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The romance of risk: adventure's incorporation in risk society

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ABSTRACT

Adventure has outgrown its use as a metaphor and motive for educational journeys into the cultural outdoors. Self-reliance cannot counter the mechanisation of everyday life. 'Adventure' is produced and serviced by the very people who felt its worth to their own individualisation and now advance its professionalisation for their own continued participation. Yet adventure workers are limited to enforcing societal risk-mitigation systems, rather than acknowledging that risk is a damaging principle for pedagogy. They must refuse to take responsibility for the lives of others as dictated by institutional rationalisation of the odds of unequal consequences. Educators have been a part of both freeing and fetishising 'adventure', but must now distance themselves from the activities that give 'adventure' a social status. The more important work for educators is to build a pedagogy of ecologies: of friction, energies, movement, connections and transitions to new relationships with the changing cultural outdoors.

KEYWORDS

Adventure; culture; risk society; Beck; Bourdieu

Introduction

This article takes as its starting point the residual Romantic-era meanings of adventure for historically situated discourses of journeys that would 'interrupt' ordinary social life. The next section discusses how the resulting individualisation of the social self has taken place through four cultural sites, thematically derived through a review of literature on adventure practice: learning, leisure, luck on the day and the newly lucrative outdoor lifestyle. Each of these aspects of practice contributes to creating western cultural subjects with no need to question 'adventure' as their universal resource. The subsequent section explores the emphasis in the present phase of late modernity on responsibility for and rationalisation of risk by those working in and leading groups in the adventure field. In the penultimate section, the relations, investments and profits associated with adventure in Beck's (1992b) 'risk society' are considered. Risk society, it is argued, incorporates adventure in order to hide risks to itself. The conclusion suggests that learning experiences must be ecologically-moving experiences that transition to cultural learning outdoors in the post-risk 'ecological era' (Armstrong, 2015).

Adventure has outgrown its use as a metaphor and motive for journeys into the cultural outdoors. Education through 'adventure' has successfully produced the self-reflexive, neoliberal, individualised adventurer who represents everything that educators who founded wilderness expedition schools in the Anglo-European imperialist countries stood against. Aiming to train the body and discipline citizenship through 'adventure' habits to adopt collective, values-driven actions in insecure times, their focus was not on the individual, but on one's 'fellow man', and not on peak experiences, but on service to others (Miner & Boldt, 1981; Mortlock, 1984). Adventure was the source of a timeless quest for a universalist challenge, the response to which was morally

undeniable. Adventure was meant to break down difference and embed fundamental respect for ontological equality, human capability in adversity and moral behaviour for social good. Instead, a sensibility to 'adventure' has been turned into a cultural practice which generates the conditions for adventurers to emerge as risk-taking subjects, willing to collude in the calculation of consequences and a context in which risk-taking is consumed for status. There appears to be little option for impressing the importance of resisting—and collectively rejecting—a risk-taking mentality.

The relatively recent educational ideas on which adventure education is built appeared in an era quite like the contemporary one. This history is viewed as a time in which courage was required to speak out in opposition to a disturbing political regime in a time of turmoil and fear. It seems that this is also a time requiring oppositional stances to socio-economic regimes re-enforcing appropriation, displacement, individualisation and injustice. For example, the western nations in the Global North are undergoing a massive movement of people to Europe (Dumont, 2015), said to be the largest migration since World War II, the time when German educator Kurt Hahn relocated to Britain along with other displaced Europeans. These new displacements require just as much understanding. In addition, widespread evidence shows young people's aspirations to be part of movements for change, originating in the twenty-first-century online environment from *avaaz* campaigns to ISIS recruitment (e.g., Noor, 2015). The purposes of moving, connecting and travelling are now contested and must change; these are no longer private choices. There are also increasingly perceptible distortions in the commodification of travelling culture, even in the way that the outdoors is 'enjoyed', such as through express adventures (e.g., *Alpenglow Expeditions*, n.d.) and fly-in, fly-out same-day ascents (Leven, 2015). The distortion of private choices for adventure requires new educational ideas.

'Adventure' has a history (Abramson & Fletcher, 2007; Humberstone, 2000; Lynch, Moore, & Minchington, 2012) and is not free of social influences, forces and structures which shape its nature, or essential resource-value, and accessibility; that is, its practical use-value. Many of these social influences stem from the surge in air travel since the turmoil and fear of the war years for migration, tourism and labour mobility. In addition, adventure has a contemporary politics belonging to an era from which societies are transitioning. In transitional economies and contexts, new metaphors, meanings and movements of people are emergent (Beck, 1992b, 1994; Urry, 2000). Teachers and leaders who act in and on the outdoors as a place for adventuring with young people must question the self-oriented reflexivity of adventure learning which has been heavily romanticised so as not disturb the growth of industrialised, and now post-industrial and commodity-based, societies and their social order. The romance of adventure is no longer useful in what should instead be the pedagogy of ecologies: of friction, energies, movement, connections and transitions to new relationships with the changing cultural outdoors.

Adventure and the self-reliant self

Learning

Philosophical concepts of 'adventure' dominate the western roots of practices of outdoor education through adventure activities. Adventure is described as an 'instinct', 'drive', 'experience' and 'journey' that could 'meet the needs and abilities of young people' (Mortlock, 1984, p. 13). Enthusiastic climber and outdoor education resident teacher, Colin Mortlock (1984) argued that adventure would provide an invaluable alternative approach to the 'holidays' which were the prevalent form of outdoors experience for English school students in the 1960s. He had difficulty persuading the Education Inspectorate of the need for young people 'to adventure' as an integral part of embodied learning; however, 'by combining outdoor activities with environmental and field studies, educational and academic respectability were achieved' (Mortlock, 1984, p. 13). The field studies in the programme were dropped ostensibly due to lack of excitement within a few years. However, it was also noticed that student peer groups positioned themselves in relation to the

prestige of “high” adventure’ and students choosing the environmental options were at an acute disadvantage (‘could not compare’) to their peers while at the outdoor centre (Mortlock, 1984, p. 47). In effect, this anecdote reveals the adventure ‘field’. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1984/2010) theorised that a field of power relations coalesces around any struggle over cultural resources creating a competitive ‘field of production’ (p. 12). In this case, the adventure field is producing adventurers through ‘restructuring the space’ (Bourdieu, 1978, p. 833) of adventure practices at this outdoor centre.

Mortlock’s once-influential text on the virtues of the adventure approach to learning explains that effort, skill and control of a situation, even when accompanied by fear and physical discomfort, produce important psychological accomplishments along the developmental ‘journey’ to self-reliance. This philosophy of adventure tended to revere the ‘simple balance’ of life’s basic needs with Nature’s unquestioned, unmediated resource as an antidote to more antisocial adventures and ‘the deep state of anxiety caused by the modern lifestyle’ (Mortlock, 1984, p. 75). It stopped short of excavating socio-cultural and bio-political patterns of the ‘instinct’ for adventure. It neglected the commodification of the romance of adventure (Varley, 2006). It neglected the social embodiment of class, gender, ethnicity, ability, sexual and colonising values orientations in education which privilege adventure’s distancing of and objectification of ‘the self’.

Mortlock’s (1984, p. 73) ‘self-reliant self’ is the ‘man’ who has learned to be ‘independent in thought and action’, to put in hard work separately to others and to travel alone rather than follow others. This adventurous person learns to discipline cognitive and emotional intrusion, because ‘only the performer can control his fear ... only he can rationalise the situation and push the fear back down’ (Mortlock, 1984, p. 71). This view of the mature, self-disciplined and self-reliant self is a political ideal of an adventurer identity, relying on the process of objectifying ‘the self’ through awareness of effort, and importantly when effort is expended in a party of others. Although Mortlock (1984, p. 75) mentions global inequalities and new technologies, he is vague about how encountering difficult challenges in the ‘natural’ world leads to the ability to tackle challenges in the social world. His inadequate conclusion is that a more honest self-appraisal results after close contact with elemental forces of life and death. Varley (2006, p. 181) suggests that such self-appraising and self-managing adventurers reveal the very modern identity of seeking and controlling the uncertainty of ‘thought and action’ because they act in spaces where adventure is already culturally ‘allowed’. Lynch et al. (2012) suggest that in fact an adventure agenda promotes the ability to carry on the expected and embodied practices of social life, despite historical evidence of exploitation and unequal consequences of actions.

Leisure

Leisure concepts of ‘adventure’ elsewhere describe a quality of play: adult play gradually becomes a ‘metaphorical system’ full of the life-long meanings that accrue to a recognisable commitment of time and investment resulting in a lifestyle identity (Kjølørød, 2003). For a life to have time for adventurous play, there must be times of leaving work routines and ‘dropping out of the continuity of life’ (Simmel, 1911/1997, p. 222). Ideas of pleasurable escape and playful adventures first promoted touring, travel and eventually the industry of tourism.

The incorporation of ‘adventure’ into modern lives from education to leisure is a way of reliving the eighteenth-century Romantic era of English culture-making, when ideals of purpose became attached to travelling to, walking in, viewing, feeling and experiencing ‘real’ life in Nature’s culturally savage world (Thompson, 2007a). Residual Romantic ideas infuse adventure education practice. These are tenacious and reactionary incorporations which undermined the potential of the ‘adventure alternative’ to lead to the transformative awareness Mortlock envisioned.¹

The English Romantic writers and poets who followed English elites travelling abroad in their Grand Tour of the continent a generation or so later differed from the men who preceded them in

the relationships they cultivated with mountains, rivers and coastlines. They appeared attracted by remote places, in contrast to the earlier travellers who avoided the frightening elements of wilderness and headed south to the Mediterranean (Freedgood, 2000). In making their way to the high peaks and crags, they praised the expanse of air and space, more qualified to write about the feeling of having been there. Only those who had stood 'upon the brink of precipices' could write poetry in awe of the 'sublime' (Thompson, 2007a, p. 7; see also Bell & Lyall, 2002). Through visual views of distant horizons, they achieved social distance from those who had neither been there nor consumed the literature of high culture.

There were more problematic aspects of such imaginative renderings of adventurous journeys. They had even more social value if there were 'danger and hardships', such that travellers were encouraged to seek out 'suffering' and 'adversity' (Thompson, 2007a, p. 2). Suffering appears to be not a motivation to travel *per se*, but rather to have been exploited to differentiate access to the most exclusive experiences. Those who sought out experiences of getting lost, hurt or frightened distanced themselves from those who sought mere playful adventures. Besides distinctions of affluence within societies (Simmel, 1911/1997), they also acted between societies: English travellers positioned themselves as 'real' travellers in writings which positioned Americans as more likely to be superficial 'tourists'. There were colonising intentions as well. When the Romantic travellers proceeded undaunted by difficult and dangerous intentions, they hoped to 'astonish the natives' (Thompson, 2007a, p. 7), somehow signalling that theirs was the racially superior culture. Finally, gendered identities were being formed: Romanticism was 'very much a masculine agenda, a set of creative, interpretive and representational strategies taken up for the most part by male writers and readers' (Thompson, 2007a, p. 7; see also Rojek & Urry, 1997).

While the suffering traveller was meant to be virtuous, the Romantic ethos distanced those with such bravery from the rest as they cultivated a kind of self that stood out (Simmel, 1911/1997). Thompson's (2007a) extensive study of various Romantic-era travel scripts shows deliberate attempts to form a desired self who had gone beyond society to find harrowing, 'dreadful' and even 'miserable' travel conditions for the sake of science and state. Nineteenth-century scientific explorers achieved greater authenticity than aspiring and proper travellers, who were nevertheless more authentic than paying tourists at the most remote distance from cultural gain (Thompson, 2007a, p. 148). The search for authenticity was a self-referencing, 'performative' cultural strategy (Thompson, 2007a, p. 8), generating the conditions for its own emergence.

Luck

'Adventure' is depicted in both pedagogical and leisure concepts as existentially exhausting one's effort and energies, strangely in the language of 'luck' by Mortlock (1984, pp. 19 and 36) and also by early modern German sociologist Georg Simmel (1911/1997). The typical adventurer—not necessarily an outdoors person, but ascribed with Anglo-European, male privilege—could be represented as depending 'on his own strength, but above all on his own luck' (Simmel, 1911/1997, p. 227). Self-reliance was really a matter of luck, while risk-taking was gambling with 'fate' (Simmel, 1911/1997, p. 226). If risk was always contingent, then how could it be measured or mastered?

Risk-taking, curiously, once defined adventure's purpose in education (Brown & Fraser, 2009):

To venture forth into the unknown, to undertake an activity that has an uncertain outcome for the adventurer and may be risky and dangerous ... The learning about the self and the world that come from engagement in such activities are the primary goals. (Miles & Priest, 1990, p. 1)

'The adventure experience' became a pithy calculation for life in which risk-taking would enhance self-efficacy; that is, belief in one's autonomous capabilities for controlling one's own luck by 'managing' risk in structured and supported skill development. Adventurers gain from exposure to situational risk to the extent that they are able to analyse any situation and meet predictable risk

with a matched competence in skill. Adventure educators, furthermore, would take responsibility for the risk-taking actions of others in order to facilitate a controlled range of developmental experiences from 'exploration' and 'adventure' to 'misadventure' and 'disaster' (Miles & Priest, 1990, pp. 157–162). Risk-taking by some, in this social process, is necessary to require risk prediction and mitigation to be provided by others. Yet, in practice, educators are aware of the exercise of luck: 'there is a lot of luck that they [students] don't end up being in a crisis', said one of Zink and Leberman's (2001, p. 55) informants (see later).

Simmel's sociological view of 'the adventure' was highly critical of possible learning through Romantic risk-taking and self-reliance. He argued that such a pedagogical practice merely generated 'affluence' for educated individuals and could not but reinforce class privilege (Simmel, 1911/1997, p. 219). The climactic intensity, which he attempted to express as the force of adventure, was, he conceded, so temporary that it was almost as if it could not uplift the alpine adventurer at all. Therefore, even for those able to reach its isolated destinations, 'the educative value of alpine travel is very small' (Simmel, 1911/1997, p. 220) and, furthermore, risk-taking when life (one's own and one's guide's) is at stake was, he felt, 'unethical' (p. 221). The Romantic ethos was by then superseded by modernisation processes.

Kane (2013, p. 148) also argues that 'adventure' is inadequate as a concept for education.

Simmel viewed adventure as a personally meaningful process that suddenly, accidentally and momentarily also affected 'life as a whole', which is what made it so powerful. It was not an experience of self and materiality in the 'continuity of life' (Simmel, 1911/1997, p. 222), but rather a revelation of differentiation within overall experience (Kane, 2013; Kjølørød, 2003). Because Simmel did not see a wilderness experience as any more of an adventure than erotic passion, in his own analogy, then adventure in his view could clearly not be exclusive to a privileged few. Kane's (2013) in-depth examination of objective/mediated and subjective/personal representations of adventure (the latter by both those who do it and those who sell it to tourists) identifies appropriations of adventure that differentiate exclusive (those who do it) and non-exclusive (those who sell it) purposes and profit.

Adventure is thus better understood today as a 'safe, non-exclusive, normalised' way of finding accessible leisure culture, according to Kane (2013, p. 148), in which life is seized even for just 'a few seconds'. Simmel noted that the Swiss Alps drew people to them and mass travel by train enabled adventure to become a leisure experience for far more people; Kane observes that adventure culture itself now draws people around the globe in mass leisure travel. Far more accessible as a result of both the rise in tourism and the rise in public education, adventure is a 'transformed' phenomenon in the twenty-first century (Kane, 2013), offering shorter, faster, controlled bursts of excitement with little educative or emancipatory value. 'Adventure' is no longer useful to the project of cultural education outdoors in the new millennium.

The late German sociologist Ulrich Beck (1992b) dismissed the relevance of historical contexts of self-reliant 'explorers' accepting adventurous risks. 'In that earlier period, the word "risk" had a note of bravery and adventure, not the threat of self-destruction of all life on Earth' (Beck, 1992b, p. 21). However, it is significant that the fifteenth-century empire-builders set the conditions for risks to be undertaken societally and remunerated individually, while not attributed to territorial expansion for economic appropriation. The romance of 'bravery and adventure' is not innocent of its role in pre-modern, colonial discourses and practices that 'by their nature ... endanger all forms of life on this planet' (Beck, 1992b, p. 22). One of these practices is the re-individualisation of the adventurer by neoliberal economics.

Lucre

Not surprisingly, 'adventure' is also inscribed as a lifestyle product, 'brand' and 'marketing strategy' in an 'outdoor industry', media industry and tourism industry (Humberstone, 2000, p. 21; Kane,

2013; Kay & Laberge, 2002, p. 25; Varley, 2006). Once adventure is commodified for production in the consumption economy, then its value as a subjective and objective knowledge source on the lived and cultural outdoors world is in question. It is likely that this has been the case since the very time Mortlock wrote his philosophy of the 'adventure alternative'.

If 'adventure' ever was alternative to mainstream education—that is, 'counter-ideological' (Humberstone, 2000) or 'counter-cultural' (Abramson & Fletcher, 2007), in 1960s and 1970s Britain, for example—it was soon commercialised as a style. It was made lucrative by the very demographic group that moved into the distinct spaces (and exercised the relational values) of alternative lifestyles, in 1980s and 1990s North America, and the Anglo-European diaspora, for example. For this reason, the export of service-learning expeditions as war-time pedagogy, of which Outward Bound and other Hahnian educational institutions were a part, was the first step in the inevitable 'institutionalisation' (Fletcher, 2014, p. 27) of adventure. 'Adventure' is produced, packaged, exported, sold and serviced by the very people who felt its worth to their own development and advanced the professionalisation of their own continued participation as educators, leaders, guides, programme managers and brand owners.

While branding is usually associated with marketing media, adventure branding began in the organisation of technologies of material culture. Branding became a distinct process in the British and European mountaineering communities, for example, as soon as British, French and German mountaineers started to design, test and improve equipment for their own expeditions and to create their own manufacturing companies (see Rose & Parsons, 2013). Invisible on the expedition (Parsons & Rose, 2003), equipment such as Karrimor rucksacks, Salomon skis and Gore-Tex jackets gained value when associated with high-profile 'adventure-makers', to use Kane's (2013) take on Bourdieu's 'taste-makers'. Other technologies such as air jet engines, rubber rescue rafts and rubber-fibre cord gained value as symbolic brands of the activities which they facilitated—jet-boating, river rafting and bungee-jumping—despite further differentiation within a competitive field of tourism supply (Brown, 1997).

When equipment makers became event organisers, they marketed an expanded package of products and services to their target market. In Britain, for example, Karrimor began sponsoring the International Mountain Marathon (<https://www.theomm.com/>) in 1970, for which fell runners carried all necessary overnight gear on their backs. Karrimor products then serviced events, creating a marketplace of events, with a different temporal and spatial relation to a marketplace of expedition equipment. In New Zealand, for example, a small kayak supplier sponsored the Alpine Ironman in 1981 in order to encourage the rental of its kayak fleet (Judkins, 1999). The Gore-Tex and Fairydawn firms sponsored the 1995 Southern Traverse (<http://southerntraverse.com>). Events today create and service adventure consumption.

The subsequent rise of adventure 'sports', such as sport climbing (Donnelly, 2003; Lewis, 2000), multisport (Barber, 2006; Greenaway, 1997; Greenaway & Woodley, 1995; Thompson, 2007b) and endurance/extreme sports (Bane, 1997; McConnell & Horsley, 2007; Tamati, 2012; Tomlinson, 1996), was not an evolution but enterprise at work. Faster adventure activities were produced to supply a competitive, temporally-organised demand in adventure tourism, such as heli-kayaking, heli-skiing, jet-boating, whitewater rafting and bungee-jumping (Brown, 1997; Hackett & Aldworth, 2006; Kane & Tucker, 2004). The tourism industry enfolds adventure pursuits into its place packaging and ownership (Buckley, 2006; Cloke & Perkins, 1998; Swarbrooke, Beard, Leckie, & Pomfret, 2003).

Adventure consumption is arguably not the same as adventure education, despite the circulation of recognisable instructional equipment, practices, techniques, temporalities and philosophies among the increasingly transnational community. Largely to do with increased population cohorts accessing higher education following World War II, the most significant impact on the rise of 'adventure' in outdoor education is not adventure demand *per se*, but the launch of adventure services by technical experts using their own relational practices and cultural habitus to supply this socio-cultural field (Bourdieu, 1978, 1984/2010). Leadership for paying clients in contrast to

secondary or tertiary students may be similar except for the temporality; but the former is commercial and the latter pedagogical, and their values should not be even remotely equivalent.

Adventure and the self-rationalisation of services

This section turns to how adventure has been ‘transformed’ from ‘instinct’ to ‘industry’ to enable popular participation in a paying adventure economy (Kane, 2013). First, such an economy must have adventure workers as a labour force and, second, such an economy must have bearers of symbolic power in positions of protection and leadership.

Clearly, adventure has been commodified by the global expansion of corporate interests behind tourism ventures (Varley, 2006), which on the surface would seem to have little to do with education. Research is revealing the possibility that the reverse is also true: that tourism investment manufactured ‘adventure’ into properties belonging to national (public) and economic (private) imperatives just as the industrialisation of travel was reaching its height in the world’s peripheral (non-European and non-American) territories (Wolmar, 2009; Young, 2013). With the ‘reflexive’—that is, self-producing and self-consuming—capacity of late modern ‘risk society’ (Beck, 1992b, 1994, p. 32), those national properties themselves have now subsidised initiatives that encourage visitors to participate in ‘adventure’ with little instinct, skill or learning needed in order to create the very symbols, routes and landscapes of adventure as returns on state investment. In this regard, tourism, travel and education share a rationalisation of (i.e. state administration of) participation.

Labour

Governments invest in ‘adventure’ assets by providing facilities, events and localities, access to the public land estate, promotion, branding and public relations, insurance and medical expertise. Also, perhaps more importantly, they invest in occupational specialisations with industry standards, professionalised training and certification pathways. Adventure work in the (domestic as well as international) tourism industry has been supported by public policy for recreation and leisure participation, as much as public spending in infrastructure for and promotion of an attractive economy (Luke, 2002). Adventure work is thus situated within the post-war ‘service work’ occupations, within two of three new categorisations of service occupations which are the ‘in-person services’ and ‘symbolic-analytic services’ (Reich, 1992, p. 177). Adventure is the ‘symbolic’ component at the centre of the provision of leadership and responsibility, leveraging the myths and heroes of various ‘explorer/discovery’ periods of economic imperialism (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001; Kane, 2013, p. 145; Lynch et al., 2012). The ‘analytical’ expertise is developed as a result of rationalised ‘experience’; project planning, programme provision, problem identification and solving, and risk management are all newly professionalised roles adopted by adventurers that underwrite the activities of ‘adventure’.

‘Symbolic analysts solve, analyse and broker problems by manipulating symbols’ (Reich, 1992, p. 178). They are university educated, often with postgraduate training, although not always members of professions, because they must be more nimble than those called to qualify in front of gatekeeping peers with a vested interest in limiting membership. Coordinators, planners, managers, directors, policy-makers, consultants, researchers and educators (Reich, 1992, p. 183) are included in the new occupational specialisation scaffolding the provision of ‘in-person services’ (Reich, 1992, p. 176) in an adventure services economy. Symbolic-analytic jobs are not a part of mass production yet are nonetheless fluid and globally tradable. Their commerce is in high-value, short-term, flexible symbolic representations, in this case of ‘adventure’, in globally circulating media—and also in increasingly connected, mediated and mobile classrooms, communities and public citizenship campaigns.

The putative problem of risk and luck is thus at the core of an adventure industry, not to meet the needs and abilities of young people’s learning, but instead to create needs and abilities in young people which then legitimise the services of adventure educators and other adventure workers. In

American political economist Robert Reich's (1992, p. 191) words, 'the supply of symbolic-analytic services generates its own demand'. The production of adventure culture has generated the need for adventure work in a process that began to blur the boundaries of education practices with those of cultural practices, such as sport, recreation, leisure and tourism, as early as the emergence of the post-war economies. While European outdoor culture practices spread in the pre-war years, material technologies and leisure practices spread in the World War II years with soldiers posted around the world acting in effect as 'eco-tourists' (Brown, 1997; Cloke & Perkins, 1998; Fletcher, 2014).²

The idea that the pursuit of adventure could be historical, social and cultural is not explored by Mortlock (1984). Kane (2013) draws upon rites of passage quests in western mythologies documented by Joseph Campbell and recalls 'the romanticised heroic journey myths of mountaineering adventurers' (Kane 2012, p. 370). However, a materialist version of the Romantic era protagonist, Robinson Crusoe, shipwrecked on an island and thrown on his own resources to survive, revisited this story of the reconstruction of 'society' in paradise by injecting an understanding of labour and the mechanisation of industry into the tale (Young, 2013). Two Victorian novelists, one on each side of the north Atlantic, replaced the 'pioneer' with an 'engineer' who worked with industrial technologies to speed the pace of his enterprising economy (Young, 2013). It is not difficult to consider Mortlock's (1984) call to a simpler way of life, hard work, self-reliance and perseverance in difficult and uncomfortable situations as yet another revision, by a philosophical educator in this case, away from the industrial engineering which produced the hunger, poverty and pollution he disparaged towards a more 'modern' socialist quest (Beilharz, 1994).

The production of the heroic self-responsible individual of late modern times is part of the historical continuity of adventure ideologies across histories of imperialism and enforced inequalities (Fletcher, 2008; Humberstone, 2000; Kane, 2012; Lynch et al., 2012). The power of ideology is its production of a division of labour, requiring waged workers as teachers, leaders and guides, and professional specialists as governance authorities (and owners of capital returns). In turn, both of these sets of actors associate around certain cultural practices and distinguishing values which come to define objects of struggle and meaning as they create their 'field of competition' (Bourdieu, 1978, p. 821). The object at the centre of the shift from 'instinct' to 'industry' is the appropriation of risk practices for profit.

Leadership

The prior focus on risk-taking in the social organisation of differentiation in sport and leisure practices (e.g., Fletcher, 2008, 2014; Laviolette, 2007, 2011; Lyng, 2005, 2008) reveals much about struggles to dislodge embodied practices from structured habits and social subjectivity without jeopardising the wider social order. An important question for adventure education practices is how group leaders who provide adventure services believe that their work rightfully involves taking responsibility for risk faced by others, which is professionally rationalised as risk management (Zink & Leberman, 2001), in their role of outdoor leader.

In the tourism industry, Cater (2006, p. 318) argues that 'what is significant is that tourist participation involves the handing over of a significant part of the responsibility for that risk management to the adventure provider in question'. In the subculture of risk sports tourism, Fletcher (2008) concludes that it is the embodied class training of an upper-middle-class³ habitus, in a system of various social class habitus or dispositions (Bourdieu, 1978, p. 834), which allows particular risk sports practitioners initial access to the relations of that field after which they position themselves close to others with the same socio-economic and dispositional training. They are then professionally positioned to adopt responsibility for risk to others without jeopardising the wider social order. Yet why would an ability to practise a skilful physical activity, such as whitewater kayaking and river rafting, for example, legitimise an ability to guide others when 'adventure' involves the 'unethical', in Simmel's word, consequences of unequal distribution of risk?

In adventure education research, Zink and Leberman (2001) found that trained, employed outdoor instructors were aware of the contradiction which grounds the 'discourse of risk' (p. 51) in a cultural script. Subjective risk, also institutionalised as irrational, incalculable and merely perceived as risk for unskilled students, as much as 'tourists', is always invited into the adventure relation to be associated with a lack of bodily mastery; whereas objectified risk, also institutionalised as rational, calculable and manageable risk practice, such as that presented by adventure leaders, is associated with distance, authority and competence. The study of 12 leaders' reflections on their approach to adventure and risk allowed an exploration of accounts of professionalised risk-taking leading to more experience and a social distancing from the 'luck' of risk consequences, and hence the higher status role of guiding others through risky experiences.

In the constant tension between subjective and objective classifications of risk (felt on the river versus listed on paper; decisions made themselves as leaders versus decisions made by Standard Operating Procedures based on the most common conditions) expressed by Zink and Leberman's (2001) participants, however, the perspectives of these adventure leaders showed that it was their bodily ability to 'know' risks in context that was at stake. In order to prove that they knew the value of risk, they had to make risk into property and emphasise risk appropriation for their own knowledge of risk management while also emphasising the demand of their students to consume managed risk. It appeared that these adventure education leaders were better able to leverage risk for their own ongoing services work by expressing resistance to the institutionalised contradiction and retaining a very small distribution amongst themselves of risk mastery. Such a strategy is better understood in light of Bourdieu's argument that:

everything suggests that the 'interests' and values which practitioners [such as students] ... bring into the conduct of sports are in harmony with the corresponding requirements of *professionalisation* ... and rationalisation of preparation for and performance of the sporting exercise that are imposed by the pursuit of maximum specific efficiency ... combined with the minimisation of risks (1978, p. 833; original emphasis)

These adventure leaders had to create efficient, rational and normalised risk exposure (Bourdieu, 1978, pp. 835 and 839, 1984/2010) while claiming the knowledge of their own risk-taking habitus as a way of resolving this discursive tension.

Adventure's self-reflexivity

Adventure education in the twenty-first century takes place in a context in which adventure is co-opted by sport, with its complex layers of class practices, conflicting interests, elite values and embodied investments, especially in competitive performances. It is therefore also harnessed to the economic rationalisation of risk in a constant struggle between systems of mitigation and embodied practice.

Educators must confront what this means for facilitating adventurous learning experiences that pose risks for others. The distinction of the 'uncertain outcome' (Miles & Priest, 1990, p. 1) is now overtaken by myriad other cultural activities which also represent and fetishise uncertainty; behaviours and expectations across social life are 'increasingly open to questioning, subject to uncertainty and change, rendering habits unwieldy before they can even become established' (Adams, 2006, p. 520). In reality, instructors such as those responding to Zink and Leberman (2001) know that a risky activity has an unequal outcome. Consensual outcomes are then reconstructed through reflexivity. Kane (2013, p. 134) argues that precisely this 'collective self-deception', using Bourdieu's term, is at the heart of the profitability of 'adventure'. Adventure educators are implicated in maintaining a powerful, societal contradiction that ultimately does not belong in education.

The acceptance of responsibility by trained adventure educators for the risk-taking experiences engaged in by others, but not for their unequal consequences, is one of adventure education's 'latent side effects' (Beck, 1992b, p. 19); that is, the social risks this field of relations poses through

systems of education to society itself. There are two complicating factors that help explain the rationalisation of unacknowledged unequal risk effects: the embodiment of structural relations and self-reflexive production of risk principles in risk society (Beck, 1992a, 1992b; Beck, Bonss, & Lau, 2003, 1994).

Social class training—that is, the adventure habitus (Kane, 2013)—is not conscious—possibly until it is no longer useful in social circumstances—because it mediates between social practices and social structures (Bourdieu, 1978, 1984/2010). It generates associations and investments, and its value is organised through its recognition by others. Therefore self-reliance as a trait of a class habitus is not a consciously learned protection against structures of risk determination, but a perpetuation of risk embodiment. It is the embodiment of structural relations—that is, accepted traditions (Adams, 2006)—of risk.

Fletcher (2008), for example, concluded that the whitewater specialists in his ethnographic research were actually practising an ownership of risk which they were ‘trained’ for, but which they could not articulate. The social stamina in adventure practitioners for the types of demanding, isolated, often uncomfortable and austere experiences, even while leading clients in elective leisure, was generated by their unconscious upper-middle-class training and not by a need to resist or escape it. Those particular class values were ‘smuggled into risk sports’ such as whitewater paddling to become ‘disciplined labour’ (Fletcher, 2008, p. 324) in a social consensus. Risk embodiment as labour is, then, central to in-person and symbolic-analytical adventure services sustaining risk society.

In this way, risk is not an unintended by-product, but a socially organised undertaking (Beck, 1992b). Adventure’s socio-cultural field, including a labour market, is constructed through techniques of monitoring and regulation (of practices and protocols) and regimes of trial and improvement in response to competing interests, change and crisis; it is self-reconstructing. Adventure promotes a similar reflexivity in its philosophy and practice, and risk management is the reflexive language in which trained individuals position themselves as negotiating challenging situations to a successful status in relation to those who fail the challenge and lose status (Kane, 2013; West & Allin, 2010). Risk was never the calculated potential to lose something of value, but is always the potential to lose a social position, an identity of value. Beck (1992b, p. 20) terms such social positions as those involved in profiting from ‘a “wealth-distributing” society’ by denying the risk-distributing processes already operating through technologies of mobility.

Studies of the meanings ascribed to risk by adventure climbers (West & Allin, 2010), iconic heroes (Kane, 2013) and outdoor leaders (Zink & Leberman, 2001) may therefore not be analysing much more than the struggles of informants to conform to the recognised regime of risk management. Risks which underpin late modern social life, not just economies and nations, are invisible. Nobody in Zink and Leberman’s (2001) study, for example, specified that pathogenic microorganisms in the nation’s rivers and streams posed a risk to their students, themselves or the future of outdoor adventure education, because this risk is both invisible and negated by water purification practices taught to everyone drinking water from the rivers. Potable water is a significant global risk that is becoming more visible and will increase as parasites, viruses and toxic chemicals are distributed faster and farther with increased mobilities of people, vehicles and equipment (Webster-Brown, 2013). Beck (1992b, p. 21; emphasis added) interprets risk as ‘the systematic way of dealing with hazards and insecurities induced and introduced by modernisation itself’. Risk lies in the decisions made to ‘deal with’ adventure. Adventure education 30 years after Mortlock’s passionate vision is overtaken by the very systems of dealing with the spread of modernisation (such as long-haul air travel) and its hazards (such as giardia parasites) which by necessity include the continued economic production of mitigating products. We know that we are in a ‘risk society’ as long as the adventure to some (outdoor users) creates ‘opportunities’ for others (chemical purification industries) (Beck, 1992b, p. 46) rather than ending the social threat to all.

Adventure education seems to be engineering an immobilising ambivalence (Bauman, 1991). The context is neither a natural world nor a cultural space, but a complex system incorporating

both in its realm of governance. Importantly, a complex system is driven by competing investments that are not based on a morally right path of action (Casti, 1994). Adventure produces risk to require safety, just as risk society produces insecurities (unequal outcomes of investments) to require insurance (protection of status and privilege) (Beck, 1992b, p. 35). Adventure educators must begin to debate their role in distributing the contradictory logic of society's risk systems through learning, leisure, labour and leadership.

For adventure education to create a context for confronting risk systems which impact societies and citizens unequally, it must devise a reference point away from its own principles. The damage of modernist industrialisation requires post-industrial thinking that does not take for granted a 'natural' world for economic benefit. In addition, it requires post-adventure thinking that disconnects education from Romantic narratives of ecstasy, the abyss and the sublime. Finally, it requires post-colonial thinking which dissociates from myths of exploration, extraction and settlement rights as aspects of development, progress and globalisation.

Various suggestions have pointed to, first, an ecological approach to the need for sustainability through education in the outdoors (Kane, 2013) and, second, an existential approach to rekindle the 'original', deeply authentic virtues of adventure (Varley, 2006). Neither of these is adequate. Education must be able to generate conditions to enact social life differently (Law & Urry, 2004) and enable discussions and debates about current philosophies and programmes of adventure education to allow 'self-criticism' (Beck, 1992b, pp. 234–235). This has become impossible in the current neoliberal individualised economy. For example, Zink and Leberman's (2001) interviewees had quite important criticisms of the conditions of their adventure work that they felt were silenced. Probing social inquiry should be repeated in ever enlarging contexts until all adventure workers are involved and begin to counter the taken-for-granted approaches to the rationalisation systems that legitimate risk in adventure education. Mortlock (1984, p. 75) proposed an 'adventure alternative', partially to counter what he called the 'trouble and inconvenience' of 'Truth'. In a world of relative truths and silencing of workplace criticism, it is even more important that adventure educators pose new alternatives to risk society's economic risk-distributing systems.

Simmel suggested that there is no need to go to high mountains for alpine vistas to stimulate a differentiation of experience. New knowledge can arise in shared proximity, enthusiasm, energy and movement; these are the differential experiences that are important. The frisson of friction is an indicator of energy and 'vitality' (Mortlock, 1984), not adrenalin and adventure. Law and Urry (2004) argue that new methods of inquiry can open up complex energetic systems; movement-based methods of cultural learning include 'walking with' and 'wheeling with'; that is, examining and experiencing mobility with each other and life forms while also tracing immobilities and energy blockages. Education requires more effort and energy to create an ecological-era culture of learning through connected energies to replace the idea of adventure as the site of self-discovery and 'self' production. It requires eco-cultural education outdoors.

Conclusion

In summary, ideas embedding difficulty, suffering, resilience and travel into 'adventure' have contributed to the construction of a late modern identity of the self-reliant and self-consuming individual who goes places, takes risks and stands out. However, these dated Romantic-era ideas carry the burden of systemic expansion and exploitation in which distant undertakings offer individual status, but ultimately profit socially vested interests. The romance of adventure is incorporated in society through education, culture, risk decisions and leadership choices. The rise of the individualised identity and reliance on sources of various kinds of capital such as strength, status and security are consequences of systems of modernity, and not just the product of 'adventure' learning, leisure, luck and lifestyle alone. Yet the practices of adventure education in the last half century—risk mitigation and the neoliberal, biographical meaning-making of risk-taking—contribute 'adventure' capital to this new individualised identity. If

adventure education is to be more than tourism, then the task of educators is to unlearn risk-mitigation habits and replace 'adventure' with a focus on energy, movement, routes and transitions to post-natural 'alternative social futures' (Armstrong, 2015; Beck, 1992b, p. 179; Beck et al., 2003).

Notes

1. Mortlock was writing prior to the mid-1980s on the threshold to the deregulation of globalising markets (Reich, 1992) and neoliberal reforms in the American education sector (Miles & Priest, 1990) which forced the 'adventure alternative' into non-profit third-sector organisations. His philosophy also reflected a post-Romantic, more socialist view of 'work together, play together and help each other' (Mortlock, 1984, p. 15) that was overtaken by the rising neoliberalism of globalising strategies.
2. Kane (2013) noted that the successful climbing of Mt Everest, ending a period of 'discovery/conquest', is also a significant event in the turn to a mass adventure culture.
3. The upper middle class comprises symbolic-analyst services providers who belong to the highly educated professions (Fletcher, 2008, p. 311).

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