies apparent within OAE, if perhaps not necessarily realised in practice, may well run counter to the ideologies of and some practices endorsed in wider society and schooling. Perhaps, OAE is struggling against the competitive ethos and dominance of prevailing sports cultures and the current anti-risk or 'culture of fear' (Furedi 1997), prevalent in wider society.

During a spell of hot weather, whilst writing this paper, the local paper on its front page reported upon young

people's adventurous activities, 'Leaping into Danger'. A similar headline in 1998 read 'Plunge Boy Risks Death'. Both had pictures of young people jumping into local rivers. The first picture shows young women as well as young men being adventurous and enjoying the thrills and fun of jumping into the river. For millennia, young people through these sorts of activities have learnt to respect water and to develop their abilities to make decisions about what is dangerous. Physical activity by girls has always been problematic, yet we see them, along with the boys, enjoying the activity of, 'Leaping into Danger'. All of us here agree that by denying young people the opportunities to take 'risks', the more they will turn to other, more harmful risk-taking activities which inhibit their decision-making capacities.

Nevertheless, we need to ask, 'Is the provision of OAE through youth work/specialist outdoor organisations, particularly when interfacing with school, any less likely to convey through its practices and philosophies those values of wider society and/or prevailing masculinities and inferiorised femininities'? And if so, is it really a problem for young men or young women or society?

Can we, as outdoor educators, afford not to critique outdoor adventure education? I suggest we must if OAE is to be taken seriously by other communities, both academic and practitioner. I have written elsewhere of the necessity of engaging with social and cultural theory for an understanding of outdoor education and adventure recreation as social and cultural phenomena (see Humberstone forthcoming a).

Before I consider the current 'Politicised' of gender in the UK and perhaps elsewhere- what has been daubed 'crisis of masculinity'- I would like to consider the concept of hegemony and how an understanding of cultural struggles and ideologies of masculinity and femininity come to be so central in schooling, sport and OAE. This is the more relevant when we are concerned with partnerships between the schools and the providers of outdoor adventurous experiences. Kirsti and I have argued elsewhere that in many cases the practices of OAE may be historically steeped in and influenced by gendered

outdoor traditions in UK and Norway (cf. Humberstone and Pedersen forthcoming).

## Hegemony

Gramsci's (1985) concept of hegemony superseded the 'strict' Marxian notion of ideology with its over-determinist economism and 'false consciousness' of the masses. Bourdieu's notion of symbolic violence is taken as close to the Gramsci's concept. Arguably, it refers to that subtle process whereby subordinate classes (the working class or pupils) come to take as 'natural' or 'common sense' ideas and practices that are actually against their own best interests. That subtle process is culture (Gibson 1985). As Wearing (1998:61) points out, 'hegemony, then, is the control of the consciousness by cultural dominance through the institutions of society. Power and privilege are maintained through cultural hegemony, but struggles over hegemonic control are inevitable. Subcultures are often formed which challenge dominant cultural forms.' Ideology however remains implicated in and crucial to struggles for hegemony. Green et al. (1990:30) suggest that ideology is, 'the complex system of perceptions and representations through which we experience ourselves and come to make sense of the world'. It is also implicated in serving the interests of the dominant ruling group. For 'Ideologies are sets of ideas, assumptions and images by which people make sense of society, which give a clear sense of social identity, and which serve in some way to legitimise relations of power in society' (McLennan 1995:126). Central to people's social identity is their gender subjectivities- What it means to be a woman or what it means to be a man in different cultural contexts. These gender assumptions have varied across the ages. Who decides and legitimates such notions and how they are maintained and for what purposes were and are matters upon which there continues to be significant personal and political struggles. Leisure, sport, schooling, youth work and the 'outdoors' are important sites of hegemonic struggles. I would argue that questions of gender and difference are central to our understanding of how best to make available OAE experiences to a range of young women and young men, particularly if our concern is personal and social development and empowerment, together with countering the prevailing 'culture of fear'.

## Media

The popular media continues to be a visible site of struggles around changing representations of masculinities and femininities. Cultural messages that reflect gender stereotypes are frequently evident, but the media may also inadvertently portray struggles over polarised

traditional notions of masculinity and femininity. Men involved in risk-taking adventurous activities in the outdoors are generally represented as 'heroes'. When women engage in these activities, sometimes with fatal consequences, they are depicted not as heroines, but behaving inappropriately and selfishly. This was the case for Alison Hargreaves, the British climber who having climbed a number of Himalayan peaks tragically died on K2 in 1995. The media were scathing of her for depriving her children of their mother.

Transgressions from masculine 'norms' are also frequently ridiculed. For example pictures of the UK soccer star David Beckham dressed in a sarong, as he leaves a restaurant with 'Posh Spice', filled the front pages of the tabloids in June 1998. They were accompanied by headlines; 'Beckham has got his Posh frock on' (Whitaker 1998:1). 'Girlie gear sarong for sexy David. But does it work for women?' (Wheathers 1998:3). Written by a woman, the latter headline goes on to further collude with hegemonic masculinity, with comments trivialising Beckham's unconventional image and relationship. The text implies that he is dominated by his partner Victoria, becoming feminised and emasculated: 'David's fashion statement is alarming for us women who prefer soccer stars in shorts not skirts. It's enough to make you weak with nostalgia for all things reassuringly macho and smelling of Brut.' (P3)

It can be both women and men who may collude to maintain the dominant gender order.

## Politicisation of masculinity

In the UK, girls have for the first time in nearly 50 years been more successful than boys in the major examinations, A levels. This has created an almost panic response from David Blunkett secretary of state for education. This so-called 'underachievement' by boys has been put down to the 'laddish' culture adopted by some boys in which academic achievement is shunned. Willis's (1977) classic ethnographic work, 'Learning to Labour: How Working class Kids get Working Class Jobs', highlighted the processes by which the 'lads' rejected the hegemony of middle class school values and ethos. Consequently they failed academically and so could only take labouring jobs. Failure of this sort is now seen as problematic. There are apparently few unskilled labouring jobs around for the 'lads' now and more girls and women have entered the work force. Gender or more specifically masculinity is perceived to be in crisis. Boy trouble has been on the political agenda in Australia since the early '90s. Whilst the knee jerk response of David Blunkett was that boys would do better in single-sex classes, taught by men, research from Australia (Collins, Kenway and Mcloed 2000) and from UK,

Maritan Mac an Ghail (19..) and others suggest there is no evidence to support this view. Kenway found that for all male classes, 'students and teachers can enjoy being sexist and uncouth with impunity. Single sex provides new opportunities for old-style masculinity, for male bravado and bonding...in terms of gender reform such classes are bad news' (Phillips 2000:4).

The view that there is a social problem because many boys are adopting 'laddish' negative behaviours is reinforced by recent psychological perspectives. 'Masculinity' it is claimed is 'in Crisis'. Anthony Clare, in interview about his recent book, 'On Men: Masculinity in Crisis', says, 'many of the men I have interviewed-such as...mountaineer Chris Bonington-spontaneously described their childhood and adolescence as a time of trial in which their strength and ability to deny feelings (of fear, pain, sadness, loss) marked their status' (Gold 2000:21). Moreover, he challenges the biological determinism of the evolutionary and socio-biologists, 'The role of social and environmental factors are inextricably entwined with male hormones, that's important because it suggests that societies can organise themselves so that this thing called male violence can be significantly reduced' p21. What Clare is concerned with implicitly is the hegemony of idealised masculinity and its affects on men and society. He wrote the book, he says, in order to give, 'ammunition (sic) to men who want to challenge patriarchy' p21.

### ***Schooling, sport and hegemonic masculinities***

Bob Connell's (1990;1995) life-history research on the diversity of men's experiences has shown the considerable pressure on individual men to conform to heterosexual hegemonic masculinity particularly through sport with its informal codes and powerful sanctioning mechanism. Hegemonic masculinity is socially and culturally constructed and is arguably not the 'natural' condition for men. Its form varies over time but it continuously embodies, 'toughness, physical and sexual prowess, aggressiveness and the distancing of femininity'. For men to retain power at a societal level, especially with the considerable challenge by women at all levels of society, the maintenance of hegemonic masculinity is imperative.

Most if not all the more popular sport cultural forms embody signifiers of hegemonic masculinity which convey messages to boys and young men and may be central to the early construction of dominant modes of masculinity (cf. Skelton 2000). Ethnographic studies of British primary schooling as well as research in Australia evidence that football is central in constructing gender relations in school and in the construction of hegemonic

masculinities (cf. Connell et al. 1982, Connolly 1998, Murphy et al. 1990, Renold 1997, Skelton 2000). (see Humberstone forthcoming for a broader discussion of the construction of hegemonic masculinity). Masculinity through sport). Mike Messner (1998) supports the research and argues further that

Organised sports is a "gendered institution"-an institution constructed by gender relations. As such, its structure and values (rules, formal organisation, sex composition, etc.) reflect dominant conceptions of masculinity and femininity. Organised sports is also a "gendering institution"-an institution that helps to construct the current gender order. Part of this construction of gender is accomplished through the "masculinising" of male bodies and minds. ( Messner, 1998:119)

Is organised outdoor adventure education a gendered institution and /or gendering institution? Or is it a counter-culture, which contains struggles over gender subjectivities? Drasdo (1972) argued that mountaineering isn't a sport. The Outward bound, with its early philosophies of 'muscular Christianity' and character building, was a strong influence on the outdoor traditions in UK and North America. At its beginnings it was almost exclusively a male institution conveying messages and practices about particular forms of masculinity. As Kirsti and I have argued elsewhere in examining the gender, class and outdoor traditions in Norway and UK, 'Wilderness' places, constituted in 'natural' environments, are not free from cultural appropriation but may become symbols and markers for hegemonic masculinity.(see Humberstone and Pedersen forthcoming).

### ***Physical education/OAE (school/youth interface) the preservation or transformation of hegemonic masculinities***

In the UK, the provision of outdoor education has been made available within the curriculum as outdoor adventurous activities(OAA) as an element within the PE curriculum in schools. Until now OAA has been compulsory at primary school level. With the implementation of the new National Curriculum in September 2000, it is highly possible that some primary schools will decide not to teach OAA in PE. With the physical nature of OAA, there are some similarities with 'sport'. But one government study of OAA in the PE curriculum states that: 'In OAA the educative processes and experiences, and their contribution to personal development and the broader curriculum, are as valuable as the activity skills themselves; the latter can be seen as vehicles for the communication of more important messages about our concerns for each other and for our environment' (Clay 1999:15).

Nevertheless, it is largely through the PE curriculum that outdoor adventure experiences are made available to pupils in the UK.

Physical education is a formal site that is strongly associated with messages and practices that bolster ideological forms of masculinity and exaggerated inferiorised forms of femininity. Historically, the image of the physical education teacher promulgated in writings and so forth was one displaying various characteristics of toughness, aggressiveness and competitive zeal. Implicitly linked with physical education teaching and classroom control were various modes of domination that encouraged physical and verbal attacks, diminishing pupil self-esteem and confidence (Whitehead and Henry 1976; Cohen and Manion 1981). Arguably, these descriptions were only partial and represented the paucity of pedagogical research in physical education at that time. However, such texts highlighted the symbolic nature of traditional physical education and the myths that surround it. Anne Flintoff's (1993) research into initial teacher education in physical education, although not giving credence to the mythology of excessive physical or mental brutality in physical education teaching, clearly demonstrated the discourses and practices that reinforce traditional concepts of masculinity and femininity. Male students during dance classes worked hard to distance themselves from association with the activity and declined the possibility of male to male contact if asked to work with another male. Flintoff (1993:194) found that in the institutions she studied normalising discourses of heterosexuality and ideologies of masculinity prevailed partly, '[B]y retaining soccer and rugby as male-only activities, the institutions ensured the involvement of male students in ... "masculinising practices"'.

Unfortunately, her research did not appear to explore outdoor adventure education teaching, probably because of its marginalisation in teacher education in the UK.

Cultural hegemony is difficult to shift. Even when attempts have been made to create more equitable practices in school physical education lessons, there still seems to be a continued reinforcement of traditional gender relations and identities (Evans et al. 1996; Wright 1997, 1999). However, it is important to acknowledge action research that has been undertaken with boys in physical education classes aimed at social and personal development. Festeu (1998) has shown that with intervention to the PE programme, there can be positive changes in boy's behaviour that is counter to the 'laddish' cultural behaviour. For girls, research suggests that they lose out in mixed sex groupings because of in-abilities of teachers to bring about pedagogic change, together with persistent demand by many boys

for the teacher's attention (Evans 1989). Merely mixing boys and girls together without sensitive and careful integration and without a change in teaching approach may serve to exacerbate misconception and mistrust between the sexes and so reinforce masculine hegemony.

Traditional sex segregation in British physical education lessons does little to create greater understanding between girls and boys. Arguably it augments attitudes that announce and celebrate the stereotypical polarities of representations of masculinity and femininity prevailing in sport such that co-operation and the recognition of similarities between the sexes is stifled. All-male environments may be problematic for some boys. Such contexts place many boys under considerable pressure to conform to non-emotional, uncaring masculine stereotypes, the laddish culture (Askew and Ross, 1988; Wright, 1997). Research of both PE and work with young women in the outdoors suggest that issues pertinent to young women, such as those concerning personal relationships and health can more easily be addressed in 'safe' girl-only situations (see Baker-Graham, 1999; Barak et al. (2000); Scraton 1993; Spratt, McCormack and Collins 1998; Zaman 1997).

There is some evidence from an ethnographic study of one mixed-sex outdoor adventure centre that the form and content of the hidden and overt curricula held positive implications for pupil's learning and confidences. An unintended consequence of the teaching approaches realised through the material conditions, social relations and ethos was a shift in gender identities and relations during the co-educational experience (Humberstone 1986; 1993). Behaviours demonstrating collaboration, responsibility and group support were valued and encouraged rather than those expressing aggressive, competitive individualism. The experience provided the opportunity for boys to rethink their views about girls' physical potential and competences. The programme visibly challenged stereotypical assumptions of gender and everyday notions of physicality. Girls' and boys' apparently more sensitive understanding of themselves and each other was a consequence of the contextual and ideological features characteristic of the outdoor centre - they were learning new skills together in relatively small numbers where they were positioned centrally in their learning and affective (emotional) communication was acknowledged. It is suggested that 'physical education experiences of these types could form a developmental basis for alternative masculine identities that neither celebrate the warrior ethos nor identify co-operative endeavour, caring, and emotional expression as "wimpish" weakness' (Humberstone, 1990:210). However, this research has not been replicated either at that centre or with other mixed groups of young people in other outdoor contexts.

Most recent critical research of outdoor cultures has focused largely on girls and women's experience and has illuminated the benefits for women and their possibilities, 'where women, 'stretch societally imposed limits on the use of the female body by engaging in activities such as rock climbing and outdoor adventure and express feelings of empowerment' (Wearing 1998:181). However, much of this research has also identified problems with outdoor cultures. Numerous empirical studies have shown that outdoor adventurous experiences can not be seen merely as a good thing practising particular 'neutral' ideologies (see Collins 2000; Allin 2000). Still such put downs as, 'last one across is a big girl's blouse!' (Allwood 2000; Levi, 1995) are used apparently to motivate young people

Research currently in progress provides disturbing data for providers of outdoor adventure at school/ outdoors interface. Nicola Manson, who is conducting ongoing ethnographic study of adolescent girls of 12-13 years experiences of PE, attended with the girls a one week Outward Bound course. Her initial analysis evidences the negative experiences for 12-13 year old girls even though a woman taught part of the course. The girls it seems were subjected to insensitive and derisive 'teaching' approaches, that is they were expected to respond positively to 'macho' approaches. Different outdoor adventure education cultures constitute sites of struggles over meanings, practices and gender subjectivities.

Steve Deeming's (2000) reflection upon spirituality in the outdoor experience, highlights clear example of hegemonic struggles both within and without the field. Referred to are broader structural influences and the recognition of the embodiment of hegemonic masculinity within the field. Reflecting insightfully upon his experiences, he expresses concerns about the external influences acting upon the provision of outdoor experiences inhibiting the realisation of alternative values, discourses and practices.

[T]hese structures (political, economic and ideological) also threaten the continuation of existing work... Could it be that the insidious, ever-present macho element of outdoor adventure prevents me from sharing and growing in my own and others' deep personal experiences except when faced with an individualised threat to continued existence? Alternatively, could it be that we all resist change, because of fear of the unknown? This is all the more a perturbing thought, considering the situations that we, as outdoor adventurers, deliberately seek out. (Deeming, 2000:32)

## Concluding Remarks

In this presentation, I have shown that OAE can not operate in splendid isolation from the wider structures of society. There are clearly struggles over philosophies and ideologies. It is important that the outdoor field encourages not only personal self-reflection but also en-

gages with critical analyses of the field, drawing upon broader social, cultural, educational and environmental theories. I have suggested that gender and difference must be central to those analyses and that cultural diversity needs to be respected.

Throughout this congress, we have seen a variety of alternative ways of learning through the outdoors. We have seen that aspects of OAE can be made available through a variety of formal and informal organisations and agencies. It is clear that greater collaboration and increasing partnership between these organisations, particularly youth work and schooling, is rapidly developing and can only be beneficial both for the field and for the richness of young people's experience.

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KIRSTI PEDERSEN

# TACIT KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURAL REPRODUCTION OF GENDER IN NORWEGIAN OUTDOOR LIFE

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## Introduction

Norwegian culture has generally been described as homogenous with few significant social and cultural differences, and where equality has been achieved between women and men on most social arenas. In this so-called egalitarian culture, outdoor recreation and adventure – or *friluftsliv* as it is called in Scandinavian countries – is often conceptualised as a key symbol of a common national identity (Nedrelid, 1991; Goksøyr, 1994). This is not necessarily so. Recent studies show that outdoor recreation and adventure is a very heterogeneous concept, comprising activities that may take place in diverse social and cultural settings. These studies also show that this cultural heritage is not necessarily passed on to the younger generations. When young people do participate in outdoor recreation and adventure, sociologist Kjetil Skogen (1999) has shown that their participation represent a reproduction of social class structures and male dominance. In my research I have shown how the dominant understanding of simplicity and equality in outdoor life hides deep cultural preconceptions of *women's and men's un-equal positions and significance* in the Norwegian culture. I have also shown how the male dominance is expressed not only in the number of participants and the activities chosen, but in the language, symbols, and interpretations of meaning that are used (Pedersen, 1998, 1999)<sup>1</sup>.

It is a paradox that while the dominant ideology focuses on egalitarian values, outdoor life is obviously gendered both on the practical, as well as on the ideological and the symbolic levels. These patterns are, however, most often taken for granted and explained as “naturally given”. I will argue that the gendering of outdoor life can be conceptualised as muted or tacit knowledge, and that this mutedness or tacitness plays an important role in the processes of cultural reproduction of gendered

structures, relations, ideologies and symbols (cf. Pedersen, 1999).

## A cultural studies approach to outdoor life

As a framework for interpretation I will use a feminist and cultural studies approach. This includes an understanding of gender as socially constructed structures, relations and symbols that are dynamic and changeable and that might be transformed. Thus it opens up for the study of how women's and men's, girls' and boys' lives, as well as perceptions of the male and the female, vary due to historical, social and cultural circumstances (cf. Moore, 1988; Melhus/Rudie/Solheim, 1992; Drotner, 1993a, b). This implies that what it means to be a woman or a man in relation to outdoor life must always be studied in concrete social, cultural and geographical contexts. It also implies that we are here dealing with positions, qualities, skills and ideologies that are not biologically given. In addition the cultural studies approach is based on the understanding that culture is only rarely expressed, described or discussed, because culture is something that a group of people share and take for granted. When specific values and ideas have become embodied as a part of peoples' understandings of themselves and their own reality, it is something that people live within, and not something they need to think about, describe or explain - unless that which is taken for granted and as “naturally given” is threatened or questioned.

Culture is not a simple and one-dimensional concept, but contains complexities and is given various meanings in different studies and settings. However, most definitions emphasise that a specific culture consists of ideas, values, and knowledge about the reality that a specific group share and communicate, and that new members

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on an anthropological study of how women and men in the age group 30 – 70 years old in Northern Norway, and describe their experiences of use of nature and how they understand themselves in relation to nature. In addition this presentation is based on the perspectives and questions that I have just started to study in a new project called *Youth, nature and identity – between local traditions and global trends*, financed by the Program for cultural studies, Norwegian Research Council and Finnmark University College.

(children and young people) are socialised into. This is an understanding of culture that emphasises traditions and continuity, and where the preconditions is a society where few social changes occur. It is only in relatively stable societies that one can study e.g. the culture of outdoor recreation and adventure in this way, as *ideas, values, codes and symbols that are transmitted from one generation to the next – more or less without any changes*. Contemporary societies are characterised by marked changes and continuous breaks with traditions. It therefore becomes necessary to use a concept of culture both in research and education that opens up for the study of innovations and reinterpretations. This is necessary in order to establish an approach that makes it possible to grasp *both continuity and changes*. What it is that is really new, what is changing, however slowly, and what it is that stays the same, can only be answered through empirical studies in specific social settings. Therefore, in a study of how traditions, values and ideas are transmitted, changed and re-created in outdoor life one has to establish a differential, relational, open, and dynamic approach. The concept outdoor recreation and adventure must be treated as a phenomenon that contains different cultural practices and meanings (cf. Breivik, 1978). To be more concrete; in a Norwegian context one can identify at least three distinct, but sometimes overlapping, cultural groups of outdoors people:

- 1) ‘the gatherers’ for whom harvesting nature as part of their subsistence economy is a prime motive
- 2) ‘the wanderers’ – where hiking and skiing just for pleasure, ‘being out’, and health is the most important
- 3) ‘the sportified specialists’; hunters, climbers, ‘telemarkers’, and dog-sledders, where excitement and challenge is the prime motive (Pedersen, 1995, 1999).

In addition, my approach is inspired by Clifford Geertz (1973) understanding of culture as a *combination of models of reality and models for reality; as both actions and interpretations*. This means that culture is perceived both as forces that govern actions and as a context which creates meanings. Based on this double analytical perspective one can study both how nature and outdoor life organise the daily activities of men and women, boys and girls, and the importance that nature and nature activities have for the creation of gendered identities and understandings of reality (Pedersen, 1999).

### Gendered structures, relations and symbols in outdoor life

Until the beginning of the 1990s, few analyses were published neither nationally nor internationally on

gendered issues and relations in outdoor recreation and adventure (Pedersen, 1993; Humberstone, 1986; Henderson, 1992). A summary of Norwegian national surveys from the 1970s and 1980s (Pedersen, 1993) show that women

- participate in other activities than men
- spend less time on outdoor activities
- make use of their local environment
- more often participate together with their family
- rarely stay overnight and rarely make physically challenging trips
- stop doing outdoor activities as young adults, especially in the 25-34 age group.

What then are the patterns among the younger generation in the 1990s? Based on a sample of more than 12.000 students from 67 Norwegian lower and upper secondary schools (aged 13-20) Kjetil Skogen (1999) has shown that there are substantial gender differences with regard to participation in some central outdoor life activities. He summarises the patterns this way:

“Boys were generally much more active than girls in fishing and sailing/motorboating. Skiing, wilderness camping and canoeing/rowing showed a more moderate predominance of boys in the active categories. Picking berries/mushrooms was the only activity with a modest predominance of girls” (Skogen, 1999: 283).

Both these findings and my own anthropological studies of outdoor life in a community in the very north of Norway during the 1990s indicate that gendered patterns in outdoor recreation and adventure seem resistant to change. A stable pattern, both over time and synchronically between different social groups of women and men, seems to be that men are oriented towards activities, equipment, and skills, while women focus on relations. Another stable pattern is that women’s outdoor life belongs to the private sphere, but women’s activities at home often represent tacit and important preconditions for men’s outdoor activities. This can be illustrated by the following dilemma: when the focus of my analysis was directed towards outdoor life activities, it was as if the women disappeared, and vice versa: it was as if the activities disappeared when the focus was put on women’s lives and contexts. Then the social organisation around the family and the local environment became visible. Mastering the outdoors is an important symbol of male identity, and outdoor life activities serve as an area where men’s privileged positions are learned and thereby reproduced. It also seems clear that “male” outdoor life activities have a public relevance and symbolise a common and unifying, local and/or national culture. My research also shows that there exist strong practical and ideological traditions that “order” or “organise” outdoor life *as if* biological sex is decisive for social and cultural relations. Thus the gendered organisation and symbolisation is *naturalised* in a way that is stable across the different outdoor life

activities, social and cultural groups, across time, and with widespread popular support (Pedersen, 1999).

However, a growing number of studies (e.g. Humberstone ed. 2000; Pedersen, 1999; Humberstone, 1986; Warren ed., 1996) show that when the social and cultural conditions are present, women can master a number of different and difficult challenges in nature. These studies show that *what* women and men do, or can do in the outdoors, and how they perceive what they do, is *socially organised in different ways*. In other words, we see that what women and men do, and their perceptions of self and of each other, can neither *organisationally nor symbolically* be captured by the dichotomy that follows biological sex. This becomes especially clear when women participate with independent competence in areas that are traditionally defined as male. This can serve as an eye-opener: then people really have to make up their minds about what we mean by so-called male and female activities and male and female values. At the same time it becomes clear that we are dealing with graded abilities and competence, and with complex, contradictory, and changeable relations. This constitutes a break with the positions that have been, and still are, dominant in many men's research on outdoor life. Their underlying and unexpressed, but sometimes also explicitly expressed, assumptions is often based on an understanding about masculinity and femininity as if it is biologically determined - and therefore 'naturally given' and unchangeable (see e.g. Faarlund, 1974; Breivik, 1990; Bjerke, 1993; Søylen, 1995).

This may explain another stable pattern. Despite the fact that women do have varied and extensive competence in practical outdoor life, discourses on gender equality have so far hardly penetrated into the reality of outdoor adventure and education. Neither people in general nor researchers, educators or politicians have paid particular attention to the male dominance or the genderedness of this core symbol of Norwegian national culture<sup>2</sup>. Seen from women's and girls' perspective, outdoor life can be described as an arena consisting of several activities where men and boys as a social group have a very privileged position, and that this reflect many of the male privileges in society. In other words, the feminist cultural studies approach show that biologically determined explanations simplify reality in a way that becomes absurd, and that outdoor life must instead be studied as a field of complex and contradictory gender-related social and cultural processes. Thus the distance between what women and men can decrease or increase; and it can be more or less polarised.

## Processes of cultural reproduction of gender in outdoor life

Although these findings may not be very sensational and new, the challenge for us as researchers and educators in outdoor recreation and adventure is to trace the mechanisms that stimulate this slowness and continuity despite the dramatic social changes that characterise post-modern societies. Inspired by the British anthropologist Paul Connerton's concept of social memory, the Norwegian anthropologist Ingrid Rudie (1995) assumes that knowledge is produced and transmitted across life spans, and to the new generations in two forms; as discursive or articulated knowledge, *and* as practical or tacit and incorporated knowledge. This might explain the earlier mentioned paradox, that despite the fact that women and girls can have varied and extensive competence in practical outdoor life, and despite the general discourse about equality, their contributions to the history and development of outdoor life has not been made relevant in scientific interpretations and the public debate. In order to understand how this can happen, social anthropologist Edwin Ardner's (1975) theory about "muted groups" can be useful. Ardner claims that when women are not represented in scientific interpretations it is because their experiences and understandings of reality have not been, or are not, acceptable for the articulated knowledge production. One result is that women - in order to be heard - are forced to advance their views through the dominant male ideology. When research on and education through outdoor life has had, and still has, difficulty in giving room for women's experiences and gendered issues, one can claim that this is because women and their lives represent unarticulated experiential worlds for male scholars and androcentric knowledge production (Pedersen, 1999).

Many feminist scholars (cf. Spender, 1980; Drotner, 1993a,b) have emphasised the importance of language in people's understanding of reality. My research shows that language and metaphors that are used both in daily life and scientific interpretations, tie men and masculinity to outdoor life, in a way that implicitly exclude women and the feminine. This is clearly visible already in the context where the Scandinavian concept for outdoor life - *friluftsliv* - was created: in Henrik Ibsen's poem *Paa Vidderne* (In the Mountains) from 1859. There are strong indications that the Norwegian culture is so incorporated in the gendered language and practices that it relates to, that the actual content is not acces-

2 Although the Department of the Environment as early as in 1987 expressed that gender equality in outdoor life is a public responsibility, one can claim that few visible initiatives have been taken by official authorities in order to improve the situation for girls and women in outdoor life during this period. It was for example not followed up in the action plan for outdoor life towards the year 2000, published by the Directorate for Nature Management in 1991.

sible to us as meanings. By using an analytic concept that has been developed by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977) one can say that we are in a *doxic* field of the Norwegian culture. If this interpretation is right, the asymmetric gender relations and the male dominance represent *the collective subconscious, and thereby deep cultural preconditions that at the same time are interwoven in the structures of society*. What we talk of here are *hard-programmed* (cf. Rudie, 1984) culturally constructed practices and understandings that are extremely difficult to restructure - and thereby change. It is in this context I have argued that gender relations in outdoor life belong to the tacit and deep cultural preconditions in the Norwegian society (Pedersen, 1999).

Another Norwegian social anthropologist Heidi Skramstad (1999) analyses and discusses different understandings of the related concepts *tacit* and *muted*. She divides tacitness and mutedness in four different, but related, and partly overlapping processes:

- 1) ideology or hegemony conditioned tacitness or mutedness
- 2) practical experiences that we never talk about, simply because they are part of the common sense interpretations of everyday life and therefore not necessary to discuss
- 3) politically motivated tacitness or mutedness because it does not pay to say anything
- 4) experiences that can not be expressed because they are traumatic and suppressed.

The kind of tacitness or mutedness that I have identified as being at work in the cultural reproduction of gender in outdoor life belongs mostly to categories 1 and 2; the hegemonic conditioned tacitness, *and* the taken for grantedness in every day life experiences. However, one can not leave out of account that some people may have conscious political interests in not raising the gendered questions in relation to outdoor life.

## Cultural changes and gender challenges in outdoor life

The above mentioned social anthropologist Ingrid Rudie (1995) defines cultural reproduction as processes that over time contain both continuity and changes. A basic question remains: how can the connections between men, masculinity and outdoor recreation and adventure be broken and given a new content both on the practical and symbolic levels, that include women and the feminine? One precondition for that to happen is that the naturalistic, deterministic (essentialist), and

male biased (androcentric) understandings must yield to research and education which aim at visualising inherent social and cultural gendered structures and contradictions, and to transcend stereotyped perceptions about female and male identities<sup>3</sup>. My studies show that so far it is mainly women who have taken the initiative to do this, for example by trying to create public attention about these issues, and 'a room of their own' where they can gain experience and exchange knowledge. Other initiatives that have been seen, is that groups of women have tried to challenge the male hegemony, and attempted to create collective strategies that can explode a privatised and family oriented outdoor life as the only framework for women's contact with nature in contemporary society. Therefore it is very rewarding to work together with female students who are interested and on the offensive, and with male students who express positive experiences and feelings about working in gender-mixed groups in the outdoors, and to co-operate on an equal footing. This fits with what the women I have studied emphasise. They neither want to be like men, nor do they want to compete with them. The point for many of them is to strengthen women's and girls' competence and skills in nature, on their own terms, and thereby be able to create a basis for more profound nature experiences and a better quality of life. They also emphasise equal opportunities and gender relations. The strategy where specific activities are organised for women is seen as a means to reach this end, and not as an end in itself.

These finds and perspectives can create a basis for further reflections, theory building and studies. Perceptions which advocate that the individual has great chances of creating and shaping his or her own identity, are inspired by theories of modernity which view traditions as something that belong to pre-modern societies. But contemporary society is of course also based on values and practices that can be relatively stable. An important insight is therefore that there *both* exist new possibilities *and* strong limitations in the ways women and men, girls and boys, can use nature. One can also clearly see that when established outdoor life traditions like harvesting and hiking lose their importance, then both individuals and entire local communities are forced to re-negotiate and reformulate their possibilities in their search for new ways of being together, meaning, and culturally gendered identities. This means increased cultural differentiation and specialisation. And the more the traditions lose their hold, and the more daily life is reconstructed in terms of the dialectic interplay between the local, the national and the global, the more individuals are forced to negotiate lifestyles and choose among a

3 The reflective team approach that was elaborated by Jan Seger and Urban Bergsten from Stockholm's University in one of the workshops at the conference, was a good example of how this could be done.

diversity of options (cf. Rudie, 1984; Zhihe, 1989; Giddens, 1991; Gullestad, 1996). Such processes can be painful and influence new generations from as early as their pre-school days (Pedersen, 1999).

These gendered processes show that people's identity in relation to outdoor recreation and adventure can not be created or transformed according to the same principle as when you fill your shopping basket. External symbols, such as a fishing rod, a special rucksack, or a weekend activity course, can never replace experience. The division that Marianne Gullestad (1996) draws between *social roles, identities, and the self* can be helpful in order to understand what is happening: people can take on several outdoor life roles - for example in hunting, climbing or paddling - without having to seek acceptance for all of them. Nor must these roles necessarily become part of their own self-understanding. A deep understanding of one's own self and skilfulness in outdoor life activities can only be shaped through a strong intrinsic motivation, lasting involvement, and repeated experiences in the outdoors - over a long period of time. If cultural changes are to take place, both women and men must develop new values, practices, and perceptions of what it means to be a woman or a man; what women and men can (and ought to) do, and the relations between them. So far my studies indicate that we can not expect that nature and outdoor life will be a significant or dominant point of reference for large groups of girls (and women) (however, I hope I am wrong) in their search for a cultural identity in contemporary societies. This is still a central point of reference for large groups of young boys and men. We need studies that can illuminate how such processes of cultural reproduction of gender in outdoor life take place (Pedersen, 2000).

## Concluding remarks

What is recognised as knowledge in society, school, and in the different subjects, and how this knowledge is produced and/or reproduced through the educational system, is part of the culture of any society. This can be seen in theories about social and cultural reproduction (Bernstein, 1977; Willies, 1977; Broch-Utne and Haukaa, 1980) that explain how people and students who come from social classes that share the educational culture's dominant values, norms, and perceptions of reality, succeed throughout the educational system. These theories have shown how the educational systems is better adapted to some groups in society than others; e.g. how boys' physical and outdoor needs and interests are better taken care of than girls' (Evans, ed. 1986; Humberstone, 1986; Scraton and Flintoff, 1992).

Until recently, knowledge and skills about how to travel and survive in the Norwegian nature was perceived as

something natural and something that was learned through everyday life practices - from mother to daughter, father to son - not only in the rural areas. As a formal educational subject, outdoor life has been a part of the national curriculum since the late 1960s, both in the primary school and in higher education. Outdoor activities are naturally something that has always been found in Norwegian schools, originally more for social reasons and as a break in a theoretically oriented school. During the latest curriculum reforms in the 1990s, outdoor life has gained importance as an independent subject. It is a means to learn to preserve nature, and to sustain outdoor life as a core aspect of Norwegian culture and national identity. It is, however, an open question whether and how the school system is able to represent or support this field, and to stimulate increased gender equality, skills, and enjoyment about being outdoors.

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Eric Maddern  
**THE CRUNCH**

An Initiative to Renew Rites of Passage for Young People the  
Rites of Passage Special Interest Group

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*This paper is a developing description of the work of a collaboration in the UK co-ordinated by Eric Maddern who is also the paper's author. It is based on regular conversations by the group concerning their work in „youth rites of passage“ programmes. Each person works from this paper when describing this work in order to maintain the „authenticity“ of the groups thinking.*

Drawing inspiration from the forms and functions of traditional youth rites of passage - practised in numerous cultures around the world and throughout time - we are developing and piloting contemporary forms of rites of passage which will help to meet the pressing needs of young people in the 21st century.

## **RATIONALE**

### 1. The Problems

Making the journey from the dependence of adolescence to the responsibility of adulthood is never easy, but today it is exacerbated by many factors, including the following:

the bewildering complexity of educational pressures and choices, making it hard to see the wood for the trees:

the extension of youth into the mid twenties and beyond, with many young people showing a reluctance to “grow up“:

for boys, fewer traditional male work roles, with more women doing men's work, but not vice versa; no “job for life“:

a lack of socially useful work (the electronic culture, some say, is a “dismal substitute for the real thing“) leading to uncertainty around roles, purpose and values:

the contemporary emphasis on fashion, celebrity and image is superficial and unfulfilling, leading to feelings of emptiness and irrelevance:

in a consumer culture that measures worth by material possessions young people may become frustrated and angry if unable to purchase these symbols of value:

this has led to increasing adolescent crime (by those who hit out) and suicide (by those who turn their feelings inward):

It may “only” be 12% of young people who are driven to extremes of crime and suicide. However research suggests (“Leading Lads“) that another roughly 60% of young people are not coping well and have problems with low self-esteem. This is specially true with boys whose self-confidence decreases through adolescence and reaches a low at age 19 when they leave home. Their problems are compounded because most boys are reluctant to talk about difficulties. Many appear fine from the outside but may be falling apart inside.

### 2. The Time Honoured Solution

Though we live in rapidly changing times there is much about the process of growing into adulthood that is the same as it has always been. This is why examining how rites of passage worked in other times and cultures and

applying those lessons to today's situation can be of immense value. Most cultures recognised the potentially de-stabilising force of undirected youth, of young men in particular, and devised clear, firm and creative ways to constructively channel these energies to bring about a purposeful and responsive adulthood. Here is a brief summary of the form and functions of traditional rites of passage, abstracted from several pre-industrial cultures from around the world. The focus is on how it was for boys, but today much would be relevant for girls as well.

#### **Form**

When a youth (between 13 and 17 years) is deemed ready by appropriate elders he is removed from his cosy family circle and, with the co-operation of the grieving women, taken “away“. Classically this is the severance or separation phase.

He then enters the threshold phase where he becomes the dignified and highly valued focus of a series of ceremonies that at times involve the whole community.

He is intensively taught survival skills - tracking, hunting lore, communication, making fire, building shelter,

crafting tools and weapons - and the sacred topography of the surrounding landscape.

He is subjected to tests and ordeals that force him to confront his fears - especially his fear of separation from mother and the fear of death. Indeed, he will go through a "death", the death of himself as a child.

He is exposed to rapid-fire secret teachings from his culture's mythology which show him who he is and where he comes from.

He may be encouraged to seek a vision of his identity, purpose and connection with the natural world by fasting alone in the wilderness.

Towards the end of the threshold phase his adult responsibilities - to himself, to society and to the natural world - are emphasised.

Finally, in the return phase, he is re-integrated to his community where his new adult status is recognised, honoured and celebrated.

## Functions

This rites of passage process achieves transformation from an individual being to a social being, from one living just in the present to one who sees the past and the future, from one who only consumes to one who also creates. In particular the young person:

learns how to survive independently and with confidence in the wider world:

by experiencing ordeals and the love of his elders, learns how to deal with difficult emotions (fear, pain, anger, grief, greed, boredom, loneliness) and to feel and express positive states (respect, appreciation, enthusiasm, love, courage):

experiences a "spiritual awakening" by meeting with Ancestral Spirits or the Divine or by seeing himself, for the first time, as a valuable part of the beauty and splendour of Nature and the Cosmos:

by being exposed to the powerful stories and strong traditions of his people, comes to feel a deep sense of his cultural and individual identity:

through the process of "seeking a vision" finds a sense of purpose in his life and begins to realise his adult responsibilities:

becomes an integrated member of his community. In summary we could say that initiations teach independence, emotional resilience, spiritual awareness, a sense of identity, purpose, responsibility and community involvement. Another benefit of the rites of passage process is that the adults involved make extra efforts to purify themselves so that the boys are reborn without dan-

ger of infection by evil. So, while the boys are learning adult values, adults try harder to practice those values. The growth of children into adulthood is therefore part of the continued growth of society as a whole.

## What about Western Traditions?

Some may object to this emphasis on drawing inspiration from pre-industrial cultures. It seems a long time since such rites of passage were practised in Britain. That's a fair point. In the West for many centuries it has been Work, especially the apprenticeship system, and

going into the Services, that have provided the two main rite of passage experiences for most young people. Both fulfilled some of the functions of traditional rites of passage and had comparable forms. But with the changing nature of work and the scaling down of the Armed Forces these options are less available than they once were. This is a further reason why there is a pressing need to develop contemporary forms of rites of passage. In doing so we can learn from the Apprenticeship and Services models as well.

## 3. A Note on Ritual

For some the concept of "rites" as contained within rites of passage may have negative associations. In its primary meaning "ritual" refers to "formal acts set by tradition, usually performed for a religious purpose". Rituals - particular words and acts - are used to consecrate or make sacred a place, a time, a person, an object or a being of nature.

They have the effect of intensifying experience, of charging a person with feelings of reverence for creative forces greater than themselves, be they "divine", "supernatural" or "ancestral". Rituals work by using symbolism. They are, in essence, about making meaning. They do not have to be attached to specific faiths, but, as the word "spiritual" suggests,

can simply be practices which help a person spirally ascend to a heightened sense of being. They are, some say, as fundamental to human culture as language itself. In traditional rites of passage every lesson, ordeal or song is part of a sacred ritual clearly designed to consecrate

the life of the initiate.

Today many traditional rituals have lost their value. However the need for ritual persists. Many people are now experimenting with creating new rituals, drawing on the principles and practices of the past but adapting

and devising forms which meet the needs of the present. This is a necessary and healthy development. Making new forms of rites of passage is part of that process.

## METHOD

The 21st century world is vastly different from that of pre-industrial cultures where rites of passage was a conscious and common practice. We now know so much more. Communication is instantaneous around the world.

The speeds we can travel would have been unimaginable a hundred years ago. Our rate of resource consumption (and corresponding production of waste) increased exponentially. Above all life is so much more complex.

We can easily be bewildered by an overwhelming array of choice. A consequence of this is that we often cannot see the wood for the trees, or, to mix metaphors, the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing.

There are many domains of knowledge and ways of working that can and sometimes do contribute towards a rites of passage type experience for young people today. But none of them, on their own, provide the complete experience. Brought together, integrated by a rites of passage perspective, their effectiveness and potency could be increased many times. The principle domains of knowledge and work which provide the source material for the renewal of rites of passage are as follows.

### 1. Sources

- ❑ **Anthropology** It's by studying other cultures that we know about the widespread practice of rites of passage. The variety of approaches, rituals and accompanying mythology can be a source of insight and inspiration to us now. Not that we would lift complete processes from one culture into our own. But we can glean ideas and perspectives. We may be able to benefit from the direct teachings of, say, Native American, African or Australian Aboriginal elders. We may also rediscover the traditional practices of early British peoples such as the Celts.
- ❑ **Youth Work** Whereas anthropology provides theory, youth work is about grass roots practice. Youth workers are faced with the everyday reality of how it is for young people. They learn non-patronising ways of "being with" them and regularly discuss and deal with the pressing issues of sexuality, pregnancy, family breakdown, anger, conflict resolution, racism, drug and alcohol use, delinquency and the police, survival skills, work, leisure and how to relate to adults.
- ❑ **Outdoor Activities** Outward Bound and other outdoor education establishments originally had rites of passage as part of their agenda. That has lessened due to pressures of time and money, but nevertheless taking young people on adventures into the wilds often involves them facing their fears, learning survival

skills and experiencing directly the awesome beauty of Nature. It can suffer from a "macho" approach with an over-emphasis on skills, but recent initiatives have been concentrating on the spiritual potential of the outdoors.

- ❑ **Environmental Movement** This encompasses a wide range of activity for young people which includes: exploring natural habitats and developing the skills of a naturalist; being involved in nature and wilderness conservation; campaigning with environmental organisations; doing "deep ecology" to expand awareness of how we are part of a living planet;
- knowing the scientific story of the origins of the Earth and the evolution of Life. All this can lead to a deeper connection with Nature and help individuals see how they are part of the wider world.
- ❑ **Creative Arts** Most arts originated in a ritual context and had a spiritual purpose. Now creative works are made for an audience, but use of symbol and metaphor in the act of creation still expands a person. Listening to stories may deepen a sense of cultural roots and awaken the idea of life as a heroic journey. Writing poetry values the individual's experience. Participating in drama brings confidence and can enlarge the sense of self. With sculpture and art people create meaning with their hands. Making music and dancing is freeing and joyful.
- ❑ **Psychology** In the last 30 years there's been a huge increase in understanding of the human psyche and methods for personal growth and development. These include listening, empathy and communication skills, assertiveness training, anger management, relationship and family counselling, gender awareness, emotional literacy, techniques for self-realisation, group dynamics. There are many models available to assist insight. These can be helpful in work with young people.
- ❑ **Survival Skills** Skill training today includes a wide range of contemporary skills such as computer literacy, self-presentation, interview technique, budgeting etc. But young people also often enjoy learning the more traditional arts of survival such as map reading and navigation, fire building and making shelters, finding wild food and cooking.
- ❑ **Spiritual Approaches** All the faiths make contributions here, teaching lessons in respect and self-acceptance, learning to love, prayer, meditation and stilling the mind, the vision quest, nature as teacher, timeless values of beauty and truth, the perennial philosophy...

This is not a complete list of sources to be drawn on in renewing rites of passage for youth, but it is enough. Many of these areas of knowledge are peripheral to mainstream education, seen as optional extras. From the

perspective of rites of passage they are central. The problem is that they are usually pursued separately. What we are proposing is to create a rites of passage process which builds on the basic traditional form (severance, threshold, return) but which fills in the content by drawing on the above eight domains of knowledge in an integrated and holistic way.

## 2. The Proposed Structure

### Preparation

- ❑ Forming a Group A group of young people, say 16-19 years old, may already exist and may be interested in finding out more about the THRESHOLD INITIATIVE. Alternatively a group may be formed with the specific intention of engaging in the Initiative. There could be positive incentives for young people to join such a group, like, for example, the paying of a minimum wage for coming to meetings.
- ❑ Weekly Meetings Regular two hour meetings would be held (for, say, six weeks) for people to begin to relax together, get to know each other, discuss issues of concern, build up to the idea of a weekend away. This is very much like what already happens in youth clubs.

### Separation

- ❑ A Weekend Camp Away from normal reality, media free, ideally with nature nearby, this taster might include touching the wild, walking, climbing, paddling, learning how to make fire, hearing mythic tales around the fire, telling your story, speaking truth, maybe making a sculpture, a picture, beginning to imagine what is possible, returning home wanting more.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch...

- ❑ The Adults Meet Parents, teachers, guides and guardians meet with the convenors of the Initiative and are convinced of its value and importance. Their cooperation is gained for planning a celebration after the return from the Threshold Retreat.

### Threshold

- ❑ The Big One After several more weekly meetings and for those who are ready, this would be a 5 to 10 day (even longer if possible) epic adventure, taking place in a wild part of the country and including a subtle weave of physical challenge, survival skill learning, creative expression, time in the group talking, listening and supporting, emotional development, time alone vision questing and tuning into the

natural world, perhaps spiritual awakening, reflecting on purpose and dreams, asking "who am I? where am I from? what am I to do? what is the meaning of life?", experiencing a rite of passage.

### Return

- ❑ Re-integration into the Community At the end of this process (6 to 9 months) there would be an unexpected (to the young people) celebration arranged by their community to show honour, respect, appreciation, love and that the "elders" know how to have a good time too!

### Continuation

- ❑ Mentor Development Initially there will need to be mentor development training for those who wish to run the THRESHOLD INITIATIVE. Then suitable young people who have been through the programme would be recruited to act as mentors in later programmes. This process is an absolute key to the success of the Initiative. Ideally mentors would continue in a supportive relationship to mentees for up to two years.

## 3. The Proposed Content

There are a huge number of possibilities of what would actually be done within the structure outlined above. In time a workbook may be produced providing practical ideas. What follows are some brief suggestions of activities appropriate to the three main phases of the rites of passage process. This section is very much "work in progress".

### Preparation for Separation

Looseners - games, introductions, informal humour, 5 rhythms dance, stories.

Sharing Issues - e.g. about parents, divorce, sex, relationships, drugs, violence. Using "talking stick" and "way the the council". Introducing element of ceremony, no giggling e.g. "This is a place where men talk about men's things".

Conflict resolution - dealing with conflict as it arises. Issues around competition and cooperation.

Reviewing the Past - drawing a lifeline, look at what's given them strength, what they wish to be rid of, write, paint, dance or tell their life stories, plot highs and lows ("chuff charts"), draw "road maps".

Tell Tales, Make Music - tell traditional or personal tales that are entertaining and/or have “teachings”; make improvised music with whatever instruments are available; compose songs.

Separate the Sexes - at times important to have sexes meeting separately, possibly whole groups as they have different issues and require different kinds of ceremonies.

Choosing a “stand behind” - each person has a mentor figure (like a godparent) who shadows them, answers questions and speaks for them when appropriate.

Giving history of place you live - exploring the past of your community, its traditions, what connects you to the land. Getting feeling of your “place on Earth”.

Presenting models of the self - e.g. the Medicine Wheel, psychosynthesis, TA and gestalt, king-warrior-magician-lover and others. Acknowledge that model is map not territory, different strokes for different folks etc.

“Elders” talk about own experience - especially what they gained from own rites of passage. Important to gain authority through authenticity, value of inspiring talk, being able to operate without models.

Saying goodbye to “old self” - recognising what you have to let go of, acknowledging fears, thinking about how things might be in 10 or 20 years.

## Separation

Making contracts - making simple open ended agreements to be clear about what is being undertaken. Could also mean saying “I am not ready to take you”.

Taking responsibility for food - promote awareness of what they are eating, encourage small scale fasting, bring up issues around sugar, tea, coffee; set tone for rituals by saying some kind of grace, be involved in cutting wood for fire, create a bread-making ceremony.

Survival Skills - design and build a shelter, use it as a bivvy, possibly keep a fire going all night.

Tune into Wildlife - become aware of birds, insects, mammals, trees, the sounds they might hear at night.

Earth Awareness exercises - e.g. a microhike, blindfold walk, finding a special place, making a sound map, writing a poem, asking a question of a tree!

Telling life story - or current chapter with a partner, focussing on upcoming transition.

Telling Mythic Tales - one story (e.g. Jumping Mouse, the Quest for the Grail) can become a theme or an axis for a whole weekend.

Blessing and Caring for Tools - when involved in a practical making project like carving or sculpture be sure to bless the tools first and care for them after.

Making prayers, offerings, wishes, intentions - involves giving away, making a line from where you are to where you want to be: “energy follows awareness; intent directs awareness”.

Discussing Values - exploring meaning of the good, beautiful and true and other desirable qualities/values.

Assessing readiness for Threshold phase - is person “psychologically” minded, will he/she benefit from it, are they ready to move forward; be careful about looking at “files”.

## Threshold

Refine intention - what you intend is what you get; brings tremendous clarity; you get what you deserve or need or have earned.

Simplicity rather than discomfort - Making sacred space - demonstrate how to create a sacred space, to build a shrine - the importance of boundary, focus, effort, beauty, offering...

Looking out, looking in - rituals may focus on outward vision leading to connection with Nature and Cosmos, or inward vision to see own heart: or both.

Looking back, looking forward - rituals may focus on healing the past or opening up to the future: or both.

Fear is threshold guardian - may be important to own up to fears beforehand or to crank them up; risk essential part of process. Methods may include climbing, abseiling, a night walk, “a Night on the Mountain of Fear” or simply speaking your truth in the group. Need appropriate level of challenge e.g. feeling that could die!

Implementing models - if models have been introduced e.g. medicine wheel, eight directions now is the time for their meaning and value to be revealed.

An expedition - this phase may involve coming to and exploring a new place, cultivating curiosity, developing aims and the means to meet them, alone or with support achieving the goals, bringing back stories, sharing the experience. To this could be added meditation/tai chi, storytelling, refining intention, storytelling, creative expression, making shrines and ceremony.

Respect - when working with physical skill need to respect tools and materials e.g. ask a tree for a branch; frustrations at beginning give way to elation at feelings of “we did it!” Experience of transformation.

Next Steps - choosing goals to focus on after leaving threshold phase.

## Return

Half-way house - can be used on way back to community to show slides of the week, present gifts, produce A2 pictures of each young person doing something positive which can be given to the parents.

Letters to Selves - drawing on positive energy and feelings generated write letters to selves as a kind of promise to the future.

Angels - everyone has an angel, someone in the group but they don't know who.

A Continuing Network of Support

## WHERE TO FROM HERE

### Pilot Projects

The year 2000 will see the trialling of this proposed contemporary rites of passage form in different parts of Britain. The intention is to work with as wide a variety of groups as possible to learn as much as we can about the process. This work will be evaluated and the results

disseminated widely. We are confident that the time has come for an integrated holistic way of working with young people that utilises the forms and fulfills the functions of traditional rites of passage, but that is adapted to meet the needs of young people today.

**Eric Maddern**  
**eric@fachwen.org Fachwen, North Wales**

### THE CRUNCH

**A critical situation, a decisive moment**  
**A Rites of Passage Experience for Young Men**  
**Designed for Group from Westminster Council,**  
**May 2000**  
**Threads and Themes**

#### 1. Orientation to Place

Getting familiar with the earthy dwellings and structures of Cae Mabon, finding what is where, hearing basic survival instructions. Some background to the cultural and historical context. Touching the wild. Encountering forest, river, lake, mountain. Tuning into the complexity, beauty, interdependence, delicacy and ruggedness of the natural world. Expanding awareness of external world, from moss to the stars.

#### 2. Orientation to Self

Telling relevant chunks of personal history to a partner, small group or whole group. Working with feelings that arise. Expressing story in different ways – “chuff charts“, pictures, dance, short writings. Gaining clarity and perspective on life journey. Getting sense of drama, tragedy, blocks, potential, desires, hidden talents. Leaders present models to aid understanding.

#### 3. Orientation to Group

Establishing circle with talking stick, discussing relevant issues, dealing with conflict, exploring the relationships between mentor and participant. Developing listening skills, empathy, mutual respect.

#### 4. Practical Survival Skills

Learning basic camping routines (use of sleeping bags etc); how to make and maintain a fire (including making fire without matches, chopping wood); designing and constructing simple shelters; cooking food. . .

#### 5. Physical Challenge

Activities could include: a) paddling coracles and Canadian canoe on the lake; b) rock climbing and abseiling; c) mountain walking up one of the nearby summits (Elidir, Snowdon or the Glydrys). Working with positive visualisation, team work, moving in and out of comfort zones. Providing the chance for a spiritual experience outdoors.

#### 6. Creative Expression

Activities could include: a) working with knives and axes to carve and sculpt wood; b) making an environmental sculpture; c) writing poems, making up a song; d) doing dance (5 rhythms), movement or martial arts practice; e) making music with drums and other instruments.

#### 7. Soul Food

Listening to old stories - folktales, myths and legends - talking about their meaning and lessons. Singing chants and songs. Playing with animal and/or universe cards. Using ways to enrich the imagination, expand possibilities. Daring to dream.

#### 8. Ritual

Gently introducing such notions and practices as: cultivating awareness by stilling the mind; marking important life transitions; honouring elements, directions, ancestors, spirits, gods or God; creating sacred space and

building shrines; focussing intent (or prayer); cleansing and purification; using symbolic actions and objects; making offerings, giving and receiving blessings.

## 9. The Crunch

This is the climax of the week when each participant does something they find challenging and scary but which they are willing to try. It could be a “vision quest” or “night on the mountain of fear“, where they spend a night alone in the forest. Other challenges might be offered according to the readiness of the participant. They may be instructed to reflect on what is their unique gift, purpose or destiny.

### A Possible Sequence

#### Day 1

Arrive and settle in

#### Day 2

Orienting to immediate natural environment

Telling own story in pairs – creating picture – sharing with group

Learning about fire lighting and chopping wood

Introduced to notion of “sacred space“

Hearing songs and stories around the fire

Getting sorted around cooking and washing up

Group discussion and process

Note: on Monday evening the group will need to be away from site between 7.15 and 9.30 due to a previous Roundhouse storytelling booking.

#### Day 3

Movement session leading to 5 rhythms dance

Making sounds into calls, chants and songs

Rock climbing session emphasising risk, teamwork, positive visualisation

Group discussion about comfort zones

Beginning to make something, a shrine perhaps?

Presenting models e.g. medicine wheel, four archetypes

More stories and songs

#### Day 4

Canoeing in coracles, Canadian canoe

Learning about making basic shelters – link to coracles

Further group discussion – looking at what you can make in your life

Finding special place in forest; poetry and/or short story writing

More songs and stories (e.g. Jumping Mouse)

#### Day 5

Focussing intent

Mountain walk (most of day)

Reviewing and group process

Making music, create a song

#### Day 6

Completing environmental sculpture on site

Time in pairs, reflecting alone

Group discussion, preparation for Vision Quest

Choosing site for the night

Night on the Mountain of Fear

Arrival of additional mentors

#### Day 7

Return from night out

Group process – welcoming participants back Mentor group devises honouring ceremony for young men Completions of process – e.g. writing letters, choosing new name Celebration

#### Day 8

Clean up, pack and depart

#### Final word

We acknowledge that the aim of this project is to increase the “employability” of these young men. However we firmly believe that their life prospects will be most effectively enhanced by increasing their inner resources of self-worth, creativity, ability to speak their truth and to listen to and hear others, a sense of purpose or direction, a feeling that they are part of a large and wondrous world. That is what we will be aiming for in this residential experience. After THE CRUNCH we confidently predict an expansion of possibilities and new feelings of empowerment in those who have experienced it.

## THE CRUNCH

### Young Man!

(yes, that means you)

Do you want respect?

Do you want things to get better?

Do you want “a life“?

## **Then come to THE CRUNCH!**

This is a week specially designed for young men in the wilds of Wales.

Here, with a bunch of amazing older men, you'll have a chance to get a grip on yourself, to see what your life is all about.

How's it going to happen? We can't tell you. That would give the game away. What we can say is that you'll get to sit around the fire, hear extraordinary tales, be heard, make music, get lost in the forest, paddle your canoe, snake up mountains, surprise yourself.

And a lot more. All in a brilliant place.

So, be bold, step out, come to THE CRUNCH.

Life will never be the same again.

**PS Quote from previous participant: "It's like being high on nothing!"**

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# HERMANN RADEMACKER

## UNEMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

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I would like to make some introductory remarks regarding the German Youth Institute, where I am coming from and the kind of research we do there. The institute is almost totally financed by the federal government. It is a kind of social research infrastructure for the youth and family services in our country. That means that those, who are mainly interested in the results of our work are the professionals and the politicians in the field of social work. We have at least two types of research work at the institute, one type is mainly characterised by evaluating programs and projects, which aim at supporting the social integration of disadvantaged young people in our country and the other type of work are more general surveys regarding the situation of young people and families in our country and also some longitudinal studies, focussing on political attitudes and political activities of young people.

This means that the research work of the institute covers the living conditions and the situation of all young people in our country, but nevertheless has special emphases on those young people who need additional support to deal with the challenges of their everyday life and those of becoming an integrated and active member of society.

The reason – also that might be interesting for you – why the institute was established more than thirty years ago was that the German parliament had made a legislation by which the German government has to deliver a national report regarding the situation of young people in country every four years, which means one during each parliamentary term. Until today, the co-operation with the commission, who is responsible for this report, is one of the central tasks of the institute.

I myself worked during the last twenty years on two main subjects:

One was the co-operation between schools and youth services and the other was the transition of young people from school to work. The experience we made in a variety of projects dealing with these subjects is the main background for what I have to contribute here.

As you know, I am not an expert for outdoor and adventure education, but I hope I will be able to describe a kind of picture of the demands and challenges young people have to deal with in order to realise a biographi-

cal pathway into adult life and into society, which will enable you to find and identify contributions from outdoor and adventure education in order to realise a successful juvenile biography.

The dramatic social change, which we see, at least since the early 1970s, has also changed the framework conditions of growing up. This change was mainly introduced by changes in the world of labour. And it is one main characteristic, which makes this change obvious:

Since the early 1970s, the traditional Fordist type of production, which meant mass-production by mass-employment, is eroding. Since then we realise that we have still mass-employment but no longer mass-production. The first obvious outcome of this erosion of the Fordist production massed was a rapid increase of unemployment, which hit all western economies – the eastern economies avoided the problem by sticking to their old-fashioned and, compared to the west, little productive economy. And I am sure this was one of the main reasons of the social and economic brake-down they suffered ten years ago.

The consequences this development had on the labour-market is shown for the old Federal Republic and West-Berlin in figure 1. It shows the qualification specific unemployment quotas between 1975 and 1997. Figure 1 shows at least some of the consequences the changes in the world of labour had on the labour-market. There is one fat line in the figure, which shows the total unemployment and there is only one line above this. This is the line showing the unemployment-quotas for those with no recognised qualification. During the second half of the seventies, their unemployment was about 50% higher than the total unemployment in our country and when in the early eighties we had a rapid increase in unemployment they suffered much more from unemployment than all the other qualification-groups on the labour-market. By 1987 the difference in unemployment-quotas between the total unemployment and the unemployment of the non-qualified has risen to more than 8% while it was only 2% ten years before. The development between 1987 and 1991 shows that the non-qualified participated over-proportionally in the recovery of the labour-market between 1988 and 1991 and the gap between the general unemploy-

ment-rate and theirs was reduced to 7%, however when we had an increase in unemployment after 1989, they again suffered much more than others. So, by 1997 the unemployment-rate was almost 25% and that means 2,5 times as much as total unemployment.

Let us now have a look at the other lines in this figure. The next line below the total unemployment is that for those, who had an apprenticeship type of vocational training and education in the German dual system, which as you know means, they have an apprenticeship contract with a private company and attend vocational school for normally one day per week. These are about 60-70% of the German labour force, so it is no wonder that the development of unemployment for them is parallel to total unemployment, because they contribute a great deal to the total unemployment. All the other groups are significantly smaller than this one, but still it is interesting to have a look at them. So, the next line refers to those, who took an exam at university. Their line followed the general tendencies of unemployment for most of the time, but they were always effected less by increasing unemployment than the first two groups and since the early 90s, it seems that their unemployment-rates are hardly effected by the general increase of unemployment, which we had since than. Those, who attended schools for technicians and masters are a very, very small group in the German labour-market, but a highly qualified one, however, mainly in technical skills, which means that they do not participate very much in the expansion of the services sector and that might be an explanation for the fact that their unemployment-rate is also increasing, however on a comparably low level since the early 90s. One group, which needs special attention is those, who studied in our universities for applied sciences that is a new type of academic training, which was established since the early 70s and they offer highly business oriented academic vocational training, for example for engineers, social worker, business management, etc.. They are the only group in the German labour-market, whose unemployment-rates went down since about 1994 while general unemployment was increasing.

So what this figure 1 shows is that a qualification is important and makes a big difference regarding the risks of unemployment. This figure, however, also gave the main argument for German policies to overcome and limit youth-unemployment. As it shows that mainly the unqualified suffer from unemployment the strategy was to fight youth-unemployment by qualifying young people. This strategy was pursued since the early 70s and we established a highly differentiated and developed support-structure for the regular vocational training and education system in our country. It mainly consists of measures for pre-vocational training, but also includes support for those in regular vocational education and

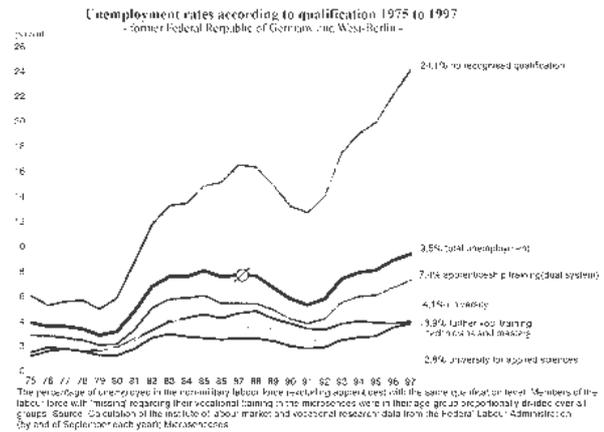


Fig. 1

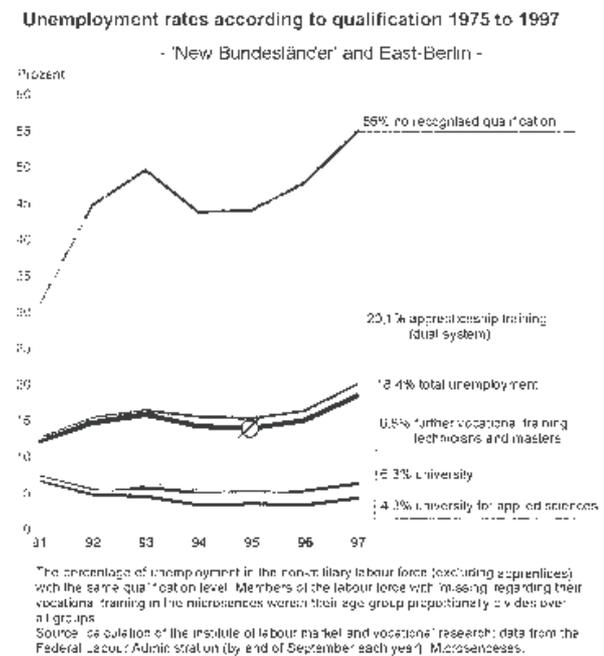


Fig. 2

training in order to increase their chances of either transition into the regular structures of training or to succeed in their training and manage the transition from training to labour.

This strategy however, was only of very limited success in the new "Länder" as you see in figure 2. This refers to the situation in the "new Bundesländer" and East-Berlin that is the territory of the former GDR. It covers only the years 1991 to 1997, because only since then we have the relevant statistic. However, it might be mentioned that had a speculative extrapolation for the years 1975 to 1991 been made, all those lines would be near zero, because the GDR had only very little unemployment and in many industries suffered from lack of labour force.

But what is interesting here is the fact that we have two lines above the line for the total unemployment. Also those who made the apprenticeship type of vocational

education and training (dual system) are suffering from unemployment more than the average. And this means:

At least in East-Germany qualification does not at all guarantee employment. We have areas in East-Germany, where 80% of the unemployed young people between 15 and 25 are qualified young people; here the unemployment-rate for the unqualified is three times as high as general unemployment. Also this figure proves the fact that a qualification makes a difference, but not all qualifications are of similar effect regarding the reduction of the risk of unemployment. And not only the 20,1% of those whose apprenticeship type of learning in the eastern part of Germany also the 7,4%, which they hold in West-Germany, is much too high. They are the ones, who prove another new phenomenon of the modern labour-market which we call the 'qualification paradox', which means, qualification is more necessary than ever before in order to have access to employment and to vocational and social positions, however it no longer guarantees the access to those positions in the same way it did until fifty or forty years ago.

Before I try to analyse what kind of development lies behind this, I would like to make one final remark on the German situation:

The German strategy to limit and to overcome youth-unemployment by qualifying young people had also the effect that we transposed the risks in the transition from school to work from the first to the second, which is the transition from vocational educational and training to labour. This development resulted in an increasing number of young people mainly in the age group from 20 to 45 being unemployed. By the end of the 1990s, their unemployment rate had exceeded the general unemployment and that was the reason why our government, as the governments in France and Great Britain, had to introduce a political program for reducing youth-unemployment, which also included support for employment. These measures, luckily, were effective and now again we have youth-unemployment below general unemployment.

Let us have a closer look on the effects such developments have for young people. Let us first look at unemployment as a frame-work-condition for the transition from school to work. High unemployment means that those who enter the labour-market for the first time that are the young people, have the highest risk of unemployment, because all those, who had the chance to enter the labour-market before them have already taken the few available jobs. That means that – at least when there is no political intervention – youth-unemployment is always higher than general unemployment, if we leave the development to the market. That is what we see in most of the Mediterranean countries, in Italy, Spain, Portugal;

we had similar situations in the UK and in the United States in the 80<sup>th</sup> and early 90<sup>th</sup>.

Which function had qualification for success under such framework conditions?

This question is very easy to answer, the higher the qualification the better. However, remember the qualification paradox mentioned above. In the selection-process companies make for apprenticeships or jobs, the certificates you can show only help to pass the first barrier. For passing the next barrier, you have to show additional competencies in tests and interviews and these have one general tendency:

Communicative and social abilities are becoming more important. Personality related criteria are valued high for the decisions of modern personnel managers.

The background for this development is not only the use of new technologies in modern work-places but also the introduction of new forms of labour organisation. Modern production processes are much more flexible than the old Fordist ones and that means that the single worker has to take responsibility not only for his/her own contribution for the product – and the modern term of product includes also services – but at least to a certain degree has also to take care of the whole process. That means he/she has to communicate and to negotiate with other workers, who contribute to the process. This means that besides workplace specific qualifications, which have to do with handling the technology on this a specific workstation, there are also a lot of general qualifications necessary, which one could also learn at school. But these new demands also mean that in modern companies we cannot use kids. We no longer have that patriarchal and custodial relation between the experienced master and the apprentice who might have left school at the age of 15. Modern production asks for the adult autonomous worker, who needs not to be supervised, this normal everyday work. That might be one of the reasons why, in Germany for more than ten years, more than 50% of those who begin an apprenticeship are older than 18. Why one should expect that – according to the traditional normal biography of transition from school to work – as they leave school with 15 or 16 (they do not belong to that third of our young generation who attend the Gymnasium until they are at least 18) they should start their apprenticeship while they are 16 or even younger.

Until now we discussed the consequences of high unemployment and the consequences of the use of new technologies and new forms of labour-organisation for the transition of young people from school to work.

I would now like to introduce another aspect, which is discussed only lately in this context. That is the changes on the labour-market and their consequences for compe-

tencies young people need today in order to manage their working life.

In Germany we have now almost 50% of our labour force, which have no long-term employment in companies. They have limited contracts or loose their jobs after comparably short terms of employment and therefore are forced again and again to engage with the labour market. And that means that they have to find employers where the qualifications and competencies they can offer are asked for or if they do not find them, they have to adapt their qualifications and competencies to the existing demand on the labour-market. In other words,

They have to do market-research as well as product development and it is their risk whether they succeed to sell the product (qualification and competencies) they have developed. This means that these people in our economic structure bare risks, which traditionally were typical for the entrepreneur. And that is the reason, why G. Günther Voß and Hans J. Pongratz are using the term 'Arbeitskraftunternehmer' (labour-force entrepreneur) to describe this modern type of industrial worker.

As this modern entrepreneurship is not only asked for by those, who repeatedly have to act on the general labour-market but also by those who stay in companies for longer terms because also within the companies labour-markets have been established with similar roles applied. Also here a high degree of flexibility is asked for and workers have to adapt their qualifications and competencies to changing demands in a similar way as those outside the company – however with the big difference that they can rely on support by the company for their vocational further education and training. So, this new 'Arbeitskraftunternehmer' might become the modern type of labour force and in this sense might replace the traditional industrial worker.

This means that entrepreneurial qualities are not only asked for in the world of those "Yetties" (Young entrepreneurial technologists) which we used to see as the winners of the new economic developments. Entrepreneurship becomes a normal and general qualification in the whole employment-system.

I think this is quite a challenge for outdoor and adventure education because isn't it one of the main educational objectives of those educational concepts to enable young people to deal with risks, to take risks and to get self-confidence, but also to experience having successfully handled risks? And that is done with the necessary responsibility, it must include young people having developed the abilities to make decisions on the basis of what they know about their competencies and qualifications in order to deal with a risk they have to face. And sure, this also must include the alternative not to take the

risk, in a certain situation, at least not now, not before the further development of qualifications.

So one of the aims in the concept of outdoor and adventure education should be to improve the knowledge of people regarding their competencies and to overcome the dramatic over- or underestimation of competencies, which we especially find in disadvantaged youth and among those, who suffer from an educational career, which was characterised more by failure than by success.

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SUSANNE KAISER

# OUTDOOR, ADVENTURE AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN PROJECTS FOR UNEMPLOYED MALE AND FEMALE YOUNGSTERS

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## Introduction

My name is Susanne Kaiser. I am a social worker. For four years now I am working for the organisation bsj in Marburg / Germany, a non-profit youth organisation, that works with the physical aspects and potentials of adolescent life styles. The body, movement and physical expression are the focus of our social work programmes, since physical action is an important means of communication and interaction, especially for the disadvantaged youth.

I am working in two programmes:

### 1. Interactionproject:

Its purpose and aim are: social and vocational integration of young immigrants, male and female. Within this programme I co-operate with schools in Marburg. I will give more detailed information about this programme later on.

### 2. A Project called AQUA:

The name stands for Arbeit (work), Qualification and Adventure. This programme gives young unemployed persons between the age of 19 and 24 years the possibility to improve qualifications that are necessary to enter the labour market: professional skills as well as social skills. Participants of this programme receive an employment contract for one year. Part of their contract is to undertake a pedagogical training to promote their social skills.

The bsj started this programme in co-operation with another organisation in 1996. The first employment training was for young men who could qualify in handicrafts such as working with wood or metal. These latter skills would help them afterwards to find an occupation.

The AQUA womens programme in which I am working, started in October 1998. In the beginning, 15 young unemployed women – usually with no or a low level final

exam or with broken off apprenticeships – could qualify in the field of domestic economy and gastronomy.

There are several reasons for the failure in their vocational context:

- problems at school
- lack of self-confidence
- lack of motivation
- difficulties in the apprenticeship
- conflict between occupation and family-orientation

## Pedagogical training in Bistro A Capella

Bistro A Capella is a public restaurant with regular business hours and catering service for diverse events. There the young women make the experience of a real working field. Additionally they get a qualification in the field of gastronomy as well as a general pedagogical qualification.

Two pedagogues are working with the young women to promote their social skills. Pedagogical contents can be the following: It is necessary to work through the individual biography of each participant, especially their experiences at school as well as their problems concerning their everyday-life at work. Nearly every young woman in Bistro A Capella lives in an individual difficult situation. The most frequent problems are drug problems, difficulties within the relationship to their partners, family problems as well as financial problems (e.g. high debts). These problems have to be worked through and supported individually. Activities, which are individually chosen and orientated at the individual social environment, are based on subjects like drugs, role of the women, sexuality, debt consult. The aim is to consider and reflect upon past experiences and develop new strategies of behaviour.

It is generally noticed that most of the women have a lot of problems in social behaviour. e.g.

- low competence in problem solving

- missing competence in team work
- communicative difficulties
- low flexibility
- low frustration tolerance
- low endurance

Those key qualifications - at the moment broadly in discussion - play an important role for the search of a job or an apprenticeship. This is especially so for our participants. The promotion of those key qualifications is very important because they left school with no or a low level final exam. The promotion of these key qualifications can increase their chance to get a job or an apprenticeship.

Generally these competences play an important role for the functioning of everyday-life in Bistro A Capella.

The conceptional idea is that methods based on adventurous experiential learning initiate and promote the development of key qualifications. Challenging situations should give the young persons the possibility to experience individual limits. For every activity the principle of Challenge by Choice is valid, that means each participant lays down his/her own individual limit. As a result participants do not only learn something about themselves but also something about the group. They get to know their colleagues in different settings and learn to accept different, individual limits. At the same time they experience being supported through motivating and helping others. Besides this, they develop together alternative strategies of behaviour which are important for their everyday work and their co-operation.

Adventure based activities start to work with the strength of the participants. In contrast to their experiences in school where those activities, which emphasise action and exercise, dominate. Young persons experience directly the effect of their behaviour and can therefore react more adequately. They also have the possibility to change their behaviour if they want to modify the result. Every activity tries to include the unity of head, heart and hand.

### **Adventurebased activities and experiential learning in Bistro A Capella**

As I already mentioned most of the participants have a lack of experience of adequate and productive co-operation / teamwork. Verbal attacks, mobbing, low reliance and high fluctuation belong to the everyday life of the Bistro. With the help of adventure based activities and experiential learning, I try to create a positive effect on these tendencies. A special setting, consisting of problemsolving activities as well as activities to promote confidence in others, should create an atmosphere that encourages the participants to find an appropriate way of how to engage with others. Most important is

mutual acceptance. Adventure Based Counseling (ABC) describes a consulting and training programme that has been developed by Project Adventure, USA. The main effects of the programme are: strengthened team structure, experienced individual limits and developed common rules which should have a positive effect on the work fitness of the group.

Problem solving activities, confidence establishing activities, activities at a low and a high ropes course and – most important – continuous reflections of the group-processes – all this leads to a more clearing perspective about their way of dealing with others and to alternative possibilities of behaviour.

### **Example from the practice:**

*We should go up the wall. Yes, but how? You can make it, she said and went off. Imagine, a wall, 4 meters high, 15 women of different weights, and everyone should go up there, without any aid. Something that seems to be impossible for a moment was successfully solved within minutes.*

*We could not do it on our own, we worked as a team, cooperated, helped us, encouraged us and suddenly we managed it. We absolutely want to save this feeling for Bistro A Capella!*

I think the problem of integrating in a team arises because of feeling insecure of one's own person. The women's biographies show a number of frustrations and failed plans. Such experiences do have a negative effect on the self-esteem of women. They often think they will never be able to manage life properly. This self-concept becomes obvious through their lack of confidence in their own competences. Challenging settings should give the participants the possibility to overcome their own limitations. Such an experience can have a positive effect on the self-esteem and further on the work in a team.

To obtain these positive effects, I work with different adventure based methods. Contents depend on the developmental status quo, the needs and the readiness of the group.

Some parts of my work include climbing (at a rock or in a hall), canoe-excursions, outdoor games, biking-tours, ABC- and City Bound programmes. City Bound has a close coherence with teaching vocational qualifications. City Bound programmes aims to train not only the already mentioned key-qualifications but also those situations, that are necessary for the entrance into an occupation. Before I present this method in more detail, I want to say that reflections upon every activity does play a very important role. The reflections helps to guarantee the transfer of the experiences to the everyday life. These ex-

periences are considered collaboratively, along with all other participants, concerning their meaning for the everyday life. So, the activities give the participants the opportunity to develop further their behaviour and to integrate the positive experiences into their self-concepts.

After two years of my practical experience, I realized that the women are more open to workshops that last several days. These workshops were much more successful than those one-day programmes which took place once the week. One reason for this is the high fluctuation within the group. As a result I had to work every week with a different composition of the group and could not progress with the beginning processes. Additionally, these processes were disturbed by stress situations and conflicts of the daily work.. That's why I decided to start with a 2 or 3 day programme and continue then with a weekly rhythm. Participants report afterwards that they received a good group-feeling. They also gave a positive feedback about individual experiences. E.g.: *"That was much better than taking drugs."* Or: *"Always when I feel fear coming up I think of this situation. And I did manage it."*

Another problem is the fact that most women refuse to take part at programmes over night. There is nobody to take care of their partners, children and animals, and all their friends are not involved. Anyway, I organised a three-days City Bound workshop in Cologne with some of the women. The task of this workshop was to organise work and accommodation for themselves. They had to visit different offices, find out the right persons to turn to, make phone calls and so on. Step by step they carried out their tasks, but without completing them finally. Otherwise one might have had to offend several persons, e.g. an employer because one has to cancel a job offer after the programme. The aim of this workshop was to gain the competences to be able to work in their familiar spatial and social surroundings (knowledge of addresses to turn to, utilisation of public transports). After the programme the women were enthusiastic about the idea of moving away from their own well known town they live in. And they were surprised with their abilities to build up a new life, based upon their own self-organisation and on their own. Even if not one of the women actually relocated the experience is still a real value and enrichment for them.

### City Bound as a method for vocational preparation

City Bound is an established term and means activities of the field of experiential learning in urban spaces. City Bound originally comes from Belgium and is an addition to Outward Bound, whose activities mainly take place outside, in nature.

The development of the City Bound concept was a result of considering two aspects:

1. considering young persons and their needs within their current social surroundings.
2. considering the critical remarks around the transfer of outdoor activities skills to everyday-life.

In the Interaction project, I mainly work with the method of City Bound.

After my first experiences with City Bound I found out that conventional adventure educational contents are not sufficient to realize the aims of the programme, especially the vocational integration of young immigrants. Similar to the target group of Bistro A Capella, those latter young people also have a lot of deficiencies in school achievements as well as in social behaviour. The target group of the Interaction-project consists mainly of young people who

- are at the transition from school to occupation
- come from different countries (Kasachstan, Russia, Turkey, Germany)
- are in the 8th or 9th grade of secondary or special school as well as in preparatory courses at vocational schools
- have only a low educational level
- are strongly frustrated at school
- have only a low motivation for going to school or to work
- live in a problematic social surrounding
- often have family problems, e.g. unemployment, addiction, violence within the family
- only have a low level of frustration tolerance
- have reduced possibilities of acting (in the sense of low mobility)

Those deficiencies can be understood as a result of different origin and therefore lingual and cultural difficulties. It is obvious, that the young people feel very insecure about German contexts because they do not have any experiences with e.g. school contents, job situation, social manners. Besides, they feel a strong rejection by the local population. That is why they often turn to ethnocentric groups which they seldom dare to leave.

In addition, the needs of school stand in contrast to the needs of the young people. School has the major task to teach intellectual / cognitive contents which are important for the final exam. It has no capacity to prepare disadvantaged young people properly. It would be necessary to teach the following qualifications:

- writing letters of application
- practice presentation talks
- be informed about the chosen field of occupation
- developing a realistic perspective on employment
- developing key qualifications

School and youth welfare services should work close together to complement one another and to work with different subjects to provide an holistic approach.

Within the described processes the traditional activities of experiential learning are not sufficient and need to be modified and extended. That is why the concept of a vocational training – using elements already known in the City Bound methods – was developed. The City Bound methods are extended by my own new ideas and transferred to other working fields like *Bistro A Capella*.

With this way of co-operation you are able to reach most of the young persons and to change traditional school structures.

### **Pedagogical relevance of resources in cities**

Considering the living space city one can find out two superior subjects: spaces and human beings. Those two can be divided into many smaller fields, but I reduce them into

- 1a. unused spaces
- 1b. occupied spaces
- 2a. subjects
- 2b. contacts / communication

**1a.** Unused spaces are relevant in town planning, new and re-organisation of spaces e.g. through building projects. I do not take those into consideration within my City Bound programmes.

**1b.** Occupied spaces means those spaces, which have a clear attribution (e.g. a bridge to cross a river or a road), but which also have other possibilities. I think, that all the surroundings of young people have affects upon them mentally. One aim of City Bound is to reach and develop a new perspective, e.g. a new perspective on human beings, a new utilisation of spaces.

**2a.** Subjects has to be understood as a superior term for an endless number of ressources, e.g. work, but also traffic, environment, poverty.

**2b.** social contacts and communicational processes (nonverbal and verbal) automatically happen if human beings meet. They are the reason for strong feelings of insecurity by our participants, but at the same time they have to cope with them, if they want to integrate into the job market.

At this point City Bound as a vocational preparation starts its work.

In different settings, the young people have to manage situations which are strongly isomorph to their everyday life. Besides, they are confronted with various reac-

tions of their peers. E.g. it is their task to responsibly gain different information or to interview passer-bys. The activities mainly have the aim to overcome the lingual deficiencies of the participants (they do not only exist for foreigners!) and - in coherence with that - the inhibition to go towards unknown persons. These activities prepare them for an interview with an authority (journalist, police president, personal chef...) at the end of the programme - e.g. an interview about the situation for vocational places in a firm or the description of a special profession. In contrast to other methods of experiential learning the individual here, within the activities, stands in the foreground. The conceptional idea of the programme is to start working with the whole group, later on with smaller groups and in the end with the individual. This does not mean, that the whole group is not important, but not generally and not always. Similar to the above mentioned adventurebased programmes, the reflection of the activities plays a decisive role and usually takes place in the whole group.

Finally I want to give some examples to give you a concrete idea of the programme.

I start the programmes with an activity for the whole group, e.g. the task to take a picture of a group of passer-bys (one can change the conditions - dependent on the participants - with the following factors: number of people; a dog, a child, two nationalities). The playful way of managing social contacts, the creative result of the task and the handling of the reactions of the passer-bys stand in the foreground. It is easier to be confronted with those tasks in the safe situation of a game and a confidential group.

An activity for smaller groups could be the already mentioned interview. An alternative is to exchange an egg against something more worthful or against some other food - but in this condition one has to be sure that no participant comes from a country where poverty and begging are necessary to survive. The programme could end for example with an interview with someone in authority. This interview is similar to a job interview. It has to be done alone or together with maximum one other person.

A very important aspect of a pedagogic in a City is the promotion of mobility. I remember a female participant, who preferred to get up one hour earlier than needed only to take the schoolbus to a train station. Then she could meet in the bus a friend with whom she could take the train to our meeting point. She could have started with the same train from her home one hour later, but she was too afraid to stay in a train on her own.

This is not an unusual phenomom, as I realized from my job experience. But in our society it is absolutely necessary to be flexible, not only at the search for a job.

In only a few cases the young people do find an apprenticeship close to their neighbourhood. They need the competence to use public transports, timetables and maps – that is why this should always be part of a City Bound programme. I often play a game, a board game called Scotland Yard, in reality – a group of detectives chases a criminal who takes the underground to flee. Every two stations the participants have to tell their location and ask for the location of others. Other examples are to visit a town blindfolded or in a wheelchair, to rope down from a bridge, as so on.

I want to finish my lecture with a citation of a participant, half a year after the workshop, right before an interview concerning a job offer:

*“Fear, why should I have fear? We have already done this before in the workshop!”*

Through the Interaction-project the cooperation with schools and bsj becomes more and more successful. We receive a lot of positive feedback from schools and there is an increasing number of new cooperational partners. We are now continuously working at 8 schools.

After 3 years of practice at a vocational school bsj started this year a special training that is similar to the existing training of vocational preparation. In the new training the curriculum is extended through a special pedagogical support: social training and adventure based activities. The target group is similar to the one of Interaction-project. BsJ is responsible for the pedagogical support.

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DAVID LE BRETON<sup>1</sup>

# VIOLENCES ET ACTIVITÉ DE PLEINE NATURE

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## Violences

En France, 7,8% des jeunes de 12-19 ans déclarent avoir été frappés ou blessés physiquement au cours des 12 derniers mois. Avec une nette prédominance masculine près d'un jeune sur 8 déclare avoir commis un acte de violence sur quelqu'un. Par rapport à 1998, la délinquance des mineurs de 1999 est en hausse de 11%. En 1999, 150000 mineurs sont mis en cause pour des crimes et des délits. 2247 mineurs sont incarcérés en 1993, 3495 le sont en 1997. La question majeure est celle des limites, c'est-à-dire du sens partagé qui permet d'exister et de se situer comme acteur au sein d'un collectif. Nous passons d'une société régie par des interdits, donc par une responsabilité envers l'autre, à une société structurée par le possible et l'impossible. Pour beaucoup la loi n'est pas vécue comme une nécessité de protection à la fois personnelle et collective pour assurer un fonctionnement propice du lien social, mais comme un obstacle à une volonté personnelle toute puissante. Sa transgression ne soulève souvent pas la moindre culpabilité mais la bonne conscience d'avoir été plus malin<sup>2</sup>.

Le défaut de *containing* de nombre de familles souvent dissociées, conflictuelles ou dont la figure paternelle est absente ou sans autorité amène les enfants à privilégier la culture de rue au contact des pairs au détriment d'un sens de la mesure et de la reconnaissance de l'autre. Pour nombre de ces jeunes, la famille n'est plus une instance de socialisation, mais un refuge affectif et fonctionnel qui n'exerce plus une fonction d'intégration au sein du lien social. Souvent chez des jeunes nés de l'immigration, la langue des parents n'est plus la leur, ils ne la comprennent qu'en partie. Les pères notamment ont souvent perdu toute autorité, disqualifiés socialement. Inscrits dans une autre époque de l'immigration, ils ont sacrifié leur existence au bonheur de leurs enfants qui ne se reconnaissent pas en

eux. « Eclipsés de la scène sociale, écrit Azouz Begag, ils se sont retirés du champ éducatif, abandonnant le terrain des responsabilités aux acteurs sociaux, institutionnels: enseignants, animateurs, policiers, magistrats, assistantes sociales... Le père ne se mêle plus des activités de ce fils qui ne communique plus avec lui. Le fils ignore l'impact sur son père de ses comportements antisociaux ».<sup>3</sup>

La socialisation s'effectue donc davantage dans la rue au contact des pairs, dans un climat d'affrontements réels ou symboliques permanents. Les phénomènes de groupe y jouent un rôle essentiel, notamment d'incitation au passage à l'acte. C'est un *leit motiv* des travailleurs sociaux, des enseignants, des médecins de banlieue ou des équipes hospitalières : pris isolément ces jeunes les plus turbulents de leur quartier sont souvent sympathiques mais en groupe leur comportement devient vite incontrôlable pouvant aller du simple chahut ou de conduites provocatrices à la violence. « On est tous pareils dans la bande, dit un jeune de Strasbourg. C'est quand on est en bande qu'on se la joue. Mais quand on est seul on commence à se calmer. En fait on a envie de frimer, de se montrer ». Une jeune femme d'origine maghrébine de Carrière-Sous-Poissy dénonce dans son quartier « ces crétins qui pourrissent la vie à tout le monde avec leur racket. Leur loi, c'est la force et leur force c'est la bande. Seuls, ils te font la bise. En groupe ils sont pires que des chiens. Et il n'y a rien à leur dire, ils n'écoutent pas » (*Libération*, 2-11-1998).

Dans la culture de rue l'agressivité, la force, sont premières, le désir paraît sans limite avec le sentiment de puissance que donne l'appartenance au groupe, la présence des autres. Elle provoque un permanent rapport de force plutôt qu'un rapport de sens, la violence ou l'intimidation plutôt que la discussion et la pesée des arguments. La moindre remarque, le moindre reproche est

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2 Cette attitude n'est pas le monopole d'une frange radicale de la jeunesse précarisée, elle touche bon nombre de personnes parfaitement intégrées, je pense par exemple à l'extraordinaire désinvolture de nombre d'automobilistes face au code de la route ou aux limitations de vitesse.

3 A. Begag, D. Delorme, *Quartiers sensibles*, Point-virgule, 1994, p 100-101. Citons à titre d'exemple le propos de cet ouvrier algérien qui obtient en 1970 un F5 à la Courneuve alors qu'il a déjà 7 enfants : « A ce moment j'ai cru que la vie serait plus facile. Un grand logement, une salle de bains. C'était pour moi du luxe. J'ai cru que les enfants allaient être mieux, et je me rends compte que non. Regardez Sélim, il est né ici, il n'a jamais connu les privations et malgré cela, il ne fait rien à l'école. Travailler comme moi, il n'est pas capable, c'est trop dur. Franchement, je ne sais pas quoi faire de lui » (Farid Aïchoune, *Nés en banlieue*, Paris, Ramsay, 1991, p 33-34).

vécu dramatiquement et engendre des conséquences sans commune mesure avec l'objet du litige (une mauvaise note, une remarque anodine, etc.). Elle amène en outre à vivre dans un défi permanent, à sans cesse vouloir démontrer aux autres qu'on est à la hauteur. La démonstration de force prime sur les ressources du langage qui ne sont souvent même pas envisagées : la parole est d'emblée disqualifiée ou source de mépris. « La parole, ça marche pas, c'est nul, personne ne t'écoute. Pour se faire entendre il faut tout niquer », dit un jeune strasbourgeois. L'individu ne tolère aucune limite, aucune loi, mais il vit cependant dans un monde d'insécurité intérieure, sans cesse sur le qui-vive, prêt à flamber pour le moindre propos, il devient totalement tributaire des attitudes du monde extérieur à son égard. Nombre de scènes de violence sont enclenchées par exemple par la présomption d'un « regard » négatif à l'encontre d'un jeune.

A l'image des autres conduites à risque la violence est un jeu avec la limite, une manière de se heurter au monde à défaut d'une butée pour s'enraciner et trouver la distance propice au lien social<sup>4</sup>. Vivre « à la limite » s'impose dès lors que la société ne donne plus à l'individu l'étoffe de sens qui mettait entre le monde et lui une distance où il pouvait trouver sa place. Le défaut de sens et de valeur se résout dans le corps à corps à la fois réel et symbolique, la frontalité du rapport au monde en quête d'un contenant. Là où une dissension avec un autre aurait pu donner lieu à une discussion, à une mise au point, l'agressivité apparaît immédiatement, provoquant souvent la stupeur des victimes. Le chauffeur qui rappelle qu'on ne doit pas fumer dans un bus se fait d'emblée prendre à partie, sans discussion possible. Insultes, menaces, crachats, dégradations, attitude démonstrative ou de défi, ces comportements aujourd'hui nommés « incivilités », qui deviennent alors relativement courant en réponse à une hostilité réelle mais souvent aussi présumée.

L'affectivité semble primer sur toute autre logique. Il ne reste alors qu'un contact brut (et brutal) avec un monde où il faut conquérir sa place pied à pied et de manière toujours provisoire, ce qui implique la recherche de sensation, le rapport physique à l'autre ou au monde. Prise de marque au risque du corps, ou même du corps à corps, face à un monde qui se dérobe ou ne dit plus la nécessité intérieure de l'existence. Mais parler de jeu

avec le risque ou même de violence relève parfois d'une imposition de problématique tant ces actes s'inscrivent pour certains jeunes comme la banalité des jours et impliquent plutôt une conception particulière de la « justice », une forme commune de rupture de l'ennui. Lutter contre la « rouille », le fait de rester sur place sans activités : « Quand il n'y a rien à faire, on commence à casser tous les trucs, déclare un jeune strasbourgeois. Ça commence comme ça : au début, on est dans un coin, on squatte et comme on n'a rien à faire, tu sais, on a envie de bouger, de faire quelque chose et comme c'est parfois trop tard le soir pour aller en ville et bien on prend des pierres, on commence à tout casser pour provoquer la police, mais tout ça parce qu'on ne nous donne rien à faire ».

Les « quartiers d'exil »<sup>5</sup> n'ont pas le monopole du mal de vivre de la jeunesse contemporaine, mais ils cristallisent plus qu'ailleurs l'exclusion, le chômage, la délinquance, et connaissent en ce sens un effet de grossissement et de radicalité des problèmes et notamment de la violence. Le problème concerne la société toute entière. Ces cités de banlieues bâties comme lieux de transition, répondant à l'aspiration populaire d'une vie meilleure, construites à la hâte sans politique d'intégration ou de vitalisation de leur tissu, se sont refermées en impasses d'existences sur leurs habitants, elles sont devenues des ghettos ordinaires hantés par le chômage ou l'exclusion, où grandissent des milliers de jeunes, hostiles souvent à l'école et donc sans autre perspective que le chômage, la délinquance, voire la drogue et son commerce prospère<sup>6</sup>, attisant chez leurs habitants des haines multiples, des jalousies, des incompatibilités, des positionnements individuels en termes « raciaux ». La dérégulation sociale de ces quartiers est contemporaine de la précarisation des emplois, d'une aggravation de la misère ou de criantes inégalités sociales, d'une fragilisation du lien social, d'une montée du racisme et de l'intolérance pour une partie grandissante de la population. Ces enclaves sociales attisent les peurs diffuses de nos sociétés dans ce contexte de mondialisation, de désorientation des repères, d'incertitude face à l'avenir. Les incivilités rendent l'existence d'une immense majorité d'habitants de ces cités inquiète et lourde de colère : voitures brûlées, ou « visitées », actions « commandos » de pillage de magasins, racket envers les commerçants

4 Voir à ce propos David Le Breton, *Passions du risque*, Paris, Métailié, 2000.

5 Il y a cependant un sentiment d'attachement des jeunes à leur quartier. Nous demandons un jour à un jeune ce qu'il ferait s'il avait beaucoup d'argent. Il répond du tac au tac : « J'achèterai tout l'Elsau » (son quartier). Le quartier est un refuge, un lieu de souveraineté personnelle que nul ne vient disputer.

6 D. Lepoutre y insiste également *op. cit.* p 42-43, il analyse aussi avec rigueur la sociabilité juvénile, les codes et les valeurs qui la structurent, donnant ainsi un éclairage précieux sur les cités, issu de l'ethnologie. Là où F. Dubet et F. Lapeyronnie voient à l'oeuvre une violence anomique, D. Lepoutre perçoit plutôt une culture adolescente, une violence ritualisée. D'où la tonalité plus « optimiste » de D. Lepoutre qui conclut son ouvrage en écrivant : « Gageons que cette nouvelle lisibilité culturelle de la jeunesse des grands ensembles de banlieues produira à terme des acteurs sociaux légitimes à force d'être reconnus et, par voie de conséquence, des citoyens de la République » (D. Lepoutre, *op. cit.*, p 339).

installés sur les lieux, présence du bruit (écoute de CD en bas des immeubles à plein régime), courses poursuites en voiture des voitures volées, omniprésence des chiens (pit-bull, etc.), attitudes provocatrices d'adolescents ne payant pas les transports en commun, s'interpellant bruyamment d'un point à l'autre d'un bus, etc. En même temps, parler d'intégration de ces jeunes déjà est grinçant et désigne du doigt une société où il ne suffit plus de naître, de grandir et de disposer d'un état civil en règle pour être considéré comme un citoyen à part entière.

Les violences urbaines<sup>7</sup>, la haine diffuse mûrissent dans ces quartiers de relégation où vit sans perspective une population stigmatisée, en proie à un chômage considérable, victime d'une discrimination à l'emploi. Les conduites à risque y foisonnent (fugues, tentatives de suicide, toxicomanies multiples, recherche de vitesse avec des voitures ou des deux roues, etc.)<sup>8</sup>. Des émeutes les secouent dans des circonstances particulières. L'étincelle qui embrase l'événement tient souvent à un conflit avec la police (arrestation, bavure, provocation, etc) soulevant, de bonne ou de mauvaise foi, la question de la « justice ». Dans les années quatre-vingt aux Etats-Unis, au Royaume Uni ou en France, ce sont des exactions policières (réelles ou supposées) qui sont à l'origine des émeutes urbaines. Les jeunes se sentent humiliés, harcelés, victime du délit de « faciès ». Les relations avec la police sont dégradées et s'enveniment au moindre fait monté parfois en épingle au fil de la rumeur. Une logique de ressentiment est souvent à l'œuvre, sans nuances, à la manière dont la violence dont ces jeunes pensent être l'objet. Par ailleurs ces émeutes sont vécues par les jeunes comme une forme d'appel populaire à la « justice » par la violence. Il s'agit à la fois de dire un refus de la justice républicaine et d'exercer une pression sur les pouvoirs publics et sur les juges pour provoquer la tolérance. Ceux qui cèdent à la haine se définissent à travers le sentiment de rejet, de discrimination dont ils se sentent l'objet. Ils se comportent en conséquence et alimentent alors une rancœur à leur rencontre (attaque de pompiers, d'agents de transport en commun, de fonctionnaires des postes, de commerçants locaux, de médecins généralistes, sans compter les affrontements avec les policiers, etc.). Le racisme et l'exclusion tendent à produire leur objet à travers une ethnicisation de certains jeunes qui retournent alors à la société globale le type de

fonctionnement dont ils sont eux-mêmes souvent victimes. L'Ecole leur paraît privée de signification dans le contexte où ils vivent, ils ne s'y sentent pas reconnus, elle véhicule une culture et surtout des codes d'interaction trop éloignés des leurs. Les enseignants se reconnaissent mal dans ces élèves à leurs yeux bruyants, bavards, impolis, multipliant les incivilités, ils ne se sentent pas respectés (souvent les élèves pas davantage). Quant aux violences entre élèves elles se multiplient dans certains collèges.

Quand le lien social ne s'établit plus que dans la méfiance ou le rejet, quand le sens se fait lacunaire, il reste la brutalité du monde et pour affirmer son existence le recours à une brutalité qui n'est pas forcément vécue comme telle par les jeunes. Ainsi, par exemple des formes violentes de jeu ont fait leur apparition dans les cours de collèges exposant la victime à être frappée sans ménagement par le groupe de manière arbitraire<sup>9</sup>. « La société est perçue comme une « jungle » dans laquelle les « gros » exploitent les « petits »; et les « malins », les « pauvres types ». Il ne s'agit pas d'une forme de domination, mais d'une chaîne continue où chacun utilise autrui. Aussi la domination devient-elle impersonnelle, dépourvue de centre, et, dès lors, disent les jeunes, les pires de tous, les plus pourris sont ceux qui prétendent parler au nom des dominés, car ils ne peuvent que les manipuler plus encore », notent F. Dubet et F. Lapeyronnie<sup>10</sup>. Si vous en imposez pas, vous êtes écrasés.

De nouvelles formes de relations sociales apparaissent, fondées sur des rapports de force qui alimentent par exemple le « business », les différents trafics de drogues où le jeu symbolique avec la mort relève cette fois davantage des formes traditionnelles de la délinquance plutôt qu'à une souffrance personnelle diffuse. Une autre terre nourricière de la violence réside dans le marché parallèle de la drogue qui alimente sans doute le pire de l'insécurité dans les banlieues. Enorme source d'enrichissement pour ceux qui le dirige et source de gains considérables pour des mineurs employés comme guetteurs lors des transactions et qui reçoivent des sommes plus importantes que le salaire de leur propre père. Outre la puissance de disruption sociale qu'elle contient la drogue est responsable de plus de la moitié des délits recensés en France dans les cités. Outre cela il existe dans ces quartiers un énorme marché de

7 Sur les violences urbaines cf M. Wieworka et al., *La violence en France*, Paris, Seuil, 1998; S. Body-Gendrot, *Ville et violence. L'irruption de nouveaux acteurs*, PUF, 1993; C. Bachmann, N. Le Guennec, *Violences urbaines*, Albin Michel, 1996; *Autopsie d'une émeute*, Albin Michel, 1997. Voir aussi le dossier « Les jeunes ont-ils la haine ? », *Cultures en mouvement*, N°11, octobre 1998.

8 Cf D. Le Breton, *Passions du risque*, op. cit.

9 Voir par exemple D. Lepoutre, *Coeur de banlieue. Codes, rites et langages*, Jacob, 1996, p 248 sq. D. Lepoutre parle également des « tannées rituelles d'accueil » (p 250 sq).

10 F. Dubet, D. Lapeyronnie, *Les quartiers d'exil*, Seuil, 1992, p 121. Cf également François Dubet, *La galère*, Seuil, 1987; A. Jazouli, *Les années banlieues*, Seuil, 1992.

recyclage d'objets volés dans les voitures, les maisons, des entrepôts, les magasins<sup>11</sup>.

La haine, quand elle existe, apparaît comme une forme de résistance maladroite et brutale, souvent cynique, au fait de vivre à la marge, une manière de se poser en s'opposant puisque le jeune, à tort ou à raison, croit ne pas avoir d'autres choix, à travers une définition de soi étroite qui reprend à l'envers les catégories du mépris pour les retourner contre une société perçue comme globalement hostile. La société tend à se diviser entre « inclus » et « exclus » et les jeunes impliqués dans les incivilités ou les violences urbaines se sentent participer de l'exclusion sans voir clairement une issue à leur situation. Parfois il s'agit simplement pour certains jeunes de rappeler qu'ils existent tout en vivant des moments d'exaltation en s'opposant à la police tout en faisant la une des médias. A Strasbourg, par exemple, où chaque année brûlent désormais entre cinq cent et six cent voitures, ce sont plusieurs dizaines qui sont incendiés la veille de Noël ou de la saint Sylvestre. La violence est alors une affirmation identitaire, elle se ritualise sous des formes multiples, répondant à la nécessité de prendre sa revanche en s'attaquant aux symboles de l'intégration des autres (incendies de voitures, saccage de magasins par exemple) ou en essayant d'en profiter sans bourse délier (dépouille, casse, racket, trafics, etc). Elle soulève de façon dramatique la question des victimes. Dans maintes formes de délinquance juvénile aucune culpabilité n'intervient, aucun regret, ces jeunes n'ont pas l'impression de faire mal, ils n'ont aucun recul sur leurs actions. Ils ne comprennent pas pourquoi ils se heurtent à une telle réprobation : « On s'amusait », disent-ils. Les personnes âgées sont volées : « c'est normal, elles ont de l'argent et nous on en a pas ». Le quartier est lui même un territoire voué à la fauche et à la dégradation. Le moindre objet laissé sans surveillance est considéré comme mis à la disposition de celui qui passe par là. Les espaces non surveillés sont des incitations à leur rendre visite, les supermarchés ou les commerces sont une cible permanente. La haine est une réplique au rejet social, au racisme ordinaire, à l'absence de perspective, à la déscolarisation<sup>12</sup>, une réponse sans ambiguïté à l'exclusion, au sentiment d'appartenir à un monde autre et d'être sans perspective. Bien entendu ces manières radicales d'exister sans souci de l'autre et dans une rage permanente alimentent simultanément la peur et donc le rejet social dans une spirale sans fin dont profitent les mouvements

d'extrême droite. Une dialectique confuse s'entretient entre le rejet dont ces jeunes sont l'objet et la réplique d'une violence diffuse pour s'opposer à ce rejet perçu comme injuste. Une violence concrète, parfois bien organisée, systématique, animée d'un lourd ressentiment, s'oppose avec ses propres armes à la violence symbolique d'être marqué d'une différence stigmatisée. Un sentiment d'exclusion, d'injustice, d'assignation à une catégorie devenue morale incite le jeune à ramasser la pierre qu'on lui a symboliquement jetée en adoptant une violence physique. Mais celui qui reçoit la pierre n'était pas nécessairement quelqu'un de favorable à l'exclusion ou un raciste, mais il risque de devenir à son tour un partisan du pire. Les mêmes généralisations s'opèrent d'ailleurs dans certains quartiers où toute présence étrangère est aussitôt suspecte et interpellée, les facteurs chahutés, les bus caillassés, etc. Assignation de l'Autre à une différence insupportable avec des formes de discrimination de part et d'autre qui brouillent encore davantage des cartes déjà pipées.

La violence ou les incivilités de certains jeunes est un symptôme de la formidable résistance de notre société à assumer son histoire, son ambivalence à exiger les devoirs inhérents à la nationalité française sans en donner concrètement toujours les droits. Ce qui amène une part de ces jeunes à revendiquer ces droits en toute indifférence à leur devoir. Et à profiter des failles du système pour faire fructifier un « business » parfois très rentable mais qui alimente incivilités et violences.

## Outdoor

J'arrêterai ici mon analyse pour évoquer rapidement l'usage de l'escalade comme technique de prévention, ou d'accompagnement de jeunes en difficulté. Outre le souci du renouvellement du travail social, la convergence de deux tendances sociales a amené nombre de professionnels à tenter l'expérience des "activités à risque". D'une part, ce constat d'une relation privilégiée au risque chez les jeunes générations, surtout celles dont on dit qu'elles sont "en difficulté". De l'autre le foisonnement de cet imaginaire récent faisant du risque une forme nouvelle d'héroïsme socialement valorisé. Curieuse rencontre entre des prises de risque silencieuses et douloureuses, débouchant parfois sur la mort ou la mutilation, et ces prises de risque encensées par les médias, promouvant de "nouveaux aventuriers"

11 Un journaliste de Libération interroge Grégory, 18 ans, un jeune de Réhon (3500 habitants), dans le bassin sidérurgique de Longwy, fils d'un cadre syndical : « Ici vivent des Français qui ont appris à baisser leur froc. Mon but c'est de vivre aux dépens des autres, de force si possible ». Si on lui parle métier il répond : « dans la drogue ». Si on lui parle logement il répond : « Loin des rats » (*Libération*, 15-2-1999).

12 Une mise au point à ce propos : la déscolarisation est loin de toucher l'ensemble des jeunes issus de l'immigration. A condition sociale égale, ils réussissent mieux que des jeunes de parents français. Pour les jeunes des cités en revanche, de toute origine, quand l'échec scolaire ou la fuite hors de l'école apparaissent, c'est l'avenir qui risque d'en pâtir sérieusement. Ce sont alors des centaines de milliers de jeunes, dépourvus de tout bagage scolaire et dont les chances d'intégration, dans les circonstances actuelles en tous cas, sont pratiquement nulles.

sous les feux de la rampe, faisant de certains marins ou grimpeurs les nouveaux "héros" d'un stade qui s'étend désormais à la société toute entière.

Ainsi, depuis quelques années, l'escalade est-elle devenue sur un plan socio-éducatif, voire même thérapeutique, l'une des voies privilégiées d'action envers des jeunes en difficultés. Et certes, l'escalade, surtout quand elle implique réellement une relation à la montagne, mais déjà simplement le déplacement sur une falaise quelconque de la région, est pleine de vertus thérapeutiques. Rappelons nous en effet que la relation au risque relève avant tout d'un imaginaire, et qu'elle mobilise les ressources de l'acteur au niveau surtout d'une efficacité symbolique. Il n'est pas indifférent qu'un thérapeute comme Robert Desoille, praticien du rêve éveillé dirigé, ait beaucoup utilisé la rêverie ascensionnelle pour dénouer ses patients grâce à des images inductrices empruntées à la montagne et à l'ascension. "L'être éduqué par la méthode de Desoille, écrit Bachelard, découvre progressivement la verticale de l'imagination, aérienne. Il se rend compte qu'elle est une ligne de vie. Nous croyons, pour notre part, que les lignes imaginaires sont les vraies lignes de vie, celles qui se brisent le plus difficilement. Imagination et volonté sont deux aspects d'une même force profonde. Sait vouloir celui qui sait imaginer" (13). Quand on parle d'"activités à risque", il faut ainsi surtout prendre la mesure d'un imaginaire du risque. Sauter en parachute ou grimper une paroi en étant assuré ne relève guère d'un risque réel; en revanche pour le jeune qui se livre à ces activités, l'appréhension est grande, et l'épreuve surmontée est une instance de fabrication du sens.

L'escalade, comme la randonnée et d'autres activités de pleine nature, n'exige pas une longue préparation physique ou technique, elle est rapidement accessible au plus grand nombre et rappelle pour certains la jubilation enfantine de grimper.

J'énumérerai ici un certain nombre de points qui me paraissent faire de l'escalade une voie propice d'action sociale ou éducative.

□ **Le déplacement.** La randonnée ou l'escalade sont pour le jeune la chance de vivre un moment hors du commun, d'échapper à la routine institutionnelle, voire à la chronicité. Changer de lieu est aussi changer de milieu, de repères, d'interlocuteurs, bouleverser provisoirement sa vision du monde, s'ouvrir à une autre dimension de l'existence, surtout si le jeune est citadin et ne dispose que de maigres repères pour appréhender le monde rural où se déroulent souvent les randonnées ou les escalades. Dans ces villages de montagne, par exemple, le jeune découvre une forme de vie sociale qui le surprend: voiture

non fermée à clé, vélo ou mobylette négligemment posés contre un mur, sans antivol, des magasins sans surveillance, des refuges ouverts aux tout venants. Son système de valeur est ici mis en défaut par une organisation sociale qui ne prévoit pas le vol comme modalité possible de relation à l'autre, comme l'observe par exemple F. Chobeaux.

- **L'ailleurs: Le sentiment que l'ailleurs n'est pas seulement pour les autres, de mettre à son tour un pied dans le rêve.**
- **Briser la pathologie du temps :** renouer avec une temporalité orientée vers un projet et venant rompre avec une existence répétitive. Il s'agit de retrouver la perspective du passé, du présent et de l'avenir.
- **La régulation du goût du risque.** Surtout si ce dernier s'enracine dans des conditions sociales et culturelles qui en fait une logique individuelle de conquête de signification. Il s'agit d'en faire une activité contrôlée, même si le jeune demeure plus ou moins autonome dans son cheminement, respecté dans ses initiatives, voire même dans ses excès, afin d'en rendre la nécessité intérieure moins impérieuse ailleurs quand le jeune est seul ou soumis à la dynamique d'émulation avec ses copains. Que les vertus anthropologiques de la prise de risque soient déjà distillées en lui pour qu'il ressente moins la fascination de s'y livrer ailleurs. La mémoire de l'épreuve surmontée est nourrie par l'imaginaire du danger et l'intensité de l'effort. Si l'épreuve est banale, elle ne laissera guère de trace. Il ne faut pas craindre de se surprendre.
- **Se donner une limite physique.** L'escalade est une activité physique qui ne délaisse aucune parcelle du corps. Tous les muscles, les membres, les mouvements sont sollicités. L'effort est continu et total. Il ne fait pas seulement appel à la dépense physique, il exige aussi une vigilance de tout instant. L'escalade s'inscrit ainsi dans la passion moderne des épreuves intenses qui exigent des acteurs de donner le maximum de leurs ressources. De nombreux adolescents, les "nouveaux aventuriers", les auteurs d'exploits ou de performances à l'intérieur, mais surtout hors du champ sportif, la foule de ceux qui se livrent "pour rien" à des efforts intenses et prolongés lors de marathon, de courses à pieds, de triathlon, d'escalades, de raids, etc, tous ces "conquérants de l'inutile" qui se multiplient aujourd'hui, tous sont emportés par une recherche de limites, ayant aussi valeur de garantie pour l'existence. "Aller au bout de soi même", "dépasser ses limites", "découvrir ses limites", "se dépasser", "se prouver à soi même qu'on peut le faire", etc. Tels sont les propos que tiennent ces acteurs. Conduites innombrables de défis où il s'agit de s'affronter soi (même si cela implique une lutte fa-

13 Gaston Bachelard, *L'air et les songes. Essai sur l'imagination du mouvement*, José Corti, 1990, p 130.

rouche avec les autres), sous les yeux des autres qui donnent une valeur encore plus grande à un enjeu qui demeure cependant intime. *Trouver une limite physique, là où les limites symboliques font défaut; se tracer soi même un contenant (containing) pour se sentir enfin exister; contenu de manière provisoire ou durable* (14). A travers la quête de limites, l'individu cherche ses marques, teste ce qu'il est, apprend à se reconnaître, à se différencier des autres, à restaurer une valeur à son existence. Et selon l'intensité de l'épreuve qu'il traverse pour expérimenter ses limites, il se procure provisoirement ou durablement une prise plus assurée sur son existence. Aller au bout de soi se charge d'un sens plein, mais dont l'incidence demeure strictement individuelle. Dans sa relation à la paroi, le jeune se sent contenu, il appuie en permanence son corps contre une limite. Son débat permanent contre un monde qui lui échappe se substitue ici à un débat avec une paroi tangible dont il accompagne les courbures en les touchant de sa propre main. Il sait contre quoi il doit se coltiner.

- **Une sociabilité de type "commando"**. La sociabilité qui caractérise une telle entreprise est particulière, elle est de type "commando", c'est-à-dire réduite à sa plus simple expression, centrée sur l'efficacité et l'effort. Elle donne à voir une forme élémentaire du lien social, sans doute plus propice à des jeunes habitués à vivre avec une poignée de copains. Et essentiellement pour "faire des coups". Cette sociabilité immerge le jeune au sein d'un groupe où la responsabilité de l'un implique en retour celle de l'autre à son égard sous peine de mettre l'expédition en péril. L'approvisionnement de la relation à l'autre, sur un mode moins rudimentaire que la concurrence acharnée qui caractérise souvent les "bandes" trouve peut-être dans ce style de groupe son meilleur outil. Injonction homéopathique de sociabilité et de confiance, sans exposer le jeune à une trop grande implication.
- **Une homéopathie du vertige**. L'escalade transpose sur une autre scène, ailleurs, le sentiment de vide, de vertige éprouvé à ne pas se sentir contenu, ni soutenu dans l'existence, mais elle en absorbe les effets destructeurs au niveau individuel. L'escalade est emblématique, elle conjugue le vertige et le contrôle, l'abandon et la toute puissance. Elle favorise une reprise en main, dramatisée ailleurs, d'une existence instable. Un instant elle donne à l'individu le sentiment de s'appartenir, de maîtriser la confusion, un vertige, qui règne au coeur de sa vie.
- **Des règles irréfutables**. "L'escalade n'a pas d'autres règles que celles que se donnent chaque pratiquant puisqu'elle n'est pas nécessairement in-

stitutionnalisée ni codifiée", écrit François Chobeaux. Dans le cours de l'escalade l'élaboration de règles s'institue dans une relation concrète à la nature et elle est sollicitée par l'efficacité et la sécurité qui doit soustendre l'action. Le jeune n'est pas ici confronté à une règle qu'il peut juger vide de sens ou oppressive, il construit lui-même dans son rapport à la paroi les règles d'action auxquelles il se soumet. Il tient sa sécurité entre ses mains et apprend ainsi à reconnaître la nécessité de repères.

## Réflexions d'ensemble

Le travail de préparation, le rêve éveillé qui précède la réalisation de l'escalade ou de la randonnée, l'évocation au retour, des temps forts de l'entreprise, permettent au jeune de se déprendre d'une temporalité sans valeur, répétitive, et libère des bouffées d'imaginaire, crée un moment de rupture, de jaillissement provisoire du goût de vivre. Le cours de l'escalade est un moment d'exception, il participe du sacré personnel et en cela il réintroduit la dimension du temps et celle de la valeur. Il irrigue une existence souvent marquée par l'échec et l'indifférence au temps qui passe. Et ce moment fort, nul ne sait à l'avance ce qu'il peut générer chez le jeune, quel processus initiatique il vient ébranler qui mettra peut-être des années avant de mûrir, mais sans lequel rien n'aurait été possible.

Mais l'escalade n'est qu'un outil. Ce n'est pas une fin en soi. Elle ne possède aucune vertu magique de restauration du goût de vivre qu'il suffirait de prescrire à certaines populations. Elle sollicite en profondeur le rapport à l'inconscient de l'individu et elle le confronte à une structure anthropologique dont les effets ne sont pas indifférents. Elle mobilise, au cours d'une activité intense, la peur, le vertige, le vide, la relation imaginaire à la mort, c'est-à-dire des instances très puissantes de la vie personnelle et surtout inconsciente des acteurs. D'une certaine manière, les affronter "sur une autre scène" revient à en apprivoiser l'appréhension. La confiance en soi, la revalorisation de soi, l'impression forte ressentie pour avoir été capable de surmonter l'obstacle, sont des sentiments qui ne vont pas disparaître avec le retour à l'institution ou à la famille. A moins qu'au fil des mois la chronicité ou le sentiment d'abandon ne viennent en atténuer les effets, voire ne les fasse disparaître complètement.

L'escalade n'est qu'un outil dont les dispositions anthropologiques sont puissantes, mais dérisoires si les effets heureux qu'elle peut susciter ne sont pas relayés par la poursuite du cheminement thérapeutique ou socio-éducatif avec le jeune. Le sentiment

14 Cf David Le Breton, *Anthropologie du corps et modernité*, PUF, 2000.

d'indifférence ou de révolte qui s'impose à certains dans ce contexte est justement lié, le plus souvent, à ce qu'ils ne perçoivent l'escalade que comme une récréation avant de retrouver le vide d'une institution ou d'un quartier où l'existence personnelle ne s'attache à aucune valeur, à aucune signification. En ce sens, l'escalade ne vaut que ce que valent les animateurs, leur qualité de présence, leur capacité à susciter la confiance, leur solidité à jouer un rôle de contenant, et surtout de relais.

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STEVE BOWLES

# CRITICAL PEDAGOGICS AND THE WORK OF OUTDOOR ADVENTURE EDUCATION

Experiential Learning as it maybe today and tomorrow

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## The Job Of Work At hand

This essay tries to express and examine some of the issues that were presented and discussed at the 4<sup>th</sup> European Congress for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning (2000). My task there was to try and open up some of the voices from the most variable and the wide-ranging and inter-disciplinary domain of critical theory and critical pedagogy. My task here, through this essay, is to build a little from that Congress for the Congress publication.

I was also then, as I write still now, attached to a congress workshop group that met under the themes of both critical theory and pedagogy as they are attached to “violence“. Therefore, violence is on display.

With this clear I will take two steps. First I will briefly introduce some of the key words, themes and issues of a critical and experiential pedagogy. Then I will move in to something that I would like to call “my style” of work which is something that asks for a participative-act yet it is also something that moves and will move only through folk.

## Others, Henry Giroux and a “Culture of Violence”

Henry Giroux was not “born” an academic and his professorial status today in the university is one that remains true to his “roots” as it remains active in his “sowing of seeds“. Giroux is one example from a critical pedagogy domain that straddles and navigates the street-ways as it navigates and straddles the academic-ways. Giroux joins the circus of the life-complex and he well understands that to survive this daring and performative life, as circus, is to be critical of all without losing the humanitas and caritas of all involved and without which we may never live the good life and find well-being. He is, of course, reflexive at work but that reflexivity is attached to the good life and to well-being for without sense of the “moral” realm there is little real meaning to the circus that is explored through a critical pedagogy. For example critical theory moves against any act of oppression and this is possible only through a

vision of the good life. By the same token critical pedagogy works against any vampire-culture ( where the life blood is sucked from folk) that survives only through an silence(ed) of democratic folk-ways. In the words of Paulo Freire the “*Culture of Silence*” is oppressive and a critical pedagogy that is informed through a critical theory moves against such fangs of the vampire. The life blood is not to be sucked from folk. The “silence” that Freire asked us to reasonably rebel against was that kind of silence which denied a participation of folk in real living folk-ways and in general terms this can be called a denial of democracy. In this critical pedagogy is firmly within an active, if minority tradition, where education itself is a democratic participation as a life-long process. Did Freire say that we must all yell and shout ? Did Freire say that we must talk and talk and talk ? In one way yes he did. But in another he did not. Freire did not deny the silence that is thoughtful. He did not deny the silence that is a saying “no” ! The silence that Freire, and Giroux, works against is the oppressive silence that is merely providing more blood to the vampire and the culture that is ruled by the vampire(s) through fear and/or through oppressive acts that are all too often subtle and sickly-subtle ideologies of silence that deny folk as folk. Values all too often grow from the sucked-blood of the weak. ( Bauman 1992)

Henry Giroux walks both the “Mall” and the “Hyper-markets” of academia and the street - all as folk-ways. He straddles and his steps are wide. Theory and practice, are for Giroux, a most inter-woven texture that is life itself and that life might be a good life for all. Such is the hope and the promise of life in terms of Henry Giroux and other critical pedagogical and cultural workers. Some examples might help explain better my words.

It was Kurt Hahn that helped create one popular rule of thumb for our work in OAE. He helped create the popular idea that we learn “through the sea” not “about” the sea in the OAE way. Without categorising Hahn as a critical theorist it is still possible to take a look at this popular visionary statement in terms of democracy and thereby find a quite massive movement at work through-

out the ages. To have an education that is “through” democracy rather than merely “about” democracy is the story-line here that is possible.

A democracy takes slow and sometimes painful processes of communication and deeds. A democracy cannot be just accelerated according to the whims and the wants of the fast-time market forces. In this an OAE that tries to re-vision the words from those like Kurt Hahn is indeed a radical edu-action. As I have written before the “outdoors” can sometimes allow just such a slow-time participation with folk as folk that all have the “time” to just sometimes “stand and stare“. The “outdoors” may be a peopled-time and a peopled-place of a slow-contemplation of sorts vis-a-vis the fast-time city.

As John O’Neil wrote so well : *“Hope is the time it takes to make the place ... where (folk) can work together.”* (O’Neil 1972, 1976)

In terms of a **“through-democracy”** movement the work of OAE may, when allowed and when promoted, attach this sense of hope and time and place to the necessary and always difficult worlds of a democratic slow and low status-knowledge-act. But this will only be when the fast-time vampire-culture of flexible-value and accelerated learning is confronted through folk as folk and with folk-ways. The “outdoors” work can do this.

But, of course, when the vampire-value is to the front then the “outdoors” may well be a different kind of place where quick and vampire-valued-evaluations are enforced as the fast-time-city is taken in the heavy rucksacks of the “adventure programme“. But my point is here that a critical pedagogy with an informed position via a critical theory well knows this and might work in other ways. Maybe. Such is a **potential** and such is a **hope** and such is a **potential**. That is a very big point indeed. We can together say “yes” as we can together say “no” through the slow-time knowledge that is attached to past times and places and directed towards a better tomorrow. Such is not the “IT” machine that has no memory and works only as mere information in the fast-time-futures of things. Such, begun a little above, is one language-game of OAE with a critical pedagogic vision that demands a dialogue with and for folk.

In this an OAE that strives and serves with and for folk-as-folk as a folk-way will not yield to the language-games of the newly invented “adventure programming” regimes. **The very motivating-vocabulary that is full of hope and potential and promise in a folk way ( that is democratic and always re-visioning toward the good life and well-being ) is not one that easily gives an open neck to the vampire and it is not one that offers itself up for the sacrifice ( a sacrifice that is all too often a culture of silence ) as a forgetful-**

**ness of suffering.** As “adventure programming” offers new necks, with new blood, to the vampires of “value” through a Capital-culture language of the “Captains of Industry“, feelgood-consumerism and do it yourself self-improvement schemes ( all for sale with a full-value contract ) then a critical pedagogy might be just what the real doctor ordered. A sense of rhetoric is no stranger to critical theory and to a well informed critical pedagogy but such is no mere and idle semantics. A couple of examples might suffice to carry on the story so far.

In 1998 as I surfed the net seeking out curriculum designs and marketing spins I came upon one comment from a leading “adventure programming” type from the USA and as this person was holding a Phd, housed in a university and leading an outdoor education programme I stopped awhile to focus my research on the blurb . I found the following :

*“Ninety to ninety-five percent of all people who loose their jobs do so because of a lack of interpersonal skills. Out of the top five qualities employers value most highly, three of them are directly related to interpersonal effectiveness. Skills of such importance should not be left to only genetics and chance.”*  
(Dr. C. Bunting)

The obvious marketing comment from Bunting above pretends to find an authoritative voice through the use of statistical data and logical progression. Being found on a site of the university and being the words of a doctor adds more weight. It would surprise little to find some “Spiders Web” games or similar programming tools to be used by many that believe in this expert-voice. But, I suggest, anyone with an inkling of critical theory will find in this expert-comment enough material to last a month work days in search of some clearly needed alternative. Why?

First it is clear that unemployment is caused through the socio-economic and political domain. Capitalism, for example, is forever expanding and seeking the cheapest labour around. To cut a long story short the very movements of capital, at cyber-space-speed, can cause unemployment and does so far more than any localised interpersonal skills ! Has Bunting never asked this question. Critical theory has and so has any critical pedagogy. Second we might ask Bunting just how good interpersonal skills can be “effective” when the buttons pressed by capital are far away from the work place of folk. When, that is, Japan, the USA or some other most distant-hand presses the button of profit and loss from the stock market world of “IT“. The two examples, as questions to Bunting, are just two of hundreds of course but enough has been suggested to begin a campfire discussion within a critical pedagogy.

If another example is needed however I might throw in a comment for dialogue. As the so called “Youth-at-Risk” ideology sweeps the stage ( a stage that is made by the new apolitical party that can only be called the conservative-left-right-left that marches to the tune of identity politics for-sale ) we find that these youth that are at risk are those youth who are lacking in self-esteem, lacking in interpersonal skills, lacking in trust, lacking in honesty and coming from “bad-family-backgrounds” where stability is just another word for nothing else to lose. Such is the research ideology of most YAR work. Now let us, for awhile, take this rhetoric at face-value. Let us accept such a definition of “at-risk” and let us allow that OAE work can help this condition. Having said that there is a question that niggles still. Even by accepting the very ideology of this “at-risk” brigade we are, if we have any critical awareness, condemned to ask something more. There is something deeply wrong with this.

The definition of a “Youth-at-Risk” is the same definition that the public has found for the very actions of so many political leaders. Political leaders and parties are accused of just this lack of honesty, lack of trusty actions, lack of good family-values and so on. This is then very strange for we do not see “at-risk” programmes advertised and run and researched for political leaders and political parties ! Why, the critical theorist asks, is this the case ? Is this another case of blame and shame the underdogs? Or, the well informed critical theorist and pedagogical worker may offer another interpretation that is worthy of consideration and dialogue. The words from Michael Weinstein might be used thus :-

***“First of all, the greatest threats are targeted: unmarried teenage mothers. They are the ones who produce the gang members who deal the drugs that pollute the social body. No safety net for them. And for their children, orphanages that will never be, because they will be too expensive to build. No safety net; Tough Love instead. It is a favour to the person deprived of welfare to remove them from dependancy ... Under these swarmy rationalisations is a sadistic glee in the trampling of the weak. The unmarried teenage mother ... Has enormous abuse-value ... exploited to satisfy the will to punish ... That is the way technotopian conservative corporatism works ...”***

**(M. Weinstein 1995. The Triumph of Abuse Value.)**

This is not the place to investigate the intricate details of any such case but it is the time and the place to open up such a debate within the field of OAE that has, I suggest, only just begun to find the nerve to tackle such issues.

Whether we talk in terms of the farce of a democratic participation ( check out the protests at the World Trade Organisation and the official responses to those protests) today or we talk in terms of a ecological future (

check out the ways that an evermore global and expansive movement of capital destroys local knowledge and local systems) we will quickly be led into talking about critical theory in one way or another. That is if we “care” and “take care“. Even in our educational systems we may, as those like Henry Giroux have tried to do, work to promote an education with and for democracy for this is lacking today. As Giroux ( with McLaren) writes in their introduction to the series of books concerning teacher empowerment and school reform:

***”In an age when liberalism and radicalism have come under severe attack, American education faces an unprecedented challenge. The challenge has now moved beyond the search for more humanistic approaches to schooling and the quest for educational equality. Today’s challenge is the struggle to rebuild a democratic tradition presently in retreat.“***

**(Giroux and McLaren 1989. See frontispiece to “Critical Pedagogy, The State and Cultural Struggle“)**

To ask for a critical approach within the work of the “outdoors” and OAE generally is to ask reasonably. It is not, as those like John O’Neil (1972 ) have said many times, to dive ourselves into ivory-tower theory without first taking our own street-wise senses of peopled-time and peopled-place seriously. I follow the advice from O’Neil here. I hope and suggest that enough has been said already to encourage a debate. To add just a little more however I can try and work in reflexive ways concerning our own work with the European Institute. I will thereby be personally involved and “in” at the deep end of the deep swimming pool. That, as it should be.

## FIRST SCENARIO

It has been said many times that our work is in “crisis“. Over the last decade such a cry has been common especially from those prolific “adventure programming” types that constantly call out for a conformity to “their models” and “their codes“. The work of those like Simon Priest ( 1996a, 1996b ) serves here as one good example. The “crisis“, for Priest, is one that where people work outside of his own model of competence and qualification “level“. There becomes a crisis of confidence in the work of “adventure programming” ( as judged by client-contracts and finance) when other ways of working are advertised as educational peradventure and where the customer is not always right or seen as a thing to be satisfied. There is, according to Priest, a “need” for his kind of “flow” ( as it were) to happen between the advertising world of the “competent” workers and the value perceptions of the clients that pay. When this “flow” is not realised then the profession gets a bad name. I have argued some of the many objections to this

line of Priest at other times and places and here I only wish to make one point. The way that Priest uses the word “crisis” is what is interesting. The hidden meanings and the “left-aways” are significant for me here. This was evident even during two seminar events where both Priest and myself spoke and wrote in quite different ways of a “crisis“. ( see Priest 1996a, 1996b and compare Bowles 1996a, 1996b in the same publications) To cut a long story short I have tried to see any “crisis” as having a socio-political and economic realm and to ask for a wider appreciation of that term just as a critical theorist might do through their adherence to a inter-disciplinary and critical perspective. ( Bowles 1998, 1999 )

My words above from the “Youth-at-Risk” section may help continue this debate for continue it needs to do and such is my aim here. There the “crisis” is opened as a big crisis of “abuse-value” attached to techno-utopias and the socio-economic domain, it is attached to the blame-and-shame culture of violence that individualises “problems” in a most inhuman folk-way and it is attached to the lack of nerve to find a political and public-face so that dis-honest politicians and “read-my-lips” promises are the lies of tomorrow. The “crisis” therefore, for me, is a complex issue that involves a most critical social and economic condition. All the so called qualifications, competence standards, accreditation schemes for “things” and customer-satisfaction ideologies will do nothing to work better such a condition where solutions are big problems themselves ! I suspect my position is reasonably clear. What of others ?

As Chair of the European Institute Peter Becker has written about a sense and a condition of “crisis“. If we consider then the work of Peter Becker ( 2000 ) we might claim that his words ask us to view the adventure and the crisis in a totally different way but without losing any sense of reasonable decision-making. Becker sees the adventure as a situation of a crisis itself or at least an always-potential crisis on the ever-new horizon. Becker sees the adventure experience as a life force, an existential and a human condition, where, no matter the need for control, we have also a respect for change and movement against static forms of habitual “safety“. In this we might say, through these words, that Becker allows us to re-vision a pedagogic practice that stays true to such a sense of adventure. We may build quite reasonably upon the words of Becker to say that a good science and a good art and a good pedagogic practice must not only practice what it preaches but also work in ways that will truly never try and destroy such an adventure. The crisis in this sense is always present in the situation of any OAE work and such should not be relegated to the bad places or to the lower-levels of work as defined by the regulating programmes of the domesticated scene

and then justified through the repetitive needs of the well qualified and certified establishments of habitual “success-machines“. The adventure experience does not need to lose good practice.

Nor does the “unknown” need to be a ridiculous “laissez-faire” free for all ( rave of death and destruction). But the qualification systems must not destroy the adventure that is in itself one reason-for-being. This was said many years ago by those like Drasdo and Hodgkin and has been repeated, through plea, enough by my own work already. The point that Peter Becker leaves us to consider is the ways that an adventure experience can be worked as a pedagogic practice in a way that will not be scienticism and will better be a scientific openness as one aspect of the creative human and existential condition and a quest for an authentic subject. Giroux would recognise here a kind of “Border Crossing“.

If then we take this point from such a reading of Becker we are quickly lead into some stormy seas of pedagogic practice. We must perhaps ask just what this crisis really is in the terms of the lived-good-life of folk. We may ask again from Georg Simmel. We may ask in the context of the works of Simon Priest.

For Simmel the “crisis” ( he often used the word “tragedy” in the same vein) was one aspect of the culture of the modern world as experienced by the conscious participant of both capitalism and modernity. First there was a crisis at work with life itself whereby the living culture becomes something apart ( as in an alienation ) Second there is the crisis that is inherent within the money-value of capitalism. Money, for Simmel, becomes the main measure of things valuable and in this abstraction there is generated a situation where anything that can be sold will be sold and in this money itself equalises all value and anything goes. There is, for example, no sense of value that can oppose the market for the market-value may take all for its own. But by the very same condition there remains a human world that is beyond mere money. There remains a certain sense of tragedy at work.

Many critical theorists and pedagogical workers would add even to this, through the earlier appreciation of this by Karl Marx, that this tragedy becomes, under the logic of capitalism a farce ! The separations of a conscious culture are one thing and indeed take on a tragic face ( reflexivity itself has a tragedy in its own making ) but when money as a part of the capitalist relations of alienation becomes dominant then there is a move from tragedy to farce ! One face of this farce here, for OAE work through any kind of both humanitas and caritas becomes “adventure programming“.

Concerning the works of Priest we might say that this Simmilian appreciation of crisis is something far bigger

and stronger and more complex than any mere call-to-programming will ever be able to “solve”. Such complexity is simply not felt by Priest at all. We may ask just why this is? Such are the questions that Becker does ask and tackle in ways that are his own. The interested reader must seek more on this matter and I only hope to have touched a surface and a heart-felt mind somewhere.

Becker, while no critical theorist in any one-way-street, shows a subtle and yet still steady appreciation of critical theory and therefore potentially a valid critical pedagogic position within OAE. Becker, I claim, deserves both a close and a respectful reading vis-a-vis the work of those like Simon Priest because Becker does not close-up and follow in any idle fashion the self-evidences of the market or of the “value-base” for research yet nor does he reduce personal-acts to the globalised capital movements either. In this my own words vis-a-vis those of Priest are clashed through a good “third-other” (that always necessary “third”) perspective. (1)

## SECOND SCENARIO

It is common to hear the call towards “value-for-money”. Such is, of course, not surprising in a climate of risk-upon-risk and the “thing-like” manufacture of the most risky of risks attached to money. Money that equalises all “value” so that before we really “know” it anything goes - so long as it pays. Therefore when even all learning must pay then we have a very big story at work indeed. Such is, of course, not in any way surprising in a climate of a “thing-like” manufacture of uncertainty where truth must pay (as learning must pay) in this ever-expanding explosive “value for money” universe. It comes as no surprise to find a corresponding language at work where the postmodern-selves are flexible-selves seeking flexible markets and jobs and seeking a language to justify and advertise such anything goes adventures. There are here quite many deep questions that we as a European Institute must ask and work through. One question is the question of money and its place in our decision-making.

It is self-evident (unfortunately) that money is “necessary” even though the working education through the “outdoors” will teach a very different story as one cannot eat money and money will not keep one warm and dry. To question the place of money today is to risk both sanity and professional position. But such must be done. Money must be questioned because it is such a self-evident “thing”. Education is nothing if it does not confront such self-evidences. But education today may well be nothing as money becomes both the overt and the covert driving force of all “learning”!

Let us say, just for the fun of it, that money per se cannot be bad. It is just a thing for exchange and just measures of a variable reciprocity. When for example a project is made by an OAE group and researched and funded then money here would simply be a simple in-between “thing” where the main driving force would be the real and the active peopled-project as the first and the last aspect of the work. The motivating vocabulary would happily reflect just this and it would find its words from a very human and sensuous praxis. We might call this kind of circulation a PP-M-PP type. That is when Peopled-project is made as the first and the last consideration and where Money is but a mere in-between. But can there be other ways that creep us on us?

When money is attached to a profiteering Capital-circulation system then we might consider a different scene. We might ask ourselves if our projects become somehow reversed so that the logic looks more like the formula M-PP-M. That is where the first and the last “thing” is Money and the mere in-between is people (as things). In such a reversed logic (M-PP-M) we are likely to find a quite different motivating vocabulary perhaps. We might find that humans becomes “resources” for example and we might find that humanitas and caritas is lost to risk-management and the evaluations of the market. The language of the market itself might well dominate and become oppressive to folk.

When projects are made because the project-group “needs” money then the project group seeks out projects that will pay no matter what those people as folk really want and need themselves. The funding system creates the evaluation in this M-PP-M logic and when the funding system is built upon a conservative attachment to the politics of the market forces then the evaluation and the research language will (if sensible!) seek a research language that satisfies the funding politics. Those that pay the piper may thereby, yet again, often select the tune as it were! (The example given above - first from Bunting and then from Weinstein - gives some meat to this scene and helps the debate) The point here is only this. We must as a European Institute take-care and we must care. We must not politically follow the idols of market evaluations and when our education confronts the self-evident nature of the money-for-money logic then our education is a political act and there is education IN politics. Such are debates that those of us inside OAE today rarely have and, I firmly suggest, must have. From the European Institute the work of Barbara Humberstone and Gunter Amesberger have provided one such step towards debate and dialogue.

## What can Be Said?

The question - "what can be said" - is an eternal one perhaps. This short essay says much more than can be said and the essay itself can do no more and do no less. In this a philosophical position is inherent in such a communication.

Perhaps I might re-phrase. What can we say together? Now I am back to John O'Neil and the theme of hope. I work and have worked here in this essay with a sense of hope. "Hope" being the time it takes for folk to make the place to work together. I have tried to open up some debates through doing the impossible. Such, I suggest, is something that any essay on outdoor, adventure-based and experiential education is condemned towards in one way or another. If something finds an illumination then I will have written "well-enough" just as the Winnicott parent of Becker well knows the futility of the over-ordered-certainty and the impossibility of law and order. I hope that something begins with a critical theory with a pedagogy and the work of OAE no matter how long it takes.

### Footnotes:

(1) I mention the work of Peter Becker here deliberately but with no intention to try and find any connection without either ambiguity or difference. Becker will use in his work the psychological positions of those like Winnicott, for example. He will not be found citing the works of Marcuse and Fromm, Freire and Illich, Merleau-Ponty and Marx for example and all these working theorists do have a firm place in this essay in some way, some people-way, and at some time or another. I will not appropriate any one person's work in any other way than in my (and sometimes "our") specific work. I do however claim that Becker has links with a critical pedagogical approach even if I believe he sits on that proverbial fence at times and waits without wanting to jump into the darkness of that adventure scene itself. Winnicott is one safe way to do that. Another safe way of avoiding that adventurous jump is to dwell upon soft versions of a rites de passage process where the "return" after liminal-living-situations (sought for through a dis-satisfaction with the "present") is cited as an almost asocial thing.

But at the same time I think that the work of Becker helps us all find connections without any fear of idle utopian dreams. Becker is critical of idle utopia and my point is this - so too is a good critical theory and pedagogy. If my words here sound silly then I only ask for the person to stand up and show just how any one theory is, in itself, a set of solid certainties or even a well established and CONSISTENT whole! Which theory, for example and as Michael Rosen (1996) best says, has ever been ostracised by the academic community because of

its lack of consistency? My point is here that no theory must even try to be such a consistent theory in a world that moves as movement itself and I am suggesting here very strongly that this is one position that so much of critical theory has appreciated and tried to work with in the most variable of ways.

In this I use the work of Peter Becker with respect and in the context of this essay itself. Paulo Freire warned us about people reading too many books and others have said that to read one book well is better than to read many books not so well. All fair points at times. It is in this arena of debate that I write and I try and work - with a sense of "Praxis". I say no more. Praxis = Folk-ways and it acts through Knowledge-folk-ways that are real and situated - theory must have itself as a practice. Consistent theories are never reasonable! To re-present reality is maybe the adventure itself but this does not mean that we might not KNOW a "thing" or two as we live real moving lives !!! Experiential Education is condemned to such. But there is much more, as Becker invites, to any such "correspondence".

The related work of Robin Hodgkin (1997) might tell one part of this story, to many folk, quite well. Hodgkin uses, like Becker, the work of Winnicott. Here play and exploration become significant educational happenings in the human movement that is a movement of adventure always somehow "in-between" the realms of safety and the frontier realms of quasi-unknown situations. That is an education (bordering on a crisis) peradventure and as a potentiality in a "space" where meaning is made again and again. Like-wise they both well appreciate a sense of multiple active freedoms as creative folk-ways on the move. That is as an educational and pedagogic potential. Both see the "place" of time and a space that is "meaningful" and perhaps of a "speed" being integral to the whole affair. But such is what a critical pedagogy tries to work with too no matter the big issues of difference. Becker and Hodgkin would both say that we make our worlds but we do not make them in ways that are simply our own for we live our lives in various structures of action. We are socio-historical being. Such might be called an active sense of "memory" or an historical appreciation in the concentric circles of a polymorph lived-life. Maybe.

The task of OAE today, or at least one reasonable task among many, is to practice what these writers concern themselves with. In the light of OAE and the adventure as it concerns a critical pedagogy we might do well to play with and explore with some "tools" and "probes" and move like the fugue and the radical rubato into the realms of the frontiers until such a time as we can create new structures at work. Perhaps we need to test out and cross the borders a little of both OAE and critical pedagogy through the very natures of our work peradven-

ture. I suggest that both Hodgkin and Becker would agree here. To do this is far better than to try and hang static labels upon these folk or the folk-ways of critical pedagogical practices. I urge a playful exploration here that respects both similarity and difference.

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KAYE RICHARDS & LINDA ALLIN  
**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**  
EATING DISORDERS AND OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

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**MENU**

**Introductory Nibbles**

**Selection of Wines**  
Red, White, Rose

**Main Course**  
Traditional Meat and Two Veg.

**Dessert**  
Sticky Toffee Pudding

**Coffee and LeCure**

**After Dinner Hints**

**Introductory Nibbles**  
**Food In Our Lives.**

*Food is central to our lives and for physiological survival. It is the focus of many conversations and punctuates our days. It is usually a social activity, with friendships made and communities brought together over a cup of tea or a meal. Indeed in many cultures, food is a sign of welcome to a guest and to refuse to eat would be considered offensive. Food is also highly connected to emotion and emotional states. It is associated typically with pleasure and, sometimes, as a comfort when we are feeling down. This may be the meaning of food for the majority of us, yet the relationship between food, social context and emotion can be much more complex. To consider this relationship, and its meaning, we ask you to explore your own answers to a series of questions:*

What does food mean to you? Is it something you can take or leave? Is it a vice, a temptation - to be indulged in or refrained from depending on how 'naughty' or

In line with the theme, 'food for thought', this paper is organised around a menu. Our dining out begins with 'introductory nibbles', whereby we consider the meaning and significance of food. A 'selection of wines' is presented in order to develop an understanding of eating disorders. In this section the history, the aetiology and the prevalence of eating disorders are briefly outlined, with particular attention to the developmental stage of adolescence and the significance of gender. The main course of 'traditional meat and two veg', provides an invitation to link these key themes within the context of outdoor adventure. This allows us to consider how the perceived benefits of participation in outdoor adventure can form a basis for an alternative approach in the treatment of eating disorders. The dessert, 'sticky toffee pudding', provides a more critical examination of the links between outdoor adventure, eating disorders and physicality. This highlights wider agendas needing to be addressed, as eating disorders are located in the outdoors. Both, 'coffee and LeCure' and 'after dinner hints' consider some of the issues of intervention and prevention of disordered eating in an outdoor adventure setting.

'good' you have been? Remember the saying - 'naughty but nice'? What emotions do you associate with food? Is food on your mind the whole time - what time will breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea be? Do you frequently ask yourself shall I or shall I not eat? Who will be there and notice what I eat? Do you feel guilty after eating 'unhealthy' foods? Do you count the calories of the food you eat?

What does food mean to you in the outdoors? Does your relationship with food in this setting change? How often do you think about food? Is it a drudge - the same old sandwiches, or dried expedition rations? Are your eating habits different in the outdoors? Do you eat high-energy food in order to sustain the physical demands of a mountain expedition? Does the cooking of meals over a small camping stove provide an enjoyable daily ritual? Do you become more aware of the physiological need for food? Do you eat more to compensate for energy expenditure? Do you feel less guilty when

eating because you have completed physical activity? Have you ever thought, 'can I cope with the pressure to have to eat in order to have enough energy to complete the day's activity?'

It is evident that people's relationships with food are diverse, yet recognition of the psychological dimensions of this seems to go somewhat unnoticed in the outdoor adventure experience. To examine the link between outdoor adventure and eating disorders, the ways in which food is addressed requires a more extensive examination. By asking ourselves what food means for us we are able to recognise the ways in which food dominates many aspects of our lives. It is this domination of food that becomes a constant preoccupation for a person with an eating disorder. Eating evolves into a solitary and painful experience, representing the key metaphor in a struggle for self-expression, identity and control. A preliminary understanding of how we come to know about eating disorders, their history and their aetiology, provides an initial framework for examining further the dynamics of eating disorders in an outdoor setting.

## **Red Wine A History of Eating Disorders**

The first medical account of an eating disorder was in 1689, when it was identified by Richard Morton as 'nervous consumption' (in Silverman, 1997). It was not until approximately two hundred years later that the basis of what is now known as anorexia nervosa was recorded. Low body weight and self-starvation were recognised as the core physiological symptoms. These symptoms were addressed through the method of force-feeding and control over the sufferer, representing an understanding of eating disorders that was underpinned by a medical model of self-starvation. This focused on an asocial and highly individualised physical explanation, with limited recognition of the psychological dimensions. It was not until the late 1960's, when the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders criteria emerged, that a growing awareness of the psychological formations in the development of eating disorders was achieved. In consequence, during the 1970's / 1980's the psychological aspects received greater attention. This included the emergence of psycho-analytical approaches, for example Burch (1978) and Selvini Palazolli (1974), alongside the suggestion by Crisp (1980) that anorexia nervosa was an attempt to, "cope with fears and conflicts associated with psychobiological maturity and phobic fear of adult weight" (in Silverman, 1997: 8). Alongside this, bulimia nervosa, symptomatically characterised by cycles of binge-purge eating, became apparent and was defined in the early 1980's.

## **White Wine The Aetiology of Eating Disorders.**

The development of eating disorders have been linked to dysfunctional patterns in the family, early developmental factors, personality characteristics, social and cultural pressure and age (Hsu, 1989). In general the eating disorder sufferer develops intense and destructive relationships with food, body image and self-esteem. Impaired functioning in relationship to the self emerges from feeling ineffective and powerless in the world, having a limited repertoire to responding to emotions and needs, personal struggles with personal identity, little awareness of self to value and looking to weight for a sign of self worth (Bruch, 1973). Low body weight and food control become a search and addiction for perfectionism of, "an external body configuration, rather than an internal state" (Brumberg, 1988). As suggested by Button (1993), "the pursuit of the goal [of low body weight] becomes more important than the goal itself" (p4). More recently both the medical and the psychological models have been challenged with a greater recognition of the ways in which eating disorders may be representative of conflicts in achieving the female contemporary role (Brown, 1993). The interaction of the physical, psychological and social conditions of eating disorders illustrates the complexities of both understanding and addressing the phenomenon of disordered eating. Due to this complexity, a diverse array of theoretical perspectives can be examined in the context of eating disorders, for example family models (Eisler, 1995), psycho-dynamic models (Herzog, 1995), self-starvation models (Fitcher & Pirke, 1995) and social perspectives (Hepworth, 1999). Feminist models of eating disorders provide an important perspective, as approximately 90% of sufferers of anorexia and bulimia nervosa are women (Brown & Jasper, 1993).

## **Rose Wine Current Issues of Eating Disorders.**

The issue of eating disorders has received a growing attention in the last decade as the incidence among young women and girls has risen. The incidence of anorexia nervosa is usually quoted at around one per cent of the population, yet the number of girls who may not show all the signs and symptoms that make up the diagnosis of anorexia is much higher. The suggestion is that 5% of girls develop sub-clinical anorexia nervosa (Button & Whitehouse, 1982). Dieting is a risk factor for eating disorders, yet by the age of eighteen 80% of women have experienced problems and issues concerned with eating and losing weight (Brown, 1993). Smolack and LeVine (1996) report that up to 40% of elementary schoolgirls report trying to lose weight. This practice of

diETING is occurring young and younger, with girls as young as seven or eight years old controlling their food intake in order to lose weight and feel better about themselves (Bryant-Waugh and Lask, 1995).

Components of the development of an eating disorder emerge predominantly throughout early teenage life, a crucial time for struggles of identity. Both gender and the developmental demands of growing up female add to the difficult transition from adolescence to adulthood, where the changing body is an outward sign of maturation. In western culture, the gender socialisation process typically means that girls are brought up with a limited awareness of the potential of their bodies (Young, 1990). Messages from key individuals and social institutions also contribute to women's sense of dissatisfaction with the realities of their body shape and size (Orbach, 1986). Moreover, the physiological realities of adolescence means that as they mature, girls move away from the societal 'ideal' thin female body type to a more curvy and rounded figure. Boys, in contrast, move closer to the ideal male body type (Smolack and LeVine, 1996). Furthermore, the influences of the cultural values of dieting, consuming less or no fat / carbohydrate as health eating and excessive exercise means that those at risk are more likely to develop an eating disorder (Hartley, 1998). The public acknowledgement of the way in which messages about the 'ideal body' contribute to the prevalence of eating disorders was exemplified in a recent UK Government Body Image Summit, held in June 2000 (Guardian, 2000). This summit aimed to address the way in which the media, particularly the fashion industry, convey an ideal of 'thin is best'. It was reflective of a preventive strategy, in collaboration with the media, in reducing eating disorders by trying to reverse the current portrayal of extremely thin women. Whilst a commendable step forward in raising awareness of the social and cultural pressures on young women, the results of the summit provide girls with more contradictory messages. It remains unacceptable to be fat, but it is now also unacceptable to be thin. These societal conditions add to the already confusing expectations and uncertainties that exist in modern society in relation to women's roles and identities.

### **Traditional Meat and Two Veg The Links Between Outdoor Adventure and Eating Disorders.**

Four basic themes in the developmental components of eating disorders can be identified. These are low self-esteem, a negative relationship with the body, feelings of powerlessness and gender identity. It is these four themes that allow us to begin to examine the interface between eating disorders and outdoor adventure more

fully. A traditional model of outdoor adventure suggests that such experiences could provide a valuable framework in addressing these developmental components. That is, participation in outdoor adventure education has typically been associated with a rise in self-esteem through achievement and risk taking (Kimball and Bacon, 1993), a greater appreciation of the physical body through physical activities (Mortlock, 1984), a greater sense of control as self-sufficiency (Ewert, 1989) and a challenge to traditional gender roles (Humberstone, 1990). In analysing these themes more closely we need to consider the ways in which the developmental factors of eating disorders can manifest themselves in different activities. To achieve such an analysis, we invite you to visualise the experiential activity of the 'spider's web' that is used frequently in outdoor education. As you visualise this activity reflect upon how the issues of self-esteem, the body, control / power and gender become apparent throughout these experiences. In what ways do they provide opportunities to positively address these issues? Having considered a recovery component now examine how these very issues could be negatively impacted upon. Thus, ask yourself in what ways are there both recovery and reinforcement opportunities of an eating disorder in an outdoor setting?

### **Sticky Toffee Pudding A Critical Examination of Outdoor Adventure and Eating Disorders**

As we consider a model of recovery and reinforcement we can conceptualise a continuum of troubled eating. This allows us to recognise both the diversity of eating issues and the risks factors that contribute to eating disorders. Many of the dimensions of eating disorders, for example a negative body image, are prevalent in many people without a defined eating disorder, being especially prevalent in women. Thinking around a continuum of troubled eating serves to illustrate how assumptions concerning the positive increase in self-esteem from participation in the outdoors can no longer be taken for granted. For example, when we look at the idea of self-esteem through achievement we need to examine what is commonly understood by this in relation to the outdoor adventure experience. In many cases, the signs of achievement in outdoor activities are demonstrated or encrypted onto the physical body. Relating such elements to the body reminds us that all experiences and emotions are 'embodied'; i.e. felt and perceived through the physical body. For those with eating disorders, the interrelationships between self and the body can be heightened, leading to more complex and emotionally charged feelings that may be negative rather than positive. For example, someone in the process of being passed through the spider's web can feel

powerlessness rather than empowered, as they give over the handling and control of their physical body to others in the group. A comment from a peer /instructor regarding a participant's large size in relation to the size of the hole to be passed through can be internalised by a person as their being 'too fat', damaging a fragile self-esteem. Furthermore, a person may have fear around their body size, which is silenced, because the goals for the activity are already defined; for example goal achievement or team effectiveness. In this way the social and cultural context and relationships between individuals within the physical space of outdoor adventure activities can reinforce eating disorders by denying individual needs, rather than help in an individual's recovery.

One important question remains, that is, if these issues arise within an experiential activity such as the spider's web, how much greater are the issues raised when providing outdoor adventure experiences, where the individual physical body is more central to the successful completion of the activity? This can be illustrated in reference to a recent incident in a climbing session when an outdoor instructor encouraged a young woman during an abseiling activity by suggesting that 'her bum looked great in her harness'. This reinforces the idea that woman should be preliminary concerned with their appearance and that competence is determined by physical attractiveness. It also demonstrates that the socialisation of women's physicality does impact upon the outdoor adventure experience and risks being heightened as outdoor adventure rests on traditional gender values. Thus, we can no longer assume, as suggested by Conner (1999) that, "there is no evidence or reason to believe a wilderness programme is harmful or could in any way exacerbate a bulimic or anorexic condition" (p8). A study by Richards (1998) highlighted how some women who had trained as outdoor educators had developed eating disorders as a way of coping with the contemporary female role which was being defined in an outdoor adventure setting. This was in part reflective of struggles against a reinforcement of low-self esteem and disempowerment of the female physical body.

If traditional goals of outdoor adventure, as presented earlier, are now reconsidered we can identify further how a reinforcement model may be developed. Firstly, self-esteem through physical achievement risks encouraging physical failure, which in consequence could enhance further an already negative body image. This is of particular concern if we examine the social constraints upon women's physical performance in an outdoor adventure setting. Secondly, challenging the self to take risks has an inherent value of controlling the mind over the body. This could maintain the mind / body dichotomy which is prevalent for an eating disorder sufferer, as they are in continual denial of bodily needs. Furthermore, such a dichotomy needs to be located within

wider issues prevalent in eating disorders, for example exercise addiction (Pruitt et al, 1991). Thirdly, self-sufficiency proposes independence and self-control. Self-control is central to an eating disorder, any inappropriate influences upon this dynamic of self-control risks prescribing to unhealthy notions of self-control. Finally, eating disorders emerge out of struggles to overcome unequal power relationships and it would be naive to assume that group relationships avoid power relationships and that all outdoor adventure spaces actively seek to demystify gender roles.

A more critical analysis of the social construction of eating disorders, and the fact it is a largely of women's phenomenon, has to alert us to the issues of maintaining woman's oppression. It is necessary to be mindful of who defines and controls the embodied self; both in society and in an outdoor adventure setting. This allows us to locate more fully the social and cultural context of eating disorders and avoids the medicalizing and pathologizing of the developmental risk factors. In beginning to understand these dimensions we can examine the ways in which physicality and links with body image are impacted upon in an outdoor setting. The centrality of physicality and the body to women's experiences of outdoor adventure is discussed in several recent research papers (Allin, 1998, 2000; Carter, 2000; Woodward, 2000). These publications consider the sense of empowerment which women can gain through participation in outdoor adventure. They also begin to show, however, the ways in which such participation can be a source of dis-empowerment and lead to a lowering of self-confidence. For example, Allin (1998) noted that the criteria for positive evaluation in the outdoors is often the demonstration of physical competence or, at least, a 'get stuck in' approach. In Carter's (2000) study, women reported a lowering of self-esteem through having to 'prove' their capabilities, gain credibility or cope with challenges to their ability levels. One explanation for this lowering of self-esteem and confidence lies in the way outdoor adventure education is constructed and the links between physical competence and masculinity (Connell, 1987). This can lead women who may already lack confidence in their abilities to make negative self-assessments or, alternatively, feel pressurised into putting on a façade of bravado, which in consequence models a denial of emotional needs. Thus, risk factors in the aetiology of eating disorders, for example a lowering of self-esteem and being unable to value and address emotional needs, have opportunities to emerge in an outdoor adventure setting.

The issues in addressing disordered eating in outdoor adventure is further highlighted when, as suggested by Conner (1999), "potential students with bulimia or anorexia, with a history of violent, destructive or suicidal behaviours should not be admitted to a wilderness

programme” (p8). Why is it that we see many provisions for disaffected young people, yet when violent and suicidal behaviour is linked specifically to what is largely a woman’s phenomenon they risk being denied the wilderness experience. Excluding women with eating disorders from outdoor programmes stems more from ignorance, fear and a medical model of eating disorders, rather than a realistic appraisal and positive management of the potential outcome. Even though there are physical risks which need to be taken seriously, for example increase rise in electrolyte imbalance and cardiac arrest with an extremely low body weight (Treasure & Smukler, 1995), suggestions such as Connors in excluding potential students with bulimia or anorexia fails to understand the reinforcement model which this risks prescribing to. By locating the gender perspective more fully, which is easily recognised as 90 % of eating disorder sufferers are women (Bordo, 1990), it can be argued that exclusion of such sufferers from the outdoor adventure experience is a reinforcement of the wider phenomenon of maintaining women’s oppression in society. This alerts us to the debate surrounding who defines and controls women’s mental health (Usher, 1991), in conjunction with the management of outdoor adventure programming for women. These debates strengthen the rationale for why a recovery and reinforcement model of eating disorders in an outdoor setting is required and the ways in which a gender perspective is central to this debate.

### **Coffee and Le Cure Prevention and Intervention.**

An analysis of intervention strategies provides the platform from which successful programming models can be developed, which include rather than exclude women’s personal defining of eating disorders. Developing strategies to eradicate risk factors can aid in primary prevention; i.e. reducing the incidence of eating disorders. It is important that a thorough examination of the potential of outdoor adventure being integrated into already developed non-outdoor intervention/ prevention provisions is completed. Non-outdoor programmes which have been implemented in a school setting include; reducing the prevalence of dietary restraint and the level of concern about weight and shape (Stewart 1998; Killen et al, 1990); increasing knowledge and improving eating attitudes and intentions to diet (Morena & Thelen, 1993); and reducing moderate and extreme weight loss behaviours and low body image (Paxton, 1993). By understanding the specific psychological and sociological processes which underpin such programmes, the role of outdoor adventure in providing an appropriate ingredient in the treatment of eating disorders can be examined and realised more fully. For ex-

ample, how can focusing on healthy functioning and self-respect in developing positive body image and exploring a pathway to success unrelated to outward physical appearance, as examined by Stewart (1998), be enhanced by an outdoor adventure experience? Understanding such processes, however, will require clearly defined boundaries for the goals of outdoor adventure, ranging from recreation, education, development and therapy. This will require, not only an analysis of the differences and similarities between these goals for outdoor adventure experiences, but more importantly that appropriate strategies are in place to ensure quality practice is achieved in each of these contexts. For example, if a therapy model of intervention is developed then professional therapeutic procedures will need to be considered and evaluated fully, both from an eating disorders and adventure therapy perspective. Thus, we need to be careful of the ways in which we seek to inform ourselves of the how the theory of the aetiology of eating disorders and the practice of treatment are related to any outdoor adventure experience.

### **After Dinner Hints Issues of Practice.**

- The following ‘after dinner hints’ suggest some initial strategies to support the process of addressing disordered eating in an outdoor adventure setting.
- Reflect upon your own prejudices and stereotypes upon the body.
- Avoid commenting on people’s body image and weight.
- Be mindful of the psychological and social components of food.
- Demphasise food in terms of it being a goal for therapy for eating disorders.
- Avoid taking control or manipulation over people’s eating habits.
- Conceptualise a continuum of troubled eating.
- Critically reflect upon the centrality of the body in an outdoor adventure setting.
- Identify the ways in which outdoor adventure colludes with the oppressive social construction of developmental components of eating disorders.
- Focus on esteem and process in outdoor activities.
- Reflect upon goals of outdoor adventure experience and evaluate them in terms of a recovery and reinforcement model of eating disorders.
- Explore partnerships with already existing eating disorder intervention provisions.

As we end our dining out together, we realise the task of addressing disordered eating, as identified in this short paper, is both complex and problematic. This should not discourage us from the potential that such programming could bring in intervening, what has the highest mortal-

ity rate of all psychiatric illnesses, anorexia nervosa. The significance of developing such approaches are very much needed - lives are at stake. We hope that this 'food for thought' creates future menus, which not only implement outdoor adventure 'courses' to actively intervene any further rise in disordered eating, but also consider a critical perspective to future approaches.

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STEVE LENARTOWICZ

# WORKING WITH DISAFFECTION AND RISK BEHAVIOURS

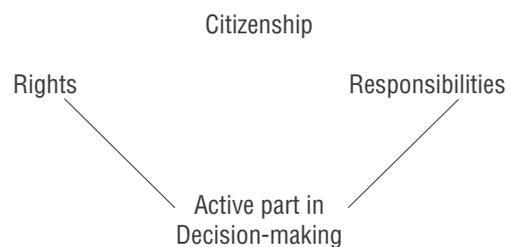
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Although the theme of this strand of the conference was drugs, the workshop focused on the broader theme of working with disaffection and risk behaviours. The misuse of drugs and alcohol was seen as a symptom of underlying issues of disadvantage and deprivation such as homelessness, failure at school, family breakdown, racism etc. These issues can also lead to other symptoms, such as depression, suicide, risky sexual behaviour and involvement in crime.

In the United Kingdom, information on serious drug misuse is limited. In one survey, it was found that 3% of young people aged 16-18 were dependent on illegal drugs, and 5% were dependent on alcohol. This is an indication of the scale of the serious end of the drug problem. However, it is thought that around 40% of young people have tried illegal drugs.

It is clear that there is a link between drug use and other factors. 10% of non-participants in education, training or employment were found to be drug-dependent, and 13% alcohol-dependent. 88% of homeless young people in London have used drugs – this is twice the rate of non-homeless young people in inner cities. 78% of students who have been permanently excluded from school have used illegal drugs, 38% of them have used drugs other than cannabis, 9% of them have used cocaine and 5% crack cocaine. Truants are twice as likely to have tried solvents or drugs, and three times more likely to have used hard drugs, than non-truants. Young people attending schools for those with educational and behavioural problems are four times more likely to use drugs than the average.

At times, the solution to the problem has been seen in terms of protection, control and punishment. However, it is clear to many people that this approach ignores the real causes, and that an emphasis must be given to prevention and support. Clearly there are structural factors to be addressed: young people need an absence of economic and social deprivation, so that there are opportunities for fulfilling employment and recreation, satisfactory housing and so forth. Young people need stable, supportive families and communities. They need to have the opportunity to develop self-esteem, self-confidence, their values systems, emotional intelligence, and



an empathy with other people. They need to develop personal and social skills such as communication, decision-making and problem-solving. They need to learn to handle risk, and to have access to the information which well inform their decisions. They also need a chance to experience success, excitement and adventure in a positive context.

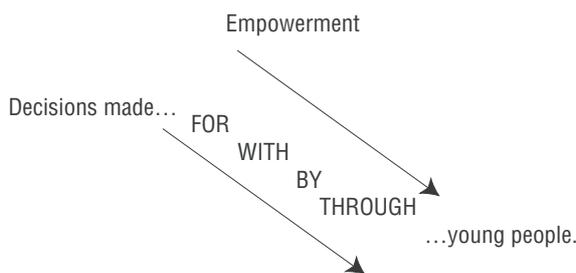
The emphasis on support means that the responsibility lies much wider than the individual and the state authorities – there is a vital role for parents, communities and voluntary and private sector organisations. An effective response means a multi-agency approach, with the state, the individual and civil society working in partnership. One example of such a multi-agency approach is the setting up of Youth Offending Teams in England, which bring together agencies such as the police, probation service, education service, youth service, social services under one umbrella, and which have a duty to form partnerships with the voluntary sector. On a wider plane, the new Connexions strategy in England seeks to bring ‘joined-up thinking’ to all work with young people.

Once it is recognised that there is a responsibility on civil society, then the notion of citizenship must be addressed. We need young people to be active citizens, and they need us to act as active citizens towards them too. Citizenship has sometimes been seen as a balance between the rights of the individual and the individual’s responsibilities to society. Citizenship education has often been limited to gaining knowledge and understanding about these rights and responsibilities, and about the structures of society. However, such a view of citizenship misses an important element – in order to be an active citizen, a young person must have a voice in deci-

sion-making, especially in decisions which directly affect them.

It is not possible to learn to take responsibility and to make such decisions through education that is located just in the classroom. Citizenship has recently been introduced into the school National Curriculum in England, but it needs to be reinforced by opportunities to learn in other contexts. Outdoor Adventure - based Experiential Learning has much to offer here.

The process of becoming an active citizen is one of empowerment. Empowerment can be seen as a process of growing from dependence to independence, but this is an insufficient definition. True empowerment involves recognising our interdependence, with each other and with the Earth. Empowering young people means that we must design our education programmes so that they are able to take an increasing responsibility for decision-making. When we work with young people, after an initial stage of making contact and trust-building, we often provide activities in which they participate. Decisions about the activity are made FOR the young people. This is especially true when using hazardous activities such as canoeing or climbing. Sadly, much outdoor education does not progress beyond this stage. The next stage is to involve young people in shared decision-making, by supporting them to take some responsibility. Decisions are made WITH the young people. Further progress in empowerment is made by giving full responsibility, so that decisions are made BY young people. Eventually, at least for some, there will be a leadership or peer education role, where decisions are made THROUGH them.



The task of the facilitator is to be aware of the stage at which young people are working, and to manage the learning activity by making decisions about how he or she works with the group so as to move them up the stages. There are three important elements involved in any learning activity:

- Content:** the activity itself
- Social Climate:** the group process involved in undertaking the activity
- Process:** how participants learn from the experience of the activity

We should give equal attention to each of these three elements. In many outdoor adventure programmes, emphasis is only given to the activity, and little attention is paid to the learning climate and process.

Each of the three elements of the programme can be managed in one of the three decision-making modes. The table summarises the interaction of these elements with the three modes (after John Heron, *The Complete Facilitator's Handbook*).

### Decision making modes about elements of a learning event (after John Heron)

Element of the learning event	Decision-making mode		
	Hierarchy: Facilitator makes decisions FOR the group	Co-operation: Facilitator makes decisions WITH the group	Autonomy: Decisions are made BY the group
Activity: What task will we do?		✓	
Group Process: How will we work together?			✓
Learning Process: How will we learn from this?	✓		

In the example given in the table, the facilitator negotiates with the group about what task they do. Perhaps they are given a choice of activities, and in discussion with the facilitator they decide to take on the challenge of a full day's canoe journey. Responsibility for how the members of the group work together to achieve the task is given entirely to the group. They have to decide how to support the weaker members of the group, how to keep up morale at difficult times, when to stop for rests, how to deal with disagreements, and so forth. The facilitator only steps in to ensure safety and to give technical instruction. However, at the end of the day, the facilitator steps in and directs a review of the experience in order to draw learning from it.

There are also higher levels of decision making - for example, deciding which mode is used is a decision in itself, which can itself be made using any one of the three modes. In this case the facilitator might have said, at the end of the day, "Would you like to run the review, or shall I run it?", delegating the decision to the group. The group decides that they would like the facilitator to direct the review.

The ultimate aim is to empower the group, and the individuals within it, to be able to make autonomous deci-

sions in each of the three elements. Learning to manage interpersonal situations and the process of learning from experience are important outcomes. A 'curriculum for empowerment' would see learning programmes designed to provide a progression towards these outcomes, by gradually moving the locus of control from left to right in the table.

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FRANÇOIS CHOBEAUX

# EDUCATIONAL AND THERAPEUTIC USES OF HIGH-RISK OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

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Nowadays, in France as in other western countries, many programmes of educational and social activities aimed at young people facing important problems of integration, for example, drug users, are at least partly based on outdoor sports that involve a specific risk.

What are the specific characteristics of the approaches developed in France ?

Why is there such an interest in this type of sports – what are the underlying mental perceptions ?

What conditions are identified for the effectiveness of these techniques ?

What issues are being discussed ?

## **Definitions, and specifics of the French situation**

The french label ‘ high-risk sports ’ applies to sports which take place in a natural environment and which involve a constant and great physical risk. These include cliff-climbing, high mountaineering, white water sports and caving (undertaken in chalky areas).

Unlike in some Anglo-Saxon countries, only very few of the activities organised by French youth workers or therapists are part of standardised programmes. As a consequence, there are next to no « programmes » - in the English sense of the word – where schemes are based on the use of one sport or another for a set length of time. Social workers prefer to include specific techniques based on activities – sporting, artistic, etc – in the context of the educational or therapeutic programme of which they are in charge. We are therefore talking about the use of these techniques amongst others rather than as the centres of coherent programmes.

The target group is made up of young people aged 15 to 30, who are all facing problems of social integration, up to the extent of social exclusion. They are all users of intoxicants, either legal substances such as alcohol, or prescription drugs (which they misuse), or of illegal drugs ranging from cannabis to heroin.

These young people receive specialised and comprehensive support, which can last years.

## **Asserted factors of interest and underlying mental perception**

Contributors who use these techniques pinpoint three factors of interest.

They already take part, or took part, in these activities, and enjoy or enjoyed them. Their wish to introduce them to the group clearly is part of a sharing process induced by a great emotional and human investment. There is a flux of desire at stake in it, professional relationship leaving room for emotions. Yet it does not imply that such an emotional dimension is necessarily unconscious. Terms such as « meeting », « sharing », « discovering » and « pleasure » are often pointed out.

In addition to this, the aspect of what we call in France « pleine nature », the great outdoors, is demanded and expected. Activities which take place in the natural environment require from the individuals and groups the mobilisation and use of abilities such as co-operation, delegation, trust, collective organisation and responsibility for oneself and others. All these capacities the development of which will ensure the social integration that these actions seek to achieve.

Last but not least, contributors place the emphasis on the emergence of great emotional charges linked to these activities. This aspect is presented as particularly interesting with groups who put on a blasé attitude, for whom who nothing seems to interest any more.

Beyond these specific and essentially rational claims, it is possible to identify four major lines of underlying mental perceptions, which are scarcely examined in spite of their apparent lack of rationality.

The notions of atonement and redemption are very often quite vividly present in the mind of the individual concerned as well as to the rest of the world. The idea is that the difficulty of these tough activities would make possible to erase past wrongs and debts to society. The presence of this major Christian theme of atonement is not surprising in our countries.

It is also noticeable that a sublimation of passions and behaviours is expected from these activities because the participant has been forced to learn to handle a con-

trolled risk in a measured and well-considered way. The belief is that this learning of a skill in control is supposed to lead to a sensible handling of one's own life almost immediately and automatically. This expectation is particularly common in the case of actions aimed at drug-users.

Many of the activities which are aimed at addicts are thought to enable the transition from an uncontrollable and lethal addiction to drugs to another kind of dependence. This new dependence is softer, positive, socialised, linked to the discovery of great feelings and emotions through these activities. It is often said that the achievement of a support programme is to shift the addiction from the need for a fix of heroin to « fixes » of adrenaline.

Quite often there is also an expectation of a cathartic process, whereby the violent and sudden emergence of deep and hidden emotions, made possible by the extreme emotional states encountered, would almost automatically neutralise the emotional charges thus revealed.

### A few requirements identified for the effectiveness of these treatments

In fact, there are two fundamentally opposed ways of taking risks into consideration that are to be thought about. The opposition lies between the so-called « *risque ordalique* » - the risk of ordeal – and « *risque dynamique* » - dynamic, active, risk.

In the first case, « *risque ordalique* », attention paid to the individual's attitude toward risk, that is the endless personal search for reassurance through the successful handling of self-imposed trials, is not very liberating. The alienation caused by drug use or other dangerous activities is replaced by a similar alienation, now caused by the « use » of different activities, but still seeking the same feeling of defying death. At this point, the person looks more and more desperately for a meaning to his life but is constantly constrained by limits which trap him.

By contrast dynamic risks lead the individual to go forward and, with some support, to take responsible steps which bring hope and new prospects. The risk is therefore positive, constructive, and part of the transformation and development of the person.

A few examples to illustrate the contrast in types of risk :

« <i>Risque ordalique</i> »	« <i>Risque dynamique</i> »
Choice left to an external decision	Choice left to the individual
Achieves the « buzz »	Achieves structure
Assessed in relation to death	Assessed in relation to life
Controls life	Enhances life
Makes one feel better	Makes one have a better knowledge of oneself
Internalised, solitary	Expressed, socialised
An end in itself	A means to an end
Based on a death wish	Based on a desire for life
External superego	Self

These examples of contrast lead one to view very differently the role of supervision and the conditions of support in these risk-based practices.

Contributing organisers of these activities who come from the « *ordalique* » perspective set up conditions allowing a direct confrontation with risks. They intervene as instructors, through emotional support and non-negotiable pressure - « you can, you must ». Their help is only technical and focuses on the task to accomplish.

Those who come from the « *dynamique* » perspective rely on the organisation and environment of the activity to create pretexts and a system of relationships between people. They use risk as a working tool, not as an aim. Their role is not confined to technical advice on the carrying out of the task. They insist on themselves being present and involved as well as on their function of emotional support – « you can do it, I wouldn't put you in danger because I like you, I value you. »

The choice of the « *risque dynamique* » logic obviously implies the presence and active participation of youth workers, medical staff and therapists during the activities. Without these it would be impossible to identify the emerging emotions or to do any attendant work on them.

Moreover, such action must be part of a comprehensive and co-ordinated project of support. To fit into a consistent scheme requires that it be developed over a long period.

Finally, there must be an adaptation of the method of teaching these techniques and a reflection on the practical conditions of implementation. It is especially necessary to take into account the conflicting relationship of the young people – they may have problems with standardised learning and constrictive teaching methods. Also, one must take account of their having difficulties in complying with rules and sometimes getting suddenly and terminally discouraged when they encounter an early failure.

ISSUES WHICH ARE BEING DISCUSSED AND ARE AS YET UNANSWERED

It is not easy to assess the impact of these actions. Very few qualitative studies are currently undertaken and those which are, deal with unreliable criteria – such as assessment of changes in behaviour in the short term or an appraisal of the « sense of change » expressed verbally by the protagonists. These procedures do not take into account the importance of the over investment and of the process of counter transference required of the staff involved in these innovative practices. They also do not take account of the importance of containing, which is both a protection and an external superego linked to these actions, allowing no infringement of the sole rule, which is that of life. They also ignore all exogenous factors linked to the protagonists' lives, changes in their environment, family mobilisations – the people who are taking part are a young age group with changing material and emotional environments.

It is possible to assess the global impact of a support programme but it seems rather risky to try to isolate one of its technical parameters.

The training of « instructors » - social workers, therapists, people specialised in the area of high-risk activities – to use these techniques with such groups and with the specific aim of helping their integration is not very developed.

There has been little research into the didactics specific to such situations. There is no continuing dialogue between the therapists involved in these programmes. There is almost no rational approach that would allow the justification of the choice of a specific technique with a specific group.

There are currently thousands of contributors who simply design their own way of proceeding on their own, without regularly exchanging their views with one another. There is therefore no consensus that could emerge from such exchanges.

Quite often, these techniques are only put forward as the last resort, where all else has failed. People promoting programmes on risky and adventurous practices are even more likely to claim that they can succeed where everyone else has failed. Then what happens to the people targeted when this approach « does not work » for them ? Will they be regarded as beyond help, or will the instigators of these approaches be taught to be more modest and therefore more responsible ?

**To conclude**

We have come to the end of a first and pioneering stage in the investigation of this approach to a problem,

marked by passionate people who have tried to lead and share with others, who have involved themselves. There have been and there are always exchanges of pleasure and desire, all for the best.

Desires for rationalisation of these projects slowly emerge, needs for training for « instructors », assessments, all necessary to bring these methods into common use. The spread of these practices depends on it. Will it not however lead to an impoverishment of the essence and diminution in the effectiveness of these methods if they become mere techniques that can be implemented by mere technicians ? The capacity to recognise others and endow them with controlled and conscious desires cannot be taught. It may be the limitations which will stop the ambitions to generalise and order these educational and therapeutic adventures.

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PETER HIGGINS

# LEARNING OUTDOORS: ENCOUNTERS WITH COMPLEXITY

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*The “right answer” approach is deeply ingrained in our thinking. This might be fine for some mathematical problems, which do indeed have one right answer. The difficulty is that most of life isn’t that way. Life is ambiguous.*

Von Oech (1990)

## Abstract

In modern education the conventional approach is to make efforts to simplify the learning process. This is done through the application of appropriate methods to a defined and increasingly prescriptive curriculum which is in itself compartmentalised into subjects with well defined boundaries. However, most human interactions (with others as well as the natural and modified environment) are complex. Understanding this world and living and working within it requires awareness of relationships, connections and consequences. Whilst there may be ways in which the school curriculum might be changed to encourage learning and understanding of this type, such changes seem unlikely. Direct experience outdoors is proposed as one way of achieving these learning outcomes. The question of relevant research in outdoor education is raised. Whilst I seek to make general points about these issues, the paper must be seen as primarily reflecting the situation in education in the UK.

## Complexity and the big issues

I would like to consider the notion that many of our interactions with the world are “complex” and discuss the range of meanings which may be associated with this. Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of complexity is in our relationships with others. Pick any person you know and think about the subtleties and nuances of that relationship. What do you really know about them and they about you? Add a third person to a conversation and the interactions might best be described as “social complexity”. Extending this notion to the multicultural society in which we now live and add the issues of equity and social justice and the result may be described as “cultural complexity”.

The genetic modification of a crop requires deep understanding of an organism in a number of ways and at various levels. This kind of science takes place at an interface between genetics, physiology and biochemistry and is provided as an example of “scientific complexity”. But this interface, complex as it might be, is highly controversial and has to take account of ecological principles and human perceptions, politics etc.

Whilst such an example has an environmental dimension it may be seen as a relatively local issue compared to an issue such as global climate change. This is now of such significance that governments are beginning to take the matter seriously. Investigating the causes of global climate change has so far been the preoccupation of the scientists who study it and it has proved to be a “scientifically complex”. However, despite awareness of the human causes (emissions of carbon dioxide etc) governments and individuals are slow to react. The issue of global warming is, by definition, not confined to one locality. I (and the rest of industrialised society pollute in one part of the globe, but someone elsewhere (eg in Bangladesh) may suffer the results of sea level rises. This example of “environmental complexity” clearly has social, political and cultural dimensions.

All of the above are also influenced by communications technology, globalisation and the media. It is obvious that we might not think about it in such terms but “complexity” is a facet of everyday life for all of us. In the present paper I consider the degree to which education provision prepares us to think and address our feelings about such issues.

## Schooling

By the time a school student is 16 years old, he or she will have spent around 9% of his or her life (awake or asleep) in schools and schooling. Calculated as waking hours between the age of 5 and 16 the figure is roughly 43%. This period of exposure to schooling is provided by the state to give the student a start in life and in the hope and expectation that he or she will play a full and active role in society. The period is a preparation, and the best the state can provide within limited funds, for

what lies ahead. My purpose in calculating the percentage (and it may seem low or high to the reader depending on their experiences) is to both emphasise the significant amount of time this represents and the obvious fact that there is a lot of time spent not in school when the student will be subject to a wide range of other influences. This begs the question, “what is it reasonable to expect the school to provide and what can be left to these other influences?” Whilst much has been written on the role of the school in society there is little debate over the central function of the school in purveying knowledge and skills and in the development of informed attitudes and values. Additionally it may be appropriate to suggest that the school might help the student make sense of their experiences outside school and, as suggested above, apply all this to later life.

The central issue of interest then is “can the school do this?”

### **The standardised curriculum**

It is not the purpose of the paper to question the effectiveness of the school in delivering the curriculum. Schools have to be efficient and focussed in the delivery of curricula. This means that structures and systems are put in place to make it easy for the teacher to teach and the student to learn. Increasingly it also means that each step of the way is monitored and the learning product (student knowledge) measured.

The selection of the curriculum (what is studied) and how it is studied (in school) is generally not a matter for the student, and with increasing government involvement in this process, may not be much of a matter for the teacher. It is not my purpose here to review the research on child development. However, it is clear in the early years of a child’s development he or she sees no subjects let alone boundaries between them. For example a representation of an event may be verbal, visual, text or a mixture of all three. In the early years of schooling, due acknowledgement tends to be made of this and the schooling of the child often takes place with one teacher (in one classroom) where a variety of subjects may well be taught together. A child-centred approach is often taken, though usually within the confines of the classroom.

In later years the curriculum is divided into a number of subjects which fit within structures in the school. Central to the process is reading and writing (and now ICT) and these are given a special place in the curriculum. Other subjects such as history, geography, chemistry, physics, biology etc are taught by specialists. There is

no doubt a rationale for this based on the premise that at higher levels the subjects are more technical (and hence a specialist is required) and that this strategy breaks the curriculum into manageable chunks for the student to digest. Also it may well be convenient for schools to be arranged this way. When student knowledge is assessed this generally occurs under the subject headings.

### **Learning**

According to the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum “learning is messy ... we rarely learn anything by proceeding along a single path to pre-determined outcomes” (SCCC, 1996: 9). It seems that we understand the world by relating pieces of information to others and fitting at all together. As multi-sensory animals we understand the world through sight, sound, taste, smell and touch. We also relate to events in ways which are intellectual, physical, emotional, aesthetic and spiritual. Whilst it may be possible to experience an event through a single sense and know it in a single way (eg reading text and considering it intellectually), this is not the norm. The more complex the experience, the more ways there are of experiencing it and knowing it. The more ways an event is known, the better that chance that it will be understood. Wilson (1998) reports that the neurobiologist Charles Sherrington (writing in 1941) considered the “brain as an enchanted loom, perpetually weaving a picture of the external world, tearing down and reweaving, inventing other worlds, creating a miniature universe” (Wilson, 1998: 11). The more multi-sensory the experience, the more colourful the weaving. This view has been supported by the work of many educational psychologists since then and is in line with the “constructivist” position which holds that learners actively construct meaning by building new experiences into previous ones. It seems to be the newness of experiences which attract our attention and help in the construction of meaning. As Bateson (1979) put it, it is the “differences that make a difference”.

Certainly many teachers are well aware of the theory of learning, and make a point of cross-referencing their subject to other areas within the curriculum and endeavour to place it in a broader context. But how does the education system encourage the student to apply this knowledge to build up relevant “worldviews” (Brookes, 1993) and opinions? How does it help the student to deal with problems which require the application of knowledge from several disciplines? Clearly school leavers have done much of the work for themselves as they do, by and large, succeed in the modern world. However, this is not to suggest that this process could

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1 Brookes (1993) uses the term “worldviews” (or mindsets) to mean ways of seeing the world which are either absorbed tacitly from everyday experiences, or educationally constructed as a function of the structure of the school and its practices etc.

not be aided by the school. This is a key skill and schools should take responsibility for this aspect of the student's development. In fairness to teachers, schools and educational policy makers this is an issue which causes considerable debate (at least in the UK). Here a number of recent consultation documents refer to the central importance of core skills (such as working with others and problem solving) but there seems little explicit guidance on how this might be achieved. This is in stark contrast to the detailed way in which guidance on how the "subjects" are taught is provided in policy documents and text-books.

### What else might the school do?

In the preceding text I have not suggested a radical restructuring of schools. This is and has been the focus of many a debate over at least the last century. Although it seems to me to be a false divide with inappropriate terminology there are those who argue for "progressive" or for "traditional" approaches. The reason I have avoided this issue is that there seems at present no possibility of this debate being taken seriously, and in the context of this paper I wish to focus on a more modest (though substantial) ambition for outdoor education.

Eisner (1985) argues that schools teach "explicit", "implicit" and "null" curricula. These can be restated as "what you can see the school teaching", "what message students take from how the schools goes about it" and "what is left out". So far I have briefly discussed the first two of these but "implicit" in a curriculum which is delivered in a manner which emphasises individual subjects, there is a sense that the connections between them are relatively unimportant.

There are issues which are of educational relevance to the school but which are difficult to fit into existing curricula. Suggestions for inclusion might be health, citizenship and sustainability. All three of these interrelate with a range of aspects of the traditional disciplines and all can be regarded as having the dimension of complexity. They also relate to each other. So, for example, the health of the individual is closely related to sustainable (non-polluting etc) practices and decisions on sustainability are, in the final analysis, made by the electorate.

Each of these has a knowledge base and some are indeed taught by some schools within a set curriculum. However, it is in the null and implicit curricula that messages are learnt regarding the importance of the areas and how they might be thought about. Thinking about and dealing with complex issues requires key skills which must include critical analysis, integrated thinking, problem solving and personal and social skills and the approach and ethos of the school is central to this process. If the

subjects are taught without these dimensions they will not be valued

### Encountering simplicity

The reasons individuals recreate outdoors are many and varied. However, a desire to "get away from the pressures and complexities of everyday life" is high amongst them. The outdoors is seen as a place to focus on the important things; food, shelter and safely negotiating potentially hazardous (adventure) experiences. These are the lower order needs in Maslow's oft cited "hierarchy" (Maslow, 1970). Indeed many an outdoor education programme cites this as a rationale, arguing that outdoor education can provide tasks and challenges which bring the student in touch with these important realities which are often obscured by modern living. Through this process the outdoors is seen as a place where individuals can "confront themselves" and, provided they engage in appropriate reflection, "develop" as a result. The essence is to strip away the complex and focus on basic needs. Staying safe, warm, dry and well fed is the priority, and working with others is often seen as the way to be successful in achieving a common goal. That through such experiences valuable perspectives on day-to-day life are revealed is a common tenet of outdoor recreation and an important aspect of outdoor education. However, I would argue that outdoor *education* has an important role in extending the student perspective out from simplicity towards encounters with complexity. In this light such experiences may be viewed differently.

### Encountering complexity

ÔWe stood in the early morning autumn sun on a field of dew-sparkled grass outside a remote churchyard on the banks of the River Findhorn in north-east Scotland. We used Tai Chi relaxation exercises in preparation for the journey ahead and discussed their use to prepare for exercise, and the principles of dealing with an external force by relaxing "with" it to allow it past rather than pushing against it. On our journey we discussed the rock shapes carved by the river and erosion in spate conditions. Our attention was captured by the shimmering golden leaves of the aspen trees on the river banks and the conversation shifted to deforestation and the centuries old relationship between trees, sheep, people and landownership (in which the trees and the people always seem to fare worse than the sheep and the landowner!). A leaping salmon gave rise to debates on the biology of salmon, fresh-water ecosystems, salmon fisheries and the management of watercourses and adjacent land. Lunch allowed a discussion (with diagrams in the sand on the beach) of the effects of currents on floating ob-

jects in the water, laminar flow and current lines. Throughout the day each individual worked to develop their own skill and enjoy the journey, and there were many opportunities (gladly taken) for people to teach or help each other. As we reached the end of our journey at dusk the mist gathered over the river and the setting sun streamed through it, broken into shafts by the pinewood on the river bank. A quietness settled on the group as each individual found their own way to savour the last moments of a perfect day.Ö

There is of course, another perfectly accurate explanation of what we were we doing there: “kayaking”.

One of the most obvious aspects of education outdoors is that, in most settings where such activities take place there is a lot going on! Think of any such experience and try to remember the place, the activity, the scenery, the weather, the natural heritage, the human impact on that place, the people you were with, the relationships between them etc. It is immediately apparent that trying to describe the event fully would be impossible (although I have made *my own* attempt above<sup>2</sup>). The example I have given could lead anyone inquiring into one small part of the event, into deeper and deeper levels of enquiry. For example, consideration of what happens to the eroded rock leads to thoughts about the water cycle and the rock cycle, geological time etc. I used “kayaking” as a sort of “throwaway” at the end of the passage, but what of the complex sensory interface between the kayaker, the kayak and the moving water and rapids of the river?

It is clear that any experience of the natural heritage can bring us face to face with issues of ecology, biogeochemical cycles and human relationships. These are the very things that schools teach about. Such experiences assist in placing these in context and through this exploration theory and practice meet. ie “the ideal encounters the real”.

The essence of such experiences is that the outcomes cannot be predicted to any great degree. This uncertainty is the essence of adventure, and a working and satisfactory relationship with adventure involves a mix of careful thought and creative application.

### **A theory to fit the experience?**

It is notable that a number of authors (predominantly well known scientists) have, in recent years written books which make a deliberate attempt to cross disci-

plinary boundaries. One or two have raised brought “new” concepts in scientific thinking to public awareness (eg Lovelock (1987) on the Gaia hypothesis, Gleick (1987) on chaos theory). In a recent book considering the importance of the search for a “unity of knowledge” (a small number of natural laws which underlie every branch of learning), the great American naturalist E O Wilson argues that every student (and political leader) should be able to answer the question “what is the relation between science and the humanities, and how is it important for human welfare?” (Wilson, 1998: 11). He argues that that few could; a tragedy considering that most of the issues that are of concern (eg ethnic conflict, arms escalation, damage to the environmental etc) “cannot be solved without integrating knowledge from the natural sciences with that of the social sciences and humanities” (Wilson, 1998: 11-12). Similarly the physicist and author Fritjof Capra (1997: 3) argues that “the more we study the major problems of our time, the more we come to realise that they cannot be understood in isolation. They are systemic problems, which means that they are interconnected and interdependent”.

What is notable about these two authors is that they are prominent scientists who have felt the need to write “popular” books to argue for awareness of complexity. At this point a mention should be made of “complexity theory”. This is the notion that within complexity order can be found and natural laws of complexity can be unearthed. They are looking for qualities of nature that “display common features across many levels of organisation” (Wilson, 1998: 95). The two authors cited above give the perspectives of advocate (Capra) and guarded inquisitor (Wilson). Both are of the view that “complexity” offers a conceptual framework for integrating a range of disciplines (mainly scientific) which have become isolated. The search for such understanding seems attractive, important and elusive. It is mentioned here because it is an indication of the effort which is now being made to address deficiencies in positivistic “disciplinary thinking” (Brennan, 1994: 7). Whilst the underlying issues are deep and complex in themselves it is clear that “disciplinary thinking” is unlikely to aid progress. Perhaps learning outdoors can contribute to the education process which in turn may encourage thought and progress in this area.

As I noted earlier there is never a shortage of critics of the so called traditional approach to education. Dewey (1956) and Freire (1972) are well known antagonists but

2 It is of course the nature of such experiences that each individual has their own view of what really happened. This is, in itself a facet of complexity. Outdoor educational programmes tend to make the assumption that there is a degree of commonality in such shared experiences (and I have implied this in my example). This may be a perfectly reasonable assumption, but at present there is little or no evidence that such questions are asked or researched. This is in accord with Brookes (2000) who argues that outdoor educators “are inattentive to the cultural and social nature of the reality they construct”, and that this tendency “weakens outdoor education theory”. This issue has implications for addressing both complexity as a unifying theme, and approaches to research in the field.

more recently others such as Hirst (1974), Warnock (1993) and Brennan (1994) have added their voices to the criticism. There seem to be a number of aspects of “traditional” education which irritate these authors. Many of these are shared and they include the lack of focus on the needs of individual learner (Dewey, 1956), the lack of practical elements in schooling (eg Warnock, 1993: 169), an over-emphasis on knowledge at the expense of the development of thinking skills, the dominance of the positivist paradigm in education, and despite caveats as to its “helpfulness”, the limitations of “discipline-based learning” (Brennan, 1994: 7-10) in addressing complexity.

No account of complexity, interdisciplinarity and education would be complete without mention of Sir Patrick Geddes, the Scots polymath who is regarded by many as the founder of environmental education. Geddes, who was influential in a bewildering range of fields towards the end of the 19th century and in the early part of the 20th century was harshly critical of the trend (especially in universities) towards increasing specialisation. He felt that without broad interest and knowledge, students would not understand the significance of discoveries in their own specialist field. He felt this to be significant, as only in this way could knowledge be brought to bear to the benefit of mankind. So strong was his belief in this that throughout his life he put a great deal of effort into the development of “thinking machines” to aid the process. These were diagrams (often in the form of a grid) which showed the relationships between subjects or disciplines. The best known of these relates to “place, work, folk” and the discipline based corollary of “geography, economics, anthropology”. Through the development of such devices Geddes “hoped to initiate and educate others to accept the need for educational reform and to pursue a synthesis of all knowledge” (Meller, 1990: 45). As reading of any account of Geddes’ life will reveal, he lived according to this ethic, making outstanding contributions to a number of fields including town planning, environmental education, biology, social reconstruction and international peace. Also see Boardman (1978) who gives a full account of Geddes’ “thinking machines” and his use of them.

Brennan (1994: 10) asks “how can we overcome shallowness in education, and alert the learner to the fact that we are complex beings who live in complex relations with each other and our physical surroundings?”. He makes several suggestions (such as adopting human ecology as a central organising theme in secondary schooling) which would require fundamental changes in the school curriculum. Whilst I support his suggestions, such changes are, in the short term, extremely unlikely. Furthermore, such changes would only partially address the concerns noted above. I believe that even if Brennan’s

changes were introduced we would, in order to address other concerns about schooling, still need to provide practical, student-centred learning opportunities.

### Can outdoor education help in understanding complexity?

As the preferred methodology of outdoor education is to encourage learning through experience and to develop confidence in self-directed learning and critical reflection (eg Hopkins and Putnam, 1993; Dahlgren and Szczepanski, 1998; Higgins and Loynes, 1997) it does seem as though it may contribute, though I will not overstate the claims for learning outdoors. A great deal of that has been done in the past and received little critical examination. However I will argue that through education outdoors, complexity can be addressed and that this can contribute to our education system to the benefit of individuals, society and the natural heritage.

As with school education, education outdoors can be considered (in Eisner’s terms) to have explicit, implicit and null curricula. I have argued elsewhere that the dominant “explicit” outdoor curriculum has a content which concerns itself with physical activities and personal and social education (Higgins, 2000a/b). Certainly in the UK outdoor programmes employ a wide range of activities which mirror those popular in outdoor recreation. Alpine skiing, mountain biking, rafting, snowboarding, visits to climbing walls etc are now popular but very few outdoor centres ever take groups away on camps or journeys (walking, canoeing or sailing) (Higgins, in press; Nicol, in prep). The use of a wider range of technologies and toys has spawned more and more qualification structures and this has led to an increasing focus on the technical and safety aspects of staff training at the expense of staff development in personal and social education (despite it being the acknowledged *raison d’être* for many programmes) and environmental literacy (Higgins, 2000a; Nicol, in prep). This situation is both paradoxical for the stated current purpose of outdoor education and (at best) pointless for the environment. Whilst outdoor education in the UK can claim to do much of educational merit, there is little evidence of a trend to encourage either environmental knowledge or a deeper relationship with the natural heritage.

Whilst this has implications for the implicit and null curricula and does, of course have implications for the “take-home message” for students, my greatest concern is for the missed opportunities to engage with complexity. I believe such an educational venture is both essential and a practical possibility for outdoor educators to engage with.

## How can this be done?

Earlier I argued that outdoor learning experiences were unavoidably and essentially complex. The complexity is there all around and permeating through the experience. Perhaps the first action to take is to acknowledge and illuminate this fact. Environmental complexity and social complexity are facets of the outdoor learning experience and this can be pointed out at every opportunity.

Second, the content of outdoor courses could place emphasis on such knowledge, of which the most obvious example is environmental. This approach has been advocated by a number of authors who have argued that man's impact on the planet demands a particular approach to education outdoors (Crowther, 1984; Crowther et al, 1998; Martin, 1993; Cooper, 1991; Higgins, 1996a,b; Nicol and Higgins, 1998a,b; White, 1998). Common themes are the development of environmental awareness and knowledge, awareness of human dependence on physical and ecological principles, and the consequences for the Earth (and ourselves) of individual and collective actions. Martin (1993) suggests that the use of adventure activities to assist in this process of "developing an alternate view of the world in this manner is the most desirable and defensible rationale for outdoor education" (Martin, 1993:10).

Practical ways of doing this include issues of human interaction with the environment through students being clearly involved in the water cycle (by fetching and carrying water to drink, discussing where it came from, how it got there, where the urine goes and how cities deal with all this) or the carbon cycle (burning wood in a camp fire and discussing the age and growth of the tree, the carbon dioxide produced and its effect on global warming, the role of photosynthesis in the production of oxygen etc) (Higgins, 1996b). As well as simple discussion of such issues it would be perfectly appropriate to conduct simple experiments, survey attitudes in the group etc. It is clear that to do this job well the outdoor educator will need to be well informed, highly motivated and imaginative. This may be perceived as very demanding, but it is worth pointing out that those who educate outdoors have all the advantages of stimulating surroundings and rich opportunities to use experiential techniques.

Third, such experiences could be used to discuss and challenge ways of seeing the world or relating to others. Outdoor learning experiences readily generate opportunities to do this. Brookes (1993:15) suggests that "the difference between outdoor education as escapism and outdoor education as the lived experience of worldviews lies with what the teacher knows". He goes on to suggest that this might mean; in essence "to be able to read educational ecologies (eg how knowledge is socially constructed and defined), "offer alternative un-

derstandings of the nature of knowledge" and "experience of alternative ecologies of ideas" (Brookes, 1993:16).

In discussing the difficulties in handling values in environmental education, Elliott (1993) asserts that values education is only likely to become a "significant pedagogical issue in schools when there is a serious attempt at adopting an interdisciplinary approach. A uni-disciplinary approach is an excellent way of reducing the awareness of complexity and of promoting a particular value stance to the exclusion of others" (Elliott, 1993:19). Outdoor education can be used to present a broad range of issues in an interdisciplinary manner (Nicol and Higgins, 1998a/b) and hence such values issues can be raised.

Finally it is worth reflecting on Freire's assertion that "the important thing is to educate the curiosity through which knowledge is constituted as it grows and redefines itself through the very exercise of knowing" (Freire, 1998:31). Whilst this can be done indoors there are great opportunities in the outdoors to encourage curiosity.

## Complexity as a purpose for learning outdoors

In a comprehensive review of the changing scene in environment and education, Smyth (1995:5) considers the central importance of addressing complexity. Although a scientist by profession he bemoans the fact that, in the light of the prestige associated with individual disciplines, educators find inter-disciplinary studies difficult to promote. He cites "territorial and administrative challenges" as two of the main problems. He argues that the common tendency to side-step such issues by "leaving inter-disciplinary integration to the student (unrealistic), or passing responsibility to the informal sector (dismissive), must be resisted if the status of holistic environmental education is to be maintained" (Smyth, 1995:5).

Above I have suggested basis for "complexity" becoming a unifying theme in learning outdoors and a range of ways in which this can be achieved. It is important that the outdoor sector decides if this is an appropriate educational endeavour. To do so requires a willingness to examine a range of questions associated with human recreational and educational relationships with the natural heritage and the origins and contemporary purpose of "outdoor education". I would contest that those who educate in the outdoors should (like any other educator) be able to explain "what they are teaching", "why they are teaching it" and "how they are doing so". Furthermore, they should be able to explain how their training, experience and qualifications (in educational as well as technical areas) make them suitable to do the job. If "complexity" is

to be addressed the training and qualification must reflect this, and this means that they should have a broad understanding of the subject matter and issues which should be reinforced by professional training.

Whilst I have argued that the issue of complexity deserves attention, it is of course little more than an assertion as there has been no research that I am aware of in relation to the suggestion. A range of research in outdoor education does now exist but much of this relates to the measurement of outcomes. Whilst the research is commendable and valuable some philosophical questions demand attention. Who is deciding what questions to ask, are the questions “good” questions? If we only ask certain questions ourselves we will only get outcome related answers, and this is more in accord with a positivist approach than an encounter with complexity!

Tanner (1980) suggests that the purpose of environmental education “must be the creation of an informed citizenry which will actively work towards” the goal of “maintenance of a varied, beautiful, and resource-rich planet for future generations”. Suggestions such as those I have made (though not fully developed) regarding the prospects of engaging with complexity are intended to make a contribution to environmental literacy and social development and thereby towards this goal. Such an approach is demanding and requires sensitivity, but it provides the outdoor educator with a organising principle in the use of outdoors for valid educational purposes, which I believe has urgent and wide relevance.

## Afterword

In the spirit of Patrick Geddes I offer a few “thinking machines” to help in dealing with these concepts in a practical manner. The first is a view of outdoor education which has guided our practice at the University of Edinburgh for many years. The “three circles model” sees the outdoor educator operating within this domain, moving from one emphasis to the other as the student needs dictate and circumstances allow.

The second is a view of the important aspects any educational “transaction”. It is a version of the model suggested by Devlin (1994) which graphically explores the relationships between the learner, the teacher or facilitator and the subject matter or curriculum.

The third is a view of “what education should be about” which has been promoted in one form or another by a number of key educational figures such as Geddes, Comenius, Pestalozzi. To summarise Geddes’ view, education should be more about the three H’s (Hand, Heart and Head .... in that order of priority) than the three R’s (Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic). (See Boardman (1978) for a review of this).

The fourth suggests a way of examining the educational pathways from complexity through to citizenship and critical perspectives. In this model the reader can find up to five C’s and the educational implications of addressing them. Fuller treatment of “Connections” and “Consequences” in outdoor education can be found in Higgins, 1996a,b.

As with all “thinking machines” they can have no value other than in their use for this purpose. Indeed it would be counter to the notion of engaging with complexity to suggest that education could be simplified to a few models!

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