Editorial

Glyn Thomas

'Giddy' and welcome to another issue of the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education. This issue, volume 10, number 2, has a particularly fresh feel about it. We welcome a total of 12 authors (or co-authors) who have never written for AJOE before. We also have four papers from distant shores, one from the UK, one from Singapore, and two from North America. I am confident that this fresh input is indicative of good things to come for 'our journal.'

The Australian Journal of Outdoor Education (AJOE) is now more accessible than ever. Academics, practitioners, students, and emerging outdoor leaders/teachers from around the world can now access the last eight issues of AJOE (including this one) on-line. This means a wider readership, broader impact, and a deeper influence in outdoor education and related fields. This will have the positive effect of attracting more authors to submit their work for publication, which increases the quality of the papers published.

This edition of AJOE includes two final papers on volume 10's theme of 'Taking Stock.' The refereed section of this edition starts with a paper from Bernie Davis, Tony Rea, and Sue Waite from the University of Plymouth, UK. The refereed section concludes with the other paper addressing this theme by Rob Hales from Griffith University, in Queensland. Let me tell you a bit about what you have to look forward to reading in this issue.

Davis, Rea and Waite describe the phenomenon of Forest Schools in the UK with the three to eleven age group. Their paper draws on a model developed by Kellert (2002) and provides a critical discussion on the contribution that such programs can make to the education of children. Their paper also identifies areas for future research into outdoor learning in the early primary school years, which they argue, has been previously overlooked.

In the second paper, Eric Brymer teams with Tonia Gray to consider the efficacy of a transactional-transformational leadership model in the study of outdoor leadership. Among other findings, the authors argue that effective transformational leadership requires a deep understanding of oneself. This has implications for the professional development and training of outdoor leaders and is certainly consistent with other literature on the training of facilitators (Hunter, Bailey, & Taylor, 1999; Jenkins & Jenkins, 2006; Ringer, 2002).

In the next paper, three authors from Singapore, C. K. John Wang, Woon-Chia Liu and Abdul Kahlid, report on a study investigating the effects of a five-day Outward Bound course on female students in Singapore. The paper explores both girls' motivations for participating in adventure educational programs and their associated outcomes. The results of this quantitative study, reveals that the programme described had positive impacts on the female student's social skills, interpersonal skills, leadership, and self-esteem.

Next, Garrett Hutson and Diane Montgomery, from Oklahoma State University report on some quantitative research exploring the connections that outdoor leaders feel to natural places? Using a research methodology called 'Q-Method inquiry' the authors explored the attitudes of connectedness that a small group of outdoor leaders felt to places in outdoor settings. They found two types of connections to places, which they described as deep-spirit and nature-emotion. The deep spirit perspective places emphasis on spiritually being a part of nature, whereas the nature-emotion perspective emphasises place meanings developed through the engagement with the intricacies of natural environments.

Tonia Gray joins Tracey Dickson, from the University of Canberra, for her second paper in this edition. The paper reports on research they conducted with some of their own students and conference workshop participants. Their study provides a snapshot of the facilitation strategies being used by their subjects to optimise learning. A critical finding of the study was that when their subjects were designing their programs, the learning style preferences of their participants did not influence the activities or approaches they used when facilitating experiences. To this end, Gray and Dickson give us an important reminder to be intentional about the strategies we use when facilitating experiences in the outdoors. The alternative is to keep on leading the way we always have, or to copy the practices of others, in a non-critical, non-reflective manner.

Rob Hales, from Griffith University, completes the refereed section of this edition with his paper, "The rise of individualism. The implications for promoting relations between self, others and the environment in outdoor education." In the paper, Hales draws on the theories of 'risk society' (Beck, 1992; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) and neoliberalism to describe the

way that the process of individualisation has shaped the way outdoor education emphasizes self above community and place. To illustrate his ideas, Hales explains how social processes have shaped the way young people have adopted mobile phone technology. He also provides some suggestions as to how the process of individualization may be countered to ensure a more even focus on self, others and the environment.

The non-refereed section of this edition features one article by the North American team of Claude Doucette and Peggy Ransom and David Kowalewski. The paper describes a program developed in a Canadian High School, which uses indigenous leaders to teach their students at a winter camp in the Canadian arctic. The program exposes students to a range of modern and traditional practices essential to living in such harsh winter conditions learning directly from aboriginal teachers.

Enjoy.

Glyn Thomas

References

- Beck, U. (1992). *Risk society: Towards a new modernity*. London: Sage.
- Beck, U., & Beck-Gernsheim, E. (2002). *Individualization: Institutionalized individualism and its social and political consequences*. London, Sage.
- Hunter, D., Bailey, A., & Taylor, B. (1999). *The essence of facilitation: Being in action in groups*. Auckland, New Zealand: Tandem Press.
- Jenkins, J. C., & Jenkins, M., R. (2006). *The 9 disciplines of a facilitator: Leading groups by transforming yourself*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Kellert, S. R. (2002). Experiencing nature: Affective, cognitive and evaluative development in children. In P. H. Kahn & S. R. Kellert (Eds.), *Children and nature: Psychological, sociocultural and evolutionary investigations* (pp. 117-151). London: MIT.
- Ringer, M. (2002). *Group action: The dynamics of groups in therapeutic, educational and corporate settings*. London: Jessica Kingsley.