



University  
of Applied  
Management



*10th International Adventure Conference*

# BEING-WITH AND BEING-WELL IN NATURE: OUR TENTACULAR ADVENTURES

7-9 JUNE 2023, TREUCHTLINGEN, GERMANY

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



# Welcome to the 10th International Adventure Conference

The idea of adventure is inevitably intensely human, socially construed, and is rooted in the emergence of our species as it struggled to survive, to move and to procreate. For early humans, every day had elements of risk, discovery, and connection, and understanding of a material and more-than-human world was essential. These simple ideas have informed conference themes emanating from an anthropocentric perspective for most of our past nine events. There have been lots of ideas about the benefits of careful risk-taking, of outdoor exercise, of adventure tourism's potential in benefitting remote rural, coastal and mountain communities. And, increasingly, the idea of outdoor leisure, adventurous and fast or slow, is presented as a salve for many of the societal ills of our times: obesity, depression, heart disease, screen addiction and so forth. We therefore wish to draw some of these ideas together in this call for contributions to the tenth IAC.

We want to expand the notion of the 'being' in well-being, and also to reverse the term – hence, 'being-well'. However, implicit in 'being-well' here is a nod to Haraway's (2015) challenge and critique of the Anthropocene and Capitalocene, and her insistence on the acknowledgement of a Chthulucene, which in some ways parallels Bennett's (2010) work on Vibrant Matters (2010), in which she argues for an acknowledgement and embrace of a wider material world filled with agency – *being-with*.

*"I propose a name for an elsewhere and elsewhen that was, still is, and might yet be: the Chthulucene. I remember that tentacle comes from the Latin tentaculum, meaning "feeler," and tentare, meaning "to feel" and "to try"; and I know that my leggy spider has many-armed allies. Myriad tentacles will be needed to tell the story of the Chthulucene" (Haraway, 2016).*

In other words, the world, and the stuff in it, from trees and bacteria to plastic bottles and hamburgers, are all powerful actants which enable or constrain the ways in which humans go about their lives. As a climber, if the rock is wet, or loose, it has agency over how or if we climb (Stinson and Grimwood, 2022). Rough seas, wind against tide, melting snow or the formation of ice all also underscore the fact that, whilst human agency has predominated in thinking about environmental degradation via the Anthropocene, we dearly need new ways of being-with.

# Welcome to the 10th International Adventure Conference

At our 10th IAC, we therefore aim to explore ways in which outdoor leisure and learning, and adventure tourism, can embrace a 'being-with the trouble' - the trouble being more than environmental degradation and destruction, and the satisficing nonsense of paying our way out of guilt. The trouble comes from the high-mindedness of anthropocentric thinking, and the power of capitalism which distances us from our place with and amongst other materialities and beings on the planet. How is a sense of wonder to be invigorated which takes us beyond our focus on the thing-ness of skiing, climbing, kayaking or whatever to a practice of worlding?

We will take time to look at Haraway's synopsis - and her spider account - reference below. How can we as academics and practitioners be 'with' the world and engage in more tentacular (connected, networked) thinking?

*"The unfinished Chthulucene must collect up the trash of the Anthropocene, the exterminism of the Capitalocene, and chipping and shredding and layering like a mad gardener, make a much hotter compost pile for still possible pasts, presents, and futures" (Haraway, 2016)*

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# Organisers



## The Adventure Tourism Research Association

The Adventure Tourism Research Association (ATRA) is a membership organisation which is assembling a worldwide academic community, and helping to facilitate knowledge exchange and the creation of new relationships in the field of outdoor leisure and adventure tourism. ATRA works with local partners to host the annual International Adventure Conference. The association's website, [www.atra.global](http://www.atra.global) is a shared portal for ATRA members' news.



## Local Hosts: University for Applied Management

The conference is held at the Adventure Campus in Treuchtlingen. Situated in the south of Franconia, in between the tourist destinations of the Franconian Lake District and the Nature Park Altmuehl Valley, the campus is the university's base for outdoor studies and for extracurricular outdoor activities. The Adventure Campus is also a conference hotel and can accommodate most of the conference's delegates. During the conference and the activities, we will explore the surrounding area.



## The venue – Adventure Campus

The conference is held at the Adventure Campus in Treuchtlingen. Situated in the south of Franconia in between the tourist destinations Franconian Lake District and Nature Park Altmuehl Valley the campus is the university's base for a degree in outdoor studies and for extracurricular outdoor activities. During the conference and the activities, we will explore the surrounding nature.



*Keynote speaker*

# EMILY HÖCKERT

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Emily Höckert is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Lapland, Finland. Her research examines and cultivates relational ways of being, imagining, knowing, and doing in tourism settings. She approaches the questions of multispecies hospitality and ethics of care at the crossroads of hermeneutic phenomenology, postcolonial philosophy, and posthumanism, asking how more-than-human communities welcome and take care of each other. Emily is a member of the research project “Envisioning proximity tourism with new materialism” (Academy of Finland, 2019-2023; [www.ilarctic.com](http://www.ilarctic.com)) and the “Intra-living in the Anthropocene” research network.

## Adventuring with Multispecies Hospitality

I am packing my rug sack for an overnight visit to the neighboring forest. I feel thrilled about this slow adventure ahead of me, which offers a well-needed disruption to routines and a gentle push out of my comfort zone (Varley & Semple, 2015). During the past years, our Intra-living in the Anthropocene (ILA) research community has been envisioning alternatives to the distancing, and even apocalyptic imaginaries of the ecological crisis by engaging with mundane beings, thoughts, and places with the conceptual lens of proximity ([ilarctic.com](http://ilarctic.com)). Through engagement with relational ontologies and epistemologies, we have become multidisciplinary advocates for a sensitive, caring, and curious orientation toward more-than-human entanglements and multispecies storytelling (Rantala, Kinnunen & Höckert, in press).

The main purpose of my trip to the forest is to think with the notion of multispecies hospitality; that is, to extend the ideas of welcome and care beyond human hosts and guests. Perhaps it is good to make it clear before the departure that my interest is not in commercial hospitality management as such but in postcolonial philosophies of hospitality that approach ethical subjectivity as openness to alterity and ‘the other’ (Höckert 2018; Höckert & Grimwood, in press). For this purpose, I use Emmanuel Levinas’ (1969) and Jacques Derrida’s (1999) writings on hospitality as guidebooks to explore how both human and non-human hosts and guests make space for otherness and negotiate the conditions of hospitality in forest settings. Their philosophy of hospitality disrupts the pre-set roles of hosts and guests, both *hôte* in French, and suggests that the positions of subjects and objects of welcome and care are continuously changing. Levinas and Derrida prioritize relation over individual freedom in a way that can be seen as quite radical and unique in the Western spirit of morality and justice. This priority makes it impossible for us to be responsible as detached adventurers or researchers alone and also reveals the arrogance of taking the welcome of ‘the other’ for granted.

The everyman’s rights in the Nordic countries give general instructions on how to be a responsible guest, yet the conditions of hospitality tend to become negotiated in situated relations between self and the other (see also Farkić & Gebbles, 2022). In theory, I can put up my tent anywhere in the woods – as long as there are no houses nearby – without asking permission from any human owners of that land. Yet, what about the favorite sleeping places of the wild boar, common paths of the deer, moose, and ants, or the striving communities of mosses? How to make sure not to overstay my welcome? Or even more, how to make kin in a place where many humans visit to hunt and cut down trees? Luckily the side pocket of my bag has enough space for Robin Wall Kimmerer’s (2013) ‘Braiding Sweetgrass’ which envisions reciprocal relations with the land.

The forest is calling! Would you like to join?

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*Keynote speaker*

# MANUEL STEINBAUER

PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF BAYREUTH, GERMANY



Dr Manuel Steinbauer is Head of the Sports Ecology Department of the Sport Science Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences. His research focuses on biodiversity and the effects of outdoor and adventure activities on flora and fauna. His aim is to find ways of participating in these activities with minimal impact on nature.

## Direct interactions of outdoor sport with ecological systems

Outdoor sport activities, such as mountain biking, kayaking, and ski touring, can have an impact on the natural environment. Activities often result in immediate disturbances, such as trampling damage, soil erosion, or disruptions to animal behaviour. These seemingly negative effects fuel debates regarding potential conflicts between outdoor sports and their social and natural environments. While detecting these immediate disturbances is relatively straightforward, determining their long-term consequences on ecological systems, such as changes in population dynamics of protected species, presents a significant challenge. It is essential to recognize that apparent negative effects, like the destruction of vegetation, may have positive implications for species composition in one context, while posing a threat to the survival of highly endangered species in another context. Therefore, it is crucial to differentiate between direct measurable responses and their long-lasting consequences in ecological systems.

Visitor management faces additional challenges due to the ongoing digitalization and individualization of outdoor sports. Digital planning tools facilitate direct communication with and among outdoor enthusiasts, but they may also encourage off-path exploration and attract visitors to previously undisturbed areas. Rapid changes in novel digital tools can outpace the development of adequate strategies for visitor management. The possibility of direct communication with visitors during their outdoor activities represents a novel key advantage, but effectively reaching people at the right moments with the appropriate tools (during pre-trip preparation, while navigating, or during post-activity reflection) remains a significant challenge.

By examining real-world examples, this talk highlights the challenges and potential of digital tools for visitor management and nature conservation and aims to underscore the importance of a nuanced understanding of the effects of outdoor sport activities on the natural environment.



*After-dinner speaker*

# CHRISTO FOERSTER

ADVENTURER, AUTHOR AND SPEAKER, GERMANY



Christo Foerster is an adventurer, bestselling author and expert on change. His motto „raus und machen“ („get out and do“) stands for a new, sustainable understanding of motivation. Christo is a passionate ambassador for the opportunities next door. His micro-adventure philosophy inspired thousands to take chances. Christo also studies the manifold effects of nature for personal growth and health – both in theory and practice. He is the father of two and lives in Hamburg, Germany.

## Reconnect – My ego, wild ways and finding the we

During the pandemic I felt the need to set out on a big adventure again. But due to the many travel restrictions my only chance was to create an expedition within the borders of my own country. That's why I found myself on the summit of the Zugspitze in the Alps one summer morning, carrying over 40 kilos on my back, including a Paddleboard. My goal: to cross Germany and reach the most northern landmark on the island of Sylt in the North Sea unsupported within 7 weeks. When I finally reached my goal after hardship and unforgettable joys I had learned far more than I ever hoped for: I had established an amazingly strong connection to the landscapes of the country I live in, a new connection to the elements, to nature, to something much bigger than me... This talk is about setting out, intense moments in the near outdoors and the connective effects nature reveals when we really allow ourselves to dive in.



*Keynote speaker*

# DAVID CLARKE

LECTURER, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, UK



Dr David A.G. Clarke is a Lecturer in Outdoor and Environmental Education at the Moray House School of Education and Sport, University of Edinburgh (UK). He is based in the Outdoor and Environmental Education section of the Institute for Education, Teaching, and Leadership. He is a member of the University's Centre for Creative-Relational Inquiry (CCRI) and the Sustainability in Education Research Group (SIERG). His teaching and research interests focus on transdisciplinary areas of creative inquiry, life experience, and ethics in education and the Anthropocene.

## **Animism and the politics of nature: Creative practices for worlding-with**

In this talk, I will consider how animism might allow a way of thinking of the world differently: as thinking of it, and our relations with and of it, as in process and never settled. I speculate, as others have, on what this view means for our ways of acting with the world, in an ethical sense. Specifically I will discuss the ways in which animism may help us circumvent a historic and increasingly contemporary problem in the politics of 'nature': when nature, as a social concept, is put to use to unethical ends. I hope to suggest some creative ways we might attempt to develop an animistic sensibility, to demonstrate that we are the world taking place, rather than beings either detached from or connected to 'nature'.



# THE SPECTACULAR-TENTACULAR EFFECTS OF EVENTIZATION AND MEDIATIZATION ON THE LIFECYCLE OF TREND AND ADVENTURE SPORTS

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The lifecycle of trend and adventure sports provides an inspiring context for examining the ambivalences of “being with” and “staying with the trouble” (making connections to these concepts from Haraway, 2016, as stated in the conference themes for IAC2023) within the larger fields of sport and tourism, in order to develop a deeper understanding of the development of these sports. This presentation summarizes the key aspects of the concept paper “No limits forever! Understanding the lifecycle of trend and adventure sports in the context of individualization, eventization and mediatization” (in press, *Managing Sport and Leisure*). Recognizing the challenges for trend and adventure sports to develop and establish sustainable communities (including participants, spectators and sponsors, among others), the presentation examines the conceptual framework developed by the authors, exploring the fundamental question of how these sports develop and increase in popularity, participation and media attention as they move through the product lifecycle. The conceptual framework promotes a comprehensive understanding of how the movement through the lifecycle is fueled by the individualization and pluralization of lifestyles and accelerated by mediatization and eventization (Sand et al., in press).

Both case analysis and literature analysis were implemented in order to develop a conceptual framework for further research. Selected trend and adventure sport cases are included in the analysis as application of the framework. The presentation summarizes the key aspects of the framework and thereby remains within a theoretical/conceptual approach, which does not present empirical results of a current investigation.

The hype surrounding trend and adventure sports is important to understand. The presentation discusses the viability of the conceptual framework as it explains how participation increases are achieved not only due to the inclusive nature of the sports, but especially through the metaprocesses of mediatization and eventization, which is made possible by the advancement of digital technologies. As athletes, participants, spectators and general public engage with these activities and share their experiences online, it gives rise to further interesting opportunities to join in and participate (Sand et al., in press).

With the conceptual framework it is possible to more clearly understand the impact of societal metaprocesses on the lifecycle of trend and adventure sports. In this way, the presentation is clearly imbedded in the conference sub-theme “beyond cognition”, as trend and adventure sports are examined within the interplay of meta-processes for societal change, enabling the continual growth and development of these sports through phases of “staying with the trouble” until full saturation and acceptance within the larger sport community is achieved, where “being with” means to be fully embraced as an established sport.



## **STAKEHOLDER-BASED DESTINATION MARKETING THROUGH ONLINE PLATFORMS IN ADVENTURE TOURISM - A CASE STUDY FROM THE WESTERN BALKANS**

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The Western Balkan countries have seen a rapid growth in tourism development over the last decade[1]. Outdoor and adventure tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the sector. However, the transition towards a well-connected information society in Europe (and beyond) is not reflected in digital transformation strategies of the Southeast European tourism sector. Digital transformation is important for the tourism industry to enhance innovation, to meet the needs of the increasingly technology savvy visitors (e.g., through online bookings and marketing, digital information search, location-based services etc.), and for competing in the global tourism marketplace[2],[3]. Emerging destinations such as countries in the Western Balkans often lack destination management organization structures and marketing budgets[4],[5]. For this reason, tourism development initiatives in Southeast Europe remain largely invisible to the international main source markets for outdoor and adventure tourism and cannot realize their full potential.

This paper presents preliminary findings of the Open Tourism Data Initiative in Southeast Europe (OTDI-SEE) which is about supporting digital transformation processes in emerging adventure and outdoor tourism destinations in Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Montenegro. The project applies the principles of the triple bottom line approach[6] in the targeted region and aims to improve economic opportunities for local tourism businesses considering social and environmental issues. An open data approach combined with upskilling, tourism content creation and the utilization of platform technologies exemplified by the Outdooractive tourism platform is used to leverage the potential of digitalization processes.

Preliminary findings show that only a small number of stakeholders drive most of the adventure tourism development in the region. Experiences of the project can confirm that there is a lack in digital skills among tourism stakeholders and training is needed to improve competencies and create high quality digital tourism content to increase the online visibility of local and regional tourism destinations and SMEs such as tour guides or local accommodation providers. In particularly decentralized content creation may be a promising approach to compensate for missing destination management organization structures in the respective target countries.

The amount of digital tourism content of the target regions on the Outdooractive platform has doubled over the last 18 months which shows that applied methods are effective. Yet, the impact of the project on local communities in tourism destinations needs to be evaluated. It is expected that approaches and learnings from the project are transferable to other emerging outdoor and adventure tourism destinations.

The OTDI-SEE is co-funded by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

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# ADVENTURE DESTINATION APPRAISALS: THE ROLE OF HARD VERSUS SOFT ADVENTURE BRAND POSITIONING

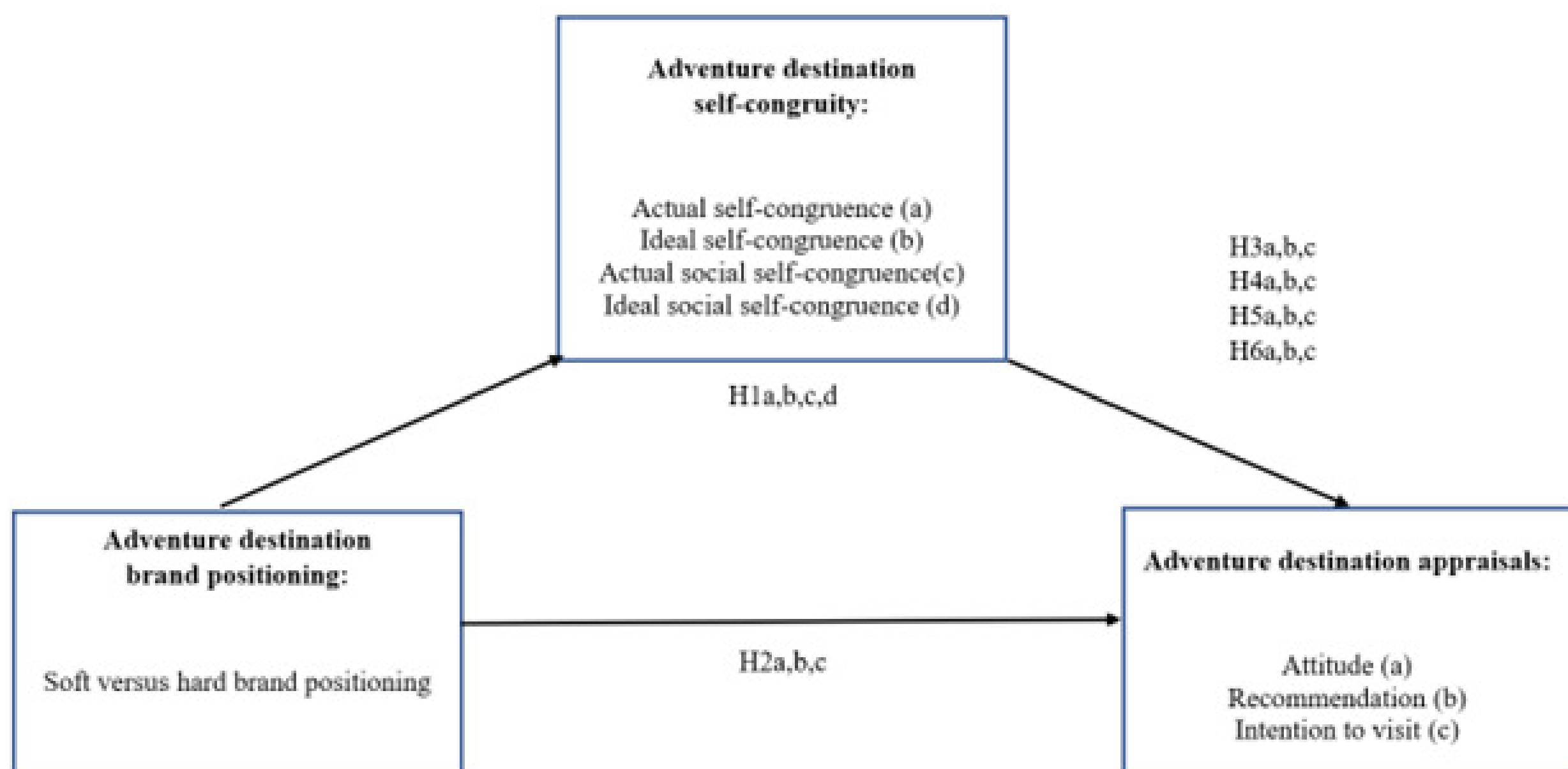
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It is an interesting observation that some of the world's most successful adventure destinations appear to position their destination brands leaning toward hard-adventure portraying an image with elements of risk (e.g., Cloke & Perkins, 1998), yet most visitors to these destinations are soft-adventure tourists who do not seek risk (Swarbrooke et al., 2003). This raises the question whether soft-adventure tourists nevertheless are more attracted to destinations with an adventurous and thrilling brand image than a softer destination image, in which case the core of the brand is centred around low-threshold adventure activities.

Thus, the main objective of this study is to investigate how hard- versus soft-adventure brand positioning impacts adventure destination appraisals. Based on self-congruity (the match between the destination image and tourists' self-image (actual, ideal, social, and ideal social self-image)), we propose that both soft- and hard-adventure tourists view hard-adventure destination images as more exciting than soft-adventure. Tourists may consciously or subconsciously see an actual or ideal match between their self-images and a highly adventurous (harder) destination image, which again will impact destination appraisals.

See conceptual model and hypotheses below.

Figure 1. Conceptual model.





## ADVENTURE DESTINATION APPRAISALS: THE ROLE OF HARD VERSUS SOFT ADVENTURE BRAND POSITIONING

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Data was collected in Queenstown, New Zealand, rated as one of the world's top nature-based adventure destinations (ATTA, 2020). The on-site consumer survey used soft- and hard-adventure picture collages as stimuli. See Figure 2. A total of 409 questionnaires were collected.

Figure 2. Picture collages.

Soft-adventure brand positioning collage.



Hard-adventure brand positioning collage.



Modified from Sirgy & Su, 2000

The findings confirmed that the hard-adventure positioning strategy resulted in a more positive attitude toward the adventure destination than the soft-adventure strategy. Participants were also more likely to recommend and visit with a hard-adventure positioning strategy. However, while adventure tourists' actual self-concepts were mediated by self-congruency as hypothesized, the ideal self-concepts were not. An explanation may be that tourists evaluate the destination based on how they see a match between the destination and their true inner needs, not caring about "showing off" as highly adventurous to others. They simply are attracted to an adventure destination that portrays a harder adventure image of being exhilarating and adrenalin filled. They perceive this "harder" image aura as positive, which impacts destination appraisals positively.

The contribution of this article is warranted for at least three reasons. Firstly, the study sheds new light on how self-congruity can play an important role in adventure destination brand positioning. Secondly, results contribute to a better understanding of how a harder adventure destination brand positioning can sway tourists' destination attitude, loyalty, and behavioural intention positively, regardless of whether they are soft- or hard-adventurers. Thirdly, the article adds to extant literature by extending adventure tourist behaviour research into the context of brand positioning. Additionally, this study offers practical implications for DMOs and adventure destination stakeholders by providing important brand positioning guidance.

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## **ADVENTURES IN ECOTONES: CONNECTING WITH NATURE IN BETWEEN LAND AND SEA**

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This paper explores adventures in ecotones, in environmental and experiential contexts. Ecotones occur between ecosystems or regions, generating properties that do not exist independently in either of the adjacent ecosystems (Odum, 1953; Kark, 2013). In this study, kayaking and coasteering experiences are explored and framed as a kind of ecotone, where experiences occur between rock and water, land and sea, and provide a multitude of contrasting and connected outcomes. Various conference subthemes are integrated: embodied practices; being-with via feelings, felt memories, senses; and intimate immensities. In doing so the overall notion of 'being-with' nature is explored, considering what this looks and feels like in kayaking and coasteering contexts.

The research considers the experiential components that occur in experiences integrating fast and slow adventure (Varley and Semple, 2015), hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing (Houge Mackenzie and Brymer, 2020), and nature encounters between physical contact and emotional connection with nature (Richardson et al., 2021). Opportunities for varied and powerful outcomes are presented, uncovering the inter-relationship between modes of adventure, wellbeing, and nature connection.

Methodologically, the paper integrates various qualitative research methods to gain a holistic understanding of these experiences and the meaningful moments that occur within and outside of them. Semi-structured interviews reveal the adventure provider's aims with regards to experience provision, autoethnographic narrative cartography uncovers the researcher's lived experience as a participant in the adventures, and reflective post-experience interviews with participants facilitate an understanding of the memorability and impact of the adventures both on personal wellbeing and nature connection.

The research findings demonstrate the range and depth of coasteering and kayaking experiences, acknowledging the diverse opportunities to come into contact and connect with nature, enhance wellbeing, and alter perspectives within the context of half-day adventure experiences. The opportunity for slowness and calm during the activities, combined with adrenalin fuelled jumps and power of the sea are revealed. The research finds that these distinct elements do not have to be separate entities, rather in their combination there is something special and distinctive. The notion of nature as co-creator is propositioned, as the adventures framed the natural environment as an active agent in the experience through its movement and geology. Closeness with nature is explored, in a literal and more emotional sense, with participants attuned to and engaged with the coastal environment, reflecting the notion of 'being-with' nature during adventure.

This paper explores nature connection and wellbeing within the context of adventure. It frames this discussion in the context of a variety of 'ecotones', demonstrating the possible transitions between different experiential contexts and outcomes within the temporal boundaries of half day adventure. Studies have shown that richness, diversity, and abundance peak within ecotones, with new forms evolving there (Kark, 2013). This work suggests this can be considered from an adventure experience perspective where unique and powerful components, often opposite, occur, and through this contrast create the same experiential richness as ecological ecotones. The importance of a range of experiential elements is therefore acknowledged, merging slow and fast adventure to create potential for both hedonic and eudaimonic benefits through personal growth, achievement, excitement, and meaning, whilst noticing the role and significance of nature within this. The research emphasises the opportunity to embed this approach into commercial adventure and create a narrative of nature connection within these experiences.

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# THE EXPONENTIAL GROWTH IN E-MOUNTAIN BIKING, AN ANALYSIS OF HEGEMONIC AND COUNTER HEGEMONIC RELATIONSHIPS RELEVANT TO INTRA-GROUP RECREATIONAL CONFLICT

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In the last ten years e-MTBs have created a rapidly growing presence in the mountain biking industry. These e-MTBs have a small electric motor which assists the effort put through the pedals (pedelecs) by the rider. The growing adoption of e-MTBs is bringing with it a recognition of a new range of issues, as well as potentially amplifying concerns previously expressed about regular mountain bikers. Electrical assistance means that a wider spectrum of riders can access new areas, some of whom may be inexperienced in accessing wilder, more remote and often sensitive areas. Furthermore, in enabling e-MTB riders to go further and faster with many other trail users not used to their presence, there is a suggested increase in the potential for conflict between different trail users (Mitterwallner et al. 2021).

Early analysis of current literature indicates such recreational 'trends', as e-bikes typically may still be perceived, morph into acceptable innovations to compliment a recreational need, however rapid development, in part fuelled by intensive marketing indicates there is a steeper level of adoption which has implications for both users and resource managers. This rapid adoption and constant innovation indicates a need for this research and whilst considering the steady development of recreation conflict theory, there is an urgency of understanding required by the outdoor industry, as sustainable pressures increase on increasingly fragile resources.

In considering e-MTB riding as a recreational activity this research aims to focus on recreational conflict, actual and perceived that develops due to intra-group reactions, permeating amongst the various guises of MTB and e-MTB users, engaging in their passions on the trails. As the uptake of both electric and non-electric mountain biking continues to grow, there is a need to understand the complex interactions, changing perceptions and resource management implications which are paramount to ensuring this choice of recreation is sustainable and maintains its capacity for growth successfully.

Whilst the aim of this project is to consider recreational conflict in the context of an upswing in e-MTB use, with the objective of understanding how hegemonic and counter hegemonic relationships impact this conflict, there is also a broader aim and objective to identify connectivity between deemed recreational conflict as the problem and consider what triggers this, whilst gaining an understanding of the interplay impacting on visitor experiences.

## Project Timeline: 2021-2024

The project is part of a PhD study (currently in Year 2) carried out under the supervision of Dr Steve Taylor UHI Scotland, Dr Carl Cater, Swansea University and Dr Sara Bradley UHI. Primary fieldwork and data collection will be carried out during Spring/Summer 2023.

Quantitative methodology will encompass deploying a survey instrument to gain meaningful statistics relating to users who ride in a variety of mixed terrain locations (mountain bike trail/hire centres alongside a variety of mountain bike club member groups) to gain a combination of socio-demographics, experiential and perception data alongside user specific mountain bike and/or e-mountain bike preferences and commitment information. The data will be analysed using Qualtrics software.

Qualitative methodology will involve carrying out semi-structured interviews. A selection of those interviews will be carried use a novel alternative 'in-riding' approach. The interviews will be thematically analyzed predominantly using an inductive approach, underpinned by a pragmatic research philosophy.

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# *Nature Protection and Visitor Management*

## **THE NAT:KIT TOOLKIT AND KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM FOR BIKE VISITOR MANAGEMENT**

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The popularity of outdoor activities, including cycling and mountain biking, has surged in recent years, which has led to several challenges for protected areas. Inexperienced user groups, overcrowding, and the widespread availability of online GPS tracks that make natural habitats easily accessible to all are just some of the issues that have emerged and are having detrimental effects on environmentally sensitive areas.

We believe that an implementation or adaptation of an existing visitor use management can make the difference to ensure nature-friendly outdoor recreation activities in the future.

Thus, in April 2023, the Mountain Bike Tourism Forum Germany released the NAT:KIT to the public. Together with three German protected areas – the Bavarian Forest National Park, the Ammergau Alps Nature Park, and the Bergstrasse-Odenwald Geo-Nature Park – we developed, tested, and shared best practices in visitor management to provide a toolkit of analysis, communication, intervention, and monitoring measures.

The Bike Visitor Management Platform NATKIT.org is the result of user analyses, surveys, research and (international) expert interviews from the research fields of communication, wildlife management and outdoor tourism.

In a workshop session, we present the final results of our two-year project work (funded by the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection) and its possible applications.

NATKIT.org offers:

- a digital toolbox with tools and measures: national and nature park administrations, tourism management organizations, and interested persons are enabled to select individually suitable communication and intervention measures for the guidance of cyclists (esp. MTB) in protected areas.
- a knowledge center with basic knowledge on the topic of visitor management.
- good practices, allowing professionals to share experiences, learn from and get in touch with each other, and continuously improve their visitor management strategies.

Beyond the project period, the platform serves as an enabling and development space that strengthens the network on the topic. Thanks to its user-friendly interface and regularly updated content, the NAT:KIT is an essential tool for anyone responsible for managing visitors – at present, focused on managing cycling activities in German protected areas. However, we are more than motivated to expand and include other forms of adventure activities in the future and broaden the scope of action on an international level.

Therefore, we are excited to share our project experience and exchange ideas with conference participants – to promote knowledge-sharing across countries and different adventure activities:

- Participants learn the essential basics and pillars of visitor use management (offer development, visitor monitoring, visitor information, visitor guidance) and the touristic customer journey in this context.
- The attendees further get insights into the NAT:KIT project and results.
- Through promoting an active exchange between participants, common challenges, valuable experiences, and possible solutions will be discussed. We learn how the four pillars of visitor use management can be applied to any outdoor activity.

In the workshop session participants will experience: What is the NAT:KIT, how does the digital toolkit work and how can I use it?



## *Beyond Cognition*

# **A PATHWAY TO CHANGE: CREATING A MORE MEANINGFUL AND LASTING CONNECTION WITH NATURE.**

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The world as we know it is in full-blown crisis, from climate change to mental and physical health, and yet these challenges seem to have no real end in sight. As outdoor practitioners we can play a much more active part to address these issues than we are currently doing. Outdoor learning, and the principles passed on from Kurt Hahn (Veever & Allison, 2011) to John Dewey (2008), have served generations of young people, but their anthropocentric principles need to be reassessed considering the current problems facing the world. If both theorists were here today, they would surely agree that their theories must change, while acknowledging that their motivation and goals are still highly relevant. What I mean is that both Hahn and Dewey – and others that have followed – are largely motivated by the same goal and that is to make the world a better place by providing the educational framework for that to happen. However, that largely anthropocentric framework needs to change and focus more on the pressing issues of our time. Instead of focusing on traditional themes like skills acquisition and character building we need to focus on two key themes. The first is instilling an environmental ethic that is based on reciprocity and compassion and the second is providing the space for participants to engage in practice that promotes wellbeing in an intentionally authentic way. If these themes do occur in outdoor learning and adventure programmes it is more likely due to subjective individual experience, rather than something that is planned and executed. These are issues that are not just appropriate for adventure therapy programmes, but for all outdoor education programmes.

I propose that as outdoor practitioners we need to integrate some basic meaningful practices, within all outdoor programmes, that centre around the five pathways of connection with nature. These pathways, researched and developed by the University of Derby, UK (Richardson, 2017), have shown to increase not only participants pro-environmental behaviour but also participants' mental health and wellbeing. It is clear from empirical research that time spent outside, along with increased knowledge of the outdoors, is not in itself sufficient when it comes to making a meaningful connection with nature that can have a positive impact on the planet and our mental health. The five pathways include senses, emotion, beauty, meaning and compassion and can be embedded into most outdoor programmes with a small bit of planning and resources. Moreover, these paths go beyond cognition and anthropocentric ideology in a way that embraces the complete totality of our being. As humans we have been moving through nature for millennia, it's now time that we allowed nature to move us. When we bring intentions to our attentions, we open the door to a new world of knowing. The biggest possible impact we can have as outdoor practitioners is to make sure that our practise helps support and maintain the health of both the planet and generations to come. To finish with a cliché, it is not the connection with nature that counts, but rather the nature of that connection.

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Richardson M, Lumber R, Sheffield D (2017) 'Beyond knowing nature: Contact, emotion, compassion, meaning, and beauty are pathways to nature connection'. PLoS ONE 12(5): e0177186. The popularity of outdoor activities, including cycling and mountain biking, has surged in recent years, which has led to several challenges for protected areas. Inexperienced user groups, overcrowding, and the widespread availability of online GPS tracks that make natural habitats easily accessible to all are just some of the issues that have emerged and are having detrimental effects on environmentally sensitive areas.



# IDLENESS AS AN ADVENTURE IN HETEROTOPIC WILDERNESS

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This discussion is situated within the broader discourse on heterotopian vision of the future of tourism, which has the potential to subvert dominant power structures and open up new possibilities for thinking and being in the world (Matteucci et al., 2022).

Drawing on Foucault's (1986) idea of heterotopia, scholars have advocated reimagining what travel means and how it is experienced while calling for greater diversity, creativity, and freedom in exploring new ways of living and being. Heterotopic spaces, real and imagined, lend themselves well to resistance against hegemonic cultural norms and values by inviting people to question and challenge the existing societal practices. Wild nature is often seen as such; a heterotopic space where people escape the pressures of modern society and engage in somewhat unconventional practices.

Adventure tourism, usually taking place in those wild spaces, has seen a shift in the mode and pace of travel. For instance, the idea of "slowness" has gained traction as it represents a cultural shift towards a simpler, more sustainable way of living; the approach much needed in our capitalist society often characterised by instantaneousness, mindlessness, or meaninglessness. Slow adventure in particular, addresses these issues by encouraging people to spend extended time in wild nature and making meaningful connections with self, people, places, and life in general, and to explore cultural landscapes tucked further away from mainstream tourism destinations (Varley & Semple, 2015). The slow consumption of outdoor spaces is also claimed to have multiple health and wellbeing benefits, and may potentially lead to overcoming social ills.

While acknowledging the benefits of slow, human-powered passage through wild nature, this study goes a step further to suggest stilling of the tourist body as a potential heterotopian vision of tourism future. The concept of tourist idleness has been recently proposed as a way to defy the culture of speed and overwork to instead more frequently engage in boredom and doing nothing (Farkic et al., 2022). In many cultures, work and productivity are highly valued, and engaging in idle activities assumes a conscious decision to resist the pressures to constantly be productive and efficient, even on holiday. Moments of idleness can be greatly beneficial; they not only provide an opportunity for relaxation and self-care, but also offer space for introspection and pondering life, getting to the roots of what it means to exist – and coexist – well. Bodily grounding is a simple yet effective way to more deeply understand the vibrant flourishing of organisms, species, and wild places with which we feel an innate urge to affiliate, and which may ultimately lead to inner transformation (Sheldon, 2020) and collective wellbeing. In extending these ideas, this study seeks to conceptually explore various cultural manifestations and benefits of idleness, while suggesting that as a 'tourism practice,' it may be an adventurous endeavour in itself, particularly for those affluent workaholic urbanites.

Tourism scholars envision the future of tourism as largely heterotopian, implying that it will consist of ethical consumption and practices that are resisting the mainstream neoliberal policies largely concerned with superficial cultural consumption (Matteucci et al., 2022). In challenging the existing conceptions of 'doing' tourism and 'doing' life more broadly, more space can be therefore created for the creative enactment of idleness. Traditions and practices of local and indigenous communities are not to be forgotten; their active participation and delivery of knowledge are essential in heterotopias, and if coupled with an intimate understanding of the benefits of nature, we may begin to appreciate that being-with nature is not just a fleeting wellbeing trend, and that life can, and should be, lived differently.

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# CITING AND SITING THE PLANTATIONOCENE: A BLACK ECOCRITICAL READING OF PLANTATIONOCENE FUTURES IN OCTAVIA BUTLER'S KINDRED

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Although more well-known for her contributions towards the Chthulucene, Haraway is equally an important figure within contemporary Plantationocene and Plantation studies. Haraway is crucially credited with re-igniting mainstream interest in Plantation Studies with her 2015 essay "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin", which popularized the conceptual Plantationocene. For Haraway, the Plantationocene acknowledges the Eurocentrism of traditional Anthropocene Studies (Making Kin 48), and centers the role of the plantation in our current ecological crisis, in which "diverse kinds of human-tended farms, pastures and forests" are cleared for plantations run by "exploited, alienated, and usually spatially transported labor" ("Plantationocene" 162). The Plantationocene remains important in theorizing both racialized ontologies and ways-of-being, as well as Black futures and agency within a heavily racialized and capitalist Plantationocene/ Chthulucene.

What might the Afro-American's role be in shaping the natural space that she inhabits? Here, the boundaries of nature are contested: where exactly does nature end, and the social begin? Many scholars have identified the historical centrality of the subsistence plot (Wynter 99) to Black experience in Afro-America. The subsistence plot was traditionally a plot of land given to enslaved Blacks to grow food to feed themselves, in a move by slaveholders to maximize profit (Wynter 99). Some scholars like Haraway celebrate the biodiverse flourishing of the subsistence plot as a paradigm of multispecies kin-making ("Plantationocene" 162), while many other scholars point to the subsistence plot as a crucial site of Black innovation and resistance (Carney 1078). Many questions arise, hence: is the plantation and subsistence plot apart from, or a part of nature? What might Haraway's kinship and entanglement look like within the plantation and Plantationocene for the most vulnerable (Black women who experienced both racialized and sexual violence)? Are instances of kin-making and entanglement in the age of the Plantationocene possible outside of the subsistence plot?

This thesis further develops and articulates both the potential and limitations of futures within a situated Plantationocene through a Black ecocritical reading of Octavia Butler's *Kindred* (1979). Occurring at the intersection of Black Studies, Plantationocene Studies and Ecocriticism, a critical examination of the interactions of Blackness and nature inflects existing understandings of the praxis of kin-making in new and interesting ways. While early Plantationocene Studies may have been interested in searching for a way to transcend the Plantationocene, a cross-pollination with Black Studies and Ecocriticism reveals the necessity of theorizing from within the Plantationocene, for there is no without. Similarly, Black feminist readings of Haraway's proposed kin-making praxis reveal that possibilities for an ethics in the Plantationocene have always been present within the kinship networks of women in Afro-American plantations. These findings on the Plantationocene have implications for how we might understand the Chthulucene, and on how we might understand entanglement and kin-making.

I argue that while *Kindred* presents a radical vision of Black feminist kinship as a praxis engendering Plantationocene futures, such futures ultimately remain unfulfilled due to a suppression and denial of Black agency within the novel. In such an analysis, Black subjectivity and agency emerge as essential preconditions for the formations of Black futures within a Plantationocene.

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## **DOES VISITOR MANAGEMENT STOP ADVENTURE TOURISM? — PERSPECTIVES FROM MOTORCYCLE TOURISM**

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Due to the corona pandemic in particular, control instruments for visitor guidance (e.g. Scharbeutz beach traffic lights) were developed and are now also being used after the pandemic. In many places it is necessary to book a time slot in advance if you want to visit tourist attractions (e.g., the Colosseum in Rome). In the meantime, spacing rules and a reduced flow of visitors have become superfluous for pandemic reasons, so - at least some of - the instruments can be considered unnecessary. At least they are of no use to the guest for a spontaneous visit. Possibly, however, for the provider, who can now offer significantly more expensive guided tours or cooperate with third-party companies such as get your guide instead of their entrance tickets.

In addition to higher costs for the visit, the experience factors associated with an independent visit are also reduced. The question of how to design an adventure using visitor guidance tools is therefore a valid one. If the guest is "taken by the hand", his unsafety is significantly reduced, since he can expect to be able to discover all the special features and highlights during the tour or on the "guided path" as well.

Since adventure tourists and motorcyclists have similar motives and activity patterns, an analysis of the special interest group motorcyclists seems to be quite reasonable and transferable to Adventure Tourism (Scherhag, Gross, Sand 2022).

With the support of investigation results to the requirements to vacation are used results from an investigation under motorcycle tourists. Is support during the trip a factor that reduces the adventure?

Therefore, in a cross-border market research study (Germany, Austria, Switzerland), about 1,500 motorcyclists were interviewed about their motives, personality aspects and activities (data collection April 2022, online panels in the 3 countries). Other aspects of the survey were the requirements of motorcycling, for example, a winding route on a low-traffic road is an important characteristic of motorcycling. In addition to the motives and characteristics of travel behavior during the last motorcycle trip with an experiential character (within the last 3 years), the requirements for future motorcycle trips with an experiential character were also queried.

Within Europe, own travel planning and traveling with the own motorcycle is preferred, outside Europe, offers of tour operators (guided tours, at least elaborated travel plans) are rather considered. This statement tends to indicate that in less known regions the competence of third parties (e.g. tour operators) is used. But will the organization of the experience make this possible at all?

# *Nature Protection and Visitor Management*

## **EXPLORING A REGENERATIVE TOURISM APPROACH TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN SCOTLAND & IRELAND**

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COVID-19 has had a profound effect on the adventure tourism sector, and wider tourism industry, globally. As the industry starts to move into a more resilient, post-pandemic recovery, there is an opportunity to promote more responsible tourist behaviour and address sustainability challenges that have been brought into sharp relief, recognising that many consumers of ‘slow’ adventures are already more likely to be aligned with these new ways of thinking and being.

The primary objective of tourism development to date has been associated with economic growth; this growth has generally implied greater numbers of tourists. Sustainability has for several decades been recognised as a means by which to mitigate the increasingly evidenced damage caused by tourism. However, this approach has come under increased criticism as being inadequate. It is proposed that tourism, particularly slow adventure experiences that can appeal to environmental or socially conscious consumers, has the potential to do good rather than to just do less harm (Chassagne & Everingham, 2019; Pollock, 2019a; Bellato et al, 2022).

This idea of regeneration is not new and has been associated with a range of industries from agriculture, food and fashion. It is however, only in recent years that the concept of regeneration has been applied to the tourism industry and in particular gained traction since the onslaught of the pandemic. Scholars have recognised that this has given us all the opportunity to reflect on what we want a post-pandemic experience economy to look like, presenting “an opportunity to not only focus on the economic, but also the socio-cultural and environmental aspects of the industry” (Brouder et al., 2020: 741). While sustainable, or responsible, tourism focusses on reducing the negative impacts of tourism, regenerative tourism practices aim to replenish and restore what we have lost by helping to build communities that thrive, while allowing the planet to thrive too. There is a growing number of examples within the adventure tourism industry of companies or organisations that have an explicit remit of making a positive contribution to their local environments or communities.

This presentation will report on the findings of a collaborative project funded by the Royal Irish Academy that brings together two universities, Munster Technological University in Ireland and University of the Highlands & Islands in Scotland. The aim of the project is to investigate how we can transcend the extant practice of gauging the health of different tourism sectors by the value of its economic contribution and inform the development of a framework by which to measure and align regenerative tourism practices, thus identifying gaps and opportunities for greater regenerative rural community development and further research.

This initiative commenced in January 2023 and the organisations are currently undertaking qualitative research in the study areas, employing semi-structured interviews of purposively sampled SMEs, community representatives and other key stakeholders in four destinations (two in Scotland, two in Ireland) to understand the nuances of the symbiotic relationship between tourism and the communities in which it takes place; interview findings will be thematically analysed and reported through written reports, a stakeholder workshop in summer 2023 and a peer-reviewed academic article.

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# HOW RECREATIONISTS USE DIGITAL OUTDOOR PLATFORMS FOR PLANNING AND NAVIGATING OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND FOR SHARING TOUR INFORMATION

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Outdoor platforms provide a great opportunity to share tours with a large number of other outdoor enthusiasts. However, some users may be unaware that tours recommended by others could potentially violate nature conservation rules. To effectively manage visitors and ensure they receive appropriate information, it's crucial to have a clear understanding of the types of information used for planning and navigating outdoor activities. By doing so, visitor management can determine the best channels to use in order to provide visitors with fitting information at the right time.

To identify effective communication channels 410 recreationists were interviewed in north-east Bavaria to determine how they plan and navigate their last outdoor activities. In addition, 74 tour authors were interviewed to compare those suggesting tours that do or do not align with nature conservation regulations regarding their motivation and attitude towards conservation concerns.

The study found that the majority of people use digital tools when planning (86%) and navigating (73%) outdoor activities. However, most digital tools are used primarily for planning (69%) rather than navigation (25%). In addition, most people (84%) use more than one tool for planning activities, while almost half (48%) rely only on one tool for navigation. The choice of tools was largely influenced by the planned activity. Trail running (93%), mountain biking (93%), and hiking (84%) were mostly planned using a digital main tool, while sport climbing was mainly planned using an analog main tool (57%), with 87% of sport climbers using printed guidebooks. Age had a smaller effect on tool choice, with 90% of 30-year-olds using a digital main tool for planning outdoor activities compared to 73% of 60-year-olds.

The interviewed tour authors stated by 83% that nature conservation is very important for them. 57% of the authors that shared tours which complied with nature conservation and 64% of the authors which shared tours which did not align to the rules were familiar with the behavior in these protected areas.

This indicates that many violations of nature conservation regulations that result from incorrect information on digital outdoor platforms are unintentional and caused by a lack of adequate information in the tools used by recreationists for planning and navigating outdoor activities. The large differences in tools used make it complex to integrate this information.

# **CROSSING THE DIVIDE; CULTIVATING A NEW RELATIONAL ONTOLOGY DECENTERING THE HUMAN FOR SELF, COMMUNITY AND PLANET**

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This study is an activist, timely campaign, responding to a call; the Capitalocene has taken possession of our sentient human wholeness, severing us from ourselves and planetary community. To belong, ('be'- to and 'long' - to desire) is to long for or desire relationship with community and is a primal human need.<sup>1</sup> Yet we have lost the relationship to ourselves, our inner community (mind/ body split), the human and other-than-human community around us.<sup>2</sup> We are at a point that, Joanna Macy terms, 'The Great Turning,' the essential adventure of our time; 'the shift from the Industrial Growth Society to a life-sustaining civilisation' (Wall Kimmerer, 2020). Responding to this crisis, humanity needs a new form of consciousness.

My hypothesis is that by cultivating a relationship, or to be in symposium with other-than-humans, will remove us from our own grand importance. This is the journey to an ecological self, a new relational ontology, that rewilds neural pathways for a wholesome human sentient self. It consciously places us as part of an interconnected, interdependent web of species. With an awareness that we are agential actors in our own ecosystem, and therefore holding a conscious responsibility that outwardly affects other ecosystem communities. Ultimately, by replacing the dualistic, extractive paradigm of the Western culture with reciprocal relations to other-than-humans, we can respond with compassion and empathic resourcefulness for self, community and planet.

Existing research shows there is pedagogical need both in society and specifically within outdoor education, where an eco-centric practice is required. For too long we have followed the archetype of 'challenge' as a means of social transformation. It also highlights a void in auto-ethnographic, other-than-human relational practices outside of research. This archetype is exclusive, exceptionalist, and mono-cultural, conforming to the capitalistic model of pushing and striving towards individuation. As a phenomenological study, I draw from both a broad transdisciplinary scholarship and auto-ethnographic insight, to demonstrate that outdoor education has an opportunity to diversify its offering by connecting to other-than-humans through the emotional receptors of empathy and awe, mediated through the lens of language can cultivate a sustainable relationship of reciprocity with other-than-humans, where humans perceive themselves to be a part of nature, not apart from it. Furthermore by decentralising ourselves and deepening these practices in place, the 'outdoors' will not only be seen as 'over there,' but all around us; we can bring outdoor education into every space when we consider everything as part of nature.

This study is the first to synthesise and conceptualise threads of existing knowledge into an 'ecology of repair,' which takes the form of a uniquely regenerative philosophy of practice (theorem), scaffolded by an ontopedagogic container (meta framework). These both have the potential to be taken outwards into community for social and political transformation and address the current void in practices of ecological connectedness, highlighted by Lumber, Richardson, et al. (2017) and specifically re-imagine outdoor pedagogy (Marques, 2011).



## *Intimate Immensities*

# THE SMALL TOURISMS AND THEIR INTIMATE IMMENSITIES

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During the Covid pandemic, media highlighted the new-found enchantments people encountered in their backyards, on balconies, or gazing out of apartment windows. Birds, insects, stars and cloud formations drew attention and fascination with the micro, macro and mundane aspects of non-human local neighbourhoods. During one such pandemic holiday weekend spent confined at homes in Australia and Scotland, the authors gathered ethnographic data and considered the notions of proximity and attunement, rendered intimate in our spontaneous and (in ordinary times) unwelcome connections with nature and its spokes-things, particular and immense. As newly confined humans, we became attentive to the various always-already mobilities occurring in the immediate, taken-for-granted nonhuman world around us.

Tourism scholars have long wrestled with imaginations of how a reorientation of mass tourism, moved away from carbon-intensive, spectacularised travel might look. In response, we apply Bachelard's (2014: 202-226) concepts of 'intimate immensities' in our analysis. We consider possibilities for a re-enchantment of our mundane worlds (Caton, Hurst and Grimwood, 2021), critical of the overemphasis via anthropocentric and 'capitalocentric' thinking (Haraway, 2016) of human dominion over the planet and the pompous assessments of our place in its history. In addition, we confront the related anthropocentric spin couched in tourism branding terms such as 'responsible', and 'sustainable' and instead offer the 'with' of the chthulucene where tentacularity and our endless interconnections between all things, beings (and even humans) inhere.

As a result, we conclude that, emanating from these dangerous times, new modes of 'with' - practices that urge people to recognise, immerse and be-with the micro and macro non-human realms we cohabit - might indeed reenchant us in our tourisms... however small.

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## *Intimate Immensities*

# WALKING AT HOME IN THE WORLD

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My paper is a sociological-personal reflection on the Israeli desert as a gendered space, and on my own paths through this space. It will start with an academic's insight on ancient language and imagery, move to a practitioner's observation on contemporary practices and norms, and end with a solo-hiker's reflection on walking as a hermeneutical-embodied way of feeling at home in the world.

In my part of the world, walking marks possession; Knowing the hidden paths of the desert demonstrates ownership. These notions are embedded in ancient middle eastern languages and rooted in images that are difficult to disembodify: "to step" is to conquer, "to set foot" is to spy, and "to walk" is to own knowledge and control (Avrahami, 2012). These terms and actions are not gendered neutral in ancient semitic texts and cultures (Malul, 2002). They are masculine ones, and they migrated, hidden within scripture, over space and time to other parts of the world as well.

For thousands of years, walking the middle eastern desert was a practical masculine realm. While pastoral nomadic communities dwelled in the semi-arid margins of the desert and moved in and out of the desert in wintertime, actual walking through the wilderness was a masculine expertise that mainly served trade and military campaigns. Like many social-economical conventions, it both shaped and sustained a gendered space. The desert is a masculine space. Men who knew the secret paths and waterholes were the experts needed to lead both caravans and troops through a hostile environment. And with duty came glory and lore.

In contemporary times, the desert remains in practice and lore a masculine domain. This is in line with the perception of "wilderness" elsewhere, for example in the USA (Cox 2017; Carpenter 2019). The local angle is based, in practice, on military management of wide parts of the "wilderness", including nature reserves, and on Bedouin male dominance in some parts of the desert "wilderness". On top of that, Israeli hiking and wilderness educators are trained and led, for so many years, by army veterans. The lore of military campaigns and the orientalist image of the Bedouin as the holder of mysterious knowledge are still celebrated and passed from generation to generation. And so, alongside with real knowledge and skills, the gendered hierarchical lore of male walking, conquering, and possessing the land continues.

I became a wilderness educator when I was 16 and was ever since wondering about this masculinity of the desert, and the ways in which it pushed all genders away from it. While I always felt at home in the desert, and felt very confident about my skills, I continued to carry the male gaze in my backpack. It wasn't until I walked the desert alone 30 years later, that I managed to hike my way out of it. Solo-hiking was a reassurance of my abilities and skills and sharing the experience on social media proved inspiring for others (cf. Weatherby & Vidon, 2018). But it was much more than that. It was an exercise of being in presence with external signs and internal voices that this is a space that, as a woman, I must fight to belong to. But most importantly, solo hiking meant that there was no crowd. And where there is no crowd there is no acknowledgment, without which ownership and possession become redundant. Being at home in the world means giving up the aspiration to own it. And so, I managed to reimagine what walking means, only by walking again. And maybe such strong embodied cultural notions, can only be changed through the body itself.

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## *Being Well and Adventure*

# EXPLORING THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN OUTDOOR ADVENTURE ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION, SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING, AND CULTURE

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Our study explores the role that outdoor adventure activity experiences play in people's subjective wellbeing. This study is based on previous research that included a systematic literature review. This led to the development of a conceptual framework and to five meta categories, describing the positive effects of adventure activities on subjective wellbeing. This presentation presents the key findings from interviews with individuals across three cultures, from the UK, Germany, and Serbia. There is an emerging body of research which investigates how individuals maintain and enhance their subjective wellbeing through partaking in activities such as rock climbing, hiking, canoeing and mountain biking. Little is known about the influence of culture on these experiences, although there are a few studies (e.g., Cheng, 2018; Shang & Luo, 2022) which carry out cross-cultural comparisons of Chinese and other nationalities of adventure tourists. Other scholars (Gross, Sand & Berger, 2022) have compared German adventure tourists with other nationalities of tourists. However, these studies tend not to focus on subjective wellbeing. Furthermore, researchers (Sulaiman & Wilson, 2018) find that the way that adventure recreation and tourism are represented and perceived is markedly different from one culture to another. Therefore, it is important to explore the perceptions that different cultures have of adventure, what adventure means to these individuals, and what subjective wellbeing benefits they gain from engaging with outdoor activities.

First results highlight cultural differences in the way the term adventure is understood and that adventure activities have a different standing and acceptance in the three countries. While adventure is a firmly established concept in the UK with an existing infrastructure, Germans and Serbians have different perceptions and a less organised adventure industry. While Germans and Serbians are influenced by their families and their upbringing, adventurers in the UK often started their outdoor passion through schools or by joining outdoor associations. When going on commercial adventures participants from Serbia and the UK enjoy having guided adventures as the guide has the responsibility and they can enjoy the shared group experience with likeminded people. Contrastingly, Germans mostly participate in commercial adventures when they do not feel capable of mastering the activity on their own. In terms of subjective wellbeing there are individual differences. Whereas in the UK, the participant outcomes are related to adventure (e.g. risk, fear), in the other countries participants report humility, awe and humbleness as important outcomes. More extensive findings will be presented at the conference, drawing on these themes as well as other emerging themes.

Our findings can help the adventure industries in these countries to develop commercial product offerings and experiences which fit the needs of their clients.

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# **SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MOTIVATION FOR ADVENTURE SPORTS PARTICIPATION?**

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Professional adventure sports participants can earn a living through content dissemination on their social media platforms (Thorpe, 2017), however rarely show associated risks and injuries which may generate false confidence in adolescents participating in the same activity (Mei-Dan, 2018). Adolescents have high social media usage, show an increased need for sensations and are in a particularly sensitive developmental stage where self-comparisons and the search for identity more often take place in a virtual setting with potential negative consequences on mental health (Nesi, 2020). Whereas the consumption of fitness-related social media content was shown to lead to negative mood and body satisfaction (Rounds & Stutts, 2021), less is known about the social media influence of adventure sports participants on adolescents. Thus, the following study aimed at investigating how social media might influence participation and behaviour in adventure sports in adolescents.

Eight adolescents (11-15 years, one female) participating in mountainbiking and eight mountainbike instructors working with adolescents were interviewed about social media behaviour and possible influences on mountainbiking. The data was assessed following a semi-structured interview guide and analysed based on a thematic content approach.

Social media was named as a motivation to participate in mountainbiking. Whereas some picked up the sport of mountainbiking through their families, others were inspired by social media videos. Thereby famous mountainbike influencers (e.g. Fabio Wibmer, 7.44 mio abonnements on youtube) were seen as an inspiration for adolescents in mountainbiking. Most interviewed mountainbike instructors saw a positive influence of those persons on adolescents in terms of motivation for the activity. They reported that watching videos of mountainbike athletes motivated the adolescents to go outside and ride their bikes. Adolescent participants explained that they admired the mountainbike influencers for their skills but also their ambition since they also showed how often they failed a trick till they performed it successfully. Adolescents were reflective about their risk-taking behavior and did not compare themselves with the influencers but rather compared themselves with peers of similar age and riding ability. Social media was also used to share pictures and videos of their mountainbike activity. Instructors named the age between 11 and 17 years as being the age range where idolization of social media influencers is highest which they mentioned was also reflected through their choice of clothes (e.g. wearing the brand of the influencers).

Adolescents participating in adventure sports were inspired by famous mountainbikers on social media, with Fabio Wibmer being named the most. Their influence was mostly reflected in adolescents' participation in mountainbiking but not in terms of heightened risk-taking behavior as participants were reflective about their gap in skill levels. Whereas watching pictures of fitness-influencer on social media is associated with reduced body-satisfaction and well-being (Rounds & Stutts, 2021), mountainbike influencers seem to provide a motivation for participating in the activity without the negative effects of social comparison on adolescents' well-being. The lack of adolescent female participants (n=1) as well as the qualitative nature of the study does not allow for the transferability of results. However, the idolization of adventure sports athletes by adolescents could be used to target health-enhancing behaviours in adolescents such as physical activity and contact with nature.

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# **A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF HOW PEOPLE WITH LIMITED MOBILITIES EXPERIENCE VR ADVENTURE TOURISM**

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COVID-19 kept people from connecting in reality and so people turned to virtual reality (VR). The use of VR headsets surged during this time (Slide, 2021) and VR as it relates to tourism has become a burgeoning point of interest for research.

People with limited mobilities (PwLM) are largely excluded from both adventure tourism research and tourism experiences more broadly, as by its nature, adventure tourism generally requires high levels of mobility. Thus, a lack of mobility as it relates to adventure is rarely the primary focus of scholarly discussion (Buckley, 2020).

This project seeks the inclusion of PwLM, and to understand their embodied experiences of using VR headsets to access adventure tourism. This research used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which is an in-depth, highly detailed study of the lived experience of an individual and the complex factors that lead to that experience. Twelve participants explored and hiked Machu Pichu on an Oculus Quest 2 headset. All participants were either wheelchair bound to had to remain seated for the duration of the adventure due to their limited mobilities. Data collection included observations of the VR experiences, followed by the individual semi-structured interview, which lasted around three to four hours.

Though data analysis is still ongoing, emerging themes illuminate the inaccessibility of VR, the importance of nature in a virtual experience and the exciting future of VR in relation to tourism. Indeed, VR creates opportunities for accessing tourism experiences that might not be possible otherwise (Iftikahr, 2022). Interestingly, however, VR headsets were experienced as inaccessible for almost all of my participants. Chronic pain sufferers were a quarter of my participants, making it impossible for them to use VR for a period of longer than twenty minutes, due to added external pain.

My participants also found that they had to adapt their behaviours to the technology, rather than the technology meeting their needs. This ranged from the way that they sat how they used their wheelchairs for them to gain a full VR experience. Analysis also revealed that nature played a vital role in participant enjoyment, while using VR and exploring Machu Pichu. Nature is often considered a danger to many of my participants with some even suggesting it could kill them. This is due to nature's inaccessibility; uneven grounds, a lack of benches, or rest spots on walks. The ways in which others interact with my participants in nature-based spaces can also be experienced as aggressive. Therefore, the ability to be alone and safe, surrounded by nature, was a source of joy for them.

The future of VR and what it might mean for tourism also excited my participants. VR has potential as a travel planning tool. Unfortunately, as my participants expressed, places that deem themselves accessible are not always so. VR could afford PwLM, and anyone with alternate needs, to visualise and understand the accessibility of tourism spaces and their related experiences.

Finally, VR as a tool for conservation was also discussed emphasising the broader relevance of VR tourism. Other areas, like Machu Pichu, that are at risk of degradation could be 'visited' in VR, not just for PwLM, but for everyone. My participants viewed VR as a way of saving these historical or vulnerable places.

Hopefully, this research project will go some way to understanding the lived experiences of PwLM in adventure tourism. Academically, it will contribute to this relatively new area of scholarly discussion, with a focus at individual level, rather than a generalised, group viewpoint. There may also be some more practical applications for the adaptability of immersive technology and the development of it as a tool for nature-based enjoyment.

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## *Gendered Adventure*

# OUTDOOR ADVENTURE FOR WOMEN: A JOURNEY TOWARDS BETTER WELLBEING

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Research has proved that activity in nature is good for us, emphasizing both the benefits of walking and nature. But that adventure – taking on something new or challenging, with obstacles and setbacks to overcome, and with an unknown outcome – has an additional effect in our by control and comfort dominated society, is fairly new. Moreover, adventure appears to have an effect not only on our physical, but also on our mental health (Belinda Kirk, 2022). Ather research confirms (Lotter en Welthagen) confirms tht adventurehes a strong relation with the wellbeing of adventurous tourist, resulting in intellectual stimulation, concentration and self confidence. Tourist developed the capacity to adapt to chang had less stress and developed better relations with colleagues on the work floor.

While visiting the Adventure Mind conference in 2020, I attended the British Women in Adventure. Since I just started a platform on adventurous women, I became particularly interested on a research amongst women on the effect of and impact of the outdoors on women in adventure (Women in Adventure, 2019), on the effect of outdoor adventure on their wellbeing. They also asked the women to describe their state of mind during the adventure or while being outside in three words. The most frequently mentioned word was 'happy', followed by 'free' and 'focused'. At the beginning of this year, the author, in collaboration with Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUas), conducted a similar (thesis) research into the effects of (outdoor) adventure on women's mental and physical health in The Netherlands. The survey was completed 508 times.

It is striking that women generally do not have bad experiences with outdoor adventure, but that they experience it as very positive. Women feel happy, free, cheerful, satisfied, motivated and inspired during outdoor adventures. Most of all, they experience freedom. The survey explains that adventure is different from sports or being in nature, for example: it is a challenging activity that you don't know exactly how it goes, with a certain degree of unpredictability. In addition, a large proportion of the women who participated feel empowered, which means that they feel in control of their own actions and are confident in this. Only a small proportion of the women who participated in the study sometimes feel unsafe during outdoor adventures. Women associate outdoor adventure as a freedom in their lives.

For example, the positive effect of adventure on their physical and mental health is very high. In addition, respondents say that outdoor adventure gives them positive energy and a sense of satisfaction afterwards. It also gives women more self-confidence by going on an outdoor adventure and has improved their resilience. In general, the regularity of the adventure does not affect the positive effects that the women find.

The research shows that outdoor adventure is good for women's mental and physical health. For example, they feel happier, healthier and more positive and gain more self-confidence and resilience. Embarking on an adventure – embarking on something new or challenging, with obstacles and setbacks to overcome, and with an unknown outcome – should play a greater role in the mental health of our control and comfort society. The effect of adventure is unprecedented. At the same time, women also see limitations, such as time, place/location, and money.

Incidentally, these barriers can be avoided with small adjustments (such as micro adventures). Earlier research (Goodnow, Bloom) shows that a small, inexpensive 'micro-adventure' can have the same refreshing effect as an epic journey. The effects of outdoor adventure (on women) are striking, as can be seen in research from Women in Adventure, as well as Alice goes Wild/Breda University. Adventure should therefore play a much bigger role in our society, because it makes people happy and improves mental health.

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# **GENDERED ADVENTURE? A VISUAL ANALYSIS OF ADVENTURE TOURISM ON THE WEBPAGES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

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Our research advances representational and gender debates by generating insight into the ways women entrepreneurs visually present adventure tourism on their business websites. This continues a line of enquiry examining the gendered nature of adventure media and deepens understandings of how diversity and difference are represented and legitimised in entrepreneurial-adventure contexts.

Many parallels can be drawn between entrepreneurship and adventure. Generating imaginative and material ideas concerning achievement and risk, both entrepreneurship and adventure become sites for human experience and meaning making. However, classic standards of entrepreneurial success are embedded in narratives of masculinity, reifying assumptions that women will never meet traditional masculinised ideals. From these presumptions, critical entrepreneurship scholars have called for more diverse understandings of entrepreneurship (Karatas-Ozkan, 2018). Likewise, the adventure tourism literature raises awareness (and alarms!) around the powerful normatives that continue to operate within adventure contexts. For instance, a 'playful, white masculinity' (Fohlick, 2005) construct is persistently portrayed in media surrounding adventure and the outdoors, whereby women are often seen as passive and consuming subjects rather than active participants, while non-white queer/gay, fat, disabled, and other deviant bodies are rarely represented at all (Stanley, 2020). Recent research has demonstrated how women and 'adventurers of difference' turn to social media to challenge and resist gendered and hegemonic discourses through 'self-presentation' (Low et al., 2022).

Indeed, representations have a role to play in governing individuals' bodies and their adventure tourism practices. Thus, we argue it is critical to further understand the ways adventure tourism is portrayed across various media channels. Specifically, we use our critical qualitative inquiry to examine imagery on women-led adventure businesses' websites based in Wales, United Kingdom. Here, we take a combined visual analysis approach (Pritchard, 2020) to facilitate the unpacking of composition and meaning of the photographic images on the 'bio' and 'home' pages of each site. Data collection occurred in the Spring of 2023, and analysis is ongoing and will be a key part of our presentation.

Preliminary findings found common compositional aspects across the visuals, highlighting the gendering of adventure participation and drawing attention to how femininities, masculinities, and 'otherness' are constructed within the adventure tourism industry. Our research into the visual analysis of women adventure entrepreneurs' websites encourages reflection around the possible ways that femininities and otherness can be re-modelled, resisting dominant values and beliefs of masculine hegemony, adventure subcultures, and the cultural contexts in which these tourism activities occur in the twenty-first century.

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# *Perceptions of German Adventure Tourists*

## **ADVENTURE TOURISM IN GERMANY – ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABILITY AND LIFESTYLE CHANGES**

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A sustainability debate is increasingly being held in tourism research and practice. Particularly considering the fact that travel is usually related to high CO2 emissions, it is important to develop appropriate strategies and compensation models. But the economic added value for the destination and social compatibility also plays a role. Adventure tourism is a pioneer and many providers have been trying to be as sustainable as possible for a long time (ATTA, 2013). Not only through the commitment of the providers, but also through the proximity of the offers to nature, the first standards (e.g. behavioural guidelines or voluntary restrictions) have already been established. For (German) adventure tour operators, for example, CO2 compensation is already an important aspect of the trip, but also the use of regional guides, the exchange with the local people and their culture, as well as the economic and social strengthening of the region are important factors.

Adventure travellers have positive and emotional experiences in nature. This creates a bond and leads to a raised importance of nature conservation and nature protection than with other travellers (Knowles, 2019). Adventure tourism is responsible for a closer bond with nature, which not only leads to environmentally conscious behaviour, but also strengthens well-being. Hanna et al (2019) reported a higher affinity with nature, a greater need to protect it and an enhanced environmentally conscious behaviour in everyday life. Environmental awareness and social justice are becoming increasingly important values for adventure tourists (Buckley, 2018). Adventure travellers are not only willing to spend more money on their holiday if this leads to a decreased environmental footprint, but their spending often also benefits the destination itself (Knowles, 2019). This is because local guides are paid, and money is also otherwise spent locally, and does not only go to tour operators.

This research examines the importance German adventure travellers (n=1,500) attach to selected sustainability measures and how the adventure trip leads to changes in behaviour. The results show that German adventure travelers consider four sustainability aspects as (rather) important. They are species-appropriate observation of animals, small nature-compatible groups, fair wages for guides in the destinations and sustainable activities in the destinations. The avoidance of air travel or compensation of CO2 emissions is only considered as important by few respondents. Postulating that sustainable measures are considered more important by younger respondents, as climate change will affect them more strongly. Significant differences can be found for four aspects. Younger respondents consider sustainable aspects more important than older respondents.

The experiences gained during an adventure trip result in different lifestyle changes. Even though four changes only affect less than 10% of the respondents, other changes are more common. About four in ten report that they have spent more time in nature/outdoors (42.9%) and/or that their interest in food and cuisine (39.9%) has been awakened. In addition, respondents are most likely to report changed attitudes towards cultures and places (36.8%) and an interest in healthy behaviors (31.1%). It is assumed that there is a correlation between age and lifestyle changes and that younger respondents change their lifestyles more easily. Results of a chi square test show, that for six of the nine included lifestyle changes, younger respondents are significantly more likely to change their behavior. The experiences of younger participants adventure trips resulted more likely in lifestyle changes.

A regression analysis determines predictors in terms of sustainability and lifestyle changes between hard adventure tourists and soft adventure tourists. Further analysis will shed light on predictors in terms of age groups and gender. The results and other statistical data will be explained in more detail in the presentation.

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# *Perceptions of German Adventure Tourists*

## **SENSE OF WILDERNESS AMONG GENERATION Z**

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Nature plays an important role for many people. A survey in 2015 could state, that for 94 % of the German population Nature is an important aspect of quality of life (BMUB & BfN 2015). The same survey could state, that the majority of the respondents prefers untouched nature: the wilder - the better.

In Germany, more and more wilderness areas are established. 31 of these wilderness areas are yet officially designated. National Parks, Nature Conservation Areas and Foundation Areas could qualify for this declaration (Zoologische Gesellschaft Frankfurt von 1858 e.V. 2023). Some of the National Parks are already claiming wilderness as a fundamental aspect either of their already existing status or their development goals.

In comparison to this development of wilderness areas, since 1997 an alienation of nature among young people can be documented. For example, only 59 % of the surveyed students could correctly define the correct direction of the sunrise. (Brämer, n. d.). Urbanisation of our way of live and the dominance of technology and media are named as causal for the distance to nature in our everyday life (Louv 2011).

As on the one hand, the importance of wilderness seems to increase for the German population and on the other hand the distance to nature seems also to grow, these contradictory phenomena lead to the question, how young people define wilderness. Is it the absence of humans themselves? Or the absence of civilization or even their traces? How about untamed nature or animals? As the importance of nature and the interaction with nature seems to be more and more common, the attempt to answer these questions could extract interesting hints to sensitize young people for wilderness aspects and natural processes.

To operationalize the research, a survey of young people will be conducted and the survey will address students of the "IU Internationale Hochschule". Pictures of natural landscapes and (wild) animals will be shown to the respondents. The pictures will step-by-step include increased hints of civilization. The students shall state in each case, if the shown picture represents wilderness. The research goal is to extract the sense of wilderness among the Generation Z and their knowledge of visible impact on nature of human beings.

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# MYTHS, MAPS AND MOTORCYCLES: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC EXPLORATION OF THE PILGRIM ADVENTURER

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Myths, Maps and Motorcycles: an autoethnographic exploration of the pilgrim adventurer is a PhD study that investigates the lived experience of solo adventure travel specifically by motorcycle. The motorcycle has been used for travel since its invention; its flexibility and vulnerability make it ideal for adventure travel. The study looks to add to almost 20 years of academic research into motorcycling (Gronau & Hokamp, 2022) and more specifically to motorcycle tourism as a form of drive tourism which focuses on the use of motorized vehicles for leisure mobility (Prideaux & Carson, 2015), which has started to gain interest since 2000 and is gaining momentum. (See, Zeitschrift für Tourismuswissenschaft special issue: Motorcycle Tourism, 2022).

Adventure travel provides an outlet and separation from the mundane and every day, creating joy through physical or emotional risk and challenge. Illuminating the lifeworld of the adventure traveller, through the study of identity, storytelling, and world view, the study is epistemologically positioned as a personal narrative emphasising human experience with qualitative fieldwork at the heart of the study in the form of a month-long Expedition on Iceland's remote F-roads by motorcycle.

Underpinning this study is the methodological position that humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives to make sense of the world around them and their place in it. As such this study utilises ethnographic fiction methods through the medium of a series comic books to analyse and represent data, not only narratively, but in an aesthetically pleasing way. Initial data collection started with reading published accounts of travel by motorcycle followed by interviews with motorcycle adventurers. An immersive approach was then taken as a full participant and data was collected through field journals, film, and photography during the 32-day journey. The data was then analysed and reflected upon utilising Autoethnography, to seek out insights of self-identity and cultural practice, and Autophenomenography to investigate the researcher's lived experience of the phenomena of solo travel by motorcycle.

The application of culturally inspired narrative frameworks were employed as analytical lenses. The paradigm of the Hero's Journey provided insight into the traveller's experience highlighting themes of departure, questing, and overcoming challenges. However, it was found to not fully encompass the complete experience therefore another framework to investigate the concept of questing or adventuring was applied. The lens of a pilgrim provided a different perspective of venturing into the otherworld but this time with a focus on gaining something internal and spiritual. These different narrative positions were employed through ethnographic fiction methods in the creation of four comics books as a way of analysing the field data, interviews and literature and providing an evocative thick description of life on the road (or off-road).

The study found that methodologically the process of creating a comic functioned as a critical way to analyse data and the act of working visual-verbally to tell the story facilitated creative discoveries that may have otherwise been obscured if limited to a sheet of lined paper. Working with the data it was found that the use of a range of cultural frameworks such as the Tourist, Adventurer and Pilgrim provided different insights and illuminated different aspects to the data allowing the researcher/author to make diverse meanings of the experience and concepts of authentic travel. The traveller interprets and narrates their experiences through different storytelling frames such as the tourist on a voyage, the hero on an adventure or a pilgrim on a sacred journey, however a common theme across the lenses was that of a sense of wellbeing and joy through the act of being in motion across remote difficult terrains facing trials and tribulations.

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# **NATURE JOURNALING: CONNECTING WITH NATURE THROUGH IMMERSIVE EMBODIED EXPERIENCES, FELT MEMORIES, AND REFLECTION**

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A key determinant of environmental beliefs and behaviours are personal values. Values are goals that people strive for, and which transcend specific situations, making them relatively stable over time, thus affecting a wide range of beliefs and behaviours (Steg et al, 2015). Four types of values most relevant to predicting environmental beliefs and behaviours are: biospheric (valuing the environment), altruistic (valuing the welfare and wellbeing of other human beings), egoistic (valuing personal resources), and hedonic values (valuing pleasure and comfort). These values are typically instilled through outdoor, experiential, environmental, and place-based education (ibid).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, university students lost opportunities for environmental education, including experiential, outdoor, and place-based learning, leading to concerns about their ability to achieve programmatic and course-based intended learning outcomes related to sustainability and pro-environmental beliefs and values. Furthermore, the transition to online learning resulted in higher levels of burn out, 'ZOOM fatigue' and stress among university students, negatively impacting academic performance (Iglesias-Pradas, et al, 2021) and reducing opportunities for meaningful, personalized and culturally relevant learning, including 'voice and choice' in determining what, how, when, and where they engaged in learning that are typically associated with experiential, outdoor, and place-based learning.

To address this, students in an Outdoor Recreation course offered at a University Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies in Canada engaged in a 12-week online nature journaling seminar and wrote a scaffolded reflective assignment facilitated through PebblePad e-Portfolios. Lectures examined human-nature relationships in leisure and tourism contexts from an interdisciplinary perspective. Together the lectures and seminar provided opportunities to integrate experiential learning with theory and critical inquiry to understand and analyze values, attitudes, cultures, programming, impacts, management, and contemporary issues and trends in outdoor recreation, nature-based tourism, and adventure pursuits. Throughout the seminars, cultivating a growth mindset and transferable knowledge and skills was encouraged while students explored their connections to place and nature, and reflected on the meaning of immersion in the more-than-human world (Tsevreini, 2021) by integrating theory with practice.

Qualitative content analysis of assignments and peer review feedback revealed different ways that online and blended learning students experienced and connected with both nature and place within and across activities, and their changing relationship with nature, place, and outdoor recreation. Nature journaling, as facilitated by the experiential seminars and reflective PebblePad e-Portfolios, allowed students to move beyond 'noticing' nature to 'being-well' with nature. Through sensory experiences of being human-in-the-world, experiential nature journaling activities cultivated a sense of wonder and curiosity among students, simultaneously inspiring outdoor learning / outdoor recreation, and fostering place connection and nature appreciation through iterative and immersive practice (Arnold, 2012; Tsevreini, 2021). PebblePad e-portfolios in turn facilitated self-reflection on felt memories and embodied experiences (Arnold, 2012). Integration of peer review feedback as formative assessment within the PebblePad workbook reduced student anxiety associated with sharing nature journaling pages for feedback, enhanced student understanding of the principles of nature journaling by writing feedback for their peers, supported the development of a growth mindset focussed on progress not perfection, and contributed to success on the scaffolded summative reflective assignment and achievement of the course's intended learning outcomes.

Together these results reinforce the importance of providing students with meaningful, personalized, and culturally relevant learning opportunities through engagement in environmental education, including experiential, outdoor, and place-based learning while demonstrating effective means to instill pro-environmental beliefs, place-attachment, and nature connection in students through online / remote experiential learning courses. These methods are expected to be broadly useful for applications in distance and blended learning curriculum design, facilitation of online field trips / seminar, and adoption and use of PebblePad e-portfolios in experiential learning courses.

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# HUMAN-CENTRIC APPROACHES, A REVIEW WITHIN A TOURISM CONTEXT

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In adventure travel the participants take an active role in the creation of the experience and the operators have an important role of mapping skills and risks in their guiding process (Buckley, 2006). Yet there is a lack of available tools that enables knowledge sharing, co-creation and skill assessments. As the drivers of current development is largely based on business-centered logic, profit maximization and zero-sum thinking (Vargo et al., 2008; Zuboff, 2019) the industry is struggling to utilize the potential value that key resources like technology could provide (Catarci et al., 2020). We argue that there is a need to shift the perspective on value, and to optimize organization, systems and infrastructure for the human experience. The adventure travel and tourism industry, with its need for intricate networks to work together, high number of small businesses (Stickdorn et al., 2014) and the natural focus on the human experience is in a unique position to benefit from human-centered approaches. Using a systematic review, we provide an overview of what has been published regarding human-centered approaches in tourism, to clarify insights into its drivers, related processes and expected consequences. It summarizes the most important attributes to a human-centered approach and provides a foundation for further investigations. The review shows how the research on human-centeredness suffers from diverse interpretations of the term and we argue that it would benefit from a more unified understanding of its applications. The research on the area is still at an early development stage and in a need for more empirical and evidence-based investigation. Our findings reveals insight on how to build and organize the right tools that are flexible enough to support human creativity and that allows to fully utilize the network of all the actors involved in the value creation.

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## ON-THE-MOVE METHODOLOGY - A TRANSECOLOGICAL APPROACH TO ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

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Very often queer communities grow and find refuge in urban spaces. For many of us, finding belonging as a queer person meant moving to the city and meeting other queer people. However, scrutiny over trans people's bodies in urban contexts is continuous. In contrast, I argue that many LGBTQ+ people find comfort in nature, although there is also a struggle to access it. Despite, these experiences have not been given much attention in scholarly literature. This research aims to start a conversation about what outdoor experiences mean for trans people: How does our perception of our bodies change when using it in adventure activities? Moreover, how is gender performed and constructed in the outdoors? Is nature a place where we find less judgment? Is condemning trans people (among other identities like migrants, people of color, people with dis/abilities, and/or queer people) to the urban context a way of killing us softly? (paraphrasing Shakhari, 2014). These are some of the questions that guide my Ph.D. thesis, which is currently in its final stage.

When engaging with my methodological approach, I was faced with two differentiated challenges. The first one was to include place and movement in the research process, both fieldwork and outcome; and the second was to engage the senses and the more-than-human in the research process, as well as evoke emotionality in the texts. To tackle these challenges, I have engaged with what I have called an 'on-the-move methodology', which builds upon an assemblage of feminist, queer, and outdoor methodological approaches. An on-the-move methodology argues for a post-qualitative inquiry that challenges the binaries of research. In thinking with, in, and through new materialisms, we allow the space for opportunities to emerge in these in-between spaces and assemblages. Moreover, by incorporating the theoretical concept of assemblage I aimed to bring the more-than-human in as an actor.

In addition, an 'on-the-move methodology' shifts the focus from an interpersonal interaction between participant and researcher to an entangled between bodies, emotions, and the more-than-human. This will also be included in the outcome, incorporating diverse digital and multimedia methodologies during the fieldwork and writing process. On-the-move methodologies move, walk, climb, or cycle, between different spaces, which may include online and/or offline spaces, tracing ethnographic places. As a space-based research study, I found an assemblage of methodologies and methods — on-the-move interviews, social media research, and autoethnography— as a way to better understand the processes and experiences that I wanted to analyze.

Transecologies emerge in the connections between trans and environment and “allows the entanglement of ecology, nature, trans embodiment, and transing bodies” (Straube, 2020, p. 58). On-the-move interviews, as a transecological methodology, decenter human interactions and experiences from the interview process. The answer materializes through our surroundings; it is not only the participant who answers but rather the whole experience we are in, the trans-corporeal mesh that we are with the more-than-human that surrounds us. These interactions with the more-than-human of the space create unique moments of observation and stillness.

Overall, this thesis examines trans people's experiences in adventure activities and discusses that spaces of resistance can be built in the outdoors. Participating in adventure activities empowers trans people in their bodies, finding embodiment through transecological belonging. Hence, for trans people, accessing the outdoors is about allowing their bodies and minds to live; It is about building livable lives. In other words, outdoor and adventure activities benefit trans people's lives not only by expanding their life experiences to new frontiers but also by helping them to flourish in their lives.

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*Inspiring Outdoor Learning*

# CLIMB TO NEW HEIGHTS: NATURE, ADVENTURE AND LEADERSHIP IN CONTEXT OF BUSINESS & TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCES

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Description: In this inspiring talk, the renowned adventurer, outdoor enthusiast and business coach, Torsten J. Koerting, takes us on an immersive journey that combines the power of nature and adventure experiences with effective leadership, personal development and meaningful learning. Learn how the format “Nature Leadership Experience” brings leadership and self-leadership experiences to life in the context of business and nature through Alpine crossings and Tour de Mont Blanc circumnavigations and ascents.

The presentation uses the master thesis "Outdoor Education and Meaningful Learning: Finding the attributes of meaningful learning experiences in an outdoor education programme" by Stacy Taniguchi, as a reference, which explores the common characteristics of meaningful learning and experiential experiences in nature. The study shows how a process of internalisation and reflection combined with feedback from other participants leads to personal growth and change.

Take aways:

- Inspiring stories and learning experiences from real-life adventure experiences that illustrate the connection between nature experiences, successful teamwork and meaningful learning.
- Deep insights into the transformative power of nature and how it contributes to personal and professional development, based on scientific evidence.
- Understanding the connections between outdoor experiences, effective teamwork and meaningful learning.
- Practical tips and tricks to integrate the Nature Leadership Experience and the study's findings into your own business and coaching environment.

Inspiring stories and practical insights that will change the way you look at teamwork and meaningful learning. Be ready for an exciting journey that will open new horizons and invite you to harness the power of nature for team development and personal transformation, as well as to effectively integrate it into your own business.



# ROLE OF YOUTH ADVENTURE PROGRAMS FOR SHAPING PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR FOR MARINE CONSERVATION

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Research shows that experiences humans have with nature during adolescence reinforce pro-environmental values, attitudes, and behaviors in adulthood (Bruni & Schultz, 2009; Raadik Cottrell & Cottrell, 2020). Environmental education has been used to facilitate these formative experiences, especially within outdoor adventure-tourism programs committed to educating youth on conservation issues and developing a conservation ethic that empowers participants to engage in pro-environmental behaviors (Pitt, Schultz, & Vaske, 2019). Adventure programming is the purposeful use of adventure activities (i.e., group initiatives, ropes courses and outdoor pursuits) to change the way a person feels, thinks, and/or behaves (Priest & Gass, 2018). The origin of adventure programs dates back to organized camping, environmental, and experiential education movements (Cottrell, 2015). Boy Scout (BSA) high adventure programs started in 1923 with wilderness canoe trips for older scouts and explorers to experience adventure outdoors in a safe and secure environment (Cottrell, 2015). The purpose of this study was to examine elements of a youth adventure tourism program and its role in shaping pro-environmental behavior for marine ecosystems in the Florida Keys (USA).

Florida Sea Base, established in 1980, is a Boy Scouts of America (BSA) adventure program offering marine weeklong programs (sailing, scuba diving, barrier island camping, fishing or a combination of each). The goal is to introduce scouts to the underwater world, its marine wildlife, and marine ecosystems. In 2019 pre-Covid, Sea Base (perhaps the largest adventure youth program globally) introduced, 17,000+ youth to the marine environment and its associated wildlife. This study examines youth expectations and motivations for their marine adventure experience and the role that experience has on shaping attitudes and behavior towards marine life and coral reef ecosystems. An objective is to understand youth perceptions of marine wildlife and ecosystems because of their participation to enhance effectiveness of current BSA programs on marine conservation.

Building on a pilot study conducted in 2019 (Cottrell et al. (forthcoming)), data (n=652) was collected summer 2022 via an onsite post-trip survey of trip expectations, satisfaction, motivations for marine tourism, personal responsibility for the marine environment, perceptions of ecosystem health, and impacts of an adventure experience on conservation ethics. Differences among scuba divers, snorkelers, sailors, fishermen, and marine science-oriented youth adventurers are examined.

Most were very satisfied with their adventure experience with expectations met. A majority felt global climate change had the most negative effect on coral health followed by hurricanes, residential areas, commercial fishing, and recreational boating respectively. Beliefs were similar among all respondents disagreeing with statements such as coral reefs can recover from negative impacts (fishing, hurricanes, recreational boaters, etc.). Program comparative results between different program groups (sailing, scuba, island camping, marine science) will be presented along with implications for the role of the marine adventure experience in shaping pro-environmental for marine conservation.

This study illustrates a collaborative partnership between the BSA Sea Base, Colorado State University, and Mote Marine Lab in the Florida Keys. Sea Base puts 17,000+ youth in the water in the Bahamas, Florida Keys and Virgin Islands with opportunities to examine the role of marine ecotourism as a form of adventure programming to shape pro-environmental behaviour for future generations.

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