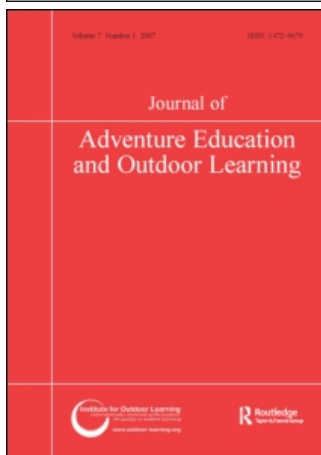


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Outdoor education: Research topic or universal value? Part one

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Outdoor Education: Research Topic or Universal Value? Part One

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Preface

This paper is the first of a three part series. Parts one and two look at aspects of the historical development of outdoor education in the United Kingdom. Part three builds on this historical platform and explores the importance of environmental education and its relationship with outdoor education.

Abstract

This paper sets out to discover if the history of outdoor education, within the UK and more particularly Scotland, provides its modern exponents with a legacy of prescribed conservatism or alternatively a form of education which embraces, or is capable of embracing, diversity of theory and practice. It begins in the post World War II period entitled "out of the ashes" and charts the history decade by decade.

Secondary sources are used and include statutory instruments as well as the body of literature that relates to outdoor education. The paper has succeeded in adding to the literature through uncovering rarely used sources. Secondary sources have been supplemented by primary data in the form of interviews. The interviews were used to provide detail and fill gaps where secondary sources were lacking.

The time between the post-war period until the end of the 1960s charts the growth of outdoor education provision. This growth is characterised by diversity where common themes such as "fitness for war", "character building" "social education" "recuperative holiday for socially disadvantaged young people" and "progressive education" emerge as competing and contrasting claims. Consequently it can be stated that outdoor education defies definition in terms of being a fixed entity of common consent, homogeneous over time and space.

Introduction

We don't need independent research to prove the value of outdoor education; we believe in it.

McDonald (1997: 377)

One of the purposes of this paper is to analyse McDonald's claim. However, this is not the primary task. I have used the statement as an opportunity not simply to analyse the claim itself but as a springboard from which to investigate the socio-historical context in which outdoor education has evolved. The main purpose therefore is to see if the development of outdoor education mirrored the homogeneity implicit in McDonald's use of the universal "we". Consequently I am not setting

out to provide a definitive account of the historical development of outdoor education. As I will show it is very difficult to generalise about which way outdoor education was moving at any particular time in terms of aims, values and philosophies. I did not set out to tell everyone's story. Instead I wanted to discover if the history of outdoor education provides its modern exponents with a legacy of prescribed conservatism or alternatively a form of education which embraces, or is capable of embracing, diversity of theory and practice. My selection of sources was guided by this task. Readers interested in a fuller history of outdoor education will find more specific texts in the reference section (e.g., Cook, 1999).

McDonald presents the reader with a curious dilemma. This statement is not only anti-research but it also adopts a position of self-righteousness. McDonald arrived at his conclusion through a combination of personal experience and reasoned judgement but not empirical enquiry. The fact that he has arrived at this conclusion through the power of reason and personal belief causes me no consternation. What does, however, is the substance of the claim. I ask myself who is the homogeneous "we" that he describes? What is the nature of the people who together constitute the "we" he refers to and why would they feel that their subject had sufficient universal value that it needed no independent debate and enquiry? How comfortable do I feel as an individual outdoor educator within that collective "we" that this statement actually represents my own view? Of the outdoor educators I know and have worked with, how do I think this statement actually represents their individual and collective views of outdoor education? I am intrigued by the use of the word "prove", what is the nature of proof and who are its arbiters? I wonder also if the statement says more about the author than about the profession it is intended to represent but then I don't know, not for sure.

It is important to point out that I am not focusing on this single quote so much as the more widely held view that it represents. Such statements appear to represent a hardened dialogue which could stifle the development and potential of outdoor education. Within such hardened dialogue is there any room for the spirit of inquiry? This leaves two possibilities. If there is validity in such assertions then research would confirm this. Alternatively, perhaps the value of outdoor education may not be self-evident to everyone and therefore research to demonstrate that is pressing.

Outdoor Education – A Working Definition

When it was formed in 1970 the National Association of Outdoor Education (NAOE) stated that outdoor education was "a means of approaching educational objectives" (NAOE, 1970). This has been the definitional template emanating from the NAOE throughout its existence and finds favour amongst contemporary writers (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993; Barrett & Greenaway, 1995; Keighley, 1998). By concentrating on "means" the NAOE were suggesting that method, as opposed to content, was the defining element of outdoor education. The method was generally thought about in terms of integrating school subjects and involving direct experience of the countryside (Parker & Meldrum, 1973).

However, despite the concern with method and process the popular conception of outdoor education, I suggest, is that of content. Outdoor activities such as canoeing, kayaking, sailing, skiing, hill walking and rock climbing are all readily associated with outdoor education. These activities have traditionally been categorised as outdoor pursuits which together with field studies represent the two main traditions in outdoor education (Drasdo, 1973; Cooper, 1991). It has been suggested that both traditions have been concerned with skill acquisition. For example, there was a recreational

component to outdoor pursuits where learning techniques relevant to, for example, rock climbing, was a desired outcome (Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres, 1988). Field studies on the other hand had an air of educational respectability about them since they could be readily linked to the school's curricular subjects such as biology, geography and geology (Cooper, 1991). Cooper (1991) argues that the skill acquisition in this context comes from the scientific techniques of observation, measurement, recording, analysis and hypothesis testing.

This has led to debates as to whether outdoor education is formal or informal (Tiffany, 1995a; 1995b; 1996) and poses the question "in what sense is outdoor education actually education?" In previously unpublished material N. Crowther (personal communication, February 24, 1999) has this to say,

The burdensome fact, that outdoor education has never managed to make the step into statutory recognition, has always presented it with problems of justification that other branches of education have never had to negotiate. One initial difficulty which complicated things was the question about whether it was a subject or an approach to education. There was some logic in the early days for regarding outdoor pursuits as the former, a subject. But what of the present day outdoor education with its amalgam of aims and objectives tied to such diverse items as "the residential experience", "personal and social development" and "conservation studies". If it is a subject, then, we have to ask, did History or Botany ever have to justify their inclusion within education as outdoor education is asked to? Or were they in early enough to gain unquestioning acceptance? How do you define a subject? Is it by a body of knowledge? If so, then outdoor education today is clearly not defined by a body of knowledge. So it must be the latter, an approach to education!

It would appear therefore that definitions surrounding education are tied up with legitimization. Crowther's view is not without precedent. Dewey (1963: 28) made a similar point suggesting, "the traditional school could get along without any consistently developed philosophy of education (with guidance coming from) custom and established routines". Dewey (1963: 29) continues "just because progressive schools (for "progressive schools" try reading "outdoor education") cannot rely upon established traditions and institutional habits, they must either proceed more or less haphazardly or be directed by ideas which, when they are made articulate and coherent, form a philosophy of education".

Outdoor education institutions may well have their own "established traditions" but the point I make is these traditions may not fit into those "established traditions" which are considered to be education in the sense that English, Maths and Science are. N. Crowther (personal communication, February 24, 1999) therefore has neatly summarised the essential elements of a perennial debate within outdoor education. At its heart are three central but linked questions. First, "what is considered to be "genuine" education?" Second, "what are the aims and nature of outdoor education?" Third, "what is the relationship between mainstream education and outdoor education?"

To answer these questions I will show how the assumptions, values, practices and justification of outdoor education developed as a dynamic process of change over time. In so doing my intention is threefold; first, in charting this process I will show why it is that McDonald (1997) arrived at his conclusion; second, I will provide secondary sources which have led others to draw different conclusions; third, I will consider the historical development of outdoor education in ontological and epistemological terms as a basis for analysis.

The Development of Residential Outdoor Education

In reviewing the historical development of outdoor education within the United Kingdom generally, and more specifically Scotland, certain themes emerge. In developing a historical context I have consulted primary sources such as statutory instruments to explore the role of the State. I have also referred to secondary sources tending more towards conceptual texts than those whose authors were concerned purely with descriptive information and its attendant focus on the assemblage of dates and events. The nature of emerging themes does not, in this instance, readily fit into such fixed categorisations of time and place. There appears instead to be a series of overlapping trends linked to the growth, and in some cases demise, of outdoor education which is dependent on sectoral rather than national commitment. The secondary sources therefore were selected and consulted since they dealt with the values (individual, organisational and social) behind the facts, looking not just at what was happening but why it was happening. What follows therefore is a categorisation of emergent themes which are presented as being particular to a certain decade. Whilst acknowledging that there will, in some cases, be overlaps from decade to decade in terms of development and emphasis, the intention is to demonstrate that there are a variety of identifiable sources impinging upon the nature of outdoor education and the way it has come to be understood. Referring to these understandings begins to demonstrate that outdoor education defies definition in terms of being a fixed entity of common consent, homogeneous over time and space. Once this point has been established the assumptions, values, practices and justification of outdoor education may be more readily understood in a contemporary sense.

1940s: Out of the Ashes – A Brave new World

Whilst the statutory development of outdoor education in the United Kingdom arose out of the 1944 Education Act (Cook, 1999) the Scottish enabling instrument was the 1945 Education (Scotland) Act. The Scottish Act (1945, Part 1, Chapter 37, Section 3) provided Scottish local authorities with the statutory powers to “establish, maintain and manage...facilities for recreation and social and physical training”. It is worth noting that the Act makes no explicit reference to outdoor education although the above description may be interpreted as including residential outdoor education centres. It is this lack of explicitness which led N. Crowther (personal communication, February 24, 1999) to conclude that “outdoor education did not have statutory support” which, as history and circumstance will show, proves to be the case.

Both Acts reflect post-war concern with issues of social welfare concomitant with a general broadening of the nature and content of education. Halls (1997b: 12) cites the case of the city of Glasgow which established a series of residential primary schools which were “inspired by ideologies of social welfare”. Pupils were drawn from areas of multiple deprivation and spent up to six weeks at a centre where their social and emotional needs were considered to be as important as their more formal academic needs. Notwithstanding the fact that the educational curriculum remained the same as would be expected in any other primary school, Halls (1997b: 12) continues, “there was an emphasis on good food and a general concern for the physical welfare of the pupils (and) attendance was looked upon as a recuperative holiday”.

Two other points from this study of Glasgow are relevant. The first is the relationship and the roles that existed between resident teachers, visiting teachers and domestic staff. In this instance both sets of teachers worked together in delivering the curriculum whilst the degree of emphasis on

pastoral care meant that “the domestic staff were as important as the teachers and greatly outnumbered them” (Halls, 1997b: 12). This is in keeping with “progressive” ideas about education where the welfare of children was seen as indivisible from their more formal education (Dewey, 1963; Mackenzie, 1970).

The second point arises out of the differing aims of social education. In the case of Glasgow the aim was to “make a contribution to the quality of life of people who were deprived as a result of poverty” (Halls, 1997b: 12). This aim contrasts with what Halls (1997b: 13) refers to as “other ideologies of education” which can be summarised into two discrete categories; the first being, “rehabilitating morally or psychologically dysfunctional people”; and the second, “developing the “characters” of people destined for a leadership role in industry”. Hopkins and Putnam (1993: 49-50) recognise the latter point suggesting “a central concern for much of the post-war period was to find appropriate methods for preparing young people for life in a working environment”.

Implicit within Halls’ (1997a, 1997b) analysis is that, in the case of Glasgow, the aim of outdoor education may be seen to be intrinsic. This is to say that there was a belief that the experience was in itself sufficient justification. There is a concern for the individual in their own right which is apparent in the words “contribution to the quality of life” (Halls, 1997b: 12).

In the “other ideologies” to which Halls refers, there is an overt attempt to engage in transformative experiences whereby the aims are not simply intrinsic. The use of the term “rehabilitation” implies that there are societal and cultural norms into which some pupils do not fit and there is a pedagogic role for outdoor education so that those falling short of the standards are educated into them. Likewise preparing the “characters” of individuals for industry implies that the experiences from outdoor education are manufactured not simply for the benefit of the individual but in line with a particular social agenda.

However, despite the more overt instrumental claims, the notion that something may have some intrinsic worth does not necessarily mean that there is no hidden agenda. There is evidence to suggest that simply participating in “rugged” outdoor activities was believed to be a means of resolving a number of other social issues. Cook (1999: 158) points to how the rationale for outdoor education “swung between “fitness for war” and attempts to reduce the incidence of juvenile delinquency”. Additional to this was the belief that providing students with new situations would assist in breaking down class barriers; that outdoor activities would provide students with socially acceptable leisure activities; and that active participation was a means to improve health. These are examples of the “other ideologies” to which Halls (1997b) refers.

These themes are in evidence in the early stages of the Outward Bound movement characterised by a fourfold achievement involving the attainment of physical skills, technical skills relating to sailing, an expedition, and service to the local community (Hogan, 1968). Hopkins and Putnam (1993: 29) suggest that part of the rationale behind this approach was “to enhance among young merchant seamen the physical and moral requirements for survival at sea after ships went down to enemy submarines”. Thus it can be seen that even though the activities of outdoor education may have intrinsic value it became apparent that the aims of the Outward Bound movement were not simply intrinsic and psychological but instrumental and social (Roberts, White & Parker, 1974).

In research conducted throughout the Outward Bound movement Roberts et al. (1974) found that there was a belief amongst staff that a commitment to community service would engender social harmony; that participation on courses led to the break down of class barriers and help dissolve social antagonisms; all of which, it was believed, would contribute to the common good. Although his research was more sociological than educational this work raises some important questions as to the legitimacy of education and who it is that defines legitimacy. For example, one finding was that “the development of compliance during a course is particularly likely to provoke favourable comment from instructor staff”. There is an essence of social engineering here. Take for instance the concept of hegemony which has been defined as, the continuing achievement by a class or class fraction or alliance, of leadership over the rest of society, in accordance with its perceived interests. It is a power relation in which the balance between the use of force and coercion, on the one hand, and voluntary compliance with the exercise of power on the other, is shifted so that power relations function largely in terms of the latter mode (Hargreaves, 1986: 7).

The belief that a common good exists implies that there also exists an appropriate set of “dominant” values and that the instructor’s role is to purvey those values. There is a clear agenda to create citizens and leaders with these pre-defined qualities and dispositions. These approaches to education found legitimacy in the Norwood report (1943) which suggested that young people might derive “moral strength from adventurous land and water based tasks” (Parker & Meldrum, 1973: 34).

At this point therefore it is possible to identify the social context in which post-war outdoor education developed (for a history of the early twentieth century see Nicol, Higgins & Crowther, 1999; Cook, 1999). The state supported agenda of developing character and leadership may be traced through documents such as the Norwood report (1943) and the historical analysis of Hopkins and Putnam (1993), Halls (1997a, 1997b) and Cook (1999). This agenda filtered through into the aims and objectives of the Outward Bound movement and has been portrayed by Roberts et al. (1974) as an ideology based on social engineering.

1950s: Green Shoots

The commitment to military and civic objectives continued into this decade. Expected learning outcomes included teamwork, obeying orders, loyalty, the ability to inspire others in adverse conditions, all of which Halls (1997b: 14) describes as “the morally acceptable alternative to war”. Halls (1997b) suggests that the expansion of this philosophy created an ethos into which local authority residential outdoor education centres emerged. This ethos was to have a direct influence on how these centres operated and key individuals stand out in this respect. As chief education officer of Derbyshire Jack Longland was responsible for the establishment of Whitehall, the first local authority residential outdoor education centre in the United Kingdom.

Longland had been influenced by the ideas of Kurt Hahn and the Outward Bound movement through the trialling of one of Hahn’s projects, the County Badge Scheme (Cook, 1999). The employment of demobilised military officers and other ranks within local authority centres (J. Cheesmond, personal communication, February 12, 1999; N. Crowther, personal communication, February 24, 1999) reinforced the ethos of outdoor education being something derived from the military which, as J. Cheesmond (personal communication, February 12, 1999) suggests, was understandable given the recent proximity to the war. In this manner key individuals graduated to responsible positions

thereby maintaining this particular ethos. The scene was set for this ethos to expand and infiltrate this embryonic profession as new centres were opened and new employment became available in the voluntary and public sectors.

Local authority developments in England also informed Scottish provision with, in the case of Edinburgh (later Lothian Region), the appointment of senior directors to education departments whose experience and personal contacts were formed as a result of employment in English local authorities (Cheesmond & Yates, 1979). To test this lineage I sought to identify and authenticate an actual example through personal contact with influential individuals. To maintain the narratives of this I will need to project beyond the current decade (1950s).

I made contact with John Cheesmond who suggested I contact Roger Mansfield, a previous principal at Scotland's first local authority centre (Benmore Adventure & Expedition Centre (1969-75)). The resulting communication revealed that John Cook (not to be confused with Cook, 1999) was an assistant education officer in Derbyshire where Jack Longland was chief education officer (R. Mansfield, personal communication, December 1999).

John Cook took up an appointment in North Yorkshire and was influenced by Jim Hogan who had a long involvement in the development of Outward Bound. In 1964 John Cook left North Yorkshire and was appointed Lothian's deputy director of education and in 1966 opened Benmore (Cheesmond & Yates, 1979). R. Mansfield (personal communication, December 1999) takes up the story:

The first principal at Benmore was Ralph Blain whose background experience was entirely Outward Bound. Ralph Blain wanted the students to be physically challenged and stretched in courses that had a very similar format to the Outward Bound 28 day courses. This was reflected in the content of the twelve day programme which was structured towards a final expedition and throughout pupils were pushed into experiences.

Thus the Outward Bound connection can be traced from Jack Longland and Jim Hogan through John Cook to Ralph Blain and the eventual programme delivery at Benmore.

To return to the 1950s, it is now possible to distinguish between two distinct strands of influence on the developing provision of residential outdoor education in Scotland. The first is sectoral (public, voluntary & charitable sectors) whilst the second is geographical (Scotland & England).

This short history provides a framework to understand and contextualise the forming and changing of certain aspects of period social values. Thus it should be remembered that at this point public consciousness was still influenced by compulsory national service reinforcing the view of military use of the countryside. Since military manoeuvres were designed to cultivate those qualities expected of members of the armed forces it is not difficult to see how easy it was for outdoor education to absorb this ethos. Linking this social context to the practice of outdoor education Halls (1997b: 14) suggests that "the idea developed that outdoor pursuits centres had a role in cultivating obedience, discipline and compliance with middle class values amongst unruly youngsters".

Elsewhere in the early 1950s significant developments occurred at Glenmore Lodge, the modern manifestation of which is the Scottish National Outdoor Training Centre near Aviemore. The "character building" aims of outdoor education continued at Glenmore Lodge but there are

indications that ideas relating to outdoor education were both changing and diversifying. For example, the first two principals were both mountaineers with previous physical recreation experience. Selection of instructor staff was dependent not on military service but the possession of certain qualities relating to aesthetic appreciation of the countryside. The purpose of “the Lodge”, at that time, was to use the natural environment “to experiment with forms of education which will assist the individual to discover his or her physical, mental and spiritual potentialities” (Loader, 1952: 14). Residential visits from teacher training colleges, amongst them Moray House in Edinburgh and Jordanhill in Glasgow, led Loader (1952: 33) to conclude that these institutional arrangements were “a great advance in the educational sphere (and that) education is a lifelong process” (Loader, 1952: 17). This is a book that very rarely features in the referenced work of writers on outdoor education and represents something of a “forgotten” text, yet here is the first post-war educational experiment to advance such expansive claims aimed at such a diverse range of user groups.

Glenmore Lodge was providing outdoor courses aiming “to give training to men and women who are interested in outdoor life and who are willing to pass on their knowledge to those who have never experienced the simple pleasure of country life” (Loader, 1952: 26). The underpinning rationale of the early Glenmore Lodge courses was that of a holiday training course, terminology very similar to the recuperative holiday theme of Glasgow’s residential schools.

From these descriptions it is possible to deduce that outdoor activities had a high recreational value. At the same time, however, Glenmore Lodge experimented with programmes designed to develop an interest in the countryside through field studies. Not only was their course content diversifying but so too was the client base to include groups from the civil service, naturalist clubs, holiday courses, secondary school groups as well as groups from teacher training colleges. Courses based on leadership, learning outdoor activities for sporting purposes, field studies and living residentially were all intended to inculcate an appreciation of outdoor life, to learn about the countryside and develop a sense of comradeship. However, commenting on potential learning outcomes Loader (1952: 24) makes the point that it was “difficult to assess the possible permanent results of spending (time) at Glenmore”. She is talking not only of learning an outdoor skill, nor how much the experience has been enjoyed, but more the extent to which that experience has learning opportunities beyond the immediate relevance of the present. This is most apparent in Loader’s (1952: 24) anecdotal and somewhat ambiguous claim that as a result of participation students “acquire a zest for living”. I conclude therefore that the ability to measure or evaluate outcomes, in a systematic manner, proved elusive.

At this point elements of liberal education associated with “progressive” ideals were influencing the nature of outdoor education. The work of Mackenzie is an example of educational experimentation more directly linking curricular education with outdoor education. Mackenzie (1970, 1989) believed that outdoor trips to the countryside represented a powerful educational opportunity to enhance and, to some extent, replace the formal timetable of his school’s curriculum. Having developed a successful programme of visits around Scotland using temporary residential bases Mackenzie decided that a permanent base was needed. Mathematics would be learnt through such means as profit and loss accounting during the renovation of a purpose built residential outdoor centre in the Scottish Highlands. Many aspects of the curriculum were already taught in this manner with the guiding principle being that effective learning depended on the personal involvement and direct experience of pupils. The battles of Montrose and Claverhouse; the angst of the Highland

Clearances, the economic web of rural life came alive in a revised and outdoor form of educational endeavour. Mackenzie (1989: 45) challenged his pupils, "cease to be ruled by dogmas and authorities", a clear distinction from the qualities promoted at Outward Bound which favoured compliant students.

However, in order for these visits to the Scottish Highlands to take place parents had to fund their children's' expenses. Coming from an urban area, identified by Mackenzie (1970) as economically disadvantaged, this placed an intolerable burden on family funding. In the absence of core funding from the local authority the school staff and pupils had to fund-raise and seek private sponsorship. The energy and commitment eventually expired and with it the attempt to establish a permanent residential outdoor education base. It is possible to conclude that the project failed because of lack of funds. However, another explanation can be proposed.

When new ideas such as these are postulated invisible hegemonic processes are likely to become more explicit. For example some parents thought that this was not "real" education as it was so unlike their own. It invited suspicion from the education authority and public at large who felt uncomfortable with new ideas about education. This led Mackenzie (1989: 63) to conclude that, "there is an inconclusive battle between those who try to make permanent the existing pattern of ideas because it is comfortable for them and those who want to change it because it isn't". Despite the apparent failure of Mackenzie's endeavours, the rationale for providing experiences in the outdoors can now be seen shifting from preparation for war and survival at sea to a general belief that being in the outdoors was good for you and could be linked to the school curriculum through both formal and non-formal approaches.

Whereas Mackenzie's view of outdoor education linked learning to the school curriculum (but drawing on alternative contexts & modes of delivery), the view developed in outdoor centres that education was not linked to the curriculum. Reflecting on his own experiences as a centre principal Noble (1995: 20) suggests, "it was so simple, so clean so wholesome back in the 50s and 60s. We didn't talk about outdoor education, at least not as a generic term. We went camping or climbing and occasionally canoeing,...and it was fun, buoyed on by spontaneity, energy, excitement and lack of criticism or justification". J. Cheesmond (personal communication, February 12, 1999) concurs suggesting "everyone (the students) seemed to be having such a good time and coming back for more". Here, therefore, is another indication of change as to the purpose of outdoor education in relation to its military past. Cheesmond further suggests that even if some aspects of the style may have been militaristic, most of the activities were not intrinsically militaristic. These signals of change and differing perceptions may be understood as a transitory relationship whereby use of the natural environment is moving from that of battleground to playground.

Whitehall's one time principal (Lyn Noble) has stated that "at the outset, Whitehall was primarily concerned with outdoor pursuits. The belief in their intrinsic value went virtually unquestioned...personal development was bound to happen!" (in Hopkins & Putnam, 1993: 36). Confirmatory evidence that this belief prevailed comes from J. Cheesmond (personal communication, February 12, 1999) who was employed at Whitehall prior to Noble's arrival. This therefore is a retrospective summary of one of the instrumental qualities early outdoor educators were trying to achieve (personal development). However, there appears to be a latent tension between those who believed that the practice of outdoor education was worthwhile in its own right (such as Noble) and those, who believed that there was some instrumental, still to be defined, value

to which outdoor educators aspired (such as Loader). N. Crowther (personal communication, February 24, 1999) explains,

the original instructors were almost without exception individuals who performed in the pursuits (mostly mountaineering) at high standards. Their immersion in these pursuits derived from either recreation or military backgrounds. In both cases, questioning the validity of outdoor pursuits was never seriously grappled with by either. It was rather like "empire", "monarchy" and "machismo" - self evidently good! If it wasn't, would we not have to re-evaluate our heroes, Shackleton, Mallory, Scott and their ilk? - the imperial legacy!

In summary the 1950s were characterised by an era of expansion in outdoor education (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993) and diversification (Loader, 1952). This expansion within the public, voluntary and charitable sectors had its roots in five distinct areas. First, the military concern with character building through adventure training; second, the growth of the Outward Bound movement with its focus on a form of citizenship where the student would engage in militaristic and civic activities to benefit self, community and society; third, the use of residential schools to address the inequalities of urban life through welfare programmes; fourth, individual school teachers taking pupils out of the classroom to engage in direct experience of the countryside; and fifth, the exploratory approaches to education developed at Glenmore Lodge.

Within this context of differing assumptions therefore, is the beginning of a rift between practitioners of outdoor education. Perhaps this is best understood by extending an earlier metaphor. I suggested that the relationship enjoyed between practitioners and the natural environment had moved from battleground, to playground. McDonald (1997) suggests another dimension to this metaphor whereby, during the course of pursuing personal and social development objectives, the playground is increasingly used in lieu of the psychiatrist's chair.

1960s: The Golden Years

The general expansion of outdoor education within the United Kingdom continued into this decade (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993). Corresponding growth took place particularly within the Scottish public sector seeing Edinburgh invest in two residential centres with Benmore opened in 1966 and building work starting on Lagganlia in 1969 (Cheesmond & Yates, 1979). Investment in infrastructure was supported strategically by developments such as the Brunton report (Scotland), published in 1963, arguing for "more diversity in physical education through more outdoor pursuits and a better understanding of environment" (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993: 47). This report, it is argued, "helped to inspire a substantial expansion of adventure education in Scotland in the following decade" (Hopkins & Putnam, 1993: 47). The Newsom Report (England), published in 1963, promoted the use of extra-curricular activities, new teaching methods and emphasised the provision of "some residential experience for all pupils in the course of their school life" (Newsom, 1963: xvi). The Scottish Education Department's 1965 policy document *Primary Education in Scotland* (also known as *The Primary Memorandum*) came to be "regarded as the epitome of child-centredness...which saw pupils as active in their own learning" (Adams, 1999: 349-350).

With these developments came a concern about content and nomenclature. Much of the content involved adventurous sports such as mountain walking, camping and rockclimbing and these activities came to be known as “outdoor activities” as well as “outdoor pursuits”. As the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (1988: 12) observes “the chief concern was to introduce the skills or knowledge that would eventually lead to participants being self sufficient in leisure activities”. Referring to outdoor pursuits Parker (1970: 3) argues that “it is quite unnecessary to either know or justify one’s reasons for participating in anything”. Once again this reinforces the view amongst some writers that activities at this time were considered worthwhile for their own sake, or as a means of developing a leisure interest (Noble, 1995; McDonald, 1997).

Whilst Parker (1970: 5) acknowledges that in the process of engaging in activities “there may be as many occasions when selfishness and other less socially acceptable traits become apparent”, he does not see the educators central role as dealing with those issues. This is quite distinct from a growing tendency of seeing the development of other qualities arising out of participating in the activities as more important than activities themselves. There was recognition that the activities in themselves had insufficient educational justification and that the focus should be the nurturing of personal and social qualities through outdoor activities. Hopkins and Putnam (1993: 49) suggest that “adventure experiences, particularly in the residential context, were...recognised in the 1960s and 1970s as a potent instrument for developing self-esteem and enhancing social responsibility for alienated and underachieving young people”.

Some measure of statutory support can be found in the Education (Scotland) Act 1969 which empowered education authorities to provide “adequate facilities for social, cultural and recreative activities and for physical education and training”. However, it should be remembered that this Act does not specifically mention outdoor education nor does it provide for the building of new residential centres.

It is within this context of competing claims and counter claims and tenuous statutory support that Cheesmond and Yates (1979: 5) summarise that the rationale of outdoor centres at this time was to “integrate the skills for leisure approach...with modified aspects of personal and social development ...and a measure of environmental understanding...Depending on various factors, one or other of these might receive more emphasis in some centres than in others”.

Environmental understanding was promoted in the policy document Primary Education in Scotland. Whilst not specifically aimed at the outdoor environment there is a recognition that the school plays only a part of the child’s education. The document states,

ideally...experience should be first-hand...teachers...should be prepared, in the quest for “real life” experiences for their pupils, to break out of the confines of the classroom and to exploit other areas within the school and its grounds or beyond the bounds of the school altogether.
(SED, 1965: 13-14).

Once again there are observable, discrete and differentiated claims being made as to the purpose of outdoor education. At this point these can be separated into four strands:

1. Recreation: where activities are pursued for the intrinsic enjoyment of pupils
2. Leisure education: to stimulate interest in the activity as a sport
3. Personal and social development: using the activities and residential experience as vehicles to develop personal and social qualities
4. An understanding of the environment.

In summary the post-war period up until the end of the 1960s represented a growth period for the provision of outdoor education. Post-war society provided a rich seedbed for sowing new ideas about education. However, this growth was not to continue. In part two I will look at some of the challenges that faced this emergent profession. It had to cope with defining itself, providing philosophical underpinnings including aims and appropriate qualifications. These developments took place in relation to changes in the way society perceived adventurous activities together with an increasing need to provide “value for money”. One further task will be to discover the extent to which environmental education featured in the development of this emerging profession.

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