Editorial

Glyn Thomas

Welcome to another issue of the *Australian Journal of Outdoor Education* where it is our pleasure to bring you four refereed papers, and two book reviews. This edition features some 'first time in AJOE' authors and some seasoned contributors. Together, their papers provide thought provoking reading across a diverse range of topics of interest and relevance to outdoor education professionals.

First up, Mike Brown questions the effectiveness of some experiential learning processes in outdoor adventure programs. From a socio-cultural theoretical foundation, and drawing on literature in that field, Mike raises some issues for outdoor education theorists and practitioners to ponder. In my opinion, the continued development of outdoor education as a profession will be influenced by our willingness to engage with these important conversations and our ability to establish a sound, defensible theoretical foundation for our practice.

The second paper, by Deirdre Slattery, uses a case study of bushwalking access in one of our iconic Australian National Parks to explore the issue of land management. This paper reminds us that an understanding of the environmental histories can add value to the learning experiences that outdoor education teachers are able to provide in specific places.

The next paper by UK team Barbara Humberstone and Ina Stan addresses the issue of well-being in outdoor education at the primary school level. In particular the authors explore the how risk and safety potentially contribute to the physical and emotional well-being of young children.

In the last refereed paper, we welcome a contribution by two authors from the USA, Katherine Ratliffe and Cindy Sanekane. If you are wondering about the effectiveness of using hippos in hippotherapy then you definitely need to read this paper. The authors carefully consider the Australian and International literature addressing the effectiveness of equine-assisted therapies.

Finally, the two book reviews provided in this issue come courtesy of Kathleen Pleasants and Scott Polley. These books are titled *Other Ways of Learning* and *Technical Skills for Adventure Programming: A Curriculum Guide*.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of the members of the advisory board and the reviewing panel for their input to the journal. Almost all their work is behind the scenes and they typically receive very little public recognition for their input. The journal would not exist without their important contribution.

Don't forget the *Australian Outdoor Education Conference* is happening from January 10-13, 2010 in Fremantle, Western Australia. Check the *Outdoor Education Australia* website for more details at www.outdooreducationaustralia.com.au

Enjoy the reading.

Glyn Thomas
Editor