Responsive pedagogies in secondary school outdoor education: Teachers perspectives and experiences

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Ngā whakaaro o ngā ākonga: Māori student’s experiences and perspectives of outdoor education

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Ka ora and welcome to this winter edition of Te Whakatika, published by Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ). I hope you enjoy the reading, and if this is your first encounter with EONZ, I encourage you and/or your school to become a member of our community and to contribute to discussions about education outside the classroom into the future. As always, letters to the editor and both feature and minor articles are welcomed and can be sent to me via email.

In the last edition of Te Whakatika, Campbell-Price and Cosgriff explored the issue of how schools fund education outside the classroom (EOTC) and more specifically outdoor education. In their article they discussed the well-established value of EOTC that is recognised in the existing policy frameworks, but also highlighted some of the conflicting statements, particularly with regard to utilisation of local communities and environments versus those places further afield including taking students overseas. Their close scrutiny of practice in a number of different schools revealed significant issues, prompting
the conclusion that "fundamental questions of equity related to access still persist" (Campbell-Price & Cosgriff, 2017, p.10). They encouraged readers to consider what learning opportunities are possible if outdoor experiences are seen as a right for all students, not just those who can pay.

This question is a critically important one for educators to consider because we live in a time that is characterised by the greatest inequalities in the distribution of wealth in human history. The perception of Aotearoa New Zealand being an egalitarian society may still exist in the minds of some people, but that perception can no-longer be argued when the reality is that poverty and homelessness are now clearly visible (if you choose to look) in most of our urban and rural communities. But poverty can exist on many levels and the awkward reality is that many people find it hard to make ends meet, despite having jobs and owning their own home, and any additional expenses such as those incurred by children attending school EOTC can create further stress.

But Campbell-Price and Cosgriff’s question can be considered through other lenses besides those who can afford to pay. For example, what learning opportunities are possible if outdoor experiences are seen as a right for all students, not just those who are male or Pakeha or able-bodied? How we grapple with these critical questions in relation to what we do in the outdoors is challenging but also empowering since the conversations can lead us to develop new ways of knowing and doing. Such an exploration is currently underway for school camps, where historically many schools have contracted the services of external providers with little input from teachers or connection to curriculum, and a range of adventure activities have been the focus of the student experience.

The Ministry of Education has funded an EONZ led initiative to critically examine school camp practices, and to develop resources that will empower teachers to embrace place-based and place-responsive pedagogies that are more inclusive, more affordable, and more integrated into local landscapes and communities. The curriculum aligned resources are being developed by Jocelyn Papprill and will be web based and interactive. Early indications are that these tools will provide a valuable resource that will help teachers and schools meet the challenges of delivering school camps into the future.

The articles in this edition of Te Whakatika take up the challenge outlined by Margi Campbell-Price and Marg Cosgriff by exploring what learning opportunities are possible in EOTC, with a particular focus on place based and place responsive approaches to school camps. All four feature articles come from recently completed or nearly completed Masters research and I applaud the authors for sharing their work in an effort to strengthen our understanding of teaching and learning outside the classroom.

In the first feature article, Andrew Skipworth represents the experiences and perspectives of six secondary school teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand who adopt place responsive and/or culturally responsive pedagogies in their outdoor education senior programmes. Skipworth concludes that outdoor education is changing in response to a variety of forces and the critical perspectives of teachers discussed in the article set the scene well for the articles that follow.

In the second feature article, Jean Cory-Wright discusses the importance of mystery and intrigue in outdoor learning experiences. She describes a wonderful shipwreck experience that she has created that anchors a wide variety of learning and reveals her intrigue as an educator when she introduced two plastic guns into the mix and the impact this had on a well-established student group in terms of behaviour and trust.

In the third feature article, Phil Washbourn discusses the experiences of Māori students in a secondary outdoor education programme. His illuminating discussion reveals that much can be done to improve the experiences of Māori in the outdoors by making much stronger links to language and culture.

In the fourth feature article, Jo Thompson writes about working with secondary students engaging with a journey style camp that employed a slow pedagogy. The students reflect on their experiences of finding out about the harbour-scapes beyond the city’s boundaries and they illustrate the sense of joy that comes from discovering more about where they live.
This edition also contains a thought provoking letter to the editor from a parent of a student soon to depart for school camp. The camp in question was for year 5 students at a state school (i.e.: non-secular) and the camp a local Christian camp. In the letter the parent challenges the school’s non-disclosure of religious education for students that was to take place on the camp, the school’s failure to provide opt-out provisions for parents in-line with current Human Rights Commission guidelines, and the original decision by the state school to engage a Christian camp in the first place. This letter raises some intriguing questions about the place of religion in EOTC that I hope to discuss in a future edition.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Te Whakatika, and wish you well for the coming winter months. Please consider sharing your own reflections on the issues facing EOTC through this forum.

Noho ora mai rā, nā Dave

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References

Dear editor

My child attends a state school and she is in year 5. Early in the year we were told that camp for the year 5 students this year was to be held at a local Christian camp. I thought no more of this, until I looked at the camp’s website and realised there would be a compulsory one hour gospel session on one evening of camp. I contacted the school, and asked them:

- Is this the only religious content, or are their other religious rituals (e.g. grace)?
- What is the opt in/opt out process for this religious content?
- Do parents know about the religious content and their right to opt out (as per the Human Rights Commission advice to schools on religious education)?
- What will the children who opt out be doing instead?

At this point I was assured that parents would be advised about the gospel session. However, only two weeks out from camp, a letter home about camp devoted only one sentence to the religious component, obtusely mentioning inclusion of a “30 – 45 minutes values-based programme” and offering the opportunity to ask questions of our child’s teacher about this.

For me, this raised some red flags. I don’t believe that the school adequately informed parents about the right to opt out, nor clearly articulated the religious content. The word ‘values’ indicates what people believe are important to them and values are something that all people possess, regardless of whether they are religious (Christian) or not. The Human Rights Commission advice to schools around religious instruction in schools (or at school events such as camp) states clearly that parents should have the option to opt out of religious instruction, and should be informed about the alternative supervisory arrangements available. I don’t think the school followed due diligence in this area, in terms of being up-front/explicit about the religious component and how late this information came out. I don’t think parents were given opportunity to make an informed decision about whether or not they want their child to attend a Christian camp.

This also raised wider ethical questions for me, in terms of why a state school was supporting a Christian camp (a business) and whether or not this is consistent with the school values, and what the parent community wants. If nothing else, it would be good for the school to consider how information about religious content at camp (if happening in the future) can be better communicated to parents, in line with the Human Rights Commission advice to schools.

Regards,
concerned parent

Responsive pedagogies in secondary school outdoor education: Teachers perspectives and experiences

By Andrew Skipworth

Abstract
A range of factors influence what is delivered as ‘outdoor education’ within secondary schools. The emergence of responsive pedagogies, a spotlight on charging fees for curriculum related expenses and questions about the appropriateness of curricula based solely on Pākehā knowledge systems are examples of issues that influence teacher decision making. In response, many teachers appear to be re-thinking how their outdoor education programmes of learning and units of work might continue to remain relevant in changing times. As changes occur in outdoor education philosophy, so will the shape and form of curriculum field trips, education outside the classroom practices and school camps.

In this paper, I draw on the findings of my thesis (Skipworth, 2017) which was completed as a part of a Master of Education. The paper reports on findings that represent the experiences and perspectives of six secondary school teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand who adopt place responsive and/or culturally responsive pedagogies in their outdoor education senior programmes of units of work. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were used as a means of collecting data, followed by thematic analysis to make meaning of the data. Teacher participants were from the North and South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand, and co-educational and single-sex schools.

Introduction
The landscape of education in secondary schools is undertaking
significant changes that will impact on outdoor education in schools. Programmes such as *Kia Eke Panuku: Building on Success* (2013-2016), which had a primary purpose of "addressing the aspirations of communities by supporting Māori students to pursue their potential" (*Kia Eke Panuku: Building on Success*, n.d.), illustrate a desire to create an education system where all students can flourish. Such programmes are commonly underpinned by the fostering of cultural relationships for responsive pedagogies, which for example, call upon teachers to draw on students' cultural toolkits (Bruner, 1996) and promote and value the knowledge of all learners (Bishop & Glynn, 1999).

Within outdoor education academic dialogue some outdoor education researchers have questioned the appropriateness of traditional outdoor education practices that prioritise personal and social development outcomes (see, e.g., Cosgriff, 2008; Zink & Boyes, 2007). Further, the relevance of these outcomes has also been put into question for both Māori and Pākehā students alike (Cosgriff et al., 2012). Others, such as Brown (2008), suggest that "an authentic outdoor education for Aotearoa New Zealand in the 21st century may be one that seeks to understand the historical and cultural antecedents that have coalesced into the predominantly adventure based, "high impact" and "novel" activity based approaches to education in the outdoors" (p. 21). Tan and Atencio (2016) also argue that teachers of outdoor education need to invest more time in "unpacking the local history, culture and ecology of specific places" (p. 32). How then, are teachers responding to changing times in outdoor education?

It became evident that the teacher participants faced several challenges when adopting place responsive and culturally responsive pedagogies, but the changes they made also brought about exciting new learning pathways for their students. Five key themes emerged in the analysis of the data, which are reported in the following sections.

**Changing pedagogical approaches and mind-sets**

Almost all teacher participants had reviewed and made recent changes to their delivery of senior school outdoor education programmes or units of work. Changing mind-sets about the shape and form of outdoor education brought about both personal and professional challenges through which teachers had to navigate. The findings in this theme are particularly important because what teachers believe and value directly impacts on the way they teach (Hill, 2012). Sarah believed that a key barrier to teachers changing practice in outdoor education relates to their identity as 'outdoor educators.' She commented that

[outdoor educators] ... hold so many things dear to them. So, the debrief circles, the analogies about life, that we're going to change people, that you're going to come back as a different person. People hold these beliefs so close to their hearts...

There were two key stimuli that ignited teachers’ desire to change what they were doing. The first, which was particularly evident for Ben and Sarah, was reflection on personal feelings of dissatisfaction with their outdoor education programmes. The importance of considering philosophical positioning as a catalyst for change is also evident in similar research with outdoor education teachers (see, e.g., Cosgriff, 2015; Hill, 2012).

Some teacher participants discussed how initiating change meant developing a different personal skill-set in outdoor education. As Ben noted, through his outdoor education degree he had learnt all the "standard" theories such as the “experiential learning cycle” and “adventure based learning”, but he found in general that these theories were falling short of meeting his students’ needs. Ben adopted Wattchow & Brown’s (2011) signposts for 'place responsive outdoor education’ as a framework for re-envisaging his outdoor education programmes, which included the introduction of localised camps where he co-constructed the learning environment with his students. A significant challenge for Ben was taking the time to explore places himself and learn what they had to offer, which parallels Wattchow and Brown (2011) who suggest an apprenticeship mind-set to places “whereby a felt, embodied encounter with a place and an engagement with knowing the place through various cultural knowledge systems, such as history, ecology, geography, and so on” (p. 190) occurs. Other teacher participants also discussed how they had developed intimate
connections with places which in turn broadened their ability to focus on more than technical skills on camps and field trips.

The second key stimulus for changing practice came about through professional development opportunities, which included undertaking post-graduate study for three of the teacher participants. Involvement in school-wide professional development also featured for Emma, and she explained that she was challenged to consider herself as a learner alongside her students. For other teachers, engaging in professional development, such as attending PENZ [Physical Education New Zealand] conference exposed them to new and innovative practices.

A key shift for a number of teacher participants was a move away from risk-centred pedagogies and curricula, which in turn provided more scope for increased student agency and autonomy. Emma explained how her Year 12 Camp has moved from a traditional 'ski camp' centred around risk management where she controlled the outcomes, to a more localised camp where students actively plan and help to facilitate the camp experience. This change initially came about because her school reviewed their policy on charging curriculum related fees to students which meant that 'ski camp' was no longer a financially viable option. It was also evident for many teacher participants that a shift away from deliberate exposure to physical risk and risk-centred assessment opened opportunities for cross-curricular and contextualised learning which held more relevance to students and the places they were learning in.

The process of power sharing, whereby teachers co-construct knowledge and promote the knowledge of learners as ‘acceptable’ or 'legitimate' (Bishop & Glynn, 1999) was also illustrated by a number of teacher participants. Emma suggested that a key consideration to relinquishing control meant that you actually had to be more skilled and provide the right level of support for students, which finds similarities with Beames and Brown (2016) who encourage a careful consideration of the types of choices you give students to avoid unnecessary confusion.

What others think matters

It was well articulated by teacher participants that the attitudes and perceptions of others acted as both barriers and enablers in undertaking change, echoing Fang’s (1996) idea that the complexities of schools can make it challenging for teachers to maintain consistency between their beliefs and practice. Almost all teacher participants felt supported by their colleagues, however, some still expressed concerns that some teaching colleagues didn’t fully understand the purpose of the school’s outdoor education programmes and subsequently gave misleading information to students. These concerns mirrored Zink & Boyes’s (2007) findings that “…school perceptions of outdoor education were somewhat of a barrier” (p. 74) in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The perceived low status of outdoor education by some colleagues, in contrast to their perception about the higher value of their own subjects proved to be a barrier for a number of teacher participants. In contrast though, Jess and Dave both acknowledged and appreciated supportive colleagues, with Sarah highlighting the importance of surrounding yourself with like-minded teachers. This mirrors the views of teachers in Cosgriff’s (2015) study where a “climate of support” (p. 348) was found to be useful in adopting pedagogical change in outdoor education.

Ben acknowledged that student mind-set had yet to make the shift from traditional experiences in outdoor education, even though, like Brown (2011), he found that students enjoyed engaging in place responsive outdoor education. Liam discussed how he created a haerenga (journey) for his students so that they could learn more about significance of the river and surrounding area to tangata whenua (indigenous people of the land). Some teacher participants noted that they had been initially challenged by students about the inclusion of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) and Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) within their programmes. However, once a new culture of learning had been established in their programmes, this diminished. By acknowledging both Māori and Pākehā worldviews within programmes of learning, these teachers effectively positioned themselves as ‘treaty partners’ which Glynn (2015) believes is a logical way forward in our education system as it supports an ideology where neither party needs to concede power over the other.
Fostering the holistic development of students

All teacher participants discussed the importance of the holistic development of students and creating culturally safe learning environments. Although personal and social development outcomes were valued, they were not the end-point for learning outcomes, nor were they predetermined. Many expressed excitement about the unexpected ways in which they had seen their students experience success.

In terms of desired student outcomes, Dave commented that “it’s primarily about the sense of belonging, or the sense of understanding [and] it’s about creating better people as opposed to creating highly skilled, highly technically proficient creatures.” A focus on places often allowed students to unpack and make meaning of knowledge that had significant meaning to their own lives and cultures. This could be seen as a shift away from what Gruenewald (2003) terms as a “school-centric curriculum” (p. 646), to one where knowledge has direct relevance to students and the places they learn in. By drawing on localised knowledge from a range of people and places, teacher participants in this study also somewhat alleviate concerns that curriculum context in mainstream schooling has been largely irrelevant to Māori students (Penetito, 2010).

Beames and Brown (2016) suggest a strength that teachers bring to learning programme design is “a comprehension of the primacy of the learner” (p. 78), which was represented by all teacher participants as they shared their stories. Emma’s Marae based camp “welcomed contributions from all cultures”, which has meant that over the years students have been able to share knowledge unique to their own cultures. Sarah has also found it interesting catering for an increase in students who suffer from anxiety over recent years, which she believed a “traditional outdoor ed programme would destroy them”. Sarah carefully plans experiences so that students feel they are confident and in control “like, to know they’re not going to drown, they’re not going to fall off their bike”, which she feels is particularly important.

Increasing opportunities to align to the ‘front’ end of the curriculum

The NZC (2007) “takes as its starting point a vision of our young people as lifelong learners who are confident and creative, connected, and actively involved” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 4). Cosgriff and Thevenard (2012) contend that such vision helps to guide outdoor education philosophies as it “specifies connectedness to the land, environment, and communities as well as contribution to the environmental well-being of Aotearoa New Zealand as integral aspects of this” (p. 69). A key success factor for many teacher participants was their increased ability to align to the front end of the curriculum as they adopted responsive pedagogies.

Dave explained that by using the local environment as a textbook, he could incorporate a range of different knowledge systems which paid attention to environmental, cultural and historical issues. Further, the construction of senior level courses that do not silo knowledge have the potential to move towards more culturally responsive practices as “Māori pedagogies, and by association, assessment practices are characterised by inter-relationships between various curricula” (Hemara, 2000, p. 32). However, several teacher participants expressed concern that it was challenging to sustain cross-curricular courses often because of assessment restraints, which reflects Hipkins and Spiller’s (2012) view that NCEA [National Certificate of Education Achievement] is yet to promote coherence across learning areas.
Thinking creatively about assessment

Curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment are inextricably linked “in complex cyclical and reciprocal ways” (Cosgriff & Gillespie, 2011, p. 10), and decisions around assessment will undoubtedly impact on a programme of learning as a whole (Hills, 2011). A number of teacher participants felt that excessive assessment practices generally got in the way of high quality learning. However, all recognised the importance of careful consideration of assessment practices as a means of legitimising their programmes of learning.

For some teacher participants, a broadening of their curricula led to the utilisation of achievement standards outside of the Health and Physical Education domain. Not all teacher participants viewed formalised assessment in a favourable light, and some expressed concern about how high stakes assessment practices in schools contradict their philosophical positioning in outdoor education. Emma explained that the culture in her school was one that favoured “a right and wrong answer”. This tension is also mirrored by Straker (2014) who reported that outdoor educators identified a “feeling caught between a system” (p. 245) that on one hand promotes predetermined assessment outcomes but on the other hand the promotes the value of authentic learning in schools.

There was a distinct preference by almost all teacher participants to use achievement standards over unit standards as they allowed greater flexibility and autonomy over context and the ways in which assessment would take place. These preferences are supported by Hills (2011) who contends that achievement standards are less activity focused, less prescriptive than unit standards and also provide opportunities to move away from a focus on outdoor pursuits. Sarah noted that she adapted a safety management achievement standard to fit her place responsive programme by emphasising ‘cultural safety’ rather than the traditional focus on ‘physical safety.’ In contrast to Cosgriff and Gillespie’s (2011) assertion that time is a key barrier for teachers in modifying assessment tasks, not one teacher reported issues around time, which suggests that teachers simply made the time to get assessment practices right.

Implications of the study

A range of implications for teachers involved in outdoor education contexts have surfaced through this study, four of which are considered in turn.

Firstly, teacher participants indicated a high commitment to strengthen bi-cultural partnerships in Aotearoa New Zealand and the NZC’s (2007) expectation that schools acknowledge the principles of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi within their curriculum framework. Their actions present strong evidence towards meeting the first standard in the new Practicing Teacher Criteria by demonstrating a commitment to “Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership” (Education Council, 2017, p. 17). Further, they also begin to address Cosgriff et al.’s (2012) call for outdoor educators to achieve a high level of cultural awareness which includes adapting pedagogy to incorporate Māori beliefs and values.

Secondly, there should be a greater alignment between place responsive and culturally responsive pedagogies. Where place responsive learning calls for contextualised knowledge and sense making, culturally responsive pedagogy takes its starting point by drawing on learners lived experiences (Scherff & Spector, 2010). A number of teacher participants indicated that place responsive approaches to outdoor education meant drawing on Pākehā, Māori and other cultural worldviews and baskets of knowledge. Such an approach can work towards addressing the problem of a predominantly Westernised curriculum for Māori (A. Macfarlane, 2004), and also means all students benefit as “one worldview is not prioritised at the expense of the other” (S. Macfarlane, 2015, p. 65). Two teacher participants discussed how their involvement in school-wide professional development programmes focused on cultural relationships and responsive pedagogies sparked a re-envisaging of what outdoor education was, yet there is a notable absence of discussion of such programmes in school-based outdoor education literature.

Thirdly, professional support for teachers involved in outdoor education is critical. Almost all teacher participants reported that they had to personally seek localised knowledge and learn new skills, which indicates a need for targeted professional support and
guidance in this area. The nature of place responsive theory does not allow for generic prescription (Wattchow & Brown, 2011), however more resources could be developed to illustrate how theory might effectively transfer into practice. A recent Education Outdoors New Zealand initiative to offer one-day workshops centred on place responsive approaches to outdoor education is an excellent example of professional support for educators. Further, in line with responsive pedagogies, it would be important to see professional learning opportunities where teachers can actively participate in sense making and draw on their own prior knowledge as a means of learning new concepts.

Lastly, teacher participants signified that adventure in outdoor education can move beyond outdoor pursuits and personal and social development, as emphasised in the New Zealand Health and Physical Education Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1999). A focus on the learner, and the knowledge and experience they bring to the learning environment were essential considerations for many teacher participants. In light of this, adventure in outdoor education would be well placed to move beyond the demonstration of skills towards authentic learning experiences that enable learners to determine their own pathways and build upon what they already know about the world (Beames & Brown, 2016).

**Conclusion**

The findings in this study highlight the importance of critical reflection to ensure that what is being delivered as ‘outdoor education’ is best meeting the needs of learners and fostering

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**The National EOTC Coordinator Database**

**Has your School signed up?**

The National EOTC Coordinator Database initiative was implemented last year by EONZ and is supported by the Ministry of Education.

The primary function of the database is to actively support the role of the EOTC coordinator by providing a direct line of communication through:

- Notification of changes to good practice as they relate to EOTC safety management, and
- Actively building capability and competency within the EOTC coordinator role and ultimately the capability of the school to provide quality EOTC.

Talk with your EOTC coordinator and leadership team and ensure your school registers at www.eotc.org.nz.

The initiative is designed for the designated EOTC coordinator or person in that role in school. However, any EONZ members can request to receive the communications generated by the initiative. Email Catherine at office@eonz.org.nz and ask for a link.

Schools face a real challenge in keeping updated with current good practice in the fast-evolving landscape of health and safety.

Since publication of the Ministry of Education EOTC Guidelines 2016, *Bringing the Curriculum Alive* updated versions have twice been released. Staff in many schools will be unaware of the changes.

The database is a mechanism that all schools should take advantage of, with registration identified as an element of good practice (EOTC Guidelines 2016, P59).

EONZ believes unequivocally in the value and benefit of schools’ engagement with the initiative and has an aspirational goal of 90% of New Zealand schools being registered with the database by the end of 2019.
their development as citizens. It has been encouraging to learn the ways in which teacher participants navigated through school systems to ensure their philosophies in outdoor education translated into practice. Each has exemplified the importance of being modest about what outdoor education can and should achieve within secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand, and in doing so they have presented a strong case for the continued place of outdoor education in the secondary school curriculum.

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About the author:

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References


This article is about field trips and opportunities to engender High Impact Learning Moments: It's in the form of a narrative from a teaching experience that highlighted a serious current issue.

Field trips usually sit strongly in the memories of all of us and in particular, the outdoor camp seems to be something we rarely forget (Lynch, 2006). We may have had different learning moments to those alongside us at the camp, but many people have long-term memories of school camps or visits. This article is about some research I am doing on a field trip camp, which is conducted as part of the Bachelor of Sustainability and Outdoor Education at Ara Institute of Canterbury. This field trip is part of a theory course, which explores educational and social theories and my research has involved me in interviewing graduates (from up to 15 years ago) about the course and its field trip. It has also taken me on my own journey of developing the course to engage student’s emotions in the theoretical learning. If you are a year 1 student at Ara or a prospective student, please read no further, because the impact of the trip hinges on an element of mystery and surprise, and you will spoil this for yourself! Each year I ask participants to keep the activities and location of the trip a secret from following year groups, and this factor is based on the work of Markey and Loewenstein (2014). Secrecy and surprise can feed curiosity and this combination is intended to augment memory traces for the participants.

Graduate’s memories and emotions during and after the trip are the main subject of my research and it is clear from the data, that all participants have remembered the trip or other similar trips in detail and have constructed learning around it. Most participants have applied that learning into their own teaching in a number of ways. The full details of the trip and the research findings will be the subject of another article but the most recent trip in March 2018 resulted in a High Impact Learning Moment (HILM) for me that is very topical today and I feel compelled to share this insight now. HILM is a term I have coined to represent the memories of insights that participants recounted in a vivid way. It is an emergent concept and it will be further explored in another article.

The trip is only 2 days long and it makes some small recognition of two outdoor philosophies from 1980’s but more importantly, it extends thinking into more current outdoor learning paradigms. The two 1980’s philosophies are “being impelled into experiences” (original Outward Bound model and Walsh & Golins, 1976) and “Challenge by choice/ challenge of choice” by Project Adventure (Rohnke, 1995). Elements of both philosophies can work well together and they are evident in the trip but they only play a minor role. The trip resonates more with recent socio cultural/ecological concepts such as “place” (Brown, 2009) “journeys” (Straker, 2012) and sustainability (Irwin, Straker & Hill, 2012). The whole trip is planned to engage the emotions of the group and
the main underlying principles come from positive psychology (Seligman & Csikzentmihalyi, 2014; Frederickson, 2006). The main means of engaging student interest and emotions in the trip is to use the concept of “mystery” as a motivator. The use of “mystery” generates curiosity (Markey & Lowenstein, 2014) which in turn fosters a thirst for learning. The whole trip is planned to be at a low technical challenge level and the aim is for participants to feel safe all the time. However, participants are challenged mentally and their world-view is highlighted and subjected to some critical questions. The trip aims to engage the emotions as a strong learning tool and the focus of the trip is on positive emotions and ultimately having fun in a game/simulation type of environment. This is in keeping with neurobiological concepts such as the negative impact of the fight/flight and cortisol/stress mechanism on learning (Hannaford, 2005) and the strong connection between emotions and learning (Damasio, 2006) especially the emotions of enjoyment and interest and the cognitive state of curiosity.

Two tutors go with the group and they contribute to review sessions and the activities. Third year students, who did the course in the previous year, act as assistants for this trip and take in turns to run some of the activities. The trip is framed as a “Conference for emerging developing nations” and each group is briefed beforehand to create some of their nation’s ways of operating in relation to international relations, justice system, equity, environmental issues, housing, waste management, food, water, shelter, immigration and electricity generation. Activities are not intended to engage negative emotions but some negative emotions will emerge for some participants. There is no use of fear in the model, which is in contrast to the more dated dissonance models (Walsh & Golins, 1976). The negative emotion that does come up is frustration, but the research showed that this was modulated either at the time or on reflection afterwards and that the experience contributed towards a building of resilience. (Ewart & Yoshiko, 2011; Allen McKenna & Hind 2012).

We meet at our gear shed at 6am and the third years have already packed the trailers with equipment for raft building, shelter building, environmental connection activities, social equity activities, educational models and a few other activities. The participants in the second year have no idea of where they are going but they know they are going to need to walk, carry a backpack and get wet for about an hour. Each team (Nation) has planned a dinner to cook together and brought a donation of food to the conference food hamper, which will later be used as prizes or as handouts to the needy groups or even as a random luck item. This generates conversations around rewards (behaviourism, Skinner, 1950) anticipated rewards (pleasure pathway, Medina, 2011) and fairness (Friere, 1980).

The first activity involves them in catching a ferry to a nearby location. They get a surprise when they find they have to jump off a jetty with all their rafting equipment in a shipwreck exercise. Each nation has to gather as much equipment as they can in the water and construct a makeshift raft and paddle to the overnight location (about 400m). This activity results in all sorts of competitiveness in the grabbing of gear and the racing to the shore. We debrief this with a metaphor of refugees and ask what it feels like to be a refugee, fighting to stay alive, and then reaching a safe destination and having to plead for help. The first team to
reach the shore get a prize of food from the hamper so the idea of rewards is planted. The next activity is the building of their shelters for the night. We use black plastic and the participants have been told to bring string. They make shelters and in addition, they make a real estate advertisement for their shelter. This activity focusses on the advertisement, most teams are absorbed in this, and they create very impressive shelters, with all the trimmings of expensive real estate. We look at each group’s shelter and advertisement and note that most of them go for a sea view, lots of space, indoor-outdoor flow and they create a typical “Kiwi” dream home. The review of this asks the question; “if everybody in New Zealand had a view and a waterfront property, what would it look like?” They realise that the view we are looking at would be full of houses. We then extend this into looking at other countries that have 60+ million people, and how the New Zealand landscape would look if there were 60 million people here and they all wanted a view. From the research, this often provokes an “eye opener moment” which I will refer to as a High Impact Learning Moment. One participant observed;

“Ah that was a real eye opener, we have this ideal aim and I never thought of the impact of it if we all managed to achieve it.”

Further to this, we have often have international students on this trip so we are able to compare their living space to ours. These have included student stories from Columbia, Philippines, Netherlands, USA and UK. These stories are a real eye-opener for the New Zealanders who have not yet travelled, although it is evident that many New Zealanders travel in their mid-20’s and they absorb this education about how others live as they go.

The next activity is two activities run into one. They are given clues and they run around the location finding bags of dried beans. As this goes on, they realise that the beans are representing money and they try harder! We then have an auction of all the rafting equipment as they are going to do a raft race. This activity usually gets very competitive and because the bags of beans have different amounts in them, we always end up with a rich team and a poor team, and a team somewhere in between. Different groups from different years have had different responses to this activity. In some years, the rich team takes all the good gear, makes a great raft and wins the race by miles leaving the poor teams with a collapsing raft and a big swim. In other years, rich teams have donated equipment to the poor teams, but it is often the equipment, that the rich team does not want. At times rich teams have given extra beans to the poor teams and they have also paddled their raft over to the sinking poor teams to rescue them. In one year, the group decided half way through the auction that the raft race would not be a true race, so they just bought all the equipment and then shared it out again. All of these outcomes result in impactful review sessions. We talk about equality, equity, and the rich-poor gap. We discuss
plight of the disadvantaged but we also look at those who work hard and run to collect beans and whether they deserve a better set of equipment. This is then related to society now and political insights start to emerge.

The trip carries on with a range of many more similar activities and in the end the nations have created their policies on poverty, housing, transport, trade, international relations, environment, waste management, justice to name a few. An activity around education and the New Zealand school curriculum and its aims, then ensues and they get to create their nation's education policy. Full details of the trip will appear in another article. I am intending to keep the majority of the trip as a mystery because it is this aspect, which engages their interest, and if participants know too much before the trip it would spoil the impact of the trip for them. This trip is the subject of my research project and this will be published on completion. However, there was an interesting twist that happened this year and it prompted me to share this interim narrative now, as I think it highlights a very urgent issue.

This year we introduced two new items to the food and prize hamper. One was a plastic gun, which fired foam bullets, and the other was a water gun. We introduced a rule that the gun could not be pointed at faces and if someone was hit by a foam bullet, they had to sit out of the activity for 5 minutes. The group that produced the best shelter was able to choose an item and they chose the gun with the foam bullets…. I was quite taken aback by what eventuated and blown away by the review conversation that it generated.

This group earned a prize and chose the gun before the auction and raft building. Up until that point, the trip had been progressing as it usually does, with some friendly competition and some insights into contrasts for rich and poor teams and parallels to this in society. The gun was used very quickly as one of the team members heard that they could shoot items that other teams had gained from the food hamper. The team with the gun did not run around much to collect beans so they could not buy much raft equipment and hence they had quite a minimal raft. Just before the rafts were launched, they went round shooting at the other two teams to take people out of the activity on the five-minute stand down. This meant that the teams without the gun also had fewer paddlers for their raft. This was the tactics of the team with the gun.

Although it was all engaged in for fun and as a bit of a game, it quickly deteriorated into a situation with some animosity and lack of trust. The students were all year 2, and they all got on well with each other, but the incident with the gun had changed the dynamics. The two groups without guns happened to camp on one end of the area and the team with the gun had camped at the other end. The two unarmed teams worked together to create rope line at about 1.5 m height across the area to ‘fence off” the team with the gun. They taped notices to the line, which said;

“This is a peaceful community, you may enter but you may not bring weapons across this line”.

The team with the gun stayed at their end of the field and continued to use the gun where they could. Time had moved on, and it was now 5.30 pm and teams were heading off to prepare dinner. We had an amnesty meeting because we realised that the presence of the gun had taken up more time than we had anticipated, and we had cancelled one of the activities. The meeting included all teams and the way they sat down was telling: the gun team were bunched together at one end of the circle and the rest had circled up. I gave the information, that in the interests of completing the planned activities, I was going to offer the gun team an amnesty. They had also won the water gun in a previous game so I said they could chose to keep the water gun as long as it was not used on people who were cooking. With the foam bullet gun, they were given the choice to hand it in or keep it. There was much discussion and an interesting point was raised by a team member from an unarmed team, who said;

“How do you respond to an aggressor when you are a peaceful group or nation?”

Then two of the gun team stepped up and bravely replied that they would give up the foam bullet gun if the other teams would promise not to ostracise them. They said they had felt ostracised as soon as they first shot the gun and their first use of it had actually been by accident. There followed a big discussion about mistakes and trust and forgiveness and it was agreed that the foam bullet gun would be handed in. The water gun was still in the hands of the gun team but I got the impression that
even using that for fun would break the trust that they had agreed on and I didn’t see it in use. The year group then agreed that the peace talks had worked and that they could all forgive and work together again, after all it had started as a bit of a game and a bit of fun!

The discussions that followed were insightful and a great depth of critical questioning was evident. Although the first shot had been an accident, this triggered suspicion and mistrust. From then the subsequent shots were used in earnest to give the armed team an advantage in the raft race (which had a food prize available). This generated the use of the rope as a fence and notices to keep the armed team out of the area when they had the gun with them.

However, the longest part of the reflection discussion focussed on the comparison of their situation with the recent shootings in the USA. They noticed that as soon as the gun was introduced into the trip, the culture changed to one of aggression and paranoia. Even the teams without the gun observed their exclusion of the armed team and their change in attitude towards them. Although there was still light banter going on (kiwis are big on banter, its just part of the deal and is usually meant as humour) the comments had got a bit more pointed and harsh. The amnesty discussion had highlighted important qualities like trust and acceptance and forgiveness and they noted how this took time to resolve, even amongst a class that was usually friendly to each other.

There was also a reference to gender and how more of the males had enjoyed the gun activity and more of the females had voiced their opposition, but not really been heard. As it was still seen as a bit of fun, it didn’t really matter to some people. This led on to an introduction to third wave feminist theory (Mayo, 2006) and an engaged interest in this from the students. This will be followed up in later lessons.

The major part of the review centred on a student who had just come back home from an exchange to a university in the USA. She said many of the people she had met had been horrified that she did not have a gun. She asserted that guns in NZ were mainly used for culling rabbits and deer when populations put pressure on local farms or bush areas, and that these hunting guns had to be licensed and kept in a locked cupboard. These were rifles not semi-automatic weapons. She explained that it would be extremely rare for a person in the street to have a gun in New Zealand and apart from hunters and farmers, people would live their whole life without a gun and they would not suffer from paranoia. In fact as you come into our country through customs, the main things they are checking for is living items including soils (pests) drugs and weapons.

Conclusions
This article is a hasty narrative telling a story. It is part of a bigger research assignment investigating the effects of emotional engagement on long-term memory, learning and teaching practices resulting from the course of study in the outdoors. The article with details on that will follow in due course, but I felt compelled to write something straightaway because this is an urgent message. The planet and its people have big enough problems without the need for aggression and paranoia in one of its richest societies. It was great to see that a class of New Zealanders aged around 19-23 had all felt the change in their simulated societies when the gun was introduced,
even when the gun was plastic and the bullets were foam. It was daunting for them to hear the story from the returning NZ exchange student, who had experienced the impact of guns on the psyche of the people. I augmented this with some psychological theory on assimilation and habituation (Piaget, 1951; Damasio, 2008) and supported it with neurobiological concepts such as brain wiring and nerve network formation in response to experiences (Hannaford, 2005). I planted the seed in their minds that a person from a gun-infested society will have different neural pathways to a person in a society with realistic gun control and a culture that does not encourage young people to have weapons. The former will find it very hard to give up their guns because they will feel some sort of dissonance when they are without a gun. When this is coupled with fear and paranoia, the society ends up compromised and humans can't thrive. This resonates with the message of positive psychology, do more than survive…Thrive! (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Many of the trip participants realised how lucky they have been growing up in NZ. It has been heartening to see the large numbers of US school students who have recently taken to the streets to protest the current gun laws. Mass action like this can make a difference and I fully support them.

A final insight that I will share, is that neurobiology resonates with socio cultural, enactivist and experiential learning theories. Our brains create nerve pathways in response to our experiences. If we have emotional engagement and movement during those experiences, the pathways become stronger (Hannaford, 2005). If the experiences are reflected on, and augmented with guidance that opens minds in critical and creative thinking, an even greater depth of learning can be achieved. Field trips provide an excellent opportunity for memorable outdoor learning experiences to occur, especially when they are reflected upon and insights are made. The final outcome of my research will be published in a further article, but the incidence of High Impact Learning Moments (to coin a new phrase) experienced on the course and recounted by graduates of up 15 years ago has been frequent and they are often deep. It is rewarding to see that this recent field trip has resulted in a High Impact Learning Moment for me; this being the insights into the students’ created societies and how these changed when a weapon was introduced into the activity. Long live outdoor learning, as it results (when facilitated well) in long-term memories and High Impact Learning Moments!

References

About the author: Jean Cory-Wright is a senior academic staff member at Ara Institute of Canterbury and she works on the Bachelor and Diploma programmes. Her main area of practice is in using the outdoors as a space for educating for broader personal, social and environmental awareness. Her research interest is the interface between outdoor experiences and emotional skills and the application of psychology and neuroscience concepts to explore this interface.
The Study

In 2017 I conducted Master’s research into Māori student experiences in outdoor education. In seeking the perspective of the Māori rangatahi I was trying to explore the potential for a different perspective on the way we currently practice outdoor education. I was acting on a concern that what we present to our students as outdoor education is in fact a very culturally filtered view of ‘the outdoors’. Very rarely, glimpses of alternative perspectives and cultural orientations surface, but
the dominant values that outdoor education projects towards ‘the outdoors’ are almost exclusively Eurocentric (Brookes, 2002; Fox, 2008; Stewart, 2008).

I approached Māori students of outdoor education to engage them in a series of focus groups. The research was based in one school, with a small number of students (15 in total). Each focus group consisted of 3-5 students composed of students from the same year level.

The aim of the study was to investigate the experiences of Māori students in outdoor education, and to consider to what degree the outdoor education practice they had experienced was culturally responsive; and to explore how students themselves envisaged outdoor education as more culturally responsive to them as Māori. The focus group data was analysed thematically, and this produced four central and interrelated themes, which will be discussed below.

What was striking to me was how complex these perspectives were, and the diverse range of perspectives that the group of Māori students brought to the focus group discussions. The themes that developed were closely entwined, with complex relationships between ideas and values. It is not easy to generalize from this diversity, and at the end of the day, the perspectives I present here are those of a small group of students who identify as Māori filtered through my own framework of analysis. There is no claim to represent the views and perspectives of all Māori students. I have endeavored to represent the experience of students involved in one outdoor programme, and it will be the role of the reader to interpret and adapt these ideas amongst their own students and programmes. These findings however, are broadly applicable to a re-conceptualisation of school camping across all levels of schooling.

**The findings**

The four interrelated themes identified from the focus groups were the importance of shared experience and relationships to positive experiences of outdoor education; the distinctive practices of outdoor education make learning enjoyable and engaging; the importance to students of making connections with Te Ao Māori through experience, stories of places and history; and the complexity of engaging Māori in participation in outdoor education, including factors such as affordability, the influence of friends and whānau and prioritising educational pathways. The first two themes are arguably very generalizable to all outdoor education students, regardless of cultural background, and are closely interrelated. The subsequent two themes were specific to a Māori experience of outdoor education.

**Shared experience and relationships are important to positive experiences of outdoor education.** This theme emphasised the importance of the inherent sociability of the outdoor education experiences. Students, particularly in adolescence, learn socially. The rangatahi indicated that the sociality of outdoor education was a significant factor in connecting them to outdoor education as a subject. Experiences were shared, and the meanings associated with those experiences were constructed as a social process as the stories and experiences were re-told and recounted. Challenge and novelty as features of outdoor education experiences are enriched by the sharing of these experiences, and...
developing stories which individuals belong to that are bigger than themselves. Anaru expressed this:

“I liked how we climbed to the top of that mountain... That was so fun... It’s just not something I’ve ever done before, and to do it with all my mates, basically, just going up there and pushing myself to do something I’ve never done before was fun...”

This finding is supported by other research into student experiences in Aotearoa New Zealand, such as Smith, Gidlow and Steel (2010), Brown (2012) and McNatty (2014) and this has implications for the way we design our outdoor education courses and their outcomes.

The distinctive practices of outdoor education make learning enjoyable and engaging. The rangatahi in this study appreciated the unique pedagogical approaches inherent in outdoor education practice. Whiri, a year 13 student, described outdoor education as “... a lot easier to understand... and because it’s outdoors... it’s based around us and having that moral support from everyone in the group... compared to other classrooms where you had to be quiet to do your work, this is more together, group activities and getting to know each other”

Outdoor education engages students through direct and embodied experiences associated with outdoor learning and the sharing of these experiences with peers. Aspects of outdoor education that promote collaborative teaching and learning need to be further enhanced by recognition of the cultural background of participants and the bodies of knowledge that are supportive of their identity.

Making connections with Te Ao Māori through experience, stories of places and history is important to Māori students of outdoor education. The study participants expressed a desire for more story-ing of places from a Te Ao Māori perspective. Ariki, a year 11 student commented, “if we go somewhere and there’s Māori history there, tell us about it, so we can learn about it... to learn more about our culture and what happened in History”.

Re-storying place has the potential to decolonise the narratives of place, and in doing so re-affirm the identity of Māori students in outdoor education. Quay (2017) uses the term “cultureplace” to describe this interaction of individuals with place, and that far from being autonomous and distinct, an individual’s response to space is contextualised by their relation to others, both human and non-human. For Māori students, the connection between them as individuals, their culture and the places they experience the outdoors is an important part of exploring their identity. Connecting Māori students through their cultural history to places is meaningful education that establishes lasting connections with the outdoor places we educate within.

Expanding the human story behind places – affordable outdoor learning

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The complexity of engaging Māori in participation in outdoor education. The rangatahi in the study reflected on a range of factors that influenced their engagement with outdoor education as an optional senior subject. Significant interrelated factors included affordability, the influence of friends and whānau and prioritising educational pathways. These factors interacted to create a complex series of decisions that Māori students must negotiate to participate in outdoor education programmes. The participation of friends or the prospect of making friends were important determiners of involvement in outdoor education. Affordability was an issue that stood out, and was referred to in every focus group. The cost of outdoor programmes and the associated costs of equipping students for outdoor activities are prohibitive. The rangatahi felt pressured by the impact of these costs on their families. The decision to take outdoor education as an option was also weighed against other subject areas, and OE was frequently seen as a bit of fun, rather than a course with a substantial basis in transferable skills and knowledge. This marginalises much of the real benefits our students receive from their outdoor experiences, and we need to do a better job of identifying the transferable outcomes of our outdoor programmes for Māori students.

The implications of the study
The implications of the findings were presented as seven recommendations:

1. **Continue to do what we do.** Outdoor activities provide opportunities to exercise autonomy and self-management, and to experience challenges that are meaningful and achievable for both the individual and the group. Outdoor education programmes should maintain and enhance a focus on cooperative and collaborative learning opportunities in which students have opportunities to share their experience and develop life-long memories and connections.

2. **A focus on story-ing places.** Identifying stories of places involves apprenticing ourselves to places (Wattchow and Brown, 2011) and connecting with communities, in particular the community that participants live within; and a decolonisation of spaces by presenting a socio-ecological approach to the story-ing, taking into account local Māori knowledge and traditions. For this to be sustained teachers need resourcing, professional development and facilitation to establish relationships with local experts to support a knowledge base from which to present the stories.

3. **Engagement and partnership with communities and whānau.** This engagement is based in relationships of reciprocity and the building of social networks of engagement and mutual commitment. Parents need to know what happens in outdoor education programmes and to better understand the beneficial outcomes that outdoor education offer the rangatahi. Rangatahi in the study suggested we ‘sell’ courses better to parents to justify the money that is almost inevitably spent on course contributions, clothing and equipment. Better engagement with the local community should make the relevance and cost of courses more understandable and relatable to parents. The engagement and partnership with the community assists in teachers apprenticing themselves to place, by developing relationships, support and expertise.

4. **Cost equity and affordability.** Access to outdoor education learning opportunities needs to be equitable. Establishing programmes that reduce the cost in terms of course fees or parental contributions is a challenge to be overcome. The excessive and exclusive cost of outdoor education courses needs to be challenged and creative outdoor education course design needs to consider local activities that retain novelty and challenge, but to which students can connect to and establish lasting relationships to place and community.

5. **Incorporation of Te Ao Māori pedagogies and principles.** These could include concepts such as whaungatanga, kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga, all of which align closely with values observable within existing outdoor
programmes. This might include introduction of Te Ao Māori learning principles such as tuakana-teina relationships, the incorporation of modes of learning such as Joan Metge’s (2015) conceptualisation of Tauira, based on traditional practices of role modelling and community learning, and noho marae experiences where a Maori perspective on place can be explored. Further exploration of contexts that resonate with Te Ao Māori, such as Waka Ama, Mahinga Kai and Kaimoana gathering have significant potential to contextualise outdoor activities within Te Ao Maori.

6. Further exploration of student voice and perspective. In seeking to understand how learning is experienced, and how we can better support individuals and groups in expressing their cultural identity in outdoor education, we need to provide opportunities for the students we teach and their whanau to share their perspective. We should seek to understand what outdoor education experiences can contribute to support their identity as Māori, or, for that matter their identity as Pasifika, or recent immigrants.

7. Teacher education and training in cultural competencies. An important and relatively urgent need exists for opportunities for professional teaching and learning development in the area of culturally responsive pedagogy in outdoor education. As Skipworth (2017) indicates, this is a significant impediment to culturally responsive outdoor education practice.

Becoming culturally responsive for Māori students is about engaging with responsibilities we have as educators to respect and give mana to Te tūranga o Waitangi, and to give recognition to the cultural Taonga of Te Ao Māori. It is a profound responsibility. Teachers have a unique opportunity to re-present the ‘truth’, to re-tell the story of the places we visit, and to provide a contrast to the dominating story of the colonial enterprise. Our Māori students need this re-storying of places, to hear the footfall of their ancestry on the land, to begin to whakapapa to the landscape around them.

Re-conceptualising school camps in ways that are culturally responsive to Māori is an engagement with the community, the histories and the stories that lie behind the places at the center of outdoor experiences. It is a recognition that we have a range of local practices, traditions and contexts that provide meaningful, challenging and novel experiences for the rangatahi we teach.

Te Ao Māori has a substantial role to play in outdoor education and school camps, both as a means to connect Māori students with their histories and the places in which they live, but also to challenge the perspectives of those who take the fruits of colonialism for granted. I am excited to continue this journey towards a model of outdoor education that better reflects the country in which I live, and all of the peoples that make it. Te Ao Māori adds a depth to the experience of place that imported values and practices cannot achieve, and this applies to Pākehā as well as Māori.
Outdoor Education in Aotearoa New Zealand: A New Vision for the Twenty First Century

Edited by: Dave Irwin, Jo Straker and Allen Hill

Outdoor education in a variety of guises has a rich history in Aotearoa New Zealand, dating back more than 100 years. Outdoor learning experiences have a strong and often much-loved place in our collective education memories. However, the world in which we currently live is vastly different from the one which shaped those memories. What does that mean for education, and more specifically, what does that mean for outdoor learning experiences? This book attends to these questions from a forward looking position by providing a practical, insightful, and innovative reappraisal of outdoor education theory and practice. Embracing a critical socio-ecological perspective, the contributors celebrate aspects of creative practice and chart a direction for outdoor education which aspires to educate for a sustainable and more equitable future.

This is essential reading for outdoor educators, teachers, guides, and students who want to expand the possibilities and practices of education, especially education which builds a deeper understanding of our relationship to the world we depend on.

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About the Author:
Phil Washbourn is Assistant HOD of HPE: TIC Outdoor Education at Papanui High School in Christchurch, and has taught outdoor education for 15 years. Following a teacher study award, Phil submitted his Master's thesis at the University of Waikato at the start of 2018, entitled Ngā whakaaro o ngā ākonga: perspectives and experiences of Māori students in outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand. This followed several years of consideration of how a culturally responsive outdoor education practice might look. Phil is now trying to incorporate the findings of his study within his programme.
A 2016 NZ survey shows only 10% of secondary students meet the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity a day with 35% spending 3 or more hours on the internet (Ministry of Health, 2016). There is now a growing movement to ‘re-wild’ our children, to connect them to nature (Louv, 2010). If our children are not going outside in their own time, how do we connect them to nature and their communities? Many authors have suggested that outdoor education could be one answer to reconnect
people with place, creating human/nature relationships (for example see Hill, 2013; Hutson, 2008; Wattchow & Brown, 2011). To do this requires shifting the focus of outdoor education from a tradition of skill acquisition and personal and social development (Zink & Boyes, 2007), to a more place-responsive outdoor education programme that includes sustainability, place and social education. Through place-responsive outdoor education students get to know their place, their community and their history, developing their own identity and sense of belonging (Penetito, 2008), that could lead to developing an ethic of care for their place (Wattchow & Brown, 2011). Research suggests that place-responsive outdoor education programmes are slowly becoming more common in New Zealand (Brown, 2012a; Taylor, 2014; Townsend, 2011).

The first part of this research looked at how does a place-responsive outdoor education journey influence an 'ethic of care' in secondary students? What are the benefits for the students of a place-responsive outdoor education journey?

The Research

How can place-responsive learning be designed? Wattchow and Brown (2011) suggest four signposts that might help point the way towards a place-responsive pedagogy. The four signposts are:

1. **Being present in and with a place.**

   This is about being open to place and being slow, either by moving slowly through or by spending time in just one place.

2. **The power of place-based stories and narratives.**

   The process of telling,
performing and creating stories about people, place and land use can provide engagement with land and culture (Stewart, 2008; Wattchow & Brown, 2011). It is also about you and your students creating your own stories in that place.

3. **Apprenticing ourselves to outdoor places.**

The idea of being an apprentice is being curious and asking questions about the whole place; the social, cultural, geographic, historic, and the natural aspects. Wattchow and Brown (2011) suggest these questions as a starting point to help with the curiosity:

- What is in this place?
- What will this place permit us to do?
- What will this place help us do?
- How does this place interconnect with my home place?

4. **The representation of place experiences.**

Think about continually reflecting on the experience with place. Getting students to take photographs, draw pictures, write poems or notes while they are experiencing the place that they can take away and use to continue the reflection once they get home. This framework appeared to be linear in layout, which it is not. I reshaped the model (see figure 1) to depict the interconnected web nature of Wattchow and Brown’s (2011) four signposts and Birdsey’s (2010) model of learning about, through and then from action by utilising environmental education’s underpinning of education in, for and about the environment (Barker & Rogers, 2004). This article is only concerned with the place-responsive outdoor education beginning to develop an ethic of care.

This new framework model then informed the design of the place-responsive journey that was the focus of this study.

### The Journey design using the signposts framework.

The research journey was designed and organised by the teacher and myself. I played a big part in this to ensure the journey incorporated the theoretical framework of both place-responsive outdoor education and environmental action into the design. To provide some context here is a brief outline of the journey:

The journey was conducted over five days. It started and finished at the school. A total of twelve students completed the journey; all were Year 10 students who had chosen and applied to be part of the Backyard Adventure club (an extracurricular club the outdoor department of the school created for this study). The staff consisted of one teacher from the school, five tertiary students who were leading the journey, plus their supervisor. I was in a participant observation role. Several community members joined the journey for short sections every day; these people provided an interpretation of ‘their’ place as we passed through.

Day 1 comprised of biking from the school to camp using the theoretical framework of slow pedagogy. The journey began with a Karakia (prayer for a safe journey); this ensured cultural inclusion and exploration of place and included visiting edible and community gardens to help form an understanding of place, again designed from the framework of exploration of place. The whole day included exploring the place and formation of the community either with their peers or with the wider community.

Day 2 saw students tramping through bush over an iconic hill to the hall where we would stay for the night. The tramp utilised slow pedagogy that allowed students to explore the place and build on the formation of community. Learning about the forest, plants, birds and human history aided their exploration of place and local issue awareness.

Day 3 was supposed to be sea kayaking across the harbour, but massive southerly winds changed plans. Instead, we caught a boat across, stopping at islands along the way. Engaging in slow pedagogy allowed us to explore these places. While there we looked at local issue awareness and cultural and historical significance of the islands. Once across the harbour, students biked to the hall for the evening using slow pedagogy. The whole day was about shared experiences and formation of community.

Day 4 saw students bike out to the harbour mouth and back to the hall for another night. Taking a slow pedagogy again allowed for exploration of the place – learning about birds, pests, the sea environment along the way.
Day 4 was designed to utilise the framework of exploration of place, local issue awareness and formation of community.

Day 5 required students to bike from the hall back to school to complete the loop around the harbour. Slow pedagogy meant we had time to reflect on the trip. Reflection did not happen just on the last day, but at the end of every day was some form of reflection and then any the students did themselves as they went along.

**Data Collection from the Journey**

Taking photos is one way of students being able to continue reflection post journey. Photo-elicitation interviews were used. Having the photographs as the focus of the interview can help share the power between the interviewer and the participant (Miller, 2015) alleviating potential power dynamics a traditional semi-structured interview with adolescents can create (Clark-Ibáñez, 2004). This sharing of power was essential to me, as the participants were all Year 10 students, aged 14 or 15. These considerations lead to the data collection method of semi-structured photo-elicitation interviews being used.

All the students were given disposable cameras and an introduction to use them a week before the journey. They also received brief instructions on taking photos:

*Take photos of what the trip is like for you, ensure the photos reflect what it is like for you over the five days we are away. You are encouraged to think about what you might like to take the photos of and that you should take up to five or six photos each day. There is no expectation of what type of photos you should take.*

As a secondary source of gathering data and as an opportunity to build rapport with the students, I ensured I had met them before the journey. I also went on the journey which allowed for some observational notes and comments to be taken. This way I wasn’t a stranger when it came to the interviews.

The first photo-elicitation interviews happened two weeks after the journey. It involved six out of the twelve students who had their name randomly chosen from a hat by their teacher. The interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes. In the interview, students were asked to talk through their photographs, and then use the photos to answer five questions about the journey.

1. This is my favourite photo from the journey because……
2. This photo from the journey makes me feel…… because……
3. This photo of…… shows what the journey was like for me best because……
4. What I liked most about the journey was…… because……
5. What I liked least about the journey was…… because……

There were some extra questions, which included prompts to find out if the students had been to any of the locations before and to explore how they now perceived their city.

The interviews were transcribed and using an open mind highlighted anything that seemed of interest or relevance. To aid this analysis, I also used a theoretical framework drawn from the literature to help guide what may be of relevance. The key points were then organised into categories based on a range of themes.

**Findings**

The data analysis had four major themes emerge from the photo-elicitation interviews; exploration of local places, formation of community, local issue awareness and reflection of journey. These were unpacked to show how the students found the place-responsive journey and the effect it had on their ethic of care for this place.

Exploration of local places is an important element of place-responsive pedagogy, helping learners to explore their place. In a pre-journey meeting, I asked the students what they liked most about their city. Most answers involved “the mall” or “can’t wait to leave”. This journey around their place allowed the students to gain a new or different perspective of their city. As one student said, “It’s just opened my eyes to the different things you could do. It’s not as boring as I thought…” (Ivy, Interview 1).

Travelling under their own steam and at that slower pace also allowed them to appreciate just how accessible the city and surrounding area is. Student Leah explained, “It’s not really as big as I thought it was” (Leah, Interview 1). All of the students mentioned that the
journey allowed them to explore the city. Learning about different aspects of the city, including, just getting to know it better, to how just being on a trip that has a slower pace allows you to be more open to what the place has to offer. Student Leah explained “It was fun just getting to the places we did; to the stuff we did. Whereas normally for school trips we would get the school van or … the bus to take you out there, so it was nice getting there by ourselves and actually enjoying the getting there part” (Leah, Interview 1).

Developing knowledge of the city included learning about both its history and meeting some of the community members. These local experts shared their knowledge and stories with the students. The stories and knowledge allowed the students to learn about and get to know the places. Some of the students had been to some of the locations before. Leah was one of those students as who explained “I’ve been up Mount [nearby], ‘cos it was a school tramp and so you like had to do it, but there wasn’t anyone telling us about like the native forest and the history of it like Tahu did or like the herbalist, I’ve never heard anything about those plants or didn’t even know their names” (Leah, Interview 1).

The journey gave the students the chance to explore their local place, get to know the city and what it has to offer and to know the local community more. The students didn’t know each other very well at the beginning of the journey, so some of the learning that took place was learning about each other, with the formation of community on the journey.

Getting to know your community is another major aspect of a place-responsive pedagogy. Getting to know the people, their stories and sharing stories with people allows you to get a deeper knowledge of your place. These students, although in the same year group, did not know each other well at the beginning of the journey. They had met a few times in the preparation sessions, and a couple of them were friends. Getting to know each other and the social interaction that took place was an important aspect of the journey for the students. Getting to know each other allowed them to form a community of their own, and to work as a team. Leah shared one of her photographs that explained...
what the journey was like for her; “This photo of us unpacking … shows us or shows what helped us get through the journey and like the way everyone had to work together to get everything done” (Leah, Interview 1). She went on to explain how they tried to ensure everyone was included and truly form a community at least for the duration of the journey, saying “we had to help each other a lot to get like through the journey … there [were] people who found it kind of really hard and so like everyone just tried to include everyone … just make sure that nobody was left out and that they enjoyed their journey as much as I guess everyone else did” (Leah, Interview 1).

As part of the journey, the students not only got to work together with each other forming a community of their own, they also got to engage with and meet other community members, as already mentioned in developing knowledge of the place. The community members shared their stories and information about the places we were visiting. From this, the students gained an awareness of local issues facing their place. Of the many issues that the students were exposed to over the course of the journey, two main issues stood out for them. The first issue was plastic waste and the impact it has on the environment. The second issue that three of the students mentioned how this affected them and they showed signs of an ethic of care developing for their place. Sophie was sad at the realisation that issues around the city could, in fact, affect the city. Ivy went on to say “I feel like if we all kinda helped it would change a lot and we would make it better” (Ivy, Interview 1).

With the post-journey interview happening two weeks after the journey had ended, the students had time to self-reflect on what they had seen, experienced and learnt along the way. Three themes emerged from the interviews: sense of achievement, appreciation of place, and a sense of empowerment.

Two students mentioned a sense of achievement for completing the journey. Yasmin summed up the sense of achievement felt after completing the journey by saying “it was really fun and tiring at the same time” (Yasmin, Interview 1). One student had never slept in a tent before and really wanted to camp again. Teamwork was again mentioned here highlighting the sense of achievement felt for all of them completing the journey.

The students got to reflect on what they had seen, achieved and learnt along the journey. One student, Ivy, reflected on the sense of empowerment she felt from having participated in the beach clean-up, and the difference it could make. This caring for how they could positively affect the wildlife could be the start of an ethic of care for the place, which a couple of students discussed through gaining awareness of issues facing their city.

The place-responsive outdoor education journey allowed the students to be present in place, exploring their city, gaining a new perspective and greater appreciation for what is there (Wattchow & Brown, 2011). The students learned about the history, culture and stories of their community, as they too added their own stories and created their community. Through this creation and re-creation of community, they began an apprenticeship to their city and potentially developed a sense of belonging (Penetito, 2008). Through reflection, both during and post the journey, students’ perceptions of the city changed. The city now represented somewhere that they had a deeper connection to and was more than just shopping malls. It had wildlife and bush, was accessible by bike, but also had its issues. More than that, the journey gave the students their own stories as a community in it. If we consider the model presented earlier (see Figure 1), the ‘fun’, slow mode of transport, the creation of community, the stories both learnt and created were the enablers that allowed the students to transition between the signposts. The relationships with each other and the wider community members were the most significant enablers the students mentioned to help
deepen their experience of their place.

Place-responsive outdoor education “is an active journey towards belonging. With belonging comes connection and the development of an ethic of care” (Wattchow & Brown, 2011, p. 196). The students displayed an emotional response to the plastic waste and how it was killing marine life, specifically the bird species, suggesting that they cared and connected to this issue. Such an emotional response led two students to go further with their care over having made a positive impact on their city with the beach clean up. It appears that the opportunity for these students to participate in a place-responsive outdoor education journey has the potential to develop an ethic of care for the environment and their city at this age group. To completely appropriate space into place may require further visits and experiences that could transform their tentative connection into an attachment for the areas and their city (Benages-Albert, Di Masso, Porcel, Pol, & Vall-Casas, 2015).

Conclusion
A place-responsive journey using a slow pedagogy can change the students’ perspective of place, and be a fun medium that develops a sense of achievement (Brown, 2012b). They learnt about their city, culture, history and people (Penetito, 2008). Learning about place can lead to learning about the issues facing the place and issues that concern them. My findings agree with Wattchow and Brown (2011) that a place-responsive journey can start to develop an ethic of care for place.

The social interaction seems to be an important enabler for the success of place-responsive pedagogy and of high importance to the students, with the shared experience helping form a community (Breunig et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2010). It aids in getting to know your people and in creating stories of your own with these people (Penetito, 2008).

References


About the author
Jo Thompson is a facilitator on the Bachelor of Leadership for Change at CAPABLE NZ, Otago Polytechnic. She has worked in outdoor education for 20 years and is passionate about reconnecting people to place for the wellbeing of people, place and the environment.
Year 9
The overall purpose for our year 9 outdoor education days at Shirley Boys High School (SBHS) is to introduce the concept of the 'Shirley Man' and our 'Better Than Before' focus to the new year 9 students. Additionally, for them to continue building stronger relationships within their teaching class, teachers and with senior student executives from their house. We do this through the experience of walking, paddling and planting between the area of our current and new school to gain a sense of belonging to this special and unique place.

Each year 9 student has their own native seedling of whisper grass or bull rush to plant in the Amelia Rodgers Reserve area, to help improve the natural habitat for all the species living there. One species in particular that we are focusing on is the Inanga or Whitebait. Modification of the tidally affected regions of stream and river banks by cattle browsing and flood control works have no doubt destroyed much spawning habitat. Because they cannot climb small waterfalls, inanga are restricted to the lower reaches of rivers and streams and their access to good habitat can be greatly reduced by poorly designed culverts.

Each day, two year 9 classes participate with one class walking from SBHS to Amelia Rogers Reserve while the other is Dragon Boating from Kerrs Reach to Amelia Rogers Reserve. They meet at the SBHS planting area where they plant their tree and compete in Tug-o-War. During this time, there will also be conversations about what it means to be a 'Shirley man' and 'Better than before'.

We hope that this is will encourage turangawaewae and for students to plant a tree symbolising their arrival to this area, our school. Moreover, the action of giving and caring to their local community; Te Taiaroa and Hapori

Year 10
Each year in either term 1 or term 4, each year 10 class attends a 3-day camp at Purau Bay. On the first day of camp the boys meet the challenge of climbing to the top of Mount Herbert (Te Ahu Patiki), our highest peak in Canterbury (919m). They reach the top showing determination and perseverance. Over the next couple of days, the boys try out a number of activities including rock climbing, coasteering, mountain biking, kayaking and some even manage to make their own rafts (that hopefully don't fall apart when they paddle them). We love being able to introduce many of our students to an area so close to the city, and provide a number of
I am a fan of Niki Harré, who is an associate professor of psychology at the University of Auckland. Her earlier publication called *Psychology for a better world: Working with people to save the planet* written in 2011 (and updated in 2018) was fascinating. In this book she discussed the need to find joy in life and talked about what living well might look like in times of global crisis. It also contained important lessons for educators about how we can help our students to view the world in positive ways.

*The infinite game* takes a different look at what it means to be human in the modern world and how to make sense of all the madness. In this book, Harré builds on the ideas of philosopher James Carse, who wrote that in life there are two kinds of games: finite games that have strict rules about who the players are, how they conduct themselves and who wins and who loses; and infinite games where the players and rules are fluid, and there are no winners or losers since the game never ends. These games are metaphors for the economic, social and cultural activities we engage in, and Harré weaves these metaphors deeply into her own exploration of how we are.

In Harré's words "This book is an invitation to imagine life as an infinite game. Just like beach cricket, the infinite game thrives when people offer their talents, look out for each other, and know when to break the rules. It's a game that deals in joy – the joy of being deeply alive and trusting that others are on your side.” (p.11)

Harré asks the reader to engage with two broad questions. The first is to perceive the world through the lens of the infinite game, and to imagine what the world might look like if our efforts were about maintaining the game (for example maintaining the best possible outcomes for our communities). The second is to imagine oneself as an infinite player, contributing to the collective of players in the endless game (where our decisions are informed by what is best for others).

As with her earlier book, *The infinite game* is about conscious engagement with our thoughts, perspectives and emotional and intellectual reactions to the world around us. As an educator, I found the discussion quite insightful.
“Outside the Classroom” by Wendy Knowles

Written during her time at Rutherford Intermediate, Whanganui. Although there is no date, the family think it would have been the late 60’s where she was responsible for outdoor education. (1960-70s?)

No long dreary days inside
Listening to the teachers chide.
Instead, we go for miles around
To study life about our town.

For science, to the pond and rocks we go
At the museum, we learn about Maoris, long ago.
In buses and in cars to Lismore Forest green;
At Bushy Park, we revel in the bush-clad scene.

On bicycles, to beach and park we ride,
To write and sketch and watch the tide.
Drama out of doors is fun and full of glee
Imagine a shipwreck - acted on sand by the sea.

We find whatever we can by research
And attend the City Council and our Putiki Church
We see what happens at the Inland Revenue
And watch the cases at the court go through.

Factories and industries, we visit galore
Pupils to parliament to learn even more.
Other schools, we meet in every sport
Returning home with a commendable report.

Speakers come to tell us of their work and leisure
And regale with travels of great pleasure.
Don’t you wish you were young, and able
To learn outside instead of chanting tables.

To Landguard Bluff all Form 1 go
To camp together with parents also
We study life on the Rocky Shore.
We gain a lot - let’s have more!

A wonderful trip we all love so dear
Is a week at Mangatepopo every year
Learning to live and study too.
Tramps and swims and science trips anew.

So Mum and Dad, if to you it seems only fun,
Just come along and see what is done.
You’ll be pleased and surprised at all we attain.
We learn more than you think and don’t leave our Classrooms in vain.
THE EONZ POSITION STATEMENT ON EOTC

1. **Purpose (What we do)**

   EONZ maintains that the primary purpose of EOTC is to engage with the New Zealand curriculum outside the classroom in order to enrich the learning of students in early childhood centres, and primary and secondary schools.

   EONZ embraces all the principles of Te Whāriki He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna O Aotearoa / Early Childhood Curriculum (1996); Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (2008); and The New Zealand Curriculum (2007); including a commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and cultural diversity, inclusive communities, coherence in learning across the curriculum, and future focussed issues such as sustainability, citizenship, enterprise and globalisation.

   EONZ supports the values outlined in the above documents including excellence, innovation, diversity, equity, community, cultural and ecological sustainability, integrity, and respect.

2. **Why we do it (benefits for individuals, communities, environments)**

   EONZ is cognisant of research (for example see TKI website http://eotc.tki.org.nz/eotc-home) that supports well-structured EOTC experiences. Studies have shown that educationally sound EOTC experiences can enrich student learning across the curriculum. The establishment of positive relationships with teachers and peers in places of significance can foster a sense of belonging to communities and environments that is essential to ongoing learning.

3. **How we do it (Pedagogy/practice/partnerships)**

   EOTC programme design should be informed by sound pedagogical principles as highlighted in the New Zealand Curriculum. EONZ maintains that EOTC should at all times occur within the framework of the EOTC Guidelines: Bringing the Curriculum Alive (2009).

   EONZ actively supports partnerships with and between teachers, schools and the community. EONZ seeks to work collaboratively with other sector organisations with the goal to improve EOTC in Aotearoa New Zealand.

4. **Where we do it (Place)**

   EONZ supports place based and responsive approaches to EOTC that seek to: strengthen the understanding that students have of their local communities and environments (as well as those further afield), and engender a sense of obligation to care for those communities and environments. To achieve these goals, EONZ encourages action oriented experiential education that explores individual and collective relationships to places to foster vibrant communities and healthy environments.
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