ADVENTURE EDUCATION: OCCUPATIONAL SOCIALIZATION OF TEACHERS, ECOLOGY, AND PARTICIPATION STYLES OF CHILDREN

A DISSERTATION

by

MARK H. ZMUDY

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Kinesiology in the Graduate School of The University of Alabama

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

2007
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend many thanks to my mom and dad for all their love, support, and friendship during and throughout all of my adventures. I would like to thank my committee members in alphabetical order: Thanks to Dr. Don Belcher for his creative insight, cups of coffee, help, support, and great teaching throughout the entire doctoral program; to Dr. Matt Curtner-Smith (Chair) for his guidance, support, leadership, and confidence throughout the entire doctoral program and dissertation experience; to Dr. Brent Hardin for his excellence in adapted physical education as well as his positive attitude, support, and great teaching throughout the entire doctoral program; to Dr. Mark Nelson for his enthusiasm and excitement, diligence, leadership, friendship, and teaching excellence; and to Dr. Jeff Steffen and his family for their friendship and mentorship as well as their extensive support during my data collection process.

Additionally, I would like to thank the Adventure Educators, ‘Nancy’ and ‘Joel’ for their hard work, dedication, and willingness during all aspects of this project; the Adventure Coordinator for his efforts in helping plan the adventure camps; Margaret Stran for her extensive assistance during my writing process; and Lance and Oh, and all of us who persevered together during this entire experience!
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INFLUENCE OF OCCUPATIONAL SOCIALIZATION ON THE PRACTICES AND PERSPECTIVES OF TWO INEXPERIENCED ADVENTURE EDUCATORS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. ECOLOGY AND TASK STRUCTURES IN ADVENTURE EDUCATION</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. STUDENT PARTICIPATION STYLES IN ADVENTURE EDUCATION</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
INFLUENCE OF OCCUPATIONAL SOCIALIZATION ON THE PRACTICES AND PERSPECTIVES OF TWO INEXPERIENCED ADVENTURE EDUCATORS

In Western culture, the inclusion of activities in educational settings which could be described as "outdoor and adventurous" dates back perhaps as far as 400 BC (Hunt, 1990). Moreover, adventure education has been included in one form or another in the school and local community/agency curricula of many countries for close to 100 years (Neill, 2004; Outward Bound, 2006). For example, since its inclusion in the national physical education content standards (National Association for Sport and Physical Education [NASPE], 1991), it has served as a platform for offering unique and non-traditional activities in American public school physical education curricula. Similarly, in Britain it has been included as one of the six areas of activity to be studied by pupils since the inception of the National Curriculum for Physical Education (Department of Education and Science & the Welsh Office, 1992; Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007). Perhaps more than any other sub-discipline of physical education, then, adventure education has evolved into a well-established professional field in its own right (Association for Challenge Course Technology [ACCT], 2004; Wurdinger & Steffen, 2003).

Historical Development of Adventure Education

Adventure education as we know it today has its roots in the teachings of Outward Bound founder, Kurt Hahn (Stetson, 2005). Hahn's visions of teaching peace and
survival skills were developed and honed beginning in 1904 and initially put into practice at the Salem School in Germany in 1920, Gordonstoun School in Scotland in 1934, and the first Outward Bound School in 1941 at Aberdovey, Wales. During the 1950s and `60s, Outward Bound schools were also opened in England, Kenya, Germany, Australia, Canada, Singapore, the United States, and parts of Asia (Outward Bound, 2006). Project Adventure, perhaps the most well-known modern and American incarnation of adventure education, was first established in Massachusetts in 1970. Project Adventure has since expanded within the United States and internationally and has become a well-known provider of adventure educator (AE) training (Neill, 2006).

Models and Goals of Adventure Education

As explained by Brown (2006), “adventure education is based on the experiential learning model which combines direct experience with guided reflection and analysis under the supervision of a group instructor/facilitator/teacher’ (p. 685). Similarly, for Miles and Priest (1990), a major goal of adventure education is for each pupil to expand the self and realize his/her own potential by learning, growing, and progressing. Some (e.g., Rhonke & Butler, 1995; Wurdinger & Steffen, 2003) have suggested that adventure education includes those activities and pedagogies which enable children and youth to move through identified sequences of the adventure process (for in-depth discussion of sequences see Bisson 1997, 1998, 1999). Specifically, they have argued that AEs should seek to teach through outdoor and adventurous activities (e.g., rock climbing, kayaking, canoeing, backpacking, winter camping, snowshoeing, trail biking, scuba diving, ropes and challenge courses) so that pupils make acquaintances, warm-up and lose inhibitions, communicate with each other, solve problems, build trust in groups, take on group
challenges on low ropes course elements, take on individual challenges on high ropes course elements, and perhaps participate in an outdoor pursuits experience.

Others (e.g., Neill, 2004) have argued that adventure programs do not have to be so rigid and can be based on various and different models of experiential learning (e.g., see Dewey, 1938/1997; Joplin, 1995; Priest & Gass, 1997). Arguably, one of the best known and most often utilized of these is the four-stage model designed by Kolb (Kolb, 1984, cited in Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). This model requires pupils to follow the cycle of experiencing an activity, observing/reflecting, forming concepts and generalizations, and applying new concepts in different situations. For example, in the Tee Pee Shuffle students stand side by side on a downed tree log and are asked to get in order by birth date without ever touching the ground. No other directions are given; and students find that this requires detailed communication. In reflection, students then discuss aspects of their lives where clear communication is useful (e.g. school, work, teams, etc.).

Research in Adventure Education

Research of adventure education has primarily focused on unearthing any general therapeutic benefits on participants (e.g., Autry, 2001; Gass, 1993; Kelley & Coursey, 1997; Neill, 2003) as well as its influence on participants' self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-efficacy (e.g., McKenzie, 2003; Paxton, 1999; Priest, 1996). These studies have consistently suggested that adventure education has positive effects on participants.

A limited amount of research has also been conducted on the physiological impact of the adventure experience on participants (e.g., Bunting, Tolson, Kunh, Suarez, & Williams, 2000; Watts & Drobish, 1998). Results of this line of research suggest that
participants have varying physiological responses to high adventure activities. For example, those with lower overall fitness have higher neuroendocrine responses to adventure activities than do participants with higher overall fitness (Bunting et al., 2000).

More recently, researchers have examined the effects of school-based adventure education and cooperative education programs on both pupils (Dyson, 1995, 2001, 2002; Dyson, Griffin, & Hastie, 2004; Grenier, Dyson, & Yeaton, 2005) and teachers (Dyson, 1996). Findings of these studies suggest that student learning and enjoyment in physical education increases due to less intimidation; students feel that trying hard and making a good effort are valued even when skills are not performed perfectly; and students of all ability levels and both genders improve social skills as well as motor skills.

Problematic in the adventure education research conducted to date is the fact that much of it has involved employing positivistic pre-post designs which have focused on outcomes rather than teaching processes (Baldwin, Persing, & Magnuson, 2004; Brown, 2006). In short, researchers have conducted what Locke (1977) critically referred to as 'black box' experiments. Moreover, there has been what Ewert (1987) called an 'over-reliance on paper and pencil measurements of attitudes, most notably self-concept' (p. 23). As Brown (2006) argued, there is, then, a need for more process-oriented research of adventure education. In addition, I would suggest that there is a need for researchers to utilize methodologies from the interpretive and critical paradigms in order to provide more depth to the current body of work and to attempt to answer different types of questions.
Purpose and Theoretical Framework

In the areas of physical education teacher education (PETE) and coach education, researchers have found it particularly useful to study the processes by which persons become physical education teachers and coaches by employing occupational socialization theory (e.g., see Curtner-Smith 1997, 2001; Curtner-Smith, Hastie, & Kinchin, in press; Lawson, 1983a, 1983b; Sage, 1989; Schempp & Graber, 1992; Stroot, 1993; Templin & Schempp, 1989). As yet, researchers of adventure education have not examined why and how persons choose to be and become AEs and why they teach as they do. As part of a larger study of adventure education, the purpose of this study, therefore, was to examine the effects of occupational socialization on two purposefully selected AEs. Specifically, I attempted to determine the influence of acculturation, professional socialization, and organizational socialization on the AEs' perspectives and practices.

Occupational Socialization

In the PETE literature, occupational socialization has been defined as ‘all kinds of socialization that initially influence persons to enter the field of physical education and later are responsible for their perceptions and actions as teacher educators and teachers’ (Lawson, 1986, p. 107). Occupational socialization consists of three major components: acculturation, professional socialization, and organizational socialization.

Acculturation refers to the years prior to entering formal training for work during which individuals’ perceptions of their occupation are influenced by a variety of factors. For example, recruits into PETE have been found to be heavily influenced by their parents, their experiences in sport, their physical education teachers and coaches, and their general schooling or what has been termed their ‘apprenticeship of observation’
Due to these influences, many American recruits enter PETE with what have been termed coaching orientations (i.e., their main motivation is to coach extracurricular sport) and teaching physical education is merely a "career contingency." Conversely, relatively few recruits enter PETE with teaching orientations, in which coaching is a career contingency.

Professional socialization refers to the influence of formal training on recruits into a given occupation. For example, PETE has been shown to have very little influence on many preservice physical education teachers, particularly those who enter with coaching orientations. Beliefs and values with which recruits enter PETE are often left unchanged or are even reinforced as are ideas about practice and pedagogy. Some PETE programs, however, can make a difference. These are staffed by specialists and highly credible faculty who work together to challenge the faulty beliefs of coaching oriented recruits, supervise early field experiences and student teaching very closely, emphasize what Lortie (1975) called a "shared technical culture" (i.e., the knowledge and skills needed for physical education teaching), and do everything in their power to support those preservice teachers who enter PETE with teaching orientations.

Organizational socialization refers to the influence of the culture of the workplace on individuals. For example, neophyte physical education teachers have been found to face particularly conservative forms of socialization in American schools. Primary socializing agents including administrators, senior teachers, pupils, parents, and, of course, coaches form what has been called the "institutional press" (Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1983) and often serve to "wash out" (Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1981) any new pedagogies that were actually instilled during PETE or support those teachers who come
to schools with their coaching orientations intact and intent on doing very little real teaching during curricular lessons. Moreover, those new teachers who do maintain their teaching perspectives in the face of this press are forced to adopt a number of coping strategies. According to Etheridge (1989) some teachers “strategically adjust,” in that they lower their standards temporarily in order to get along. In time, unfortunately, the “adjustment” often becomes permanent. In addition, Lacey (1977) found that that some teachers “strategically comply” with poor practice so they can survive but teach and act according to their real beliefs when they can do so without being detected. Conversely, Lacey (1977) found that other beginning teachers try to “strategically redefine” their situations by challenging poor practice and thinking.

Method

Participants

Participants in this study were two fairly inexperienced, middle class, Caucasian AEs. Both were also physical education teachers and had completed their master’s degrees in PETE with an emphasis in Adventure Education at a university in the same midsized city, situated in the American midwest, in which they currently lived and worked. Nancy had completed her undergraduate work in PETE at the same institution. This degree program had also included a significant adventure education component. Conversely, Joel had undergone his undergraduate PETE training at another institution in which he was exposed to adventure education only minimally. Both signed consent forms in congruence with the university’s institutional review board policy on human subjects.

Nancy was 24 years old, completing her first year as an elementary physical education teacher, and had approximately 4 years experience as an AE. For example, she
had completed a clinical experience teaching indoor rock climbing, acted as a volunteer instructor for many other classes and trips including ropes course, rock climbing, rappelling, winter camping, canoeing, caving, hiking, and several summer adventure camps, and she helped host a week-long alternative adventure PE program for a high school student. Joel was 23 years of age, concluding his first year as a high school physical education teacher, and had 1 year of experience as an AE during which he had acted as a college level teaching assistant for an adventure class, and had worked frequently with the climbing wall and ropes course programs at his graduate institution.

Both Nancy and Joel had received all their formal AE training from within their undergraduate and graduate PETE programs. At the graduate level, they had taken courses in a variety of outdoor activities including ropes and challenge courses, climbing walls, and outdoor rock climbing. They had also studied the principles and pedagogies of adventure education during three, 3-hour campus-based courses and two 8 to 10 hour field experiences. The main emphasis during these courses was on experiential models of learning in general and teaching the sequenced stages of adventure (Bisson 1997, 1998, 1999; Rhonke, 1989; Wurdinger & Steffen, 2003) in particular. The faculty responsible for delivering their training was primarily one male with extensive experience in adventure education. He could be described as possessing an innovative orientation toward the field as evidenced by the students' focus on and incorporation of cutting edge adventure theory and sequentially logical teaching.

At the undergraduate level, Nancy had taken one course in adventure education with the same faculty member, and one course in outdoor pursuits pedagogy with an additional experienced faculty member who had the same theoretical emphasis. Joel,
however, had taken one class that included outdoor pursuits content and also served as a ‘leader’ for the same class during a later semester.

Setting

The study was conducted while Nancy and Joel worked at two consecutive week-long summer adventure camps in which they taught through a variety of outdoor and adventurous activities including high and low ropes course, hiking, caving, canoeing, indoor rock climbing, and compass skills. Each week campers also engaged in an overnight camping trip to a location where a swimming beach, hiking trails, and large playing fields were available. Supplemental activities included crafts and group games. The official or planned curriculum required Joel and Nancy to move through the sequenced stages of adventure (Bisson 1997, 1998, 1999; Rhonke, 1989; Wurdinger & Steffen, 2003) while teaching on the ropes courses (i.e., incorporate activities and tasks designed to help the children make acquaintances, warm-up and lose inhibitions, communicate with each other, solve problems, build trust, tackle group challenges on low ropes course elements, and tackle individual challenges on high ropes course elements).

In addition, a more general adventure education approach was taken by AEs while teaching through other outdoor and adventurous activities. Specifically, the AEs sought to allow students to learn and grow personally through the process of experiencing a variety of innovative and challenging outdoor activities, as well as to foster group development.

The camps were organized by the Adventure Coordinator supervised by the main faculty member responsible for training Nancy and Joel. For this reason, much of the activity took place on the university campus. Facilities here included a classroom for
meeting, playing fields, two climbing walls, an indoor high ropes course, and outdoor high and low ropes courses. During the first camp, two parents acted as chaperones to the group which had come from a church. During the second camp, one guest AE participated in the overnight camping trip only.

Five boys and 10 girls attended the first camp. They ranged in age from 9 to 14 years. Nine boys and seven girls participated in the second camp. Age ranges for these campers were 10 to 14 years. The vast majority of children came from middle income backgrounds. Twenty-nine campers were Caucasian and two were Asian/Pacific Islanders. As a group, the campers were enthusiastic, yet difficult to manage. A typical day involved the children arriving at 8:00 a.m., engaging in activity from 8:30 to noon before eating lunch from 12:00 to 12:30. The children then participated in a second activity from 12:30 to 4:00 before eating a snack and being picked up by their parents at 5:00. Each week the AEs and campers worked as an intact group throughout all activities.

Data Collection

A variety of qualitative techniques were employed to collect data aimed at explaining the influence of their acculturation, professional socialization, and organizational socialization on the AEs' perspectives and practices. Formal 60-minute semi-structured (Patton, 1990) interviews of each AE were completed twice each week. These interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. Informal interviews were also conducted whenever there was an opportunity to speak with Joel and Nancy during the adventure camps. Detailed notes were recorded from each informal interview at the earliest convenience.
Non-participant observation was employed for the duration of every day of each adventure camp. This involved observing Nancy and Joel and extensive note-taking while they were instructing; organizing; interacting with colleagues and parents; and interacting with children during transitions, lunch, and snack time. On several occasions, and when appropriate, participant observation was also utilized. This involved joining in with activities or helping with instruction for short periods of time. Again, notes describing these observations were recorded as soon after they had occurred as possible.

Document analysis was also employed and involved examining Joel and Nancy's written plans and daily activity schedules, and making notes on the contents of these materials. Additionally, two 30-minute activity session segments were videotaped during each week. These tapes were used to conduct stimulated recall interviews with each of the AEs. During these interviews, the videotapes were replayed to Nancy and Joel and paused periodically so that they could explain their thought processes related to specific courses of action during instruction. All four stimulated recall interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Think aloud planning was utilized and involved each AE talking into a tape recorder during self-selected intervals throughout each day and evening. These tape recordings were transcribed verbatim.

AEs also supplied two critical incident reports per day. Following O'Sullivan and Tsangaridou (1992), the first of these involved the AEs describing anything they found significant about their working day in general while the second required them to record anything they found significant about their instruction, management, and the campers' social behavior in particular. Finally, at the conclusion of each day, AEs supplied an
electronic reflective journal entry about anything concerning the camps that seemed pertinent.

Data Analysis

Standard interpretive methods were used to analyze data. This involved identifying and coding data indicating how the AEs practiced and thought about adventure education and how their occupational socialization had influenced these practices and perspectives. Both these data types were then divided into categories, subcategories, and themes by utilizing analytic induction and constant comparison (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Trustworthiness and credibility were established by searching for discrepant cases, by cross-checking the accuracy of results from the different data collection techniques (Goetz & LeCompte), and by inviting the AEs to review and provide feedback on the analysis at regular intervals.

Results and Discussion

AEs’ Practices and Perspectives

Based on parallels drawn from the occupational socialization literature in PETE, prior to the study it seemed likely that the AEs' orientations would fall along a continuum ranging from weak to strong. Specifically, I thought it possible that some AEs might have a leisure orientation and essentially do little more during activity sessions than provide a supervised and safe environment in which pupils could “play.” These AEs would have the same non-teaching perspective as physical education teachers with strong coaching orientations. At the other extreme, it seemed likely that some AEs would have an adventure orientation in that they would make every effort to incorporate and draw on elements from the various experiential learning models on which adventure education is
based. A key feature of the instruction provided by these AEs would be *teaching through* the various outdoor pursuits in which their pupils engaged. These AEs would be comparable to physical education teachers with strong teaching orientations. Finally, I hypothesized that in the middle ground between these two extremes would be AEs with an *outdoor pursuits orientation*. These AEs would focus on the *teaching of* the various activities in which their pupils engaged. Helping pupils master physical skills would be the ultimate goal of their instruction rather than a means to realizing objectives linked with the theoretical underpinnings of adventure education.

The bulk of the data collected during the study suggested that both Nancy and Joel fitted somewhere between the leisure and outdoor pursuits orientations described in the preceding paragraphs. Both were "very enthusiastic" and "energetic" but, as the following extracts illustrate, their primary goals were to provide campers with "enjoyment," expose them to a variety of activities, and teach them some "skills":

I want the students to have fun. I want to give them as many opportunities to do different activities [as I can]. . . . The third thing would be to give them more information on the different skills and, you know, give them more of the technical aspects. (Nancy)

I think the first one [i.e., objective] is fun. Second, might be friends, just trying to talk with friends and hang out with friends, and just be with those people. (Joel)

Additionally, when describing the degree to which they thought they had been "effective" during their instruction at the end of the second camp, both AEs alluded to their priorities:

I think that I'm somewhat effective and I feel like the kids have fun and they are exposed to the activities. I don't know how proficient I am at them, but I would say somewhat effective. (Nancy)
I would say I'm fairly effective . . . I feel like I can teach some things. My knowledge base is limited . . . I've been experiencing things for a while, but not actually teaching, and a lot of the skills are new to me. (Joel)

The AEs' pedagogies also mostly betrayed their priorities for "fun" and "skill learning." For example, during the teaching of some activities, the AEs created a welcoming, warm but "business-like" atmosphere, fashioned a well-sequenced and developmental set of tasks, provided numerous "demonstrations" with technical instruction, and gave plenty performance feedback while monitoring the campers very closely. Moreover, they differentiated tasks for campers of different abilities and often used "indirect styles" of teaching. During the teaching of other activities, however, the environment was more "relaxed and easy-going," there was no sequence of tasks, demonstrations were few and far between, feedback was sparing and predominantly motivational, and the teaching styles employed were more "direct."

While the main body of data indicated that Joel and Nancy possessed hybrid leisure-outdoor pursuits orientations, there was, at least, some suggestion that they were contemplating using or actually experimenting with pedagogical elements associated with an adventure orientation. In their written plans, for example, they listed tasks which they could use to move campers through "the stages of adventure" including "group juggle" ("acquaintance activities"), "monster walk" ("problem solving"), and "zipper run" ("trust"). Both AEs were also observed "processing" and "debriefing" campers during some ropes course activities albeit at a "superficial level." For instance, on one occasion Samantha, a camper in Nancy's group, noted that she and her peers had "worked pretty well together and done a good job of encouraging each other." On another, following a low ropes course session, Joel explained that "what I try to get those students to think about during the debrief is what made them successful . . . or if they were unsuccessful, why . . . and how could they
change that for . . . a different activity in the future.” Other indications that the AEs were thinking about the adventure process came in their own reflections. For example, following one particularly successful caving session, Nancy explained that she “really thought the kids were all talking and working well with each other today.” Similarly, Joel enthused at his campers’ “persistence” and ability to “work together” after a low ropes session. When questioned directly about their incorporation of “adventure theory” into their teaching at the end of the second camp, however, Nancy spoke for both herself and Joel when she stated that “it’s hard to do, but you try to touch on [the stages of adventure], you know having de-inhibitizers and communication, and trust and stuff. You know, we try to do them somewhat.”

Factors Influencing AEs’ Practices and Perspectives

Acculturation. During their childhood and youth, three key factors led Nancy and Joel to get interested and eventually choose a career in physical education in general and adventure education in particular. Interestingly, none of them were school-based. First, as illustrated by the following extracts, both grew up in families that emphasized participating in outdoor activities:

I have to say that my parents are active, they both hike a lot. . . . They used to camp. . . . And my brothers will go mountain biking every once in a while. (Nancy)

My brother is definitely active in adventure activities. He has hiked 1,600 miles of the Appalachian Trail, so he’s been backpacking a bunch. He is always seeking new adventures. . . . I would say my dad kind of got us both into adventure activities. He really enjoys the outdoors mainly, not necessarily ropes course stuff, but just getting us hiking and out in the woods doing stuff, just walking and that kind of thing. [We’ve been active] since we were little. We’ve gone cross country a couple times, and we always stayed in national parks and went hiking and camping, lots of camping as a family. (Joel)
Second, both were ‘more exposed’ to ‘the outdoors’ when they attended camps run by private agencies or the church in their mid-teens. These camps and the instructors/counselors who ran them essentially served as the settings and role models for the AEs’ apprenticeships of observation. While generally positive about his experiences, Joel noted that at his camps ‘most of it was outdoor pursuits without [anything] actually being taught.” Nancy was a little more enthusiastic and explained that she

Went to a Christian camp . . . like weekend camps for confirmation and stuff, where we got to go rock climbing. They had, like, the big wood walls and stuff like that. So we got to go rock climbing. . . . I think that was like the breaking point, right there, where I got more interested in doing rock climbing and stuff. (Nancy)

Third, as they got older, both AEs began to explore the outdoors with peers during informal trips. Joel, for example recalled that:

At 15, 16, I kind of took some more initiative and, partially because I started to have more freedom in general at that age. . . . you know, maybe me and my friends would go up to the mountains and hike around. (Joel)

Professional socialization. Nancy and Joel’s acculturation led to them entering their formal Adventure Education training programs with orientations that appeared to be slanted toward the leisure. This training, however, was certainly designed to change these orientations for the better.

The coursework in the various outdoor pursuits, adventure education theory, and the related field experiences clearly had a considerable and positive impact on both Nancy and Joel as evidenced by the following testimonies:

I think [outdoor pursuits] when I took it in college was really the turning point where I really came out of my shell as far as the liking adventure activities. We did orienteering here on campus. We did a rock climbing trip. We did rappelling. . . . There were more trips that were available so . . . I did winter camping where I learned how to camp in the snow. That was an adventure and a half! (Nancy)
We were taught how to use a compass and shoot bearings . . . and how to make up different courses. And then we were kind of just taught how to develop a group . . . making sure people are warm, dry, and well fed all the time. And then taking adventure theory, that involved more of the ropes course and we did training on that, how to learn how to belay. Then I think just asking for the extra experience to go on trips and help lead them, my teaching skills and stuff evolved from doing that. (Nancy)

I guess just going through ropes classes, . . . rock climbing, and adventure theory was the first class that I took that really caught my eye. My [training] background probably starts when I TA'd for this [adventure education pedagogy] class. That was probably my first official training. We just finished a . . . class in Colorado with rock climbing experience and I got the opportunity to do some mountaineering, which I'm pumped about. [In another class] we went through adventure theory, we talked about the stages of adventure. (Joel).

In addition, the fact that the faculty who trained them were credible, worked together to promote the same shared technical culture and perspectives on adventure education, and modeled that perspective also appeared to have a major impact on the two AEs. This was particularly so for Nancy who, in the following extracts, explained how she, some fellow students, and one of the faculty members worked with one particular pupil and how she got to teach adventure education within her undergraduate PETE student teaching experience:

There was a girl that came from the east part of the state and myself and 3 other people kind of hosted her for a week because she was failing PE and wanted to come up with an alternative way for her to pass the class. So we had her do different adventure activities. We took her caving. We took her on hikes. . . . We took her camping. We took her rock climbing. And just to see how much she grew in a week and how much she had, how much more of an appreciation she had for PE by the end of the week, you know. She's like "this is really cool! I never knew there were things like this before?" (Nancy)

I would facilitate at the ropes course because it was kind of our job to go through the stages with the groups we'd bring in, so that gave me practice before hand to do the stages. But then, student teaching at the high school was the first time that I actually got to more or less do the whole entire seven [not including outdoor pursuits] stages like in a three week unit with kids. (Nancy)
Organizational Socialization

At the completion of their master's degree programs both Joel and Nancy appeared to have shifted their orientations from leisure to somewhere between outdoor pursuits and adventure. What factors, then, led to a regression in their orientations by the time they were observed working in the two camps featured in this study?

First, it was apparent that their experiences teaching physical education in the public schools led to some of what they had learned during their formal training being washed out and this wash-out effect transferred to the camp setting. Both AEs were permitted to teach adventure units at their schools but their instruction, in this capacity, was interfered with by other more senior physical education teachers' views about how adventure education should be done and their curricular structuring. For example, while Nancy worked in deinhibitors and ice breakers and did a lot problem solving which pupils solved as a group in what was her favorite unit she explained that her school's version of adventure education was called adventure building and was only somewhat close to what she had learned to deliver in her university training. Joel faced more significant situational constraints (Hargreaves, 1984). The six other physical educators in his school were much more experienced and gave Joel little say in curricular decision-making. Consequently, he relayed that while adventure is taught within the school. It's not completely adventure. He went on to lament that,

We have a cooperative games unit. It kind of takes games from adventure and makes students work together. In a lot of classes, there's a warm-up game, and they use some adventure games as warm-up games. And then they get into their activity, like a basketball unit or badminton. So they dip into adventure content. Sometimes what happens is people will take a whole adventure unit and divide it up into instant activities, and not ever actually teach adventure content. There's zero debriefing, and kind of, why are we doing this? There's not much talk about why we are doing this. What's the purpose of this activity? . . . I think it's kind of
'Do we have enough energy to do this?' It's kind of a pain I think for the teachers. They feel like they're burdened by it. (Joel)

Both school physical education departments also primarily employed the multi-activity curriculum model which has been shown in the past, in the American context at least, to be the preferred model of non-teachers with coaching orientations who provide short units which involve very little instruction and a great deal of poorly organized and supervised inappropriate game play dominated by more skilled and physically able boys (see Curtner-Smith & Sofo, 2004; Ennis, 1999). Neither AE was particularly impressed with this model of instruction and realized that the "goal mainly was just to get the students exposed to the different activities . . . and get along with each other." In their position as junior teachers, and in the face of such strong "presses" however, they were powerless in terms of making any changes. Consequently, they strategically complied with this form of "instruction" and perhaps over time began to strategically adjust to it.

The second factor which appeared to lead to a regression in the AE's orientations toward adventure education was the influence of the children they taught in the two camps and, by implication, the influence of the children they taught in the public schools. Like other novice teachers of physical education and other subjects, Joel and Nancy appeared to suffer from "reality shock" (Veenman, 1984) in that they were not expecting the number and degree of behavioral problems they faced on a daily basis at school and during the two camps. Moreover, in line with "teacher concerns theory" (see Behets & Meek, 1996), at this stage of their career they were heavily concerned with surviving themselves which, in turn, led to a focus on "management" and specifically "handling problems and behaviors" and being "in charge." Typical of the comments made about management by the AEs during the two camps were the following:
Management today was a big struggle. When we were heading down to the ropes course the first time today, the kids were just everywhere. We asked them to stay on the path, but that was not happening. So Joel and I had them sit down and talk about behavior issues before we went to the ropes course. (Nancy)

A lot of our management had to do with talking while we were talking. Also, there were a lot of campers messing with each other, which started to get old. This group is really going to test Nancy and I's management skills. We are going to have to be creative and keep the activities fun and entertaining. (Joel)

One effect of struggling with managerial issues appeared to be the reluctance of Joel and Nancy to attempt to use more indirect styles of teaching in order to move through the stages of adventure for fear of losing “control.” Another was engaging in negotiations over content with the campers. Joel, in particular, used this strategy and explained that “sometimes maybe I'll bargain with them. I'll say, you know, let's do this for a little while, and then we'll do something that I think they might have more fun doing.” As with other teachers who “negotiate their curricular” (see Ennis, 1995), the goal of Joel's action was to secure campers’ compliance by giving up some of his more rigorous and educational tasks and goals and replacing them with those that were more leisure oriented.

Summary and Conclusions

The most important finding of this study was that it indicated that the practices and perspectives of the AEs in it were heavily influenced by their occupational socialization. Moreover, the patterns of socialization which served to shape Joel and Nancy were somewhat similar to those which previous research has shown impact physical education teachers (e.g., Curtner-Smith, 1997, 1999, 2001).

Both AEs' acculturation led to them entering formal training with less than ideal orientations toward adventure education. Their formal training, however, appeared to
cause what Sparkes (1991) termed a 'real' change in their beliefs and pedagogies. That is, change occurred at a deep rather than a superficial level. Major reasons for this appeared to be the nature of type of coursework taken by the AEs and the credibility and teamwork of the faculty. There was certainly no attempt by the AEs to 'impression manage' (Lawson, 1983a, 1983b) and pretend to go along with the faculty as coaching oriented recruits to PETE have been shown to do. Unfortunately, the AEs' organizational socialization served to partially wash out these gains. Key factors in this washout process were experiences while teaching in the public schools and the campers they taught.

What are the implications for AE training if the findings from the present study transfer to other settings and AEs? First, understanding that AEs can enter programs with one of three different orientations to adventure education and that these influence how they interpret or 'read' (Gore, 1990) the pedagogies they are being trained to use has to be helpful in itself.

Second, it seems most likely that recruits into adventure education training will most likely enter with leisure or outdoor pursuits orientations. If this logic is correct, it would, third, seem reasonable to suggest that faculty tackle these orientations head-on and contrast them with an adventure orientation, just as more successful PETE faculty contrast coaching and teaching orientations (see Curtner-Smith, 1996).

Fourth, understanding the orientations with which recruits enter formal training programs may have implications for the curricular structuring of these programs. For example, it might be that shifting from a leisure to an adventure perspective is a developmental or maturational process. If so, perhaps faculty will be most effective if, during early coursework, they focus their efforts on shifting recruits who possess a hard
core leisure orientation to an outdoor pursuits orientation. Later coursework could then be devoted to a further shift toward an adventure orientation.

Finally, the study suggests that adventure education faculty need to focus particularly on providing AEs with the skills with which they can manage campers effectively in the adventure setting, a clear understanding of the realities they will face on graduation, and, in line with Fernandez-Balboa (2000), some idea of how to deal with and become a player in curricular politics. The latter will be particularly important for AEs who also teach physical education in the public schools. Crucial to realizing these objectives, logic dictates, will be the inclusion of more early field experiences with children in adventure settings, perhaps at the expense of outdoor pursuits and adventure trips with faculty in which AEs essentially take on the role of pupils.

Obviously, more research of a similar type is needed to determine whether the findings of the current study, do, in fact, transfer and to unearth other factors within and interactions between AEs' acculturation, professional socialization, and organizational socialization which may prove helpful. In particular, studies which examine different types of recruits, training programs, practicing AEs, and adventure worksites would be useful.
CHAPTER II
ECOLOGY AND TASK STRUCTURES IN ADVENTURE EDUCATION

Adventure education has flourished during the last 15 years (Association for Challenge Course Technology [ACCT], 2004; Wurdinger & Steffen, 2003). Indeed, adventure education programs for children and youth both within school curricula and sponsored by various agencies outside public schools, such as Project Adventure (2007) and Outward Bound (Outward Bound, 2006), have become relatively common around the United States.

An indication of the growing popularity of adventure education in the United States is the fact that it has been included within the benchmarks and content standards for school physical education produced by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education [NASPE]) since early 1990s (NASPE, 1991) and the significant increase in the number of challenge courses, climbing walls, and bouldering walls that have been constructed in schools during the last decade (ACCT, 2004; Wurdinger & Steffen, 2003). Moreover, interest in adventure education and the proliferation of adventure-based programs also appears to have grown considerably in other countries. In Britain, for example, “outdoor and adventurous activities” have been a component of the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) since its inception (Department of Education and Science & the Welsh Office, 1992; Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007).
Models of Adventure Education

According to Miles and Priest (1990), the major objectives of adventure education are to facilitate student growth, learning, and realization of potential. In addition, for Ford and Blanchard (1993) a primary goal is to challenge participants. To achieve these objectives, adventure education has often been organized in stages or sequences of activities within the adventure environment which are designed to encourage team building and group development (e.g., see Bisson 1997, 1998, 1999).

Perhaps the most commonly used adventure education model was described by Rhonke (1989). In the first stage of this model, students engage in activities designed to help them get acquainted with each other. In the second stage, they participate in activities aimed at warming them up and helping them lose their inhibitions. During the third and fourth stages, students are asked to take part in activities which enhance their communication and problem-solving skills, while in the fifth stage they engage in trust-building activities. Finally, the sixth and seventh stages are devoted to the challenges of tackling low and high ropes course elements.

For many in the field (e.g., Neill, 2004), the distinction between outdoor pursuits courses and real adventure education programs is that in the former instructors merely teach activities (e.g., rock climbing, kayaking, canoeing, backpacking, winter camping, snowshoeing, trail biking, scuba diving, ropes and challenge courses) while in the latter adventure educators (AEs) base their instruction on one of a number of different experiential learning models (see, for example, Dewey, 1938/1997; Joplin, 1995; Priest & Gass, 1997) and teach through activities.
For Brown (2006), "adventure education is based on the experiential learning model which combines direct experience with guided reflection and analysis under the supervision of a group instructor/facilitator/teacher" (p. 685). To this end, arguably the experiential model most often used by AEs, at least on paper, is the four-stage model proposed by Kolb (1984, cited in Evans et al., 1998). In this model, participants move through the cycle of experiencing, observing/reflecting, forming concepts, and generalizing and applying concepts to new and different experiences. For example, they may engage in a communication/problem solving activity called "blind forms" in which they stand in a circle while blindfolded and, following the AEs command, work together to make various shapes with a rope. Reflection on this activity might involve agreeing on a set of ideas that facilitate communication. These ideas could then be applied to other activities and situations outside the adventure education program such as personal or work relationships.

Adventure Education Research

While the amount of adventure education being provided for young people has expanded, research of the pedagogy of adventure education is still very much in its infancy. To date, the streams of research which have been conducted in this area have revealed the therapeutic effects of adventure education programs on participants (e.g., Autry, 2001; Gass, 1993; Kelley & Coursey, 1997; Neill, 2003); the positive impact of adventure experiences on participants' feelings of self-efficacy, self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth (e.g., McKenzie, 2003; Paxton, 1999; Priest, 1996), the physiological responses of participants engaged in adventure activities (e.g., Bunting et al., 2000; Watts & Drobish, 1998), and the positive influence of hybrid adventure...
education and cooperative learning models in physical education settings on teachers' satisfaction and students' psychomotor and affective development (Dyson, 1996, 2001, 2002; Dyson et al., 2004; Grenier et al., 2005).

As informative and useful as much of this work has been however, and as Brown (2006) has pointed out, researchers have paid little attention to the teaching-learning processes involved in adventure education. Instead, they have tended to focus on the outcomes of adventure education programs without bothering to find out what may have been responsible for producing (or not producing) these outcomes. These types of positivistic pre-post designs without reference to teacher-student processes proved to be singularly unhelpful and were heavily criticized when mainstream sport pedagogy research began in earnest in the 1970s (Locke, 1977). There is, then, as Brown (2006) noted, a need for more pedagogically oriented research of adventure education. As I have argued elsewhere (Zmudy, 2007a), as well as utilizing methods commonly drawn from the positivistic paradigm, for example, the use of paper and pencil inventories to measure hypothesized outcomes; such work should also draw from the critical and interpretive paradigms, particularly in terms of data collection and analysis methods employed.

Purpose and Theoretical Framework

Sport pedagogy researchers have made great strides in their efforts to discover the characteristics of effective physical education lessons by employing what has become known as the ecological or task structures perspective (Curtner-Smith, Todorovich, Lacon, & Kerr, 1999; Doyle, 1977, 1979, 1983, 1986; Doyle & Carter, 1984; Griffin, Siedentop, & Tannehill, 1998; Jones, 1992; Hastie, 1995, 1997, 2000; Hastie & Siedentop, 1999; Tousignant & Siedentop, 1983). This perspective examines various
systems and structures which are created by the interaction of teachers and pupils during lessons. With the exception of Hastie (1995), to date, sport pedagogy researchers have not used this theoretical perspective to guide studies of instruction in adventure education. Therefore, as part of a larger study of adventure education, the purpose of the research reported in this paper was to describe the task structures and ecology which existed in two consecutive 7-day summer adventure camps.

The Ecological/Task Structures Perspective

Researchers of classroom ecology, (Allen, 1986; Doyle, 1977, 1979, 1983, 1986) view teaching as consisting of a series of tasks and have identified three important ‘task structure systems’ which serve to steer and guide the processes which unfold during instruction. These are the instructional task system, the managerial task system, and the student social system.

The instructional task system focuses on student learning and consists of the various learning activities in which students engage. According to Doyle (1979), this system is filled with ambiguity and risk for students, the former resulting from the lack of clear understanding about the standards and types of performance they are expected to produce for a given task, the latter being the product of the likelihood of failure in terms of reaching these expectations. Not surprisingly, therefore, students put much effort into reducing ambiguity and risk during task performance by asking the teacher questions about the tasks, particularly those with which they are unfamiliar. For this reason, students are likely to spend less time asking questions when presented with familiar tasks and, hence, spend more time engaged in them (Doyle, 1977; Doyle & Carter, 1984).
The effectiveness of the instructional task system can be undermined if the managerial task system is weak (Doyle & Carter, 1984). This system is created by establishing a set of rules, routines, and expectations which serves to bring order and organization to a classroom and which facilitates student engagement in instructional tasks (Doyle, 1986; Emmer, Evertson, & Anderson, 1980; Evertson & Anderson, 1979; Evertson & Emmer, 1982; Sanford, Emmer, & Clements, 1983). The managerial task system, then, is foundational and makes it possible for learning to occur (Miller & Hall, 2005).

The instructional and managerial task systems are obviously interrelated, and collectively form what has been referred to as 'the program of action' (Doyle, 1986) or 'primary vector' (Merritt, 1982) because they provide the momentum, energy, and direction of a lesson (Hastie, 1997). If programs of action/primary vectors are weak they can be pushed off course by 'secondary vectors' (Doyle, 1986) which are initiated by students in an effort to reduce the demands of tasks, weaken accountability, create more interesting tasks, or increase opportunity for socializing (Merritt, 1982).

The student social system was first described by Allen (1986). He noted that a major goal of pupils during schooling was to socialize with each other. This means that teachers often negotiate the degree to which student socializing will be tolerated in a classroom in exchange for engaging in instructional tasks and learning. It also means that teachers' managerial systems are partly constructed with the aim of holding the student social system in check.

Finally, a key concept within the ecology paradigm is that of accountability. Specifically, if students are not held accountable for performing tasks in either the
managerial or instructional task systems they will not take them seriously or perform them properly (Doyle, 1983).

*Task Structures in Physical Education*

Hastie and Siedentop (1999) explained that most ecological studies of physical education have mirrored classroom research in that they have also revealed the existence of three main interrelated task systems. Again, these were the managerial task system, instructional task system, and student social system.

Tousignant and Siedentop (1983) were the first to describe some of the task systems present in conventional physical education. As well as describing the kinds of tasks secondary school students completed within the instructional system and the specific rules, routines, and expectations observed in the managerial system, they identified a new system which they termed the transitional system. Tasks within this system were aimed at setting up equipment or organizing students for a new phase of a lesson.

In addition, Tousignant and Siedentop (1983) noted that differences in task difficulty, task presentation, and accountability led to different degrees of student engagement within instructional tasks. Specifically, if tasks were too difficult, increasing risk, students tended to avoid them. If tasks were too easy, students would modify them to make them more interesting. When task presentation was explicit, students were more likely to engage as the teacher wished. Vague task presentation, however, promoted off-task behavior. In addition, when students were formally assessed based on minimal participation, they engaged in a good deal of task modification. Evaluation based on
effort produced slightly improved student performance, while evaluation based on performance led to high rates of good quality student engagement.

A number of studies have also focused on how physical education teachers construct their managerial systems. For example, Fink and Siedentop (1989) described how seven American elementary teachers established the rules, routines, and expectations which were the foundation of their instruction early in the year. Critical in this process was the provision of a clear description of routines and allotting time for students to practice them. Similarly, Curtner-Smith et al. (1999) described the rules, routines, and expectations that a sample of 20 British teachers employed within their managerial systems prior to and following the implementation of the NCPE. Key to teacher success was the establishment of starting, stopping, equipment set-up gathering, and organizing routines as well as the expectations that students would learn, give maximum effort, be on-task, and be safe.

Several researchers have also described the student social system as it exists in physical education (Hastie & Siedentop, 1999). For example, Placek (1983) discovered that both pre-service and in-service physical education teachers often placed high levels of importance on student enjoyment and participation and put less emphasis on student learning, a phenomenon which she termed “busy, happy, and good.” This emphasis, then, served to promote the student social system. Worse still, Supaporn, Dodds, and Griffin (2003) concluded that when teacher nurtured the student social system and placed little importance on the instructional and managerial task systems, students were not always busy and it was not certain when and if they were good.
Further, Hastie and Pickwell (1996) observed the 'busy, happy, and good' syndrome during dance lessons taught within secondary physical education and, worryingly, noted that the teacher accepted lower levels of male participation in exchange for less student misbehavior. Again, these factors, in combination with low teacher monitoring, allowed the students' social agenda to prevail. Embedded within some physical education ecologies, then, is a negotiating protocol in which teachers offer to reduce the standards within their instructional system if students will comply with their management system (Hastie & Siedentop, 1999).

In contrast to the findings of studies of more conventional models of physical education, research of sport education (Carlson & Hastie, 1997; Hastie, 2000) indicated that the student social system supported the instructional and managerial systems. Instead of competing with instructional tasks or falling foul of managerial protocols, socializing was encouraged and nurtured. For example, student socializing led to the realization of some of the key goals of the model including teamwork, cooperation, leadership, and the creation of a festive and authentic sporting atmosphere.

Similarly, during a study of a week-long adventure education unit, taught within secondary school physical education, Hastie (1995) found that student involvement in instructional tasks was high even though they were not held accountable through formal grading. This was because ambiguity and risk were easily manipulated by the students so they could work at a level congruent with their ability. Further, student socializing served to promote greater participation in the instructional tasks. Moreover, social tasks were clearly explained by teachers so students were able to clearly identify the ways in which the social and instructional tasks were linked within what Hastie (1995) referred to as 'a
large social experience' (p. 91). This meant that there was no need for students to communicate with each other in a clandestine manner in order to avoid being detected by the teacher or to be concerned that socializing would inhibit their ability to do well in the unit.

**Method**

**Participants**

Two adventure educators (AEs) who were also licensed physical education teachers were the participants in this study. Joel was 23 years of age, possessed a master's degree, and was finishing his first year working at a high school. Nancy was 24 years of age, also possessed a master's degree, and was finishing her first year of teaching at an elementary school. Joel and Nancy were novice AEs and had 4 years and 1 year's experience, respectively, of teaching adventure education within their respective schools and at camps run by outside agencies.

Thirty-one elementary and middle school aged children also participated in the study. Five boys and 10 girls aged from 9 to 14 years attended the first camp. Nine boys and seven girls aged from 10 to 14 years attended the second camp. The socioeconomic status (SES) of most of the students was middle class. Two of the students were of Asian/Pacific Islander descent, while 29 were Caucasian. The AEs, students, and their parents consented to their participation in the study in line with the author's institutional review board policy on human subjects.

**Setting**

The two consecutive week-long adventure camps were conducted in the American midwest in a town of approximately of 54,000. Students arrived at 8:00 a.m., were taught
one activity by Nancy and Joel from 8:30 to noon, and had a lunch break from 12:00 to 12:30. They took part in a second activity from 12:30 to 4:00 and were provided with an afternoon snack before being collected by their guardians or parents at 5:00.

The adventure coordinator from the local university organized the camps and, consequently, much of the instruction took place on his university campus which had excellent facilities. Nancy and Joel designed the camps' curriculum. Their first objective was that students learn to participate in several outdoor pursuits including canoeing, camping, swimming, hiking, indoor rock climbing, and caving. Their second goal was to promote personal and social growth and a sense of affiliation among the students. Finally, while participating on a ropes course consisting of standard low and high elements, the aim was to move the students through Rhonke's (1989) seven stages of adventure.

Data Collection

Data collection was guided by the constructs within the ecological/task structures perspective. The key data collection technique employed was non-participant observation. AEs and students were observed during all facets of the camps and extensive field notes were taken. Participant observation was also utilized occasionally when it appeared advantageous to take part in the activities or to aid the AEs for short time periods. Field notes about what transpired on these occasions were typed as soon after the observation as possible.

The AEs were asked to reflect on anything salient by keeping an electronic journal. Further, they allowed all written documents they developed (e.g., plans and evaluation materials) to be examined. In addition, they were asked to complete two critical incident report forms per day. These forms were similar to that designed by
O'Sullivan and Tsangaridou (1992). The first required the AEs to describe anything of general significance which had occurred during the day, while the second required them to note significant issues within their instruction and management or concerned with the social interactions of their students.

Two hour-long, formal, semi-structured interviews (Patton, 1990) were conducted with each of the AEs. All four interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. In addition, each week the AEs also completed one stimulated recall interview. Again, these were tape recorded and transcribed. During these interviews AEs observed 30-minute segments of their teaching which had been videotaped. The protocol allowed for the AEs to pause videotape whenever they wished to comment on task structures and ecology. On 20 occasions, the AEs were required to "think aloud" while planning. This enabled their thoughts about their instruction and management to be tape recorded and transcribed.

Two types of interviewing were also conducted with the students. First, whenever possible, they were informally interviewed during the course of camp activities or during periods of transition between activities. Field notes were typed as soon after the conclusion of these interviews as possible. Second, 60-minute focus group interviews were conducted with groups of three to six students. During these interviews, students were asked about the various tasks they completed, the AEs' managerial and leadership styles, and the opportunities they had for socializing. Again, these interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

Data Analysis

Constructs from the task ecological/task structures paradigm also guided the data analysis process. Based on these constructs, data were coded and categorized so as to
inform about the instructional approaches, managerial protocols, social interactions, and other systems which emerged from the adventure camps. In congruence with Goetz and LeCompte (1984), credibility and trustworthiness were established by seeking negative and discrepant cases, crosschecking the accuracy of results from the various data collection techniques, and by extending invitations to Joel and Nancy to review and provide feedback on the analysis at regular intervals.

Results and Discussion

As in previous research of the classroom and school-based physical education, three main task systems were identified. These were the instructional, managerial, and student social systems. In addition, two systems unique to adventure education were uncovered. These were labeled as the exploratory and atmospheric systems.

*Instructional System*

Joel and Nancy set up a fairly traditional instructional system in that their main mode of instruction was direct. In Mosston and Ashworth’s (2001) terms, they primarily employed reproductive teaching styles, particularly the practice style, in which they made most of the decisions. Typically, Joel and Nancy presented a task in a fair amount of detail, the students responded, and the two AEs provided both technical and motivational feedback. As illustrated in the following field note extract, these two forms of feedback were the major mode by which the AEs held the students accountable for performing tasks.

As we are entering the cave, Joel and Nancy tell the children to stay together with the group, to know the whereabouts of their partner at all times, to respect the bats in the cave by not touching them and by not shining lights on them for more than a couple of seconds at a time, and to maintain several points of contact with the ground as it is uneven and the rocks are slippery. Nancy gives a demonstration of how to move with three points of contact touching the ground. Nancy then
explains, "I was making sure that everyone was going to be safe going down the rope and stuff, and getting into a position that they felt comfortable and stable, that they weren't going to go falling into the cave or anything like that."

The students appeared to be very comfortable with this form of direct instruction and noted that Joel and Nancy "picked a lot of good activities" and were "strong leaders" because "they . . . talked us through [tasks] and set up things and helped us do things." Key reasons for their comfort, then, appeared to be the lack of ambiguity in the tasks they were asked to perform and the fact that there was no risk of formal failure in terms of performing the tasks.

As portrayed in the following field note passages, the students were also comfortable when the two AEs occasionally slipped into reciprocal teaching and required them to provide feedback, or employed the guided discovery teaching style:

The AEs have gathered the students in a circle and are telling them exactly how to put on their harnesses for the high ropes course. The group is asked to wait until the AEs provide a demonstration and to not proceed on their own. Once each student has on a harness the students are asked to raise two hands in the air. Each student is allowed to put down a hand after another student checks his/her harness for proper safety. Each student's harness is, therefore, checked twice.

While preparing for canoeing, Joel is using a series of questions to teach the children about the boats and paddles. For example, he asks, "How do you think you should hold the paddle for a power stroke?" The children are paying close attention. The pace of the lesson is moderate, and ample time is given for the students to answer.

As well as increasing the amount of on-task behavior by explaining tasks in detail and providing a good deal of technical feedback, the AEs also appeared to decrease the amount of task avoidance and modification by pitching tasks at the correct level of difficulty or employing a modified version of Mosston and Ashworth's (2001) inclusion style in which they accepted a range of specified performances for one task. For example, when heading to the cave,
The kids were very eager to get to the cave and wasted no time at all moving up the steep hill on a muddy trail, and the trail was very slippery. Some students moved with careful footing, some used a rope tied to a tree by Joel for assistance, and some simply crawled up on their hands and knees!

In general, the students made few attempts to deflect the path of the primary vector which was mostly robust and aimed at teaching the various outdoor pursuits. There were times, however, when the AEs' presentation of tasks was vague or confusing, the amount of feedback they supplied was negligible, and, consequently, the students' performance of tasks was "weak." For example, during a trust-building activity called the "zipper line" the following problems were observed:

The students go about the task half-heartedly at best. Joel demonstrates but is forced to slow down because the students are not moving their arms quickly enough. Joel does not really say anything about this problem. Consequently, the students who follow are also forced to slow down and the trust aspect is not as rich as was intended.

Moreover, there were times when the AEs clearly lowered the standards within the instructional system in exchange for compliance with the management system. For example, the AEs decided not to require the students to take part in "compass activities" because "some students that didn't like [them] would've made it really hard on us."

Management System

Both Joel and Nancy were well aware of the necessity for establishing a strong management system which involved "laying down some basic ground rules," and "explaining [their] expectations." Key rules and expectations which the AEs relayed to the students during group discussions at the beginning of the camps were "1) be respectful of others and don't make fun of people; 2) let the AEs know when you have to go to the bathroom; 3) be safe; and 4) listen and be attentive to directions." In addition, the AEs set about establishing a number of major routines. These were "meeting everyday at 8:00 a.m."
at the ropes course classroom to store personal gear (e.g. lunches, jackets), transitioning into activity quickly by using a buddy system, and not wasting time when the AEs give the call to gather the group for instruction.

Initially, the AEs reinforced their rules, routines, and expectations much as they would have done in a school setting. This they did by reminding students of rules and expectations when they were broken or not met, and practicing, rehearsing, or re-teaching routines. As the camps evolved, however, increasingly, the parent/guardian chaperones who attended with many of the students essentially took over the role of enforcing and reinforcing the managerial system to the extent that Joel and Nancy "had less responsibility in the management department."

Generally, the parental takeover was fairly successful in that the chaperones tended to deal with their charges quickly and quietly when the management system was threatened. Consequently, although the AEs were "not sure what to expect" for the most part they "really enjoyed having [the chaperones] around for extra support." In addition, the AEs recognized that, due to the presence of the chaperones, "the students were much better listeners and on task so [the camps were] an easier and more enjoyable experience . . . because [they were] able to do more teaching and leading, rather than more disciplinary stuff."

On the downside, at times the presence of the chaperones appeared to undermine the AEs' authority and both lamented that "the kids don't really listen to us. They always look to the parents for guidance on what to do." Moreover, because the chaperones were regarded as the enforcers of the managerial system by the students and the AEs became used to not dealing with managerial issues, on the occasions when parents/guardians were
not present the system was severely weakened. Key problems which ensued included students’ “talking while [the AEs] were talking,” “messing with each other,” and “testing” the AEs.

**Social System**

To a large extent, the student social system in operation was embedded within Joel and Nancy’s interpretation of adventure education and so served to facilitate the instructional and managerial systems rather than compete with them. For example, the AEs’ goals of promoting personal and social growth and developing a sense of affiliation among students could not be achieved without encouraging students to socialize. In addition, several of Rhonke’s (1989) stages of adventure also required the students to socialize or work together in groups (e.g., warm-up activities, communication activities, trust-building activities). Finally, to achieve a high standard of performance in many of the outdoor pursuits required a good deal of communication among the students. As illustrated by the following interview extracts, Joel and Nancy recognized the fact that the student social system had a mainly positive impact on their instruction and management:

I think the activities in themselves prevent having to do a lot of disciplinary action because they’re something new and fun for the kids to do and they don’t get to do them a lot, and they get really excited about doing them. So I think the kids know that they kind of need to be on their best behavior. (Nancy)

At the ropes course, the social aspect was one of the most important things. The students spent a good deal of time in the morning playing games designed to allow the kids to get to know one another better and differently and to talk to each other extensively. (Joel)

In line with previous literature, socializing was also a top priority for the students whose reasons for attending the camps included “having fun” and “meeting new friends.” Unfortunately, and as alluded to in the previous two sections, this drive to socialize did
occasionally clash with the instructional and managerial systems, usually in the form of interruptions or "not listening" closely when tasks were being presented.

In addition, there were times when Joel and Nancy sacrificed instructional goals and allowed students to socialize in exchange for compliance with managerial goals or because of a change in their priorities. For example, Joel explained how he "bargained" with the students: "I'll say, 'let's do this for a little while,' and then we'll do something that I think they might have more fun doing." Similarly, Nancy recalled that "canoeing didn't get done... because the kids were having a good time swimming. And as long they're happy and having a good time here, that's all we really cared about."

*Exploratory and Atmospheric Systems*

The exploratory and atmospheric systems were both extensions of the instructional and social systems. The exploratory system involved the students collectively morphing an activity (as opposed to a task within an activity) presented to them by the instructors into "an adventure" in which some aspect of the environment was explored with tremendous enthusiasm. Importantly, the AEs supported these adventures and they were compatible with the management system. For example, during a break within a canoeing trip, the students explored every part of what they called "Adventure Island." Similarly, during a caving trip, "the group began moving through the different spaces in the cave... checking out as many places as they could find."

The atmospheric system consisted of tasks used by the AEs to purposefully create a "warm and inviting" climate, "make the kids feel as comfortable as possible," "make sure everyone feels part of the group," and nurture students' personal and social development.
Again, the tasks designed within the ropes course sessions based on Rohnke's (1989) seven-stage model played a major role in this system.

Summary and Conclusions

This study uncovered the five task structure systems which made up the ecology of two adventure camps for children and youth. The instructional and managerial systems were very similar to those previously described by classroom (e.g., Doyle, 1977, 1979, 1983, 1986; Doyle & Carter, 1984) and sport pedagogy researchers (e.g., Tousignant & Siedentop, 1983), while the exploratory and atmospheric systems had not previously been identified and appeared somewhat unique to adventure education.

Moreover, the social system was similar to those observed within sport education (Carlson & Hastie, 1997; Hastie, 2000) and adventure education (Hastie, 1995) within school-based physical education in that it mainly served to support the instructional and managerial systems rather than compete with them as in more traditional models of teaching. However, the fact that there was at least some tension between the social and instructional systems during task presentation within the present study is an important departure from Hastie's (1995) conclusion that student socializing was not problematic in the adventure education setting.

Another key difference from Hastie's (1995) school-based study is that the responsibility for enforcing the management system was gradually taken on by parental chaperones, which was both advantageous and difficult for the AEs. Since this is a structure that AEs operating outside the school context are likely to encounter with increasing frequency given current concerns regarding liability, it would seem sensible that those training AEs talk to their charges about how to form good working relationships with parents. Perhaps the focus of these discussions should
be on the need for AEs to retain overall responsibility for management and to provide clear guidelines as to what is expected of chaperones.

There are, of course, other implications for AE training from this and similar studies. First, having some understanding of the ecological paradigm in general and the ecologies of different types and interpretations of adventure education in particular would surely help neophyte AEs learn their trade. Specific guidance as to how to construct a foundational managerial system within the adventure setting would also obviously be of use as would practical advice on how to provide students, particularly those of a nervous disposition, with instructional tasks which are low risk and unambiguous. Those responsible for AE preparation might also do well to focus on pedagogies which enable AEs to ensure that the student social system contributes to, rather than detracts from, their instruction and management. Finally, teaching AEs methods by which they could nurture the exploratory and atmospheric systems could also lead to their increased effectiveness.
CHAPTER III

STUDENT PARTICIPATION STYLES IN ADVENTURE EDUCATION

Adventure education has a long standing history in American schools as well as internationally (Neill, 2004; Outward Bound, 2006). Indeed, its roots can be traced back to the works of Plato around 400 BC (Hunt, 1990). According to Stetson (2005), a key figure in developing adventure education was Kurt Hahn. Born in 1886 in Berlin, Hahn's dream of pursuing peace through education (Hahn, 1920) was realized through the development of the Salem School in his native Germany in 1920, Gordonstoun School in Scotland in 1934, the County Badge Scheme for Holt's Blue Funnel Shipping Company in 1940, and the first Outward Bound School in Aberdovey, Wales in 1941.

Outward Bound then expanded to England, Kenya, Canada, Australia, Singapore, the United States, and parts of Asia during the 1950s and 1960s (Outward Bound, 2006). In 1970, Jerry Pieh, the principal of the Hamilton-Wenham High School in Massachusetts, launched an initiative to start Project Adventure (Neill, 2006). Arguably, Project Adventure has since become the major organization through which adventure education experiences for youth are delivered in the United States and in much of the rest of the world.

Outside of specialist schools, adventure education has had a checkered history in terms of getting established and accepted as part of the school curriculum. In the United States, however, the inclusion of adventure education and outdoor pursuits in the national
benchmarks and content standards for physical education in the early 1990s (NASPE, 1991) gave the subdiscipline a huge boost and it now seems as though it is here to stay. Similarly, the inclusion of adventure education in other countries’ official educational policy documents has also given it a strong foothold in physical education curricula. In Britain, for example, “outdoor and adventurous activities” have been included as part of the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) since the early 1990s (Department of Education and Science & the Welsh Office, 1992; Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007). Not surprisingly, then, adventure education has evolved into a widely recognized and accepted professional field (Association for Challenge Course Technology [ACCT], 2004; Wurdinger & Steffen, 2003).

Adventure Education Models

Several “experiential’ learning models have been utilized by adventure educators (AEs) in the recent past (e.g., see Dewey, 1938/1997; Joplin, 1995; Priest & Gass, 1997). Arguably, the most widely used of these models was developed by Rhonke (1989). In this model, AEs use outdoor and adventurous activities (e.g., kayaking, canoeing, backpacking, scuba diving) as a medium through which to achieve a number of physical and psychosocial goals. Specifically, students are required to move through seven stages of adventure education. These stages comprise activities aimed at helping students form acquaintances, activities intended to break down students inhibitions, activities aimed at promoting students' ability to communicate, solve problems, and build trust, and activities which enable students to tackle group challenges on low ropes course elements and individual challenges on high ropes course elements (ACCT, 2004; Wurdinger & Steffen, 2003).
Many adventure education experiences within the seven stages of adventure are predicated on Kolb’s model of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984: in Evans et al., 1998). Kolb outlined the experiential learning process in four distinct yet interconnected phases. In the first phase, students experience an activity, while in the second AEs employ pedagogies which require students to engage in observation and reflection. In the third phase, students are required to form of concepts and generalizations; and in the fourth phase they are placed in situations where they must apply newly learned concepts in different situations. For example, communication skills learned and debriefed during communication activities are applied to solving problems and building trust in later stages. Further, the newly attained skills are then applied to life outside the adventure program. As emphasized by Joplin (1995), importantly, this model of experiential learning includes both action and reflection on the part of the participants.

Research of Adventure Education

Adventure education researchers have mainly focused on discovering whether or not programming has a positive impact on participants’ self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-esteem (see, for example, McKenzie, 2003; Paxton, 1999; Priest, 1996) as well any general therapeutic benefits for participants (see, for example, Autry, 2001; Gass, 1993; Kelley & Coursey, 1997; Neill, 2003). These studies have generally indicated that participants are indeed affected positively by adventure education.

A few researchers have also studied the impact of adventure education on the physiology of participants (e.g., Bunting et al., 2000; Watts & Drobish, 1998). Findings from this line of research indicate that participants' physiological responses vary depending on physical as well as emotional stressors during the activities. For example,
during high stress adventure activities, participants with higher fitness levels have lower neuroendocrine responses than do participants with lower fitness levels (e.g., Bunting et al.).

In recent years, a few sport pedagogy researchers have also investigated the impact of adventure and cooperative education programs in schools on both teachers (Dyson, 1996) and students (Dyson, 2001, 2002; Dyson et al., 2004; Grenier et al., 2005). Results of this work revealed that adding an adventure education component to the physical education curriculum increased student enjoyment and learning because teachers valued effort as much as performance, students felt less threatened, and the gymnasium became more inclusive.

One weakness in the study of adventure education to date is the over-reliance on the positivistic paradigm in general and pre-post designs concerned solely with outcomes rather than processes of teaching in particular (Baldwin, Persing, & Magnuson, 2004; Brown, 2006). Indeed, mainstream sport pedagogy researchers realized that “black box” experiments yielded little useful information about instructional effectiveness some 30 years ago (Locke, 1977). A second and major criticism leveled at the current body of adventure education research has been the “over-reliance on paper and pencil measurements of attitudes, most notably self-concept” (Ewert, 1987, p. 23). For this reason Brown noted the need for more research of adventure education in which AE and student behaviors are examined. Going a stage further, and as I have suggested elsewhere (Zmudy, 2007a, 2007b), there is also clearly a need for researchers of adventure education to begin to expand their horizons and ask different types of questions which
will necessitate drawing from the methodologies commonly associated with the interpretive and critical paradigms.

Theoretical Framework and Purpose

Although relatively few studies have been conducted in this line, a handful of sport pedagogy researchers with a critical bent have contributed much to the literature on physical education teaching by examining the ecology of the gymnasium and sports field and describing the participation styles of children, youth, and young adults (Bain, 1985, Bennett, 2000; Griffin, 1984, 1985; Pope & O'Sullivan, 2003). These studies have indicated, in several and varied American physical education settings, that all students do not have the same experiences. On the contrary, groups of students within the same class often have vastly different experiences. Unfortunately, the studies have also indicated that these different participation styles can serve to make students' experiences of physical education inequitable at best and the instructional climate dysfunctional at worst. Specifically, the various participation styles of children and youth described to date appear to form layered hierarchies with those students at the bottom suffering humiliation and misery and those at the top learning to dominate and bully. Not surprisingly, in these kinds of classrooms conventional goals of physical education are impossible to meet.

A classic example of a dysfunctional hierarchy of participation styles was described by Griffin (1985). While observing team sport units in middle school physical education, Griffin described five styles of participation for the boys in a mixed-gender class. These were machos, junior machos, nice guys, invisible players, and wimps. Machos were in the middle of the action, very skillful, aggressive, and loud. They often belittled their classmates, but were seen as leaders by other students. Junior machos were
a notch below the machos because they were physically less imposing and less skillful. Their behavior mimicked that of the machos except that while their “superiors” ignored well-skilled girls in the class, junior machos often put them down. Nice guys were frequently as skilled as machos but they did not verbally or physically abuse other boys, and generally treated girls as equals. Invisible players interacted with other students infrequently, gave the impression of being involved in games when they really were not, and were consequently rarely marked by opposition players or passed to by players on their own teams. Finally, wimps were poorly skilled and, if they were permitted to take part in games, they were peripheral to the main action. Moreover, they were abused and teased by machos, junior machos, and some girls.

At the completion of her study, Griffin (1985) concluded that boys who did not conform with accepted patterns of male behavior (e.g., be competitive and tough) were, as much victims of gender-role stereotyping as girls. In addition, she noted that children whose self-worth was based on the humiliation of others whom they considered different needed as much counseling as those who were victimized. Without this counseling, she believed physical education would be a venue where some well-skilled boys gained a perverted sense of superiority and girls and poorly skilled boys would be condemned to misery and failure.

Griffin (1984) also described a similar and equally disturbing hierarchy for middle school girls in the same setting. At the top of the hierarchy were well-skilled athletes who were highly involved in class activities and foremost in the teacher’s thoughts. Junior varsity players were less skilled and sometimes as keen as the athletes and at other times appeared disinterested in lesson proceedings. Cheerleaders were not
interested in participating in games at all but were enthusiastic about their teams' progress. *Lost souls* were poorly skilled and often afraid, confused, quiet, and subdued. *Femme fatales* had a wide range of skill levels, were totally disinterested in the sports and games being taught, and consumed by their appearance and with attracting boys. Finally, *system beaters* used all means possible to avoid participation in physical education. The primary tool by which this goal was accomplished was the securing of written excuse notes from various authority figures, such as parents, other teachers, and doctors.

A third study conducted by Pope and O'Sullivan (2003) revealed that during poorly supervised “open gym” sessions within a high school and in various community settings, students manufactured a hierarchy in which youth sport experiences were dominated by physically aggressive, large, and relatively skilled African American boys. This dominant group dictated that most available space would be used for the playing of basketball games. In order for new boys to gain a place at the top of the hierarchy and be permitted to play, they had to have the right physical characteristics and “serve time” (p. 311) in the gym. This meant that the majority of students were not invited or permitted to participate in games and merely “survived.” For this reason, Pope and O'Sullivan noted that their study had revealed a type of “Darwinism in the gym” (p. 311).

Two studies of university fitness and weight training activity classes by Bain (1985) and Bennett (2000) did not reveal the same kind of hierarchy as found in the aforementioned studies of school students. Nevertheless, they identified a number of participation styles which, again, indicated that different groups of students in the same classes had radically different experiences. Bain (1985), for instance, classified the students she observed as *serious runners, serious walkers, social interactors,* and
absentees and noted that students in the social interactor and absentee groups made comparatively little effort to participate in class activities. Similarly, Bennett (2000) found that the students he studied fell into either the “slackin’” or “sweatin’” groups. Moreover, the slacker group consisted of subgroups Bennett termed socializers, manipulators, underachievers, and minimalists; while the sweatin’ group comprised ex-athletes and their side-kicks.

Participation Styles in Adventure Education

Adventure education is typically portrayed as providing a highly equitable and supportive environment for all participating children. It is generally thought that students enrolled in an adventure education program universally gain much that is good from the experience. The suggestion, then, is that there is only one participation style for pupils in adventure education and it is a positive one. To my knowledge, however, there have been no studies which verify or refute this sentiment. As part of a larger study of adventure education, the purpose of this study, therefore, was to describe the participation styles of children enrolled in two consecutive week-long summer adventure camps.

Method

Participants

The primary participants in this study were 31 elementary and middle school students. In attendance at the first camp were 10 girls and 5 boys ranging in age from 9 to 14 years. Seven girls and nine boys attended the second camp. Their ages ranged from 10 to 14 years. The majority of the campers were from middle income backgrounds. Twenty-nine campers were Caucasian and two were of Asian/Pacific Islander descent.
The secondary participants in the study were the two novice AEs responsible for carrying out all the instruction at the camps. Both AEs were licensed physical education specialists. Nancy was 24 years old with a masters' degree and a first year elementary physical education teacher with approximately 4 years' experience as an AE. Joel was 23 years old, also held a master's degree, and was a first year high school physical education teacher with approaching 1 year of experience as an AE.

Setting

The adventure camps took place during the summer in a midwestern American town of 54,000. The camps were organized by the adventure coordinator of the local university where the two AEs had trained; hence, many of the activities in which the children engaged took place on the university campus.

Joel and Nancy were responsible for planning the curriculum for the camps. Their goal was to move through the stages of adventure (Bisson, 1997, 1998, 1999; Rhonke, 1989; Wurdinger & Steffen, 2003) while pupils worked on low and high ropes courses, and to facilitate pupil growth and group affiliation while experiencing and learning the skills involved in a variety of outdoor and adventurous activities including hiking, canoeing, caving, and indoor rock climbing. Campers also engaged in an overnight camping trip each week which included swimming, hiking, and orienteering. Crafts and group games also supplemented the main activities.

Typically, the children arrived at 8:00 a.m., engaged in activity from 8:30 to noon, and ate lunch from 12:00 to 12:30. They engaged in a second activity from 12:30 to 4:00, consumed an afternoon snack and were picked up by their parents or guardians at 5:00.
The AEs, students, and their parents gave consent for their participation in the study in accordance with the author’s institutional review board policy on human subjects.

Data Collection

Eight qualitative techniques were used to collect data about the children’s participation styles. The main source of data was non-participant observation. Extensive field notes were taken based on observations made of the campers throughout the 2 weeks. On occasion, participant observation was also employed. This involved joining in activities for short periods of time. Field notes based on these observations were made as soon after they were completed as possible.

Focus group interviews, approximately 1 hour in length, were completed each week with groups of three to six campers. These interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. During these interviews, campers were asked about their participation styles. In addition, informal interviews were conducted with the campers and AEs whenever possible and appropriate. Again, notes were made on the contents of these interviews as soon after they had concluded as possible.

Formal, semi-structured interviews (Patton, 1990) lasting approximately 1 hour were conducted once each week with each of the AEs. These interviews were also tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. One stimulated recall interview with each AE was also conducted during each week. These interviews involved the AEs watching half-hour videotaped segments of their instruction and stopping the videotape intermittently so they could comment on the campers’ participation styles. Again, these interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim.
Two completed critical incident report forms written in the format developed by O'Sullivan and Tsangaridou (1992) were collected from the AEs each day. The first of these reports requested the AEs to note anything they found significant during their working day generally. The second involved the AEs reporting anything noted as significant about their instruction and management as well as the social behaviors of the campers. Finally, at each day's end, the AEs each reflected on anything they found pertinent in an electronic journal.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using standard interpretive methods (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Constructs from the ecology paradigm guided the analysis process so that data were categorized and coded in a form which shed light on the participation styles of the campers. Following Goetz and LeCompte, searches for discrepant and negative cases and cross-checking the accuracy of findings from the different data collection techniques were used to establish data credibility and trustworthiness. The AEs were also invited to review and provide feedback on the analysis at regular intervals.

Findings

Nine participation styles were identified among the boys and girls who attended the two adventure camps. These were (a) go getters, (b) explorers, (c) limelight seekers, (d) fear conquerors, (e) chickens, (f) light hikers, (g) ground supporters, (h) rough housers, and (i) mini-rough housers.

Go Getters

The go getter group consisted of four older boys and girls. Go getters were campers who wanted to really “go for it.” They were out to impress everyone with their
exploits, were leaders whom most other campers wanted to mimic, and were “very adventurous during the activities” to the extent that they did not always follow the AEs’ directions. Go getters usually accepted and completed difficult tasks and challenges. If they did have technical or psychological difficulties performing activities, they were skilled at disguising the fact and managed to convince their peers that this was not the case and that they were “not scared.” For example, Allen, a 12-year-old go getter who was accused of “shaking” on the high multi-vine by his friends, explained that he was actually “bending down [and that] maybe on the way back my legs were shaking because of the wire.” Behavior and reactions typical of go getters are described in the following field note extracts:

During the arts and crafts activity of making tie dye shirts, James, a 14-year-old boy, jumps up and starts to climb a tree. He is pleased with his audience and is directed by the AEs not to go any higher, but he protests and says, “I can make it!” The other campers continue to look on in wonder at his disregard for the AEs’ directions. During the climb James gets stuck, but acts as if it is part of the plan.

On the high ropes course, Laura, a 12-year-old girl, climbs up the pamper pole with no problem. She pulls the rope to get the trapeze swinging in her favor so that she can attempt to catch it following her jump. When asked what she thought of the pamper pole she says with a big smile “it was really fun!”

Explorers

Four boys and girls ranging in age from 10 to 12 years were categorized as explorers. Explorers were much quieter and a little less skilled than go getters but, nevertheless, were fairly competent and successful. They were comparatively aloof and insular, “liked participating, but did not “like to go first.” Importantly, they were not interested in attracting attention to themselves. Moreover, they tended to tackle activities by experimenting on their own and without asking for assistance or advice from the AEs.
or their peers. It was rare for an explorer not to complete a task. The following field note excerpts illustrate the kinds of behaviors in which explorers engaged:

On the ropes course, Joel, the AE, is trying to re-focus some boys by asking them to give some support to Sasha, a 10-year-old girl. When asked how she is doing during the multi-vine Sasha answers “I don’t know,” and continues on walking across. She has a very even expression on her face, and she does not say another word during the rest of the high element. She is quiet even after she reaches the ground.

Isaac, a 10-year-old boy, is proficiently walking across the high cat walk. He is doing just fine, looking straight ahead. When asked what he thinks, he simply says “scary.” Later he says “it’s kind of getting harder.” Isaac is true explorer.

**Limelight Seekers**

Limelight seekers also spanned the age range and included one girl and two boys. Limelight seekers were capable of completing most activities and, in the main, were willing to do so. While they generally had no real fear of participation, they often reacted to situations that might frighten other less skilled campers in an overly dramatic and “fake” fashion. This behavior was aimed at getting the attention of their peers and the AEs.

Limelight seekers often screamed in the middle of an activity. For example, on more than one occasion, Janice, a prime example of a limelight seeker, shrieked “Oh my god! Oh my god!” Other campers asked their peers and the AEs for compliments or took long pauses during activities to create what I came to call the “I don’t know if I can make it!” effect. All the while, limelight seekers were usually smiling, laughing, and obviously enjoying themselves. The following field note passages illustrate behaviors that were typical of limelight seekers:

As Janice gets off the cat walk, she exclaims “Wow!” and kisses the ground several times as her audience of many appears pleased. A little later on, Janice goes up the cat walk again. “I never thought I would do this again!” She is acting as if she is stuck, but no one says anything except Joel, the AE. Janice cruises right across the cat walk and has absolutely no problems.
Adrian, a 10-year-old boy, is climbing the multi-vine. He is smiling and says "it is scary!" Adrian is wobbling but smiling. He yells "I can't do it!" a couple of times but continues to move without a problem and completes the element.

**Fear Conquerors**

One boy and two girls ranging in age from 10 to 12 years were classified as fear conquerors. Fear conquerors were generally nervous about participating and often downright frightened by some activities. Consequently, an "oh my gosh" was never far from their lips. Unlike the limelight seekers, they were unlikely to attempt activities without a good deal of encouragement and motivational feedback from the AEs and their peers. Providing they received this kind of support, however, they usually completed tasks even though they were more than relieved to be finished. Typical of the field note descriptions of fear conquerors' behaviors were the following:

Alice is on the high cat walk at the ropes course and is saying she is nervous. She does seem genuinely nervous, but is willing to do the high element anyway. Nancy, the AE, asks Alice how she is doing and says that she "looks good." Alice says "I am a little freaked out, but I am OK. I want to go all the way across."

Beatrice is on the giant swing at the ropes course. The entire group is chanting her name as she rises in the air, waiting to pull the rip cord on her belay system that will allow her to swing. She is obviously scared of heights and tells the group about this. She agrees to go half way up to the top instead of all the way. When she pulls the rip cord, she winces and closes her eyes. She looks shocked for a moment, then smiles as she is lowered to the ladder to come down.

**Chickens**

A fifth group of one girl and two boys were referred to as "chickens" by their peers and themselves, generally in a sympathetic, as opposed to a spiteful, manner. These children were particularly nervous, easily frightened, lacked self-confidence, and not terribly well-skilled. Not surprisingly, it took a great deal of support from AEs and peers to get chickens to attempt a number of the activities in the first place. As illustrated by the
following field note extracts, in general, these attempts were abandoned pretty quickly
before task completion or ended in failure when, in the campers own words, they
‘thickened out’:

Evan, aged 11, climbs the pole up toward the catwalk, but then decides he does not want to continue. Having got halfway up the pole he says ‘I hate to say this, but I want to come down now.’ He is very polite and not too urgent in his request, but is also serious and does, indeed, climb down. He seems to feel good about his participation and walks away smiling.

Rita, an 11-year-old girl, is quietly looking at the cat walk. She says she made it ‘about half way up the pamper pole, and then came back down.’ Rita says she is ‘not in a hurry to climb again.’ When asked what she thinks of the pamper pole, she says ‘it was really wobbly and scary.’

*Light Hikers*

Two campers were categorized as light hikers. When new activities and tasks were first demonstrated or described, light hikers feigned at least some level of interest. When it came to participating, however, they made little or no effort and often abandoned an activity very quickly. Reasons for this behavior appeared to range from a lack of self-confidence and skill (i.e., similar to the chickens) or a genuine disinterest in the activity or challenge. The following are typical field note descriptions of light hiker behavior:

Tree climbing, again, spontaneously breaks out among some campers. Elena, a 12-year old, runs up to a tree that her friends are already in. She looks up, makes a stretch for a branch she can easily reach, and says ‘Oh, if I can only do it!’ She then jumps up on her toes twice and says, ‘Oh I can’t do it.’ She then turns around and walks away.

During caving, a rock shelf is discovered in the back of one of the caverns. The shelf is full of water, but Joel, the AE, jumps up and crawls back. Joel is immediately soaked from head to toe. Some boys and girls follow and are also soaked. They are all laughing. Gerald, a 14-year old, states three times that he is ‘going to go for it as well!’ However, once Gerald reaches up and gets his hands wet he says ‘there just isn’t time to go for it! See, everyone’s coming back already!’ He does not ever climb up or join in.
Ground Supporters

Three ground supporters were identified among the campers. These children ranged in age from 10 to 14. Ground supporters often decided to exercise their right not to participate in any high level or apparently more risky activities. Rather than losing interest in class proceedings, however, they put a great deal of effort into offering verbal encouragement and compliments to their participating peers. Importantly, this kind of encouragement was spontaneous rather than the result of AE or peer prompting. The following are two examples of ground supporter behavior taken from field notes:

Gary, aged 14, is watching his little sister from a distance as she traverses across the multi-vine, 35 feet in the air. Gary, who has opted out of participating himself, yells "Go Isabelle! You can do it!" He then declares "that's my sister up there. She is all the way up there and I can't even go half way!"

Jerry, a 12-year-old boy, is making his way up the climbing wall with Nancy, the AE, belaying. He is in the process of completing a rather difficult climb. Caitlyn, who has let it be known that she is not going to attempt to climb, is standing by watching and yells out "go Jerry! You got it!"

Rough Housers

The rough house group consisted of six mainly older boys and girls. Rough housers took every opportunity to physically and verbally harass each other. Indeed, they seemed more interested in this agenda than the majority of the activities in which they were asked to participate. To this end, behavior included throwing objects, such as small rocks and wood chips, at each other, liberal use of the "mosquito slap" to the foreheads of peers, making fun of each other during activities, and engaging in excessive "horseplay" whenever possible. For the most part, these activities appeared to be without malice. In addition, they went largely undetected by the AEs, except when they interrupted
instruction. Examples of rough houser behavior are illustrated in the following field note excerpts:

While spending time at the swimming beach following the overnight hike, Jack, Jerry, Rob, Kat, Kayla, and Ebony were pushing each other around, throwing each other off the diving dock, not following the lifeguard’s rules and getting away with it! In addition, they engaged in a trick slide contest with belly flops and invented new methods of “picking on” each other. The lifeguards eventually gave up any attempts at reprimanding the campers.

At the ropes course, there is a group of boys who are play-fighting, pushing, and chasing with sticks. They have been asked by their peers at least three times to stop this action. The AEs have also intervened on three additional occasions. The sticks are finally on the ground, but the action has not stopped. Joel, the male AE, is now trying to re-focus the misbehaving boys by asking them to give some support to Shelly, a 10-year-old girl who is on the multi-vine.

**Mini-Rough Housers**

Mini-rough housers were three younger campers who watched the rough housers carefully, seemed to enjoy what they saw, and so copied their behaviors to an extent.

Their own version of rough housing behavior, however, was watered down and relatively gentle. Moreover, unlike their models, they ceased these behaviors almost as soon as they were asked to do so by the AEs. Typical behaviors exhibited by the mini-rough housers are described in the two field note extracts below:

Three mini-rough housers, Indigo, Betty, and Amy are aged 10, 9, and 10 years, respectively. They are observing the rough housers engaging in a sand fight at the swimming beach. Indigo pretends she is going to dive into the sand, but then stops short, drops to the ground gently and in slow motion, with both hands out, and carefully lies down. Betty and Amy copy Indigo. The three girls eventually also put sand in their swim suits, but only a tiny handful, and only a couple of times.

During breakfast after the overnight camping trip, most of the campers are standing around a table making jokes about how loud and annoying the black birds were at 6:00 a.m. Another one flies by and the kids are joking about it because black birds “don’t fly straight, they kind of fly wavy.” The campers are by pretending to fly like the blackbirds themselves. At the last minute, well after the joking has fizzled out, Betty jumps in and yells out “would you guys please make that bird be quiet!”
Discussion and Conclusions

The main conclusion to be drawn from this study is that it indicated a relatively small group of children participated in the adventure education camps in a number of different styles. These participation styles ensured that the children had differing experiences of adventure education and varying degrees of success. Regardless of whether or not it transfers exactly from setting to setting, this finding, should, in the very least, reinforce that what AEs teach may not be received in the same manner by all their children, a fact to which the relatively inexperienced AEs in the present study seemed fairly oblivious. It should also alert AEs to the different kinds of learning and socialization which can occur in the adventure education setting be they intended or products of the hidden adventure education curriculum.

Interestingly, there were a number of similarities between the participation styles observed in the adventure education setting during the current study and those recorded by Griffin (1984, 1985) during her study of conventional middle school physical education. Specifically, there were some common characteristics among the machos and athletes described by Griffin and the go getters in the present study. In addition, the present study's explorers and Griffin's nice guys, junior machos, and junior varsity players shared several key characteristics without being identical. The current study's limelight seekers revealed elements of Griffin's femme fatales in their behavior and its chickens were somewhat similar to the wimps and lost souls identified by Griffin. Finally, the current study's ground supporters were obviously close to Griffin's cheerleaders, while the light hikers were not dissimilar to Griffin's invisible players.
Despite these similarities, it is important to note that, unlike Griffin's (1984, 1985) work or the study of open gym by Pope and O'Sullivan (2003), the current study did not indicate that a pecking order existed between the various categories of children and, consequently, there was no sign of a layered hierarchy or any bullying. Indeed, regardless of their participation styles, all the children who attended the adventure camps in the current study appeared to take much away from their experiences that was positive. Reasons for this difference may well have been the heavy focus on affective objectives within adventure education, much lower student-teacher ratios, higher levels of supervision and management, and greater instructional intent and skill. It may also be that the setting played a major role and it would be interesting to compare the results of the current study with those of similar studies of adventure education taught within school physical education programs.

Further studies are also obviously needed of other adventure education camps and with different groups of children and youth in order to discover the degree to which the participation styles described in the present study transfer and, perhaps, to uncover new participation styles. As alluded to in the previous paragraph, these studies could add much to the literature by closely examining the link between AEs' pedagogies and the participation styles of their charges. As well as informing and partially shaping initial AE preparation and ongoing training, data from these studies might also lead to AEs developing pedagogies which specifically cater to each or some of the participation styles discovered.
REFERENCES


Association for Challenge Course Technology (2004). *Association for Challenge Course Technology Challenge Course Standards.* Martin, MI: ACCT.


