The rise of individualism. The implications for promoting relations between self, others and the environment in outdoor education.

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Abstract

In this article I explain how the process of individualisation has led to the prioritisation of the self over aspects of community and place. The theories of risk society (Beck, 1992; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) and neoliberalism (Bourdieu, 1998; Forsey & Lockhart, 2004) are used to explain this process. These theories have three significant implications for outdoor educators working for social and environmental change. The first is that people are urged to negotiate their futures through constructing identities of an autonomous self as a reaction to these social processes. Secondly, individuals consequently tend to de-value certain others in a market-oriented world. Finally, place has become less important in the construction of individual identity and the shaping of social relations. These aspects have significant implications for outdoor educators interested in promoting new understandings of self, others and the environment (Martin, 1996, 1999; Mann, 2002). As a way of understanding how social processes influence young people's notions of self, others and the environment I explore how young people have adopted mobile phone technology. Suggestions to counter some negative aspects of the individualisation process are offered to outdoor educators whose general goal is to promote a greater understanding of self, others and the environment.

Introduction

This article examines the implications of broader social and political forces that particularly challenge outdoor educators who are interested in working for social and environmental change. In this article, I argue outdoor educators need to be conscious of how certain social trends counteract the goals promoting a greater understanding of self, others and the environment. If outdoor programmes are to be effective in helping people develop a greater understanding of community and environmental relations, then outdoor educators need to consider how broader social processes are actively negotiated by individuals. Not accounting for these forces can result in educators not understanding why community and environmental oriented aspects of outdoor education may have less appeal to students and be actively resisted by students.

Documenting the loss of aspects of community and place in the outdoors, that have resulted from the changes in contemporary society, is not new to outdoor education. Previously, Loynes (1998, 2002) bemoaned the loss of community values and the decreased emphasis on place in many outdoor programmes. He argued the processes of 'MacDonaldisation' (Ritzer, 1993) have led to an increase in the commodification of programmes. The outcome of commodification meant that the development of relationships with others and place had become devalued aspects of programmes. This occurred through implementing programmes that emphasised the predictability of outcomes. He argued that the more uncertain adventurous experiences and

the associated socialising aspect of outdoor culture that was part of that experience, was being lost to market driven, popular culture ideals. This article builds on Loynes' (1998, 2002) ideas by offering a perspective on how this situation has come about as well as insights as to how educators might resist some of the negative aspects associated with these trends.

This paper will explore these issues by firstly outlining the theory of risk society and the ideology of neo-liberalism. Then it will examine how young people's appropriation of mobile phone technology within their daily lives illustrates the individualisation process. Finally, I offer an example of how outdoor educators might directly confront the process of individualisation through reconnecting student's mobile phone use with a particular type of engagement in outdoor education. The discussion of risk society and neo-liberalism in this article is limited to the extent that it is focused on how outdoor educators have to negotiate these trends jointly with students in their care. Although important, I have not examined the changes in teacher-institution relationships as explained by risk society and neo-liberalism. Boyne, Brown, Maxted and Wattchow's (2003) examination of neo-liberalism in teacher practice showed that there was conscious and unconscious adoption of market orientations to outdoor education in the cases they examined. These matters would be fertile ground for a broader analysis across the Australian outdoor education field.

Self, others and the environment

The examination of risk society and neo-liberalism in this article is placed within the outdoor education context of promoting the goal of a critical understanding of self, others and the environment. This broad goal is a fundamental component of the motive of service in outdoor education, originally drafted by Martin (2001). Although the following statement has not yet been universally accepted at a national peak-body level (see Mann, 2002), it does provide a point of focus in considering how broader social processes influence general outdoor education goals.

Motive of Service

Through interaction with the (our) natural world, outdoor education aims to develop an understanding of our relationship with the environment, others and ourselves. The ultimate goal of outdoor education is to contribute towards a sustainable community. (Mann, 2002, p. 76)

In this statement there is an assumption of the equality of self, others and the environment as a site for developing relationships through the notion of sustainability. A fundamental component of this is the notion of community. However, much of outdoor education practice does not prioritise community alongside the individual. As noted by Lugg and Martin (2001) personal development is the major focus of outdoor education in Victoria schools. Additionally, Brookes' (2004) analysis of the discourses of certain outdoor education texts showed that the texts overgeneralised the purpose of outdoor education. Brookes (2003) in another analysis revealed that there was still a penchant for promoting self-development (character building) as a major goal within outdoor education curriculum. This was despite the weight of evidence, outside outdoor education theory, that seriously questioned the espoused outcomes that character education claimed to deliver.

Despite the intentions of the motive of service in promoting equality of self, others and the environment there still appears to be a trend in some outdoor education practice to prioritise self development over the development of relations with others and the environment. The predominance of the self over other social or environmental foci needs to be examined in outdoor education if such a motive of service is to be valued as a cornerstone of a general outdoor education philosophy.

The consequences for the outdoor education field in Australia are significant. If outdoor educators do not adopt a conscious orientation towards the hidden curriculum of neoliberalism as provided by Boyne, Brown, Maxted and Wattchow (2003) and the

individualisation process, the goals of promoting a greater understanding of self, others and the environment will be tacitly realised in ways that are partial and antithetical to the goal of developing communities and improving environmental relations. To understand how these social trends influence outdoor education an explanation of risk society and neoliberalism is offered below.

The individual and society

Understanding changes in society using the risk society thesis and neoliberal ideology is important because education (and by default outdoor education) in Australia is currently being shaped by these two trends (Apple, 2001; Reid, 2005; Roberts, 2003). The concept of risk society (Beck, 1992; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) helps explain how individuals and organisations react to the human created hazards and insecurities created by an ever-changing technological world. This idea, coupled with an increasingly dominant neo-liberal ideology that promotes the market in every aspect of our lives (Bourdieu, 1998), poses significant challenges to those interested in teaching and learning in the outdoors. These two concepts will now be outlined.

The way the term risk is used in this article is different in orientation to the way risk is used to describe personal risk in an outdoor activity and also that of 'at risk' behaviour. Beck (1992) uses the term risk society in the following way to describe a cultural meaning rather than a technical meaning. People have always been subjected to natural risks such as natural disasters. However, modern society is increasingly exposed to risks resulting from developments in society. Risk society refers to the risks that are manufactured by humans. As such these risks can be controlled by the society. Terrorism and environmental issues are good examples of risks in this category.

A key characteristic of the risk society is that individuals and social groups are marginalised in that it is difficult for these people to foresee risks that have been derived from advances in technology (Beck, 1992). In other words people feel they have little control over large scale risk issues.

The effect of these changes is a global shift to a new 'risk society' which is marked by a loosening of traditional ties and structures and the individualisation of society (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Traditional institutions (e.g., family, community) hold less power to predict and devise ways of dealing with the risks of this new modernity. This then creates a context in which the individual sees little reason to publicly engage in the various crises that are broadcast in our media, and instead focuses on their individual task of constructing their own biographies to attempt to take control of their lives (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). In

this way, individuals are not so much as disempowered but their attention is redirected to the individual task of the project of the self.

Neo-liberalism is also an ideology that is both an outcome and part of the individualisation process in the new risk society. It has a major effect on the individual and is quite commonly referred to in Australian political contexts as economic rationalism (Forsey & Lockhart, 2004). From a social perspective it is a political economic philosophy that intrudes into the social realm, having the effect of changing the nature of the individual and destroying collective structures (Bourdieu, 1998). Protagonists of the ideology hold that the motive of self-interest that underpins the market is more 'efficient' at directing the social distribution of goods and services than the political institution of the state. The pervasiveness of neo-liberalism means that almost all activity is subsumed within the realm of the market place. All human action and even identity are fodder for the quest of maximising profit and production. As such, individuals have had to negotiate personal responses to the neo-liberal pressures that increasingly govern human action. Another way of thinking about the effect of neo-liberalism is that through this pressure individuals have had to become entrepreneurial selves (Peters, 2001).

The outcome of the individualisation processes as described by the risk society thesis and the notion of neo-liberalism can be defined under a central concept offered by Lyotard (1993). His insights into the individualisation process shed light on the consequences of the risk society and neo-liberal discussions thus far. Lyotard's use of the term 'autonomous chooser' is similar to the previously mentioned biographical seeking self and the entrepreneurial self.

Lyotard (1993) concludes the autonomous chooser gained independence, but at a tremendous price to the community. He argued that independence in this sense was gained at the expense of discarding social obligation to other members of the community. Choice, based on autonomous self-interest, has no theoretical and practical need for the other. I would also add here there is less need for the self to be connected to the environment. In the new regime described by risk society, the needs of individuals are met autonomously through the notion of individual free choice. Therefore, there is no obligation for others to the community. If there is no need to consider the other or to enter into dialogue with the other, this then further distances the independent autonomous chooser from a shared community. Individuals are then more liable to be subsumed by the processes that created this orientation in the first place. That is, if people construct the world as individuals quite separate from the rest of the world, people will tend to react individually to the issues of being in that world.

The idea of the autonomous chooser is useful for this analysis of individualisation and outdoor education because it exemplifies the outcomes of the process. I must stress here that people do not turn into autonomous choosers but rather the notion metaphorically frames the way individuals relate to the world. It will be used in the following section to help understand how people have developed individualistic responses to the process described thus far. I will use the example of young people and mobile phone technology as a way of illustrating the responses.

Individualisation, young people and 'the mobile'

In this section I examine some responses from young people to these forces with the purpose of revealing some problems that outdoor educators encounter when promoting greater understandings of self, others and the environment. The cohort that I shall examine is called *Generation M*, or alternatively, *The Net Generation* (Tapscott, 1998). These people are between the age of eight and 18 and are different to Generation Y and X in that the former know no other reality that does not include information communication technologies (ICTs) (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). These young people also are growing up within a modern context of a globalisation of education where the real life consequences of increasing privatisation, marketisation and performativity in education are felt by young people differentially through their class, race and gender (Apple, 2001). These young people perceive this as the norm and that they know no other reality.

In the first case below that examines the *self*, the mobile phone will be used as an example of how young people negotiate their futures through constructing identities as autonomous choosers. In the second case I examine how increasingly young people tend to de-value the *other* in the social process of constructing and maintaining these identities. Lastly I explore an example of how the *environment* has become less important in the construction of individual identity and the shaping of social relations.

Self

In this section I give examples of how young people increasingly negotiate their futures through constructing identities of an autonomous self as a reaction to these social processes. Increasingly, certain forms of communication technology are being used by young people not simply as tools but as key social objects. Srivastava (2005) details the extent of this phenomenon through examining the ways in which young people have appropriated mobiles phones into their social world. This phenomenon is significant because the number of young people who own mobile

phones is increasing. Mathews (2004) found that in Australia 57% of young people are reported to receive their first mobile phone at the age of 13-14. This has implications on the impact of the technologically mediated culture of these people. For example,

... mobile phones have now become the determinant of whether a young person is in the "in" crowd or not. ... Young people use the mobile phone primarily to sustain and enhance their social networks. It allows them to maintain status, in terms of age, gender, class, peer group and so on. Moreover, ownership of a mobile phone is an important step in a child's process of becoming independent from its parents and teachers: it is a medium for the assertion of their own identity and autonomy. (Srivastava, 2005, p. 13.)

This excerpt illustrates the importance of mobile phones in the daily life of young people. The construction of autonomous identity is performed through the appropriation of technology to fulfil certain individual desires that have been afforded through 'opportunities' in consumption of the mobile phone. Whilst the idea of certain objects being appropriated for rites of passage into adulthood is not new, what is interesting in this case is that the object culturally prescribes how communication occurs. Further analysis of young people's use of mobile phones has been undertaken by Carrol, Howard, Vetere, Peck and Murphy (2001). They have noted that mobile phones are more than just a useful tool for young people. "This increased level of connection [through the appropriation of the 'mobile'] has been used by young people to deal with the issues of identity, power and fragmentation in their lives ..." (Carrol et al., 2001, p. 7).

They found that young people made technological driven decisions about mobile phone use rather than task orientated decisions. In other words, young people think of how technology can be incorporated into and enhance their life as opposed to thinking what use it has from a functional purpose. In terms of my argument in this paper concerning risk society and neoliberalism, the cultural mediation of determining one's networks of communication through the mobile phone affords opportunities to the entrepreneurial self in a rapidly changing world.

Exercising control over one's life through communications technology allows people to feel empowered through their ability to respond rapidly to changes in their immediate world. As such the attractiveness of the mobile can be seen as

a consequence of the young people's positioning a risk society where individualism is a reaction to dis-empowering nature of modern community life.

Thus mobile phones can be seen as an important mediating tool that fulfils certain individual biographical desires of the young autonomous chooser. In many ways it is no different to clothes and other material aspects that are part of the identity forming process. The difference between this tool and other cultural objects is that this technology has the potential to intensify and individualise the experience of identity formation and maintenance in ways that devalue direct individual and social experience (Payne, 2003b). This means that 'authenticity' and 'naturalness' of an individual's experience are less influenced by the physicality of the individual. The physicality of the individual and identity formation of young people in the past has been based around one's local place of residence and familial relations. With the de-structuring aspects within the new risk society traditional values, norms and beliefs have less influence on the individual (Cote, 2005). New ways for the individual to construct identity have been afforded by the 'free choice' of mobile phone consumption that emphasizes the self as an autonomous chooser.

The outcome of the individualisation process in a social sense is that young people can become anomic and, in the extreme, this can result in crime and other antisocial behaviour (Mitchell, Bunton & Green, 2004). This is not to say that the mobile phones are the cause of this outcome. However, as a tool in the process of identity formation it is but one aspect that mediates the process of individualisation of the autonomous chooser in a risk society. This has significant implication for relations with others and the environment.

Others

In this section I outline some ways that the process of individualization, as seen through mobile phone use, can devalue others in social situations. Three ways that young people can devalue others are explored. These aspects are that many young people find themselves opting out of social interactions where there might be negative feedback to them. Secondly, that the practice of mobile phone use impacts on the time and commitment young people have for others. Lastly, the impact of not owning a mobile phone will be examined.

Evidence of individuals increasingly de-valuing the 'other' in the social process of constructing and maintaining these identities can be found in the situation where young people seek 'not to be present' in social interactions where there might be negative feedback. This situation is not only confined to young people but is an important aspect in a young person's

development because of its potential to continue as a pattern in adult life. As Srivastava (2005) points out, according to the results of a Nokia survey:

- 71% of users are now consistently late for social events because of the option to rearrange through a mobile voice call or text;
- Almost 70% admitted that they often cancel at the last minute by sending a text message;
- 78% admitted to ducking out of uncomfortable or awkward social situations by sending a text message rather than calling. (p. 122.)

The reciprocity inherent in communities can be avoided by the use of the indispensable mobile phone. Not engaging with the 'other' to receive negative feedback has the effect of reinforcing the importance of the self over others because the concerns of the other are not felt and taken into consideration by the individual. Another aspect of mobile phone use that devalues others is the habit of keeping social contact open-ended.

The habit of 'keeping options open' or the 'multi-meeting' has also been enhanced by the use of mobile phones, i.e., users often make several approximate and tentative appointments, deciding only at the last minute the meeting they would attend depending on the value they ascribe to it. (Srivastava, 2005, p. 124)

The second aspect of how young people can devalue others is through redirecting their priorities as a consequence of time intensification. Given that young people's mobile phone ownership is increasing (Australian Psychological Association, 2004), and that there are reports of major problems of mobile phone debt, increasingly young people are working to pay off their debts at earlier early age (Manktelow & Hegarty, 2004). The implication of this feature is that it has the effect of decreasing time for social non-work contact with others. This then facilitates the need to have contact through ICTs and quite commonly this means SMSing others to maintain their social networks.

Lastly, non-ownership of a mobile phone has implications for those not in the social networks afforded by mobile phones. Although there are contradictions in the research (Campbell, 2005), there seems to be an indication of indirect social exclusion in the social networks of young people. Mathews (2005) found that 91% of adolescents who owned a mobile phone reported that young people respected the decision of other young people not to own a mobile

phone. However, half of the young people who did not own a phone said that they felt excluded and a further 29% said they felt pressured into owning one. Thus, whilst not intentionally excluding others, there appears to be a perceived concern of social exclusion from those who do not own mobile phones. This conclusion is even more significant if the mobile is seen not just as a tool but a rite of passage that is intertwined in the process of a young person's identity formation in which consumer pressure also plays a significant part.

Whilst acknowledging that not all outcomes of the mobile phone use in young people's lives have a negative effect, the mobile phone's role in the social world of young people is problematic for the user. The incorporation of the mobile into the identity of young people has had particular social implications that devalue certain others. It also has implication for young people's relations with the environment.

Environment

In this section I present the argument that the way people appropriate technology has implications for how people co-construct notions of self and the environment. Such a large topic warrants a detailed investigation. However, in this article I have limited my analysis to how people can become disassociated with place through mobile phone use. Kaplan (1996) argues that the post-modern specialisation afforded through new technologies (mobile phones), create new and different networks, communities and auto/biographies that reshape the relationship between place and space. People are re-conceiving the notion of place towards a more spatial orientation rather than inherently relating people and action through other locating means (Usher, 2002). In short, space is becoming more significant than place.

Mobile phone technologies, and the 'anytime anywhere' culture associated with it, prioritises the social at the expense of the locale. The sense of belonging to a place is giving way to the social construction of an 'at-home' environment where the emotional elements of place are determined by the user of the phone (Srivastava, 2005). To illustrate, a talking point for many people using mobile phones revolves around disclosing the location from where they are calling. Many people attempt to locate themselves when they start up conversations on the phone. This illustrates the vacuum created by the new mobile technology that can be filled with the social world that the user can construct.

By constructing these mediated environmental relations facilitated by the characteristics of the ICTs there is a risk of the relations being significantly

different to those without ICT mediation. The importance of this idea is signified in the following statement.

By building up a history of experiences, space becomes a "place" and then its significance and utility is put forward . . . place is a medium for significant actions: place affords a kind of activity. There is a behavioral framing that come from our sense of place, which makes us know what is appropriate to do in different places. Each location, beside a specific layout and spatial organization, has social meaning and cultural understanding about its function, nature and role. (Nova, 2003, p. 20)

Drawing from this perspective, individuals will have less understanding about social meaning and cultural understanding of places because of the change in the mediating qualities of the mobile phone. The mobility afforded from mobile phones allows people to construct an identity not bound by place. Individuals can shape these identities in the space that they themselves create.

An example of this can be found in a recent conversation I overheard involving a young person in a car talking to her friend on a mobile phone. When asked what she was doing she said to her friend that she was 'just hanging out doing some shopping' in a particular local mall. I noticed, however, that she and I were actually in the parking lot of a national park interpretation centre and the mall she was talking about was 10km away. Her disconnection from the physicality of her surroundings was facilitated by the fact that mobile phone creates a space whereby the user is not bound by the place from which the call is being made.

The young person's experience can be put into perspective through the work of Payne (2003a) on the embodiment and the technics of experience. He states that,

The mediation, abstraction and de-centring of human activity might be understood as a form of dis-embodiment, a practice of dis-embedding and mass disengaging 'materially' or organically' from the life world. That is, there a greater risk of NOT knowing our selves, others and the local ways that are as meaningful as what they once were. (p. 19)

Whilst not calling for a re-traditionalising of experience the point is that the appropriation of technologies into the process of individualisation does

have considerable impacts on the ways young people now consider notions of place compared to people from not so distant pasts.

Although these examples of self, others and the environment do not paint an overly bright picture of the mobile phone, this does not discount the benefits of mobile phones for communities and the environment. For example, "On the other hand, it can be postulated that mobile phones have given users more responsibility and have facilitated accountability, e.g., between children and parents or employees and employers" (Srivastava, 2005, p. 22).

Whilst acknowledging certain benefits associated with mobile phone technology it is my contention that the way in which mobile phones have been incorporated into a young persons identity means that others and the environment have difficulty finding a place within the makeup of the autonomous chooser.

Implications for outdoor education

My argument based on the discussion above is that the individualising aspects of appropriating technologies into one's identity have inherent problems for creating a sense of otherness and developing environmental relations. Three points are relevant for a discussion of individualisation and outdoor education. These points are:

- The social processes of individualisation have created a world where people become empowered through the project of the self. This is apparent in the desire for young people to construct identities as autonomous choosers of mobile phone technology. This occurs to such an extent that the mobile phone has become an indispensable part of most young people's identity formation.
- Individuals increasingly tend to de-value certain others in the social process of constructing and maintaining these identities through the lack of reciprocity and social exclusivity that ownership affords.
- The disconnection with place can occur through reorienting notions of place towards a space orientation that is not rooted in physical locality. This is afforded by certain privileges in the social constructions and self-identity that mobile technology provides.

The popularity of free choice education (see Rudduck & Fielding, 2006) creates a problem for educators interested in social and environmental issues. Students caught in the grasp of the individualisation

process are most likely to continue to 'choose' more autonomous ways of being in the world. The problem for educators is how to promote learning opportunities that facilitate social cohesion and environmental relations in an attempt to reorient the individualisation process in young people's lives. To counter these effects, consciously co-opting the very aspects that contribute to heightened individualisation into the realm of teaching practice may be the way forward.

At the risk of being prescriptive I shall offer some ideas that might be useful achieving the goal of promoting a greater understanding of self, others and the environment. These ideas are based on Cote's (2005) particular approach to 'education for choice.' Cote (2005) acknowledges the importance of choice in managing the adverse, overbalanced nature of individualisation processes in the identity formation processes of young people.

Fundamental to this approach are the notions of critical education (Martin, 1999) and the notions of community and care (Quay, 2005; Quay, Dickinson & Nettleton, 2002). In an attempt to build on this work I wish to emphasise the importance of identity formation in the potential resistance to individualisation process and that critical thinking and care are important in that resistance. Taking a local community approach to political behaviour matches young people's contemporary individualistic approach to civic issues that commonly focus on organisations and issues that are closest to them. This approach would result in greater understanding and apparent influence for younger generations (Huntley, 2006). Given this position, some ideas on promoting a greater understanding of self, others and the environment are outlined in the following example.

One extreme would be to ban mobile phones. This runs the risk of participants perceiving the program to be irrelevant to the identity seeking process that young people are engaged with, and are no less engaged with, during the experience in the outdoors. Alternatively, adopting an uncritical laissez-faire approach would see many of the individualising aspects being realised.

Firstly, mobile phones will always be problematic for outdoor education as the range of coverage is increasing. Additionally, for those in mountainous areas, summits afford reasonable coverage in most of eastern Australian non-wilderness settings. Secondly, mobile phone ownership by young people is increasing but mobiles are not yet owned by all young people and thus their use on programs is fraught with social inequity issues. Lastly, mobiles are not just tools but have become part of people's identity - they are indispensable.

Given these aspects a mobile could be used on a program to widen and deepen community and environmental relations that risk society has impacted upon. A way of negotiating these issues with students might look something like this.

Firstly, there needs to be zones where mobile phones are switched off and this could be negotiated with the students. Next, find out directly from students their thoughts on how to address some of the problems of mobile phone use and individualism. In the course of writing this paper I have talk to university students about the problems of mobile phones and many of the issues raised in this paper are of concern to these students. I suspect the same to be true of school aged students. A discussion of these aspects would be useful in framing these suggestions.

Since mobile phone photographs can be uploaded immediately to a website, the group could display photos taken by the outdoor education camera phone directly on a moblog (a website for the display of mobile phone photos). If managed in a socially inclusive way, equity issues could be accommodated. Family, significant others and communities 'back home' could view the photos and thus create connection in more 'traditional' ways. That is, assuming that these 'others' had pathways to see these photographs. If they did not, the students could engage with their significant others after to the experience to show what they had done. Importantly, a particular theme could be introduced by the students that provide voice on a particular issue and might increase feelings of empowerment over contributions to something greater than just their program. This would also ground their experience with the place in the social world after outdoor education experience.

Although this idea is not without theoretical and practical problems the point I am making is that mobiles are not going to go away and the individualising effects of risk society and neoliberalism are not either. Taking a critical perspective and engaging with the issues of individualisation directly, whilst at the same a focussing on what students care about, is a way to ensure that teaching and learning approach to promoting self, others and the environment can be achieved with equal weight given to individualisation and community and environmental relations.

Conclusion

We now live in a risk in society where the pervasive forces of neo-liberal ideology have produced individuals that can be characterised by Loytard's (1993) autonomous chooser. The purpose of this article is to explain how individualisation processes gives rise to particular ways that young people envisage self, others and the environment. This has produced a problematic context from which outdoor

education attempts to reach its aims. The general aim of educating for self, others and the environment was seen to be problematically challenged by these processes. The example of mobile phones being incorporated into the lives of young people illustrated that individuals commonly tend to heighten notions of self, devalue others and reconceive their relationship with the environment in ways that de-emphasize place. I have offered a tentative solution to this problem by exploring an idea that explicitly and proactively reacts to the risk society and neo-liberal tendencies of individualisation. By doing so I hope that a tacit acceptance by outdoor educators of the individualisation process can be circumvented. Educating for self, others and the environment can be achieved with equal weight given all three aspects.

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