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**Ko au te whenua, te whenua ko au
- I am the land, the land is me**

*An autoethnographic investigation of a secondary school
teacher's experience seeking to enrich learning in outdoor
education for Māori students.*

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree

of

Masters of Sport and Leisure Studies

at

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by

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THE UNIVERSITY OF
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Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

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Abstract

This thesis is my story as an outdoor educator, as a researcher, and a co-participant reflecting on my own actions and experiences as well as those of my students. In this autoethnography I share my revelations and tensions in my role as an outdoor education teacher seeking to enrich the experiences of Māori students. Māori culture and history have largely been ignored in the outdoor education classrooms and environments of Aotearoa New Zealand. After teaching the subject for ten years I didn't perceive that I was perpetuating the same invisibility in my own outdoor education course. Over this time a number of questions that had fermented at the back of my mind came to the fore; 'why are so few Māori students opting to take outdoor education as a senior secondary school subject?' and 'how can I make the subject of outdoor education more desirable and appealing to Māori?' A place-responsive approach incorporates and values traditional ways of learning through the notion of place and the stories attached to them. The cultural context of learning about and through place has the potential to provide learning opportunities that are relevant and meaningful to all learners but particularly Māori. Place-responsive pedagogies allow outdoor educators to create an environment where language, knowledge, culture and values are normal, valid and legitimate – contexts where Māori students can be themselves. Through this research I have found that the implementation of a place responsive approach has had significant implications for Year twelve outdoor education at Mount Maunganui College. The improvement in Māori student achievement and numbers selecting the subject have been affirming.

Ko au te whenua, te whenua ko au – I am the land, the land is me

Preamble /Mōteatea

The Mōteatea, E Hika Tu Ake and the legend of Mauao that follow are significant to Mount Maunganui College, with Mauao our most visible landmark. For me, it has been the place where I first felt a ‘feeling of belonging’ when I moved to Mount Maunganui in 2001. Since this time my relationship to Mauao has continued to evolve and grow. I have stood on the summit of Mauao with my outdoor education class and witnessed students make connections of their own with each other and their significant place(s). The mountain of Mauao has also served as my place of reflection and refuge through the process of this research.

E Hika Tu Ake

E hika tū ake ki runga rā
Whītiki tāua hei tama tū
Kūmea ki te uru, ūea ki te tonga
Hiki nuku, hiki rangi
I a ra ra
Ka ngarue, ngarue
Toia ki te hau mara
Kia whakarongo e
Taku kiri i te kiikini o te rehutai
O ngā ngaru whatiwhati e
Haruru mai nei
Wīwīwī, wāwāwā
Horahia o mata ki a
Meretūahiahi e
Hei taki i te ara ki a Tangaroa
He atua hao i te tini ki te pō
E kōkōia e ara e

Legend of Mauao

There was once a hill with no name among the many hills and ravines on the edge of the forests of Hautere. This nameless one was pononga, slave or servant, to the great chief Otānewainuku, the forested peak which stands as a landmark for the tribes of Tauranga Moana.

To the south-west was the shapely form of the hill Puwhenua, a woman clothed in all the fine greens of the ferns and shrubs and trees of the forest of Tāne. The nameless one was desperately in love with Puwhenua. However, her heart was already won by the majestic form of the chiefly mountain Otānewainuku. There seemed no hope for the lowly slave with no name to persuade her to become his bride.

The nameless one sorrowed. In despair he decided to end it all by drowning himself in the ocean, Te Moananui a Kiwa. He called on the patupaiarehe, the people with magical powers who dwelled in the forests of Hautere. They were his friends and they plaited the ropes with their magic to haul him from the hill country toward the ocean. As they pulled on their ropes, they chanted their magic chant.

Arise you who slumber
Prepare ourselves, prove our manhood
Heave to the west heave to the south
Move heaven and earth
It awakens,
It loosens, shudders
Haul toward the stormy east wind
That the skin may feel the tang of salt spray
Of the turbulent thundering waves
Wī wī wī
Wā wā wā
Cast your eyes heavenward

Toward Venus, the evening star,
To light the path to the ocean of Tangaroa,
The god who lures many into his embrace, into eternal darkness
Alas, the birds have awakened. Dawn has come.

The patupaiarehe chanted this song and hauled the nameless one from his place among the hills from Waioku. They gouged out the valley where the river Waimapu now flows. They followed the channel of Tauranga Moana past Hairini, past Maungatapu and Matapihi, past Te Papa. They pulled him to the edge of the great ocean of Kiwa. But it was already close to daybreak. The sun rose. The first rays lit up the summit of the nameless hill and fixed him in that place. The patupaiarehe melted away before the light of the sun. They were people of the night and they flew back to the shady depths of the forests and ravines of Hautere.

The patupaiarehe gave a name to this mountain, which marks the entrance to Tauranga Moana. He was called Mauao, which means caught by the dawn, or lit up by the first rays of sunrise. In time, he assumed greater mana than his rival Otānewainuku. Later he was also given another name, Maunganui, by which Mauao is now more often known. He is still the symbol of the tribes of Tauranga Moana: Ko Mauao te maunga, ko Tauranga te moana.



Fig 1: *Mauao from Tauranga Moana*

Acknowledgements

I have finally come to the end of this long and challenging leg of my learning journey. I would never have made it to this point without the help, love and support of a number of very special people. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the following people for their endless support, wisdom and guidance during the duration of this research.

Firstly, my thanks are extended to my two wonderful supervisors, Dr. Clive Pope and Dr. Mike Brown. I am deeply grateful for your continuous support, patience, dedication, and your expertise throughout this process. I feel so fortunate to have you both as my thesis supervisors. Dr Clive Pope, as the memorable ‘teller of tales’ in my undergraduate years, I have learnt so much from your vast expertise in the method of autoethnography and have appreciated your considered advice. Thanks to you I have found a research method that warms the heart and enriches the soul. To Dr Mike Brown, thank you for introducing me to the place-responsive approach, for the opportunities to develop professionally and academically, and for inspiring me to change my teaching approach and philosophy. This whole process has re-fuelled my enthusiasm and passion as an outdoor education teacher. Thank you to you both for not giving up on me and maintaining your guidance and support even when I waivered off course at times.

I also would like to acknowledge the University of Waikato for allowing me this opportunity to extend my learning and for granting me the University of Waikato Masters Scholarship. I also would like to acknowledge the Department of Sport and Leisure Studies and the lecturers who taught me as one of the ‘guinea pigs’ from 1993. You not only taught me Sport and Leisure concepts but also a love of learning that I still hold true today.

Special thanks must also be given to the 2011 and 2012 Level 2 outdoor education students from Mount Maunganui College. Your input, passion, and enthusiasm for the changes we made in our outdoor education course will be etched on my heart forever. My heart swells with pride when I reflect on the privilege to see you shine as you connected with each other and our significant places. I am also

incredibly proud of how your passion for the outdoors shone through to your academic results.

I would also like to express my deepest appreciation for the fellowship and support of my Principal, Russell Gordon for his support, vision, and leadership in developing our school into a place and culturally responsive learning environment. Also my thanks are extended to my physical education team at Mount Maunganui College for their friendship, support and laughter throughout this journey.

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“Ko au te whenua, te whenua ko au” – I am the land, the land is me

Timatanga Kōrero

“I really need to use my study hours”, I say to my Principal, “all my time is getting sucked up by my meetings, planning, marking and sorting out staffing issues. I don’t have the energy once I get home to think straight, let alone to do any half decent writing!”

“Sorry to hear that.... Let’s try and work out a solution.... actually what’s your thesis actually about? I know it’s something to do with Māori education from the readings you keep emailing me but what is it actually about? Place based education?”

“My thesis is about my own experiences as I explore ways to enrich the learning of my Māori students in my Year 12 outdoor education class. I use strategies from Te Kotahitanga and teach the course through a place responsive approach (PRA). I’ve changed my pedagogical approach in the hope that I can create an outdoor education course that’s more appealing for Māori”.

“Ok”, says my Principal with a nod of approval, “but what method will you use to present your thesis?”

“An autoethnography”

“What the heck is that?”

“It’s a method which is similar to an autobiography – where I tell the stories from my experience of moving from a traditional approach to a place responsive approach in outdoor education. I speak purely from my own perspective but am also informed by the experiences of my students. I make it clear from the outset that I only speak from my position as a middle class Pākehā woman and teacher so this is the lens through which I view teaching and learning in outdoor education. I do not conceal who I am or my personal position in the story. It appeals to me because I want my thesis to be accessible to a wide range of readers, including students, parents, teachers as well as outdoor educators. I also like how a story telling approach resonates with the oral story telling traditions of Māori, which I feel is appropriate for what I am hoping to achieve”.

“So are you just going to tell stories?”

“I am going to tell stories but also interpret my experiences through comparing and contrasting academic theory and discuss the work of people who have influenced the direction I have taken on this academic and personal journey”.

“Where do the students fit into all this?”

“I interpret what the students see, say, and do through my eyes – either what I have written in my journal at the time or on reflecting on my teaching outdoor education through a place responsive approach. I also share (with their permission) their memories, highlights and challenges that they have shared during conversations and in their camp evaluations. I do not speak for them but use their words and actions to inform the changes I have made to my outdoor education course”.

“So are you just going to talk about teaching and camps?”

“No. It is important that I position myself first. I need to make clear to the reader my position and my motivation to undertake this study. I also share the process of critiquing the ‘what, how and why’ of outdoor education. I used to teach a lot of adventure-based learning and take my class to high ropes courses. I no longer have either in my course but rather I have adopted a place responsive approach. When I think about how the approach has changed the experience of my students and my own experience as a teacher I get shivers down my spine. When I reflect on the feelings, words and actions of my students my heart swells with pride and satisfaction. My outdoor education course has become a lot more than just another course at school for these students. What I have experienced on this journey has had its challenges but more than anything, huge rewards. I have also seen the potential of a PRA across the Curriculum, like through our Ko Wai Ra cross curricula junior focus”.

“Good on ya Jane”

“Thanks for that”

As I walk away I realise I haven’t actually worked out a solution for my study hours getting sucked into the ether of teaching and leading a busy department. It has been lovely to share and talk about my passion though.

Through the course of my teaching career I have noticed that outdoor education is not appealing to as many Māori students as I would expect; this led me to formulate the following question: What are the experiences of a secondary school

teacher seeking to enrich learning for Māori students studying senior outdoor education, and how could these experiences inform the professional practice of educators? Through this autoethnography I share my reflections, tensions and revelations on the process and practice as I implement a place - responsive outdoor education course in order to make outdoor education course appealing and desirable to Māori.

This autoethnographic study will have significance in contributing not only to the field of outdoor education but also to wider secondary school education. I explain the process of planning and implementing a place responsive approach in Year 12 outdoor education in order to enrich the learning experiences of Māori and to create an outdoor education course that is arguably more desirable for Māori students. The learning experiences of both myself as teacher/researcher and the students involved in the outdoor education course are explored. Through sharing my journey in an autoethnographic style my thesis will be accessible to a wide audience, particularly those who desire to change their practice away from a traditional model to a place responsive approach that enriches the student's educational experience by providing a course of study, which is culturally relevant and responsive. It should be a course where they can bring who they are as Māori into the classroom and into the outdoors.

CHAPTER ONE:

‘Whaia e koe ki iti kahurangi’

Seek that is most precious.

My motivation and research position

This thesis is my story as an outdoor educator, as a researcher, and a co-participant reflecting on my own actions and experiences as well as those of my students. I have positioned myself as the writer as I share my revelations and tensions in my role as an outdoor education teacher seeking to enrich the experiences of Māori students in my outdoor education course. I am passionate about both outdoor education and the achievement of Māori students. Therefore, it was important that I utilized a method that accurately represented the impressions and disclosures I have encountered along my research journey.

As a researcher I bring my own worldview and my set of beliefs to this research project, and these inform the conduct and writing to this qualitative study. I have endeavoured to make these explicit in the writing of this thesis (Creswell, 2002).

I was born in the small Bay of Plenty town of Te Puke in 1973. I was an unexpected arrival as my parents were only expecting one baby. It wasn't until after my sister was born that my parents and hospital staff realised they were delivering twins. Shortly after being born my sister and I were placed in the Māori ward because the nurse assumed we were Māori. This was well away from the Pākehā mothers and babies. Although I obviously can't remember this experience this was my first encounter of racism.

It is important to point out that I am not Māori. I am in fact a Pākehā of Cornish and Irish descent. My parents came to Aotearoa New Zealand with my two older brothers and older sister by boat in 1970. As a Pākehā of Cornish descent I knew little of my own unique language and culture that has all but been lost due to the assimilation of my Cornish ancestors into English culture.

I dearly wished that I were Māori as a child because I admired the culture, the values and beliefs, and the stories and legends. I was envious of my friends who always had lots of relatives to play and hang out with, and how they spent time together around and on the marae. Looking back I think that I was in a cultural 'no man's land' as I didn't feel Pākehā and although I was often mistaken for a Māori I couldn't identify as being Māori either. I was fortunate that I was included in kapa haka, marae sports teams and Māori women's welfare league through my friendships but I was aware that my involvement in things Māori did not make me Māori.

I have witnessed ignorance and racism throughout my life. I have witnessed racism first hand when others directed their ignorant words towards me (because of my brown skin) assuming I was Māori. I have also witnessed racism towards the people around me, and towards Māori generally. The difference was that I could explain that I am not Māori and the ignorant comments would no longer be directed towards me. This often lead to even more racist comments as the person speaking would then assume I was on board with their ignorant beliefs. There have been other times that I have chosen to let people believe I am Māori to avoid having to qualify my position. For Māori this exit clause was not available and so I grew up around many friends who either resisted, compromised who they were culturally, or turned their back on who they are as Māori in order to take the path of least resistance.

In Aotearoa New Zealand concern about underachievement of Māori in relation to other students is a matter of high priority (Ministry of Education, 2013). Explanations for this disparity vary from/between socio-economic, cultural deficit and 'victim blaming' theories.

There has been numerous times during my teaching career where I have felt deeply uncomfortable and frustrated to work in a system that did not provide culturally responsive learning opportunities, therefore disadvantaging a large proportion of my students. There have been other times where I have sat in staff meetings and felt anger and disgust at the racist stereotypes, deficit thinking and the 'victim blaming' that were voiced by some of my colleagues.

To understand the present situation it is important to critique and understand the past. During my undergraduate study at the University of Waikato I had the opportunity to learn the history and stories behind our education system. This included the impact on Māori of the colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand and the subsequent social and educational policies since this time. From the structures and practices that were designed to meet the needs of Pākehā settlers, to the assimilation and integration policies that directly benefited Pākehā and marginalised Māori. I also got the opportunity to examine how these systemic structural benefits remain ‘invisible’ to most Pākehā, which is evident in hegemony of white middle class ideals in education (Bishop & Glynn, 2003). This learning had a profound impact of me, and my development as an educator.

Three years into my teaching career I was starting to wonder if I would have to leave my beliefs and personal convictions at the school gate to survive in the education environment. Then in 2002 our school became part of the pilot of the professional development initiative, Te Kotahitanga. The goal of this initiative is to improve Māori achievement through better relationships and teaching strategies (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai, & Richardson, 2003). The professional development initiative involved a three day hui at a local marae, co-construction meetings, class observations, and feedback sessions. Being part of this initiative showed me that I could make a real difference in my own class even if I felt I had minimal impact on the deficit thinking of some of my colleagues. Bishop et al (2009) argue,

Te Kotahitanga is an approach that rests in the first instance upon a commitment by teachers to build caring and learning relationships and interactions with Māori students; in the second, for teachers to strongly believe Māori students can improve their achievement; and thirdly, their students are able to take responsibility for their learning and performance (p.5).

The first stage of the hui involved reading and discussing the educational stories from Māori students, their parents and teachers. As our school was part of the pilot programme some of these narratives came from our own students and school community. The students’ narratives of their experiences had a profound impact on me. Many of the narratives resonated with what I had observed during my own

upbringing and later as a teacher. Many of the students shared that they found classes boring when they were required to learn histories of other countries with no connection to their own. Even when these students did have the opportunity to learn about key events in New Zealand history it was invariably taught through the eyes and perceptions of the other (Bishop & Berryman, 2006).

In contrast to my vested interest in Te Kotahitanga and bicultural education and their associated pedagogies, I did not consider my outdoor education teaching practices were based on universal, colonising and hegemonic notions. I considered myself (and still do) to be a passionate outdoor educator who genuinely cares about the students I teach. However, since the beginning of my teaching career I had observed proportionally less Māori choose to take outdoor education as a subject compared to physical education courses and for many years I was curious to know why. Despite my best efforts, only a small minority of Māori students elected to study outdoor education as a senior subject at Mount Maunganui College. I was naturally disappointed because I felt these students would miss out on all the benefits that adventure pursuits offered and I began to examine possible explanations. I suspected that the low numbers may be due to comparatively higher course fees or that the team sports inherent in our other courses (e.g., Touch Rugby, etc) were more appealing when Māori students had to choose one course over another.

Despite my interest in bettering the educational experience of Māori, and despite my later involvement in Te Kotahitanga, I never questioned the content and skills inherent in teaching outdoor education. On reflection I am shocked that I wasn't able to see that the 'how, what and why' I was teaching was disadvantaging and dissuading Māori students.

I had observed the 'invisibility' of Māori culture and history in the outdoor industry but I didn't perceive that I was perpetuating the same invisibility in my own outdoor education course. For example, while tramping in the Kauearanga Valley in the Coromandel, I found a wealth of information of the colonial history of the area at the visitor centre, on information boards and in pamphlets.

Yet I found no information on Māori history or significance of the area. It was as if no people existed in the area in pre-colonial times.

Setting a Change in Course

During my postgraduate study year in 2010 I had the opportunity to interrogate the origins of outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand. I discovered what and how I was teaching was based in other places and times. The most disturbing discovery was what I was teaching was based on military traditions that were designed to prepare young colonists for the demands of war (Cook, 1999; Loynes, 2000). It seemed ridiculous to me that although rich in knowledge and skills in the outdoors Māori knowledge, specific Iwi and Hapu knowledge, and culture has largely been ignored in outdoor education programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand.

During the same year I also discovered Place Based Education (this term was later changed to Place Responsive to better reflect the approach) through the same paper offered by Dr Mike Brown. I felt strongly that a place responsive approach (PRA) presented an opportunity to meet the needs of Māori and provide students with the opportunity to engage with the unique histories, geographies and cultural understandings associated with their particular places. I was excited by the possibilities a PRA offered my students and myself as an educator. I believed a PRA could enrich the learning and experiences of my students and myself as an educator. I formulated a proposal in 2010 and redesigned my Year 12 outdoor education course over the next five months ready for the 2011 school year. My aim was to enrich the learning experiences of all students, but particularly Māori in outdoor education. Through the implementation of a place-responsive approach I sought to attract more into Māori selecting outdoor education as a senior subject.

Research with and for Māori

I felt a degree of discomfort as a Pākehā undertaking research with Māori. Through my postgraduate studies I became acutely aware of the ethical complexities of undertaking cross-cultural studies in the field of educational research. Bishop and Glynn (1998) argue,

despite Māori being one of the most researched peoples in the world, there is a great deal of evidence that many of the studies of Māori people's lives

and experiences has been of more benefit to the researchers than to those who have been the objects of study (p.16 -17).

Māori, like many other indigenous peoples throughout the world, have been disempowered by researchers who have taken the knowledge of Māori and claimed it as their own, “presuming to set themselves up as authorities on the culture of the ‘other’, yet discussing the lives and experiences of Māori in ways that are alien to their understanding” (Mahuika, 2008, p.2). The experiences of many of the world’s indigenous peoples can attest to the devastating and dehumanizing impact seemingly ‘objective’ researchers have had on their traditional cultures (Bishop & Glynn, 2003). This experience is common throughout the world amongst indigenous and colonised peoples. There have been numerous examples of research and teaching since colonisation that has simplified and commodified Māori knowledge. This has provided a further rationale for assimilation (Smith, 1998).

As a Pākehā researcher it was vital that I actively resist what Ellis (2010) argues, are “colonialist, sterile research impulses of authoritatively entering a culture, exploiting cultural members, and then recklessly leaving to write about the culture for monetary and/or professional gain, while disregarding relational ties to cultural members” (p.1). I needed to find a research method that would benefit and not harm or exclude the Māori students who are my motivation to undertake this project.

Autoethnography and Critical Research

A critical research frame has guided this qualitative approach and was also the motivation to create a place and culturally responsive outdoor education course. In order to frame this research it is important to be cognizant of injustices inflicted on Māori through the process of colonization and the effects that are inherent in our educational system.

Critical Research is deliberately political, seeking the emancipation of individuals and groups within society. Its purpose is, “not merely to understand situations and phenomena, but to change them” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p.26). It

seeks to emancipate the disempowered, to redress inequality and to promote individual freedoms within a democratic society.

My goal through this process is, to understand my reflexive place in this ethnographic project, to learn how to write myself into this emergent form of critical ethnography. In doing so, I seek “to write a decolonizing narrative” (Cook-Lynn, 2008, p. 324). Autoethnography complements critical research because it enacts “a way of seeing and being (that) challenges, contests, or endorses the official, hegemonic ways of seeing and representing the other” (Denzin, 2006, p. 422). Autoethnography is not simply a confessional tale of self-renewal; it is a provocative weave of story and theory. “The tale being told”, writes Denzin (1992), “should reflect back on, be entangled in, and critique this current historical moment and its dis-contents” (p. 25).

I also had to consider how best to talk about outdoor experiences that are personal, spiritual, and embodied. Would a traditional methodology be an accurate expression of what I have experienced over the last three years? Could I talk about my students, some of whom I have known for over ten years, as subjects? Can the ‘voice from nowhere’ accurately express how it feels to feel connected to others and with our special unique places? Could the “omnivescent voice from nowhere” (Richardson, 1997, p. 3), the practice of writing oneself out of the research, be a true representation of what happens to the mind, body and spirit when I stand on the summit of Mauao with my students and see all the places we have been and developed a relationship with? I am there, seeing, feeling, hearing, experiencing with my students. Each of us is different but we experience these places together. I cannot follow the traditional writing model where I am required to silence my own voice and view myself as a contaminant (Richardson, 1994).

As an outdoor educator I am in the field, "a member of the landscape" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p.63), in how I relate to my students, in the places we experience, and my reflections on them. I chose autoethnography as a mode of inquiry because through my reading I was persuaded that "texts needed to construct a different relationship between researchers and subjects and between

authors and readers" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.744-745). Reading of how "the narrative text refuses the impulse to abstract and explain, stressing 'the journey over the destination', and thus eclipses the scientific illusion of control and mastery" (Ellis & Bochner, 2003, p.217) appeals to me as an appropriate method to represent my teaching and learning journey.

Autoethnography allows me to examine personal experience and meaning from the inside, as well as incorporating a view beyond myself. It's in this way that autoethnographers show a concern for others and the political and social consequences associated with living life today (Denison & Markula, 2003). Autoethnography emphasizes the linkage between themes within my experience and broader cultural and subcultural processes. As the researcher-author who wishes to portray the relationship between Māori education initiatives, a Place Responsive approach, and my experience as an outdoor educator involved in embodied activity, autoethnography constitutes the best method of representing that relationship (Hockey, 2006).

Autoethnography is where I am central to the research process and both communities and cultures are explored through my experiences and senses. Reed-Danahay (1997) argues that researchers may lay varying emphases on its three inter-related constituents: auto (the self), ethnos (the culture) and graphy (the research process), through the researcher's affective self-story relations between personal experience, life-worlds and engagements with the culture that may unfold. It is not simply subjective autobiography or mere stories of my experiences; it autobiographical accounts where my voice is the authoritative voice along with "rigorous critical reflection and review through an ethnographic lens, and, importantly, an analysis of cultural practices" (McMahon & Thompson, 2011, p.4). Through the process of writing I recognise that, "what there is to know is inextricably linked to an individual's past, present, and future. It is shaped by historical, social, political, and economic experiences "(Dumbar cited in Denzin, Lincoln & Tuhawai Smith, 2008, p. 86).

Autoethnography is associated with the telling of stories, which are utilized to discuss and represent my development as an outdoor educator seeking to enrich

learning in outdoor education for Māori students. These accounts signpost the ideas and theories I have explored, define my areas of interest and shifts in direction, and the complexities that excite, frustrate and engage me. Autoethnography, and specifically the stories inherent in this method are appropriate because they are directly related to the relationship between knowledge and pedagogy. The events told, the relationships revealed, the places identified are linked to telling a story. Most of all, I want readers to critically reflect on their practices and modify them appropriately.

I have used autoethnography and the collection of stories as my research method, merging personal narrative and storytelling with academic research (Houston, 2007). I feel it is the appropriate method in order to make this text accessible to a wider audience, of representing outdoor experiences in our significant places, and for researching with Māori. The stories presented in this autoethnography are closely related to those inherent in Māori culture. Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes that the tales shared “serve to connect the past with the future, one generation with the other, the land with the people and the people with the story” (Smith, 1999, p. 145). Autoethnography increases the accessibility of the text to a wider audience, has a wide appeal and reflects the stories that are inherent in every culture. This, in turn has the potential to convey knowledge within the context of the complexity of human affairs, expanding an understanding of other people and our sense of community with them (Haig-Brown, 1992). These messages may link individuals to each other, to their specific place, and to help them understand present events in the past. Words and meanings create social relationships, create the story and create understanding.

As an autoethnographer, I aim to use personal experience to illustrate facets of cultural experience, and, in so doing, make characteristics of a culture familiar for insiders and outsiders. Through my personal accounts I present the tensions, revelations, outcomes and experiences that have informed the changes I have made to my Year 12 outdoor education course. I follow these narratives with my academic interpretations of these stories. This experience has been an opportunity to put the theory into practice, focus on the process rather than the product, and emphasise the journey over the destination (Ellis & Bochner, 2003).

To accomplish this I present a layered account, an experimental, postmodern, ethnographic reporting format which enables me, as researcher to use as many resources as possible including place responsive and social theory, lived experience, and emotions (Ronai, 1997). Layered accounts focus on my experience alongside data, analysis, and relevant literature. This form emphasizes the procedural nature of research, and illustrates how "data collection and analysis proceed simultaneously" (Charmaz, 1983, p.110). Existing research is used as a "source of *questions* and *comparisons*" rather than a "measure of truth" (Charmaz, 1983, p.117). In representing my research journey using layered accounts I use vignettes, reflexivity, multiple voices, and introspection (Ellis, 1991) to invoke readers to enter into the "emergent experience" of doing and writing research (Ronai, 1992, p.123).

I aim to make this text aesthetic and evocative by using techniques of 'showing' (Ellis, 1997), which are designed to bring you, as reader, into the scene, particularly into thoughts, emotions, and actions (Ellis, 2004, p.142). Showing allows me to make events engaging and emotionally rich, and I will use conversation at times to achieve this. 'Telling' is a writing strategy that works with 'showing' in that it provides readers some distance from the events described so that they might think about the events in a more abstract way. Ellis (1997) explains that between the two there is a shift in the balance between telling and showing. Telling occurs when I intervene in the narrative and suggest how one might feel about characters or interpret events. This allows the characters to act out the story and reveal things about themselves without me proposing interpretations. I will use italics in this text to indicate when I am 'showing' in contrast to no italics for when I am 'telling' to demonstrate my stepping in and out of the experience and reflecting on what can be learnt. The art of showing is particularly relevant to stories about the outdoors because the experiences are so visceral. When we are active we often lose sight of what is real, rational, and conscious as images, colours, sounds, and smells all blur. With showing it becomes possible to go beyond conscious reasoning and bring readers inside and in-touch with people's lived movement experiences (Wattchow, 2004).

Through the process of constructing this thesis, writing has become a way of 'knowing'—"a method of discovery and analysis" (Richardson, 1994, p. 516). By writing in different ways, I have discovered new aspects of my topic and my relationship to it.

Representing the Outdoor Experience

How I relate to significant places, how I feel both mentally and physically as I move through or glide over the water with the sun's warmth on my skin, climbing ridges with muscles threatening to burst out through the surface of my skin cannot be accurately represented in what Sparkes (2000) describes as, "author evacuated texts" (p.22). Traditional research methods not only evacuate the author from the text but also promote an erasure of the body from the process and product of research (Spry, 2001).

How I feel to be 'active' in these places, and how it feels to learn something of the life story of a student, is to gain a new understanding from the stories of others. T Our body, mind and soul, is one as we rest, move through, or over these places (Rangiwai, 2011). I believe autoethnographic writing is the best way to represent embodied experiences in the outdoors and this approach is supported by a number of scholars (Hockey & Collinson, 2007; Humberstone, 2011). For van Manen (2001) the researcher aims to "transform experience into a textual expression of its essence – in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive re-living and reflective appropriation of something meaningful: a notion by which a reader is powerfully animated in his or her own lived experience" (p. 36). This can only occur after an intense quest for understanding of the experience prior to its description (Wattchow, 2004).

The Mind and Body Dualism

I find it interesting that many people see the mind and body as separate entities. This introduction of metaphysical dualism originated from Descartes (2008) who argued that mind and matter are two distinct and separable substances. This view values intellectual thoughts and emotions over embodiment, and alienates the

mind from body, individual from world, and thought from action (Sutton, 1998). This dichotomy is seen in physical education where the body is commonly considered as a machine, to be measured and analysed. This approach is referred to as Technocentricity, and relies on scientific approaches to enhance performance in sport (McBain & Gillespie, 2006). This view directly contrasts with my understanding. For, as Crossley (1995, p. 47) has observed, the mind is inseparable from the body; they remain “reversible aspects of a single fabric”. This combination of corporeal and cognitive interacts with a particular physical environment to create a particular form of “emplacement” (Howes, 2005, p. 7). I want this thesis to demonstrate how, through physical activity, my students and I move over and experience our Maunga/mountains, islands and coastal trails. How it feels to paddle through and on waves or over our rivers and lakes. How the salt air blowing off the waves tastes on the lips and the feelings of elation when I look down the coast from the summit of Mauao. It is through our senses that we engage with the world and build relationships with each other and our significant places. Humberstone (2011) proposes that, “autoethnography can provide particular insights into understanding and analysing connections between personal embodied outdoor experiences, culture and nature” (p. 1). Further, the very fluidity of movement ‘through’ nature brings forth continuously changing perceptions and awareness (Hockey, 2006). As Ingold (2000) notes, people see as they move and “our knowledge of the environment undergoes continuous formation in the very course of [our] moving in it” (p. 230).

I find a greater connection to this form of representation and sense the contribution it can make as a way of knowing that allows both the author and the reader to feel and understand the world in which we live together as embodied beings (Sparkes, 2002). The embodied experience has been described by Stoller (cited in Brady, 2004), as “...a mixing of head and heart. It is an opening of one’s being to the world—a welcoming. Such embodied hospitality is the secret of the great scholars, painters, poets, and filmmakers whose images and words resensualise us” (p.622).

Through my reading for this thesis I have found a method that will “allow readers to feel the moral dilemmas, think with the story instead of about it, join actively in

the decision points that define an autoethnographic project, and consider how their own lives can be made a story worth telling” (Bochner & Ellis, 2000, p740).

The reader may identify at various levels, at a personal level there may be resonance with my journey and particular embodied experiences, and for another reader the situation of the story may hold true (Humberstone, 2011). Each reader of this autoethnography brings different resources to this text and, thus, different tools for making meaning out of the story. “The stories may summon different experiences from different readers in a variety of ways and with each reading” (Tsang, 2000, p.55). The focus on reader response encourages connection, empathy, and solidarity, as well as emancipatory moments in which powerful insights into the lived experiences of others are generated (Sparkes, 1997). If you are able to make meanings as you read, put something of your own into the account, and do something with it (Bochner & Ellis, 1996) then I have made a difference through writing this thesis.

Spheres of Influence

It has been argued (Atkinson & Silverman, 1997) that focusing on the individual is not sufficient to tackle what are essentially institutional and societal problems. However, no social change in the history of the world has ever come about without at least one person starting it. As individuals in society we all have our own spheres of influence, which change, and develop, as we go about our lives. What is important is that as educators, we play a part in the process of reflection and change, and in creating a culturally responsive learning environment. Outdoor education, with its unique potential could make a contribution towards this creation. Perhaps more than anything the special contribution of outdoor education lies in the embodied blend of curiosity, wonder, awe, joy, and potential of the teaching approach to stimulate critical thinking (Geertz, 1988).

As a researcher, I do not exist in isolation. I live enmeshed in social networks that include friends and relatives, partners and children, colleagues both within and outside school, students, and to my school and university. Consequently, when I write up this research using personal experience I not only implicate myself but also others (Adams, 2006). Furthermore, I value and want to maintain

interpersonal ties with my outdoor education students, which makes relational ethics more complicated. Consequently, ethical issues affiliated with my relationship with students are an important part of the research process and product (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011; Tillmann-Healy, 2001).

Although I am central to this learning journey, I am acutely aware that “one’s stories are constructed in and through the stories of others” (Holman Jones, 2005, p. 784). Moreover as Nudd, Schriver and Galloway (2001) argue, when we place our lives and bodies in the texts that we create, engage and perform, they are “no longer just our own; for better or worse they have become part of the community experience” (p. 113).

The students involved in this process also have their own sphere of influence. They have built their own memories and also have stories to tell of their experiences in the outdoors and of their significant places. They have stories to tell of the history and legends of these places that they share with family, friends and whanau. Their stories are built on by the experiences and knowledge from their significant others. Any experiences and/or conversations I have included in the proceeding pages I have discussed with the students involved. Throughout this learning journey they have been excited about their involvement in the process of transforming outdoor education at our school.

I have used pseudonyms so that students cannot be identified and have at times merged characters and experiences to retain anonymity. I have done this to protect individuals if they decide in the future they do not want to be identified or have their stories shared (Tolich, 2004). These protective devices should have a positive influence on the integrity of this research now and in the future and how the work is work and interpreted and understood (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). This is of utmost importance as I plan to be living in the world of these relationships in which my research is embedded well after this research is completed.

Through writing this autoethnography my text will be accessible to more readers, “making the personal visible and political” (Cook-Lynn, 2008, p.325), and

demonstrate how specificity can inform discourses that can extend to other contexts (Meyer, 2003). My desire is for this work to stimulate discussion with others about memories and experiences of their own, touch the reader in some way, entertain, and not drown the reader with theory or provide solutions to perceived deficiencies.

This thesis focuses on my perspectives, my feelings, how the actions of others influenced me. Bochner (2001) argues that,

As researchers we should move away from master narratives and toward local stories; away from idolising categorical thought and abstracted theory and toward embracing the values of irony, emotionality, and activism; away from assuming the stance of the disinterested spectator and toward assuming the posture of a feeling, embodied, and vulnerable observer; away from writing essays and toward telling stories (p.135).

My accounts of experiences through this process as an outdoor education teacher will create charged moments of clarity, connections, and change not only for my outdoor education class and my school, but also the reader who is motivated to enrich the educational experience of other Māori students. This thesis brings into play personal experience, place responsive and cultural responsive theories to collectively uncover the educational and personal potential to uncover connections between body, culture, history, emotions and the senses as the body engages with significant places. This is where I situate myself in this research journey, which is an embodied expression of my own belief systems, my experiences and political convictions. It is this relationship between personal experiences and reflections upon them, the researcher and researched, individual and society, mind and world, structure and agency that provide the theoretical background to this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO:

‘Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei’

Aim for the highest cloud so that if you miss it, you will hit a lofty mountain

I have chosen the whakataukī above to represent my move to Mount Maunganui and as an outdoor and physical education teacher at Mount Maunganui College. The whakataukī is the Māori proverb chosen for our school by our principal shortly after his employment and represents the academic goals and aspirations of our students. It also represents my own goals as a teacher wanting to make a positive difference at Mount Maunganui College.

Moving to Mauao

After a meeting at Mount Maunganui College to officially accept my position as Teacher in Charge of Outdoor Education I change into my running gear and run. I run from the school car park, along the beachfront to Mauao, the mountain peninsula that dominates the coast and skyline of the Bay of Plenty. I head up the steep clay track that leads to the summit.



Fig 2: *The track up Mauao*

As I run I look across the sparkling blue channel that runs between Mauao and Matakana to the tree lined golden sand beaches of the island. There is not a cloud in the sky and I feel the golden heat of the sun warming my skin. Once I reach the summit I pause to admire the view. As I look out across the Pacific Ocean, out to the islands, along the coast and across to the school I am overwhelmed with a feeling that I belong here. I feel exhilarated and excited about living at the Mount, living close to the beach, and closer to my support network, and most of all making a difference as a teacher at Mount Maunganui College.



Fig 3: *View from the summit of Mauao*

I have experienced a lot since that day. My optimism and enthusiasm for teaching have waned at times, but the feeling of belonging and the appreciation I have for the place I live has only grown over the last thirteen years. I have stood on the summit hundreds of times since that first run but I have never forgotten that feeling of belonging I felt on Mauao that day.

Teaching has never been ‘just a job’ to me. I became a teacher because I wanted to make a difference in the lives of young people. There had been teachers in my life that had a profound effect on me. Teachers who I got to know well through sport, who supported me in reaching my goals and shared in my success or

disappointments. The English teacher who told weird and wonderful stories that I still remember clearly today. He taught his students about life not just what was required by the Curriculum.

The American biology teacher and basketball coach who told funny stories of his involvement in drug experiments at university and invited the basketball team to his home to meet his family. A teacher who built positive relationships, genuinely cared about his students, and who did not tolerate any form of prejudice in his classroom. Whereas some teachers would ignore teasing and jokes that were racist or sexist, this man would expose the jokes as offensive and would not accept this behavior in any shape or form.

I admired the physical education teachers when I was at school but didn't have the same relationship with them as I did with some of my other teachers because I didn't study the subject after Year 10. This was the time before physical education was a School Certificate subject so I took the accepted academic pathway. I used to look out the window from the physics classroom and feel pangs of jealousy as I watched the physical education class laughing and playing in the sunshine.

I originally wanted to be a physical education teacher because I wanted to develop elite athletes. I had experienced success as a runner and triathlete and believed sporting success had only had positive influences on my life. Through athletics and running I had made friends from all over the country, I had travelled to different places, gained confidence in myself both as an athlete and as a person, and I got attention and support from different people in both my local community and the running community. I wanted students to benefit from all the opportunities elite sport could offer an athlete. I was so competitive and so focused on the best athletes in the class who I wanted to beat, that the students who avoided physical education at school were invisible to me. I could only see the competitive students, such as myself, that strived to be the best at everything and were motivated to win.

Through my undergraduate education I became excited about the behavioral aspects of sport, sociology of sport, and relationships between leisure, power and

politics. I started to question my commonly held view of 'the body as machine' and examine different groups in society access to sport and leisure. I reflected on my experiences as an athlete through my learning and was interested in mastery goals, burn out in young athletes, aggression in sport and gender in sport. By the time I started my teaching career I couldn't wait to apply what I had learnt to develop elite athletes, but I also wanted every student to find a physical activity or activities they enjoyed that they could participate in throughout their lives, that would make them happy and contribute to their lifelong health and wellbeing.

My role as an outdoor educator evolved from sport. I had discovered multisport and thoroughly enjoyed running along bush tracks, kayaking down rivers and along coastlines, and mountain biking through farms and single track I was focused on improving my performance through training and developing technical skills but also loved travelling to and exploring different places via running, riding and paddling. I gained a new appreciation for the outdoors through multisport and I wanted my students to experience the same opportunities.

When I met the students in my classes at Mount Maunganui College I was so excited. My first impressions were of young people who love the beach lifestyle. They all seemed tanned and healthy, friendly, confident and intelligent. My form class was the second highest academic class in Year 10 and full of exceptional young people. Over half were Māori and so my first impressions were this was a school where everybody had an equal opportunity to achieve success.

The physical education department had four new teachers including a new head of department. The department was in a state of chaos with outdated programmes, a poor moderation record and widespread student apathy towards the subject. I knew the new Head of Department, as he had been a physical education teacher when I was a student at Te Puke High School. He was a pleasant hard-working man who entrusted the new staff to work with him to develop courses and programmes, and to get the department moving forward. My primary responsibility was to be in charge of the development of the outdoor education course.

Prior to my employment the course had been run 'army style' course with camps dominated by 5am wake up calls and ten kilometre runs in endless mud. My predecessor was a 'hard man' who had been a soldier and lamented the abolishment of corporeal punishment in schools. The discourse of 'throwing them in at the deep end' and 'development through overcoming hardship and adversity' had dominated outdoor education. Students who had taken the course spoke of tramping for days through mud, of lack of sleep and exhaustion. They spoke of being proud to have survived the experience but none I have met had ever gone tramping again. Numbers had been dwindling for several years, as fewer students were willing to take outdoor education as a subject.

When I began teaching outdoor education at Mount Maunganui College I completely rewrote the course to not only rid the course of the military training type focus, but also to adapt to the changes of the introduction of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA). I based these changes around units I had taught while I was in Hamilton. Having grown up in the Bay of Plenty I adapted the Mount Maunganui College course to the local environment but both the Hamilton and Mount Maunganui courses were very similar, consisting of traditional units of work such as personal and social development through adventure based learning and high rope courses. Survival skills, map reading and navigation skills were emphasised for the Bushcraft unit of work. Skills and technical instruction were taught through rock climbing, kayaking and mountain biking. I also introduced training and competing in a multi-sport event as part of the course as I was also coaching many students who were in my course. The students generally were enthused about their experiences and appreciated the opportunity to get to know their classmates and teacher. My aim was to provide the students with the skills and enthusiasm to plan their own excursions with family and friends in the outdoors, and hopefully whatever profession they chose they would be able to make the most of their recreation time. However, on reflection, the students did not have the opportunity to return to many of the sites of their outdoor experience and did not form a relationship with the places that we visited. For example, one year I took the class tramping around Lake Waikaremoana. It was a long and rough drive to get there but on the whole an enjoyable experience that students found challenging. A highlight for me was

seeing a couple of my students encounter snow for the first time in their lives. They rolled in the freshly dumped snow like excited puppies. Despite the positive experience only one student has revisited the area out of the whole class.

Many of my outdoor education students over the years have gone on to take up leadership positions within the school and the wider community, and many forged careers in the outdoors both in New Zealand and overseas. I enjoyed seeing outdoor education students who identified themselves as 'outdoor eders' around the school. While the 'sporty' kids wore their compression wear and caps on a mufti day the 'outdoor eders' would wear polypropylene and beanies. I was puzzled that even though the course numbers continued to grow, outdoor education was still not appealing to more Māori students at Mount Maunganui College. I worked to promote the subject to students around the school and at our school's course selection evenings, but most of the time Māori students would indicate they would prefer to study sports science. I would show them pictures of all the cool activities such as high ropes and adventure based learning, I wrote articles and included pictures in the school magazine, but none of what I tried seemed to excite them or their parents. I just couldn't understand where I was going wrong. I felt that to many Māori students were missing out on all the opportunities that studying outdoor education offered them.

By 2002 I was fully involved in the Te Kotahitanga initiative at Mount Maunganui College, and was invested in making a positive difference to the educational experience of Māori students. I was getting positive feedback from the facilitators for my relationships with students and the teaching strategies I was implementing. However, I felt I was struggling to incorporate a relevant cultural context in physical education and outdoor education. Although I incorporated games such as Tapuwai into my minor games unit, and Māori legends into the dance, I was concerned that what I was doing would be considered tokenistic. I had heard teachers share with pride in co-construction meetings that they write the day and date on the board in Māori to provide a cultural context. I wanted to do much more than translate Māoritanga into Pākehā terms. I wanted to seek ways to incorporate Māoritanga into my teaching in an authentic way, not as a cultural 'add on'. Hokowhitu (2004) argues that by decontextualising Māori cultural

concepts cultural invasion has occurred and the Freirian concept of 'false generosity' may become evident. According to Salter (2000) this difference is a 'way of knowing for Māori' but for Pākehā it is a 'way of education' and as such becomes institutionalised knowledge. Hokowhitu (2004) argued that learning in a bi-cultural context, "will hold less (or no) value to a student if it is taught in a cultural vacuum. If practices are not shown to be philosophically underpinned, then a student has every right to question their validity and relevance" (p.78). These issues continued to niggle at my sub-conscious as I strived to improve the educational outcomes of the Māori students in my classes.

I had always found teaching rewarding and challenging. I was never bored as there were always lots challenges and opportunities. Through teaching and coaching I got to share my passion for sport and the outdoors. I got to laugh and play games, I got to see the joy and exhilaration on the face of students when they roll a kayak for the first time. I got to train and race with my students. I got to take students to my favourite places to mountain bike, tramp and kayak. I got to witness students' passion for the outdoors develop and grow. I got to train with and coach a successful running and multisport team while still competing myself. I got to share in student success when they achieved academic success through learning that was relevant and meaningful to them. The multisport course reflected my perception of what I would have loved to study when I was at school. The course attracted students with similar attitudes and social position as myself. Students who were predominantly white, middle class, competitive, and passionate about training and racing. I felt I was making a positive difference to the experience of students and to the school and I found teaching and coaching extremely rewarding.

Then as my responsibilities grew – leading the development of outdoor education, establishing a multisport course, initiating and developing an institute of sports performance, then a promotion to assistant head of department, then head of department, I started to lose my passion for teaching and lose sight of all the reasons I wanted to be a teacher. There were times when I felt like teaching was getting in the way of doing my job.

I found leading a department both challenging and rewarding. The opportunity to lead change, to feel like the people in my department were paddling the same waka toward a shared vision, and see the difference it made to the experience and results of the students we teach was incredible. It was unfortunate at this stage of my career I felt I should lead and implement everything myself and I felt there wasn't enough hours in the day to accomplish everything I wanted to.

I had meetings and extra administration work to do after school so I couldn't offer the time I had previously allocated for my runners and multisport athletes. I had somehow got heavily involved with my surf club (on reflection this was a ridiculous thing to do when I was already overcommitted), and became the sprint coach, head instructor, rookies coordinator, female club captain as well as patrolling over the summer months. School was becoming 'ground hog day' – waking up early, gym, eat breakfast, rush into school, growl at somebody for wearing a hat inside, growl at someone for eating in class, growl at someone for talking while I was setting a task, rushing to get paperwork and planning done in interval and lunchtime, rush to a meeting, hope the meeting finishes in time for me to change clothes before I start coaching, coach, make dinner, spend some time with my children, do some planning and marking for the next day, sleep and do it all again the next day. I had no one to blame but myself as I strived to make a difference in the lives of students and the wider community. I overlooked the importance of investing quality time with my family and myself.

When my class went on camp I would spend hours planning the activities and addressing safety issues, writing letters and gaining parental permission. When we were on camp my own children stayed with their grandparents and I had to arrange to get the cats fed by neighbours. I would often come home to kids who had missed their own sport and activities, cats who had run away or been run over by a car, and kids who needed comforting as they grieved for their dead or missing pets. On top of this there were a couple of occasions the principal called me into the office on my return from camp for varied reasons like: "Little Joey capsized and had to kayak in wet clothes"; "the kayak journey was too long and now Bobby has a cold"; "the kayak was too short so Lilly still had the energy to sneak in the boys tent in the middle of the night"; "Lilly's parents want to know

why the teachers didn't patrol the tents at night"; "Bobby's parents want to know why the kids had to stay in tents when it was raining". It wasn't just the stress of being responsible for the safety of students for days on end but also the time it took to plan the camp, set my relief for my classes back at school and all the paperwork I had to catch up with on my return to school.

I was often in a position where I had to defend outdoor education vehemently. At Head of Department meetings when other teachers complained that outdoor education students were missing too many lessons in other subjects because they were away on camps and daytrips, to my department when I was away for up to a week at a time, and my other classes that had to be taught by a reliever while I was away. I was always able to support my argument with evidence to promote the value of outdoor education. I spouted off with the number of student leaders that came from my course, and how this proved that outdoor education was excellent at developing character, leadership ability and confidence. I shared my observations and countless examples of students who thrive outside the classroom and in an outdoor environment. I also provided lots of examples of students who only stayed at school because they loved the subject of outdoor education.

I alerted my colleagues to the fact that students often don't get the opportunity to get in the outdoors with their families and would list all the benefits they missed out on. I could provide countless examples of students who spent most of their free time in front of screens playing computer games or on Bebo (popular before Facebook). Students who didn't even visit the beach all summer holidays, and others still who had lived in Mount Maunganui all their lives but had never climbed Mauao. I was passionate about my subject and believed in its worth for the lives of my students. However, from when I started teaching outdoor education, and throughout my career I never questioned the origins of the subject, nor the 'what and how' I was teaching. I never considered that my course did not appeal to the very students who had inspired me to become a teacher. I was an outdoor education convert, and I also converted the students I taught.

Brookes (2002), contends; Passions for particular forms of recreation, commitment to certain programmes or forms of programme, and professional and

personal identities are at stake. It is clear from the literature that outdoor education adherents frequently link their practice with strongly held personal beliefs and values (p. 422).

However, over time, and with increased responsibility and commitments I was becoming tired and was losing my passion for outdoor education. Allen Hill (2010), a former outdoor education teacher himself states, “Teaching is a highly stressful and absorbing profession which challenges teacher’s mental, physical and emotional capacity. This often leaves little time to reflect deeply and critically about how beliefs influence and guide pedagogical practice” (p. 11). I discussed these issues with my mentor, Reece. He was the deputy principal, but had also been a head of physical education, and an outdoor education teacher so he understood the predicament I was in. When a teaching position became available in the physical education department we made the decision to employ an outdoor education teacher. This meant I could focus on my head of department responsibilities, the sports performance programme and sports science courses.

With my energy and focus prioritised in other areas I didn’t miss the responsibility of teaching outdoor education and enjoyed being able to spend my days back at school instead of being away on camp so often. I did, however, miss the relationships that form with students through time spent together in outdoor places. I was for the first time in my career, starting to feel ‘stale’. I felt I was losing my passion and enthusiasm towards for teaching. I knew something had to change so I applied for a study grant in the hope that the experience would refresh me as a teacher. I wanted to have the time and energy to look at strategies and pedagogies to improve the experience of Māori in education and look at ways to make outdoor education more appealing and accessible to Māori students. Over my eleven years of teaching outdoor education the issue of why more Māori were not opting to take outdoor education continued to ferment in the back of my mind. I felt I had positive relationships with my Māori students and I observed that the number of Māori students who opted to take outdoor education as a senior course reduced further over the time I wasn’t teaching the subject. Ironically, I focused my energy into incorporating Te Kotahitanga strategies into teaching physical education, health and sports science and received positive

feedback from teaching colleagues and Te Kotahitanga facilitators. Having the time away from teaching outdoor education I was able to step back and reflect on the subject. The questions about why outdoor education didn't appeal to more Māori that had fermented at the back of my mind over the years came to the fore and this increased my desire to seek answers.

I was fortunate to gain a Ministry of Education PPTA study grant in 2010, which allowed me to complete a Postgraduate diploma. It also provided an opportunity to step back and reflect on my practice. As stated previously I was becoming disillusioned with teaching outdoor education so I knew something had to change. After twelve years of teaching I felt free from the bells, the commitments, and the frustrations I had felt when students didn't attend, listen, or hand in assessments.

I felt an incredible amount of freedom. I felt like I was free to be 'my non-teaching self'. I had energy to run in the sunshine, go to the gym at any time of the day, watch my children play sport and put effort into my friendships and relationship. Most of all I had time to reflect on my career refresh my ideas and focus on my own learning. The experience was extremely positive for many aspects of my life. Being away from the hectic pace of the school environment gave me time and energy to reflect on my long held assumptions about outdoor education, and allowed the opportunity to critique and challenge my professional practice and beliefs.

As part of my post-graduate diploma I studied post colonial and indigenous studies, the development of Te Kotahitanga, and Dr Mike Brown's Leisure, adventure & the outdoors paper. I was involved with a TLRI project lead by Dr Mike Brown investigating the implementation of place-responsive outdoor education programmes in Mount Maunganui College and Ngaruawahia High School. I found the opportunity to work collaboratively with other passionate outdoor educators, with Mike, and his assistant immensely valuable. Mike's paper had provided me with the opportunity to deconstruct outdoor education as I knew it, and offered exciting alternatives that I felt had the potential to provide an outdoor education course that appealed to Māori students. This amplified my enthusiasm and excitement to implement changes to my Year 12 course on my return to school in 2011. I felt excited that I could make a real difference to my

students in outdoor education, particularly the Māori students who I was striving to reach.

What I learnt from my university study, my own experience, Mike's paper, and through my involvement in his TRLI not only rekindled my passion for teaching outdoor education but lead me to the research questions, which form the basis of this thesis. My learning and experiences informed the changes and the motivation to implement a PRA outdoor education course.

In order to make my Year 12 outdoor education more appealing to Māori students at my school required me to critically examine the content and pedagogies inherent in the course and in outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand. For several years I had tweaked the programme to fit with curriculum, assessment and student feedback, but the types of activities and how I taught largely remained the same. Some key experiences as an outdoor education teacher had lead me to question the 'taken for granted assumptions' inherent in outdoor education. While I was engulfed in school it was difficult to take my niggling questions any further. As Hill (2010) argues, "It is not easy, as an educator to identify, reflect on, and articulate those deeper level beliefs that can make such a profound difference to our teaching" (p.8).

My experiences resonated with the research of Zink (2003) that I read during my time on study leave, who found outdoor education programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand consist of activities such as kayaking, rock climbing, high ropes, bush craft, and safety management. In a discussion about outdoor education in New Zealand, Zink (2003) suggested "there are a number of things working to privilege pursuits based activities over other forms of outdoor education experiences" (p. 61). These influences include the high profile of adventure, the emphasis placed on personal outcomes, and the increased focus on risk and safety management (Lugg, 2004). As in my own experience as an outdoor education teacher, Nicol (2002, p. 89) concurs that, "In the absence of stated philosophical underpinnings and empirical evidence it is clear that outdoor education has developed, to some extent, as a series of practical activities." In this sense, Nicol (2002) suggests that the rationale for much outdoor education, has grown out of

accepted practice, and often lacks a clearly articulated philosophical foundation. This is a problem in so much as “philosophical debate proceeds in defence of what has always been done” and outdoor education is more likely to become just another “reinforcement of the status quo than a visionary pedagogical endeavour” (p. 90). Over my thirteen years of teaching outdoor education the niggling doubts were accumulating into serious doubts. Although I was seeing lots of positives in what I was teaching and the opportunities the course provided for my outdoor education students, I was becoming less and less convinced that I was achieving what I had previously believed I could in outdoor education. I was at the stage of my career where I was looking for something else in outdoor education or even give up teaching the subject altogether. In order to make changes I needed to examine and critique what and how I had been teaching outdoor education. Through my post-graduate study I had the opportunity to investigate the possible reasons for the poor uptake of Māori students to select outdoor education as a senior subject at my school. I had also observed the low number of Māori in other sectors of the outdoor industry, such as the small number of instructors who are Māori. I began to question the very values and beliefs associated with traditional outdoor education that I had defended vehemently for over ten years. I found myself questioning if how and what I was teaching was in fact perpetuating hegemonic, universal, and colonising notions. My assumptions that perhaps outdoor education was too expensive or that sports science courses that had a strong team sport element would just be more appealing to Māori were shaken. I would have never thought what and how I was teaching was actually disadvantaging the very people I wanted to see succeeding in my outdoor education class.

CHAPTER THREE:

‘Tungia te ururua, kia tupu whakaritorito te tipu a te harakeke
Clear the undergrowth so that the new shoots of the flax will grow.

I have chosen the whakataukī above to represent the process of critiquing and responding to the learning needs of my students in my Year 12 outdoor education class. In order to create an outdoor education course that would be appealing to my Māori students required me to question my practice and its’ relevance in this place and time.

Tramping and Daydreams

Often when I am active – like running, cycling, kayaking, or like today, walking in the bush I tend to daydream. In this instance I am daydreaming about the Kauri loggers who have been here before us. I imagine the men who felled these trees were broad and very muscular from all the hard physical work. I wonder what it would have been like for these men to live and work here in the Kaueranga Valley in the late 1800s. I wondered if they enjoyed the experience or if all they did was work, eat and sleep. During previous visits to the Pinnacles Hut, the warden shared the story of ‘Crazy Jack’. He was a logger who suffered a mental breakdown, ran away from the logging gang and set fire to the bush. I wondered if Jack was already crazy or did the hardship he endured send him over the edge?

On our way into the park I had taken my class to the Department of Conservation (DOC) visitor centre. We took the time to look at photos and read all about the felling and milling of the great kauri forests (DestinationOutdoors). We watched a multi-media display and heard colourful tales about the rigours of bush life, and the skills of the hardy characters who felled these mighty trees and created ingenious dams to drive the huge logs downstream to waiting booms, ready for barging to Auckland. The loggers used to drive the logs over the Billygoat falls where only twenty percent would reach the booms, the rest were lost or smashed

in the process (Destination Outdoors). Kauri logging in the Kauaeranga Valley lasted 60 years, during which millions of Kauris were felled.

With these images and stories fresh in my mind, and once I had seen the physical impact of the logging, my mind began to meander. There was so much space between the trees, and trees were sparsely spaced. Despite the logging having ceased over seventy years ago I could see of the impact on the surroundings, such as large pieces of tramway and large stumps of what was once majestic kauri trees lying alongside the track.

As I walked on I approached steep steps carved into the hillside, I began to think how arduous it would have been for the fully loaded packhorses trudging up the slippery steep stone steps. The muscles in my legs and lower back began to ache under the weight of my pack as I trudged up the large steps. I figured my pack's weight was insignificant in comparison to what those poor packhorses had endured.

“Miss!” says Te Kani, as I am instantly shaken from my daydream.

“Wiremu has run off ahead and I can't see him anymore”.

I was wondering how he could run – let alone walk with a pack on each of his forearms, as well as his own pack on his back. It seemed to me that Wiremu viewed this tramp as a race and he just wanted to get to the destination as quickly as possible. When a couple of the girls were struggling during the early stages of the tramp he offered to carry their packs (one on each forearm) so that they wouldn't hold up the rest of the group.

I ask the student teacher that was near the front of the group to make sure the rest of the group stayed together and I take off in pursuit of Wiremu. I am trying hard to contain the anger and frustration that is simmering beneath the surface. I had taught the class risk management prior to this camp and we had identified the risks of getting lost and/or injured. We discussed the safety strategy of staying together as a group to minimise these risks. I had also reinforced how important this was before we embarked on this tramp today. I am flabbergasted - after all that why would he take off and leave the group? I finally catch up to Wiremu and call to him to stop and wait for the others. I take a few deep breaths in order to

recover from the exertion of walking at speed with a pack on, and more importantly to calm myself down before I talk to Wiremu about his irresponsible actions,

“Do you remember what you learnt in class and how important it is we stay as a group? What if you had got lost? What if our group separated and then somebody breaks an ankle? Half of the group wouldn’t even know”.

“Well Miss I am not going to break my ankle and I can’t see why I can’t run. You should understand I always see you out running”

“Wiremu I am confused. When we were training for a multisport race you refused to run. And this tramp isn’t about racing it is about our class demonstrating safety management and bush craft skills and exploring this beautiful place. Once we get to the hut and settle in I am keen to take this heavy pack off and go for a run – if you are keen to run you can join me if you like”.

We continue to argue while we wait for the others and I feel the last of my patience draining away. I try to change the subject,

“You should be enjoying your surroundings on this tramp not trying to race. Let’s take a look at this map...there is a volcanic pillar up ahead called Tawera Nikau, it looks to be a couple of hundred metres ahead, we should wait there for the others”.

Wiremu walks in silence and once he sees the pillar he peels off all the packs one by one off each forearms, his front, and finally the pack from his back, and sits with his back against a tree and sulks. I wait for the rest of the group to catch up and give them a chance to eat and drink before I tell them about the volcanic cone, Tawera Nikau, and how it was formed.

“Miss, why is it called Tawera Nikau?” *asks Danielle.*

“I don’t honestly know. I know there is a league player from Huntly with that name but I don’t know if there is any connection. I will try and find out”.

“Miss, did Māori live in this bush back in the day?” *asks Te Kani*

“I would say so but they didn’t have any information at the visitor centre or in any of the information I have about this area. I will definitely try and find out for you and if you are interested it would be worth you trying to find out for yourself”.

I was really curious to find out myself - I knew there must have been Māori who had lived here but there was no physical evidence, and from the pamphlets and

information I had seen you would have thought this Valley had been empty of people prior to the Kauri logging.

As we walk on towards the hut I started daydreaming again, about what life would have been like for pre-colonial Māori. It appeared many students were daydreaming about the same thing and we began to talk about our mind meanderings. We wondered about who had lived in this place before, and what their life would have been like in this rough countryside. We wondered where the pre-European Māori who had lived here had gone? One student wondered how they could survive without sheep to eat, or to make woolly jumpers and blankets to keep them warm. Another wondered how they lived off the food sources in the bush and streams.

Recollections and Reflections from the Way Things Were

The story above is from my recollections of my experience on a Year 12 camp at Kaueranga Valley in the Coromandel. I had only been teaching at Mount Maunganui College for two years and this experience marked the beginnings of some niggling doubts about what, and how, I was teaching in outdoor education and whether I was providing a course that appealed to Māori students. I recognised the importance of forming positive relationships with all my students, from my own experience and this was also reinforced through the Te Kotahitanga programme. I also recognised the importance of ensuring my students could bring who they are as Māori into our learning environment. I was puzzled as to why my interactions on camp and other shared outdoor experiences were not always positive.

Despite having strong value statements purporting to support Māori students at both Mount Maunganui College and in our current education system as a whole, I hadn't questioned the universal approach that I was implementing in outdoor education. I had not properly considered the history, culture and significance of places where activities took place. I concentrated my efforts on the provision of activities and the location in which the outdoor activities occurs became largely irrelevant (Brown, 2008b).

When I was in the bush, on mountains, kayaking at lakes and rivers, I would often have conversations with students when they asked about the Māori people who had lived in these areas previously, I was curious as well. Who were the Māori who lived here? How did they survive? What was their life like? Where did they go? I would often follow up on this inquiry and always found a wealth of information, on signs and in pamphlets, about the colonial history of outdoor places, but specific hapu and iwi histories and stories were difficult or sometimes impossible to find. Since that early experience in the Kaueranga Valley I have often reflected on the year 12 outdoor education course at Mount Maunganui College, and what I have observed in the outdoor industry, and have felt the Māori history and significance of place or ‘whenua’ (land, placenta) has been largely overlooked. How I was teaching outdoor education meant that I wasn’t acknowledging the history and relevance of the outdoor places for my students. For some of my students the content I was teaching was not relevant or meaningful to them personally, culturally or historically. I wondered if this was why researcher Pip Lynch (1999) found that Māori are statistically under-represented in outdoor education classes and within the industry as a whole.

This is in stark contrast to when I started teaching outdoor education in 1999. Back then I never questioned the origins of the subject, or the wider implications of the context and content of what I was teaching. During the early part of my career I was preoccupied with the excitement and elation to be given the opportunity to teach outdoor education. Every school seemed to be doing very similar things and for me it was about sourcing information and resources and planning exciting camps that made one course better than another. As Robyn Zink (2003) contends, “outdoor education is complex and there are many competing demands and pressures on teachers to develop and provide programmes for their students” (p.5).

Although I had a personal connection to places I took my classes to, I couldn’t see the potential of including these connections in how or what I taught. Of course there were times when students did connect to places but this wasn’t due to anything I planned. Like other outdoor education programmes I had seen, my

course was generally not responsive to the unique cultural, historical, social, and geographical aspects of places where we visited and recreated as part of the teaching and learning process (Brown, 2008b). The differences I saw between courses were due to the cost of activities not the location. Students at my school generally could not afford residential camps or scuba diving so I provided activities that were more affordable. In order for me to develop as an outdoor educator and provide a place responsive course I need to critique my practice. Alison Lugg (2004) argues that if outdoor education to develop as a relevant educational pursuit we must be prepared to examine our own practices in relation to social and environmental issues in this place and culture. Along a similar vein, Hill (2008a) asserts,

this examination should include how programmes and activities are engaging with the local environment and, in turn encouraging students to make connections and develop relationship with those places and their local communities). How activities and programmes resist or reinforce dominant cultural assumptions and beliefs such as anthropocentrism, individualism and linear progress should also be examined. Lastly, and most importantly, an examination of how activities and programmes embrace positive cultural traditions and traditional forms of knowledge, particularly Māori perspectives (p.51).

Tripping on Colonial Roots

While I was on study leave in 2010 I investigated the origins of outdoor education. I had not considered that in Aotearoa New Zealand outdoor education programmes have obvious connections and links, both historically and in the present to outdoor education in Great Britain (Andkjaer, 2010). In school and tertiary institutions, outdoor education has historically been seen as a branch of physical education thus contributing to the development of outdoor education practice as outdoor recreation and adventure activities and to the predominance of physical education teachers teaching outdoor education in schools (Lugg & Martin, 2001). Initially, when the subject of physical education was introduced in Aotearoa New Zealand it was military based (Hokowhitu, 2003). From 1877 onwards, the military focus can be attributed to the need for physical training and

fitness in readiness for possible military action to protect the British Empire (Stothart, 1974; McGeorge, 1992). By 1912 this emphasis in the primary school had faded, however military training remained universal in secondary schools until the 1960s. Thus, Culpan (2004) argues “the historical development of physical education in New Zealand was inextricably linked to the colonisation process, the political agendas and alliances and the need to have a disciplined and effective workforce and army” (p.226).

Outdoor education also originated from England from the same military roots. Cook (1999) describes how the development of outdoor education within the post World War I school system in the UK was also influenced by the desire to toughen up young men for war. Whether by parallel evolution or dissemination, this military influence spread throughout the United Kingdom’s Outdoor education and development training practice, appeared in Australia and New Zealand and crossed the Atlantic to influence organisations like Project Adventure and the books of Rohnke (cited in Loynes, 2002).

Today, the purpose of outdoor education courses are variously adventure, science and service minded, still reflecting what some would argue to be the better values of British imperialist history (Loynes, 2002). Outdoor education programmes, mainly adopted in public schools, emphasised development of physical endurance, strength, courage and leadership qualities to prepare socially elite young men for “political leadership, war and the rigors of life in the colonies” (Cook, 1999, p.44).

The physical education curriculum ironically ignored the ingenious and tactical successes of Māori in battles with British troops. Even Native Schools accorded Māori military and weaponry drills no recognition. This demonstrated the extent that physical educationalists at the time dismissed anything Māori (Hokowhitu, 2003).

This dominant British model of outdoor education was developed from Outward Bound, the Boy Scout movement, military training and the Duke of Edinburgh scheme (Brookes, 2002). A common goal for all these British models was to build

character. The use of outdoor adventure activities for ‘character’ building through adversity was promoted by Baden Powell (founder of the scouting movement) as a way of combating juvenile delinquency and criminal tendencies in boys (Lugg, 2004). The origins of the term *character building* go back at least to Edwardian England, when Baden Powell envisaged scouting as a “character factory” (Rosenthal, 1986). It is arguable that the roots of character building were never intellectual; rather, the term helped build support for the scouting movement, especially among the middle class, and resonated with contemporary hopes, beliefs and fears (MacDonald, 1993).

Race, cultural domination and outdoor education

Humberstone and Pederson (2000), writing from British and Norwegian perspectives respectively, also raise the issue of race and cultural domination. How relevant is outdoor education practice to cultures other than Western, and particularly Anglo-Saxon society? These issues include the neo-colonist, anthropocentric view of nature and the outdoors, and the emphasis placed on action, risk and challenge with personal development as the central pedagogical goal (Andkjaer, 2009; Hill, 2008).

The uniqueness of biculturalism is not reflected in the dominant structures and practices of outdoor education that have been established in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Irwin, 2010). This is despite the obligations under the *Tiriti o Waitangi* (Treaty of Waitangi), our nation’s founding document in to ensure partnership and participation with the Māori people and their culture. In outdoor education, Eurocentric values have tended to dominate, and Māori ways of knowing have been devalued (Cosgriff et al, 2012). For example, white water kayaking has been offered throughout many outdoor education programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand, but the activity is predominantly framed to emphasise skills and safety. The rich Māori history of paddling which includes the use of waka for exploration, transportation and fishing has largely been ignored (Townsend, 2011).

Therefore, it is imperative that as an outdoor educator that I am aware of cultural assumptions that underpin particular activities and change them to suit the needs of the students rather than trying to homogenise people to fit the activity. In her PhD research Lynch observed that Māori perspectives were absent from the records she had access to. This suggests an omission or silencing of Māori students' experiences in outdoor education (Lynch, 1999). Bailey (1999) points out that adventure activities developed for societies that hold individualism as a central culture tenet may not be appropriate to indigenous cultures who place greater emphasis on community and interdependence.

In particular, in outdoor education practice, an independent view is characterised by individualism, autonomy and a faith in the inherent separateness of distinct persons. This independent view of self is commonly associated with people from individualistic societies (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Moreover, as Humberstone (2000) argues, outdoor adventure education activities often perpetuate hegemonic views of culture and masculinity associated with rugged individualism, competitiveness and physical strength. This exclusion may not be overt but expressed in the subtleties of language, framing of the activity, allocation of roles and so on (Lugg, 2004).

This focus on self-reliance and individualism is contrary to the interdependent view of self that is inherent in many indigenous cultures, including Māori culture. This view sees the self only in relation to others and an understanding of a fundamental connectness of humans to each other. The ability to work cooperatively with others and to achieve positive interpersonal relationships are highly valued (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Durie (1994) has also noted this aspect of Māori culture and suggested that the Western ideal of independence and 'standing on your own two feet' is seen as maladaptive by Māori while interdependence, connectedness and whanau commitment and loyalty is actively encouraged. Within Māoridom, great emphasis and value is placed on working co-operatively with others (Cathcart & Pou, 1992), achievement is whanau-based (Milne, 1993) and aspects of spirituality and inter-personal relationships are highly prized (Niwa, 1998).

De-contextualised outdoor education

Outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand Secondary schools have been developed from the historical colonial roots and remains predominantly universal in approach, (Brook, 2002; Brown, 2008a), meaning courses tend to be designed to be applicable to all purposes, conditions or situations. Culture, the history and significance of place are largely ignored and outcomes tend to be predetermined.

As Brook (2002) contends,

“From the outset an uncritical preference for universalist accounts of outdoor education was apparent in outdoor-education discourse. Universalist tendencies required only a willingness to follow the path of least resistance. Context-free accounts of outdoor education promised immediate applicability, and drew on conceptual frameworks readily to hand” (p.417)

Brown (2008b) criticises a universal approach in outdoor education that is de-contextualised and does not take into account the histories, the culture or significance of place. De-contextualised outdoor education programmes are predominantly activity focused and activities are conducted irrespective of the seasonal, geographical, or environmental variations or implications. This includes programmes that are based in a locale that has no meaning for the participants historically or culturally. These adventure activities take place in a new or novel place, and for the purposes of the programme it is largely irrelevant where the activity occurs.

Mechanistic View of Learning

A universal approach seen in Outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand and programmes overseas also reflect Skinner’s (1953) ‘operant conditioning’ or ‘computational’ approach to teaching through activities such as Adventure Based Learning and High Ropes courses. ‘Operant conditioning’, is from behavioural

psychology and assumes a passive view rather than active view of students as learners. The approach originated from the work with laboratory animals (Skinner, 1953), and works on the principle that behaviour is learned, and responses are strengthened or weakened by the consequences of these behaviours (Wearmouth, Berryman & Bishop, 2010). In addition, whenever individuals behave in ways that are seen as more appropriate, they are rewarded in a way that clearly recognises the greater acceptability of the new preferred behaviour within contexts and settings where that behaviour is clearly acceptable (Merrett, 1985).

This likened how the human mind works to that of a computational device (Bruner, 1999), and was the theory behind transmission modes of teaching where the learner is seen as an 'empty vessel' to be filled with a set of prescriptive knowledge for regurgitation (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh & Teddy, 2007).

This 'computational' approach is also seen in outdoor education and can be characterised in a number of ways. One way it can be recognised is by the language used to describe it. Typical words include programming, processing, framing, funneling, front loading, sequencing, cycles, outcomes, and task (Loynes, 2002). Loading and processing are lifted straight from the world of production lines; programming, loading and sequencing from the world of computers. Both describe rational, mechanistic, technological, deterministic and linear approaches to a task. The raw materials or data are loaded at one end; they are then assembled and manipulated in a pre-determined sequence to deliver a uniform outcome of a predictable standard as effectively as possible. Applying the metaphor to a learning experience provides a rational proposal with measurable outcomes predetermined during the negotiations between the outside provider and the teacher (Loynes, 2002)

The production line approach tempts the provider and/or teacher to consider participants as objects, resources or labour, manufactured to fulfil their potential as a cog in a machine rather than as a human being. Likewise it tempts the facilitator to focus on certain learning objectives to the exclusion of others. The result, pushed to an extreme, is a participant who is oppressed rather than empowered by their managed experience (Loynes, 2002). By example, the activities of ABL and High Ropes both have pre-determined outcomes which are

measured, and treat the experience as a product which is packaged for marketing (Loynes, 2002). This “off the shelf” approach has been described by Loynes (1998) as “adventure in a bun” (p.1). Loynes likens the approach to the MacDonaldis restaurant chain, and argues the commodified approach to providing adventure experiences then reflecting on them as: “counter to the organic and emergent nature of experiential learning as it takes account of environments, individuals, groups, cultures and the experiences that arise from their interaction” (Loynes, 1998, p.1). Outdoor instructors and many other outdoor educators are effective at establishing communities of practice and employing “novel” tasks which shape particular behaviours which are generally deemed to be desirable (Brown, 2009). However, Brown (2009) warns we must be mindful neither to confuse conformity with learning, nor to reify the communities of practice within outdoor education programmes as more authentic than other communities of practice.

An example of a commodified and decontextualized activity is once again, the High Ropes courses. These are built on a flat ground without any consideration of the individual location, what is available in that location, the history or the stories. The use of contrived activities utilizing metaphors to achieve personal and interpersonal development goals are also universally used (Rose & Paisley, 2012). Below is my recollection of observing my class on a high ropes course.

Feeling Low on the High Ropes

“JUST PUSH ME” screamed Ariana as she stands on the ledge of the Giant Swing. The instructor hesitates then appears to make the decision to accede to her request and pushes her off the edge. Ariana’s screams puncture the air and I am uncertain if the scream is one of terror or of happiness.

I am watching from below and feel like I have been nothing but an observer of my students’ experience all day. I have been busy with my clipboard assessing them and reinforcing safety instructions and encouraging students to challenge themselves. I have been on several high ropes courses myself, most recently when I was here on a visit prior to the camp. I could relate to how the students were

feeling and experiencing. I, like them, got a bit of an 'adrenalin buzz' when I completed a challenge up high that went against all my survival instincts but other than that I always felt reluctant. The students get two sets of credits for completing the course – one unit standard for personal and social development on high ropes and one achievement standard for physical performance. The performance grades were based on the amount and level of challenge they were successful at.

The metaphors that the instructors included in the course seemed to be met enthusiastically by the students,

“If you can trust someone to belay you, encourage you, and keep you safe here then you can have that same trust in others throughout your life. In turn you can be the person that encourage others and that people trust throughout your life”.

I wondered if the students thought of these metaphors when they gave each other 'wedgies' by dropping them suddenly then locking out while belaying or when they called each other “chicken shits”.

“If you can overcome your fear on a High Ropes Course then you can overcome any challenge or hardship in your life”, said another 'cool' instructor who was well meaning but had no idea of the background of these students or what some of these young people had been through.

The instructor helps Ariana out of the swing. She is laughing almost hysterically then her laugh turns into hysterical crying. Her best friend hugs her as tears and snot run down her face and the sound of her crying pierces the air. Other students ignore what is happening right beside them and nobody seems to know what to do. I walk over and rub her back and ask her if she is okay - even though it is blatantly obvious that she isn't. The instructor appears a little spooked and walks away to coil a rope. I was left wondering about the efficacy of the personal and social development goals, which were the focus for this camp.

The high ropes course fulfills the perceived need for a guaranteed adrenaline buzz guaranteed with safety delivered quickly anywhere. The reviewing (or processing) techniques are often seen as a solution to establishing conscious and rational

learning outcomes from the experiences. These are then readily available for collection by the evaluation tools after the programme (Loynes, 2002).

The evaluations I received back from the students were extremely positive and their assessment results were very good. However, I found myself asking what the students actually learnt from the experience and whether for some the high ropes had actually done more harm than good.

Views of Whenua

When undertaking activities in outdoor environments, I always made students aware of the immediate impact of their pursuit on that specific environment through the use of environmental care codes and the practice of low-impact techniques. However, the lens through which nature was viewed was seldom questioned (Stewart, 2004). An anthropocentric worldview of nature dominates outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Verhagen (2008), describes the anthropocentric worldview as consisting of a more or less consistent set of explicit and implicit concepts, assumptions, biases and ideologies that place the human being at the centre of the Earth and even the Universe. This worldview is often associated with a utilitarian attitude towards Nature. That is, “it considers Nature to be an instrument for human ends without taking into reasonable account the needs and rights of other life forms and Earth systems themselves” (Verhagen, 2008, p. 1). In this view, nature is understood as an assault course, a gymnasium or puzzle to be resolved and controlled. It is a resource to be commodified instead of a home to for one to relate to (Loynes, 2002). This perception of nature, Gough (cited in Lugg, 2004) asserts, contributes to “shallow environmentalism” (p.7) and a perpetuation of an anthropocentric mindset, which he sees as the root of modern environmental problems. Brookes (2002) argues,

This mindset is part of the outdoor education discourse has been dominated by neo-colonist interpretations of the outdoors. Particular locations are seen either as empty sites on which to establish social or psychological projects or merely as examples of abstract realities such as the environment. Experiences are predominantly conceived as episodes from which insights may be quarried, or tools with which to inscribe the self, rather than as constituting relationships in which understandings are inherent (p.406).

Wattchow (2008) contends that “the desire for outdoor places to serve as adventurous stages, upon which the drama of outdoor education participants’ personal and social development is played out, can be viewed as a denial of the very place within which it occurs” (p.13). Loynes (1998) likens much outdoor education practice to an “express train” where groups are racing through the countryside without thought of the landscape through which they pass. Instead he offers a model whereby the experience is slowed down and individuals encouraged to seek a “spiritual” connection with the land (p.17). Outdoor educators’ predilection for the encounter of a universal wild nature (Brookes, 2003b) may be seen as a denial of local ecology and history. In contrast, many Māori have a biocentric view of nature. The biocentric world view is a more or less consistent set of beliefs, assumptions, biases or ideologies that place the biosphere at the centre of a person’s way of life, thought and feeling. It represents a partnership model between humans and nature, one of its main tenets being the belief that the human is a member of life rather than its master or even its steward. There are, obviously, various gradations of biocentric worldviews (Verhagen, 2008).

Coming Home

We are on our way home after three days tramping in the Kaueranga Valley. Overall I felt that most of the class had engaged in the learning opportunity by applying their outdoor skills during the camp. On the whole they appeared to enjoy the experience – we had lots of hard case students in the group who kept us entertained with their jokes and crazy antics. The tramp was challenging for many in the class but they all appreciated the views from the Pinnacles, the rivers and the waterfalls. The camp was not without incident - I had growled one student for leaving the group and running ahead, and another one for dropping rubbish in the bush. There was also one boy who insisted he didn’t need a pack liner, then panicked when it begun to rain so decided to unpack and repack his gear inside his pack liner while the rain soaked his sleeping bag and spare clothing. Thankfully the hard cases made the tramping fun, and one student in particular, Te Kani, had the biggest loudest personality in the group. On the drive home he insisted on sitting in the front of the van, and right up to when he fell asleep,

talked and joked at a hundred miles an hour, took control of the radio, and subsequently the music our group would listen to during the journey. Te Kani sung loud and proud along to his favourite songs. Then, as if somebody had flicked a switch, Te Kani was asleep - out like a light - and the van is suddenly quiet. As I steer the mini-van into Takitumi Drive, he leans in my direction until his head is on my shoulder and begins to slump forward. The three students who managed to stay awake during our drive home are cracking up laughing at him. I take one hand off the wheel and gently move his head off my shoulder and towards the passenger door, which wakes him up. At that moment, our mountain, Mauao, comes into view. Our Maunga stands surrounded by the sparkling blue waters of Tauranga Moana and appears to be beckoning us home. The students who had been laughing loudly a minute ago fall silent as we are all struck with the absolute beauty of this place where we live. I feel flutters in my chest, and my excitement begins to build, the kind of excitement you only feel when you are coming home. Te Kani is now fully awake and quietly takes in the familiar sights of home. "Miss, Kauearanga Valley was all good but I am so happy to be home. There is no place like the Mount".

Relationships with Whenua

Māori identity emanates from the land. According to this view, self-awareness, spirituality, and mana (prestige and self respect) originate from the land. Walker (1990) explains how Māori identity and spirituality derive from Māori iwi history and affiliation. Pre-colonial iwi lived in fairly well demarcated geographical boundaries and therefore tribal landmarks such as mountains and rivers became central to Māori self-conception and social identity. These self-conceptions combined with traditional Māori understandings of human existence (which do not separate the spiritual and secular worlds) to create the cultural belief that the self is intrinsically linked to the natural world in mind, body and spirit (Barlow, 1991; Walker, 1990a). For many Māori the importance of whenua extends to all cultural practices. Because Māori believe that Papatuanuku (Earth mother) is living and whenua has mauri (life force) it is essential that whenua is cared for by its guardians and not reduced to a mere commodity that is bought, sold or traded (Walker, 1990a). Regarding then the universal ethic of respect for others, Māori

would perceive that respect must also be extended to the land. Reedy (cited in Culpan, Bruce & Galvan, 2007) argues,

Relationships are everything. Relationships are the essence of everything. Relationships with those who were there at your birth. They look after you, they nurture you. They tell the stories [pass on history and knowledge]. The relationships transcend people to include the fish, the forest, and the seas relationships with the environment. The Māori people know every part of every inch of the land, lakes and the seas. That is the environment they grew up with (p.10).

This connection with whenua is not the case for all Māori. After nearly two hundred years of assimilation Māori are suffering the loss of cultural identity through the loss of language, religion, and the alienation of tribal lands (Walker, 1990; Smith, 1990). This has had profound implications for Māori in terms of identity and in education.

It may be difficult to challenge individualistic, hegemonic practices in outdoor education but I believe implementation of a place-responsive approach, acknowledging a Māori world view, and emphasising learning about the cultural history of place will be valuable to not only Māori students, but all students at Mount Maunganui College. As Penetito (2009) argues, Māori already have a well-rehearsed traditional and historical affinity to place-based practices. A place-responsive approach that includes Māori cultural history of 'place' has the potential to make outdoor education more appealing to Māori students.

CHAPTER FOUR:

‘Kua takoto te manuka’

The leaves of the manuka tree have been laid down

This whakataukī refers to a form of *wero* (challenge), which is preformed in very formal situations such as a Pōwhiri on a Marae. The laying down of the manuka leaves represents laying down a challenge, and how a person picks up the leaves represents whether or not they are answering the challenge (Woodward, 2014). This whakataukī is used in the context of my learning journey to represent the challenge ahead implementing a place responsive outdoor education course and striving to create a course that appeals to more Māori students at Mount Maunganui College.

2007

The bell has just rung for the start of the 2007 school year. I leave the staffroom where we have just had a meeting and head from the staff room, and walk across the school to the classroom where I will be meeting my Year 12 outdoor education class for the first time. They are all waiting outside the classroom and as I walk past them to unlock the door the air feels thick with a mix of both excitement and anticipation. I wish them all a good morning, unlock the door and let them in. A couple of them are noisy and showing off while most of them appear quite nervous and subdued.

“Welcome to outdoor education! I am Ms Townsend (as I write my name with a marker on the whiteboard) and I will be your teacher this year. For this lesson I am going to go over what we will be doing in this course, the course expectations, and I will also get you to complete a small task at the end of the lesson. I want to know the reasons you chose outdoor education as a subject”

“Ms Townsend”, asks Tomas, “will we get to mountain bike this year?”

“Yes”

“What about kayaking?” asks Erana

“Yes, how about I hand out the course outline and then you will all know exactly what we will be doing”

I walk around the room distributing the course outline to all the students in the class.

“As you can see in your outline you get to learn how to manage risks in a challenging outdoor activity. For this year the activity will be kayaking. We will be taking you over to the Kaituna River where I have hired instructors to help keep you safe. You get to paddle down rapids and even a small waterfall. You will learn most of your skills in our kayaks in the school pool.”

“What if someone drowns Miss?”

“You won’t drown because you are going to learn the skills to keep you and your classmates safe. Also the instructors will be in charge of your safety.....we are going to start the year with Adventure Based Learning, this is a sequences of challenges and problem solving activities for you to get to know each other and give you the opportunity to develop your communication and leadership skills. You will also have a day at a high ropes course and you will do a unit standard that assesses your personal and social development”.

“Miiissss, where is the high ropes?” *says Tama*

“Whakatane, you may have seen it – it is close to the airport on your way into town.

“Do we get to surf at Ohope beach?” asks Aiden

“Do we get to go on the Toi’s track where we ran with the running group last year”, *asks Steven.*

“No like I said we are only going for the high ropes course – just for the day and we won’t have time for anything else”.

“What about rock climbing miss?” says Whitney.

“Yes we will be rock climbing at the indoor wall down the road but you also get to rock climb on Mauao. It is pretty neat because you are up on the rock and if you take a look all you see is ocean and islands. I will show you some pictures. For those of you who have done my multi-sport course you also get to compete in a multisport event. You race in a pair – the first person does a kayak, bike, run then tags the second person who then does the same. Fastest boy, fastest girl and fastest pair win a prize and we will have a BBQ in front of the beach after”.

“Yeeeeeeuuuss” says Steven, “Coooooooooooooool” says Andrew (who have both won National Multisport titles).

“Aren’t we going into the bush miss?” asks Wiremu.

“Yes we are going to do a two day tramp and camp in the Kaueranga Valley, you are going to learn bushcraft and outdoor survival skills”.

“Ooooh awesome Miss T I need that shit for the army” says Daniel.

“Alright now I’m going to get you to write a page explaining why you chose outdoor education as a subject this year and what you hope to get out of it. Be specific with your reasons and your goals and make sure you name your work”.

2011

The bell has just rung and I walk across the school to the classroom where I will be meeting my Year 12 outdoor education class for the year. They are all waiting outside the classroom and as I walk past them to unlock the door the air feels thick with a mix of excitement and anticipation. I wish them all a good morning, unlock the door and let them in. Two of the boys are noisy and showing off while the rest of the class are quiet and subdued.

“Welcome to the 2011 outdoor education class! For those of you I haven’t taught before my name is Ms Townsend. You are a very special class because we will be doing things differently in this course for the first time this year. You will be learning outdoor education through a place responsive approach. We will also be involved in research on the place responsive approach led by my lecturer and one of my thesis supervisors, Mike Brown. Do any of you have links to Ngāi Tahu?”

I hear a few murmurs.....”Where is Ngāi Tahu Miss?” asks Cameron.

“Down South aye Miss”, says Ruth.

“Yes Ruth. Well Mike Brown was an outdoor instructor with Aoraki Bound, which was part of an Outward Bound programme for Ngāi Tahu. They went on a journey over all their Iwi’s significant places, visit sites of historical and cultural significance, and learn traditional food gathering practices and stories from Iwi elders”.

“Wow! That sounds cool Miss”, says Keanu who had sat quietly until now.

“So what is that place responsive thing Miss?” asks *Jared*

“It is an approach where we build a relationship with our local places. We will learn about the history, the stories and legends, as well as the ecology and geography of the places we visit. We do not just use places then leave – we learn about them and develop a relationship with our significant places. Staying local means we can develop an ongoing relationship with our significant places instead of spending hours on a bus travelling to far off places that we are likely to never revisit. Whereas we used to do a high ropes course – and it didn’t matter where we were – some are even indoors, you could be anywhere and it would be exactly the same. With a place responsive approach the places we visit are the focus – the relationship between people and place. You will have the opportunity to revisit our significant places and hopefully share your knowledge with your friends and family. We will be guided by your curiosity and follow the inquiry model from the curriculum. Questions like ‘what has happened here?’, ‘what is possible here?’ can guide your inquiry”

“What do we do first miss?” asks *Jared*.

“We will be kayaking and surfing this term. I have purchased some soft-top surfboards for you to use, and we can just run down to Omanu beach, especially when we have class either side of lunchtime. Some of you probably already spend a lot of time down there as many of you are surfers, surf lifesavers or both, others of you may hang out on the beach and swim, but how many of you know how Omanu got its name or what has happened there in the past? What about the geographical features of the beach?”

“I know it has a sandbar with a wicked break sometimes”, says *Daniel*.

“We are going on a kayak journey on Lake Tarawera. Whereas in the past you would have done white water paddling, and you would have had an instructor you didn’t know and who you were unlikely to see again rescue you if you capsized going down a rapid. Well now I aim to teach you all the skills necessary for you to organize your own safe and enjoyable journey for your family and/or your friends. It will be about the journey – not the destination. You will research an area of interest to learn about and share about the lake. It could be the pink and white terraces, the Tarawera eruption, the ghost waka sighting, history, stories or legends. You may want to know about the people who lived there for generations

prior to colonization or find out where they or their descendants have gone. We are also going to cook a thermal hangi for our dinner”.

“Miss, I know how to cook a thermal hangi” *says Jared,*

“Great because I have no idea really and have never cooked one before so was hoping for some expertise”.

“Miss, I can cook using a normal hangi but I think it might be different. I will ask my Koro cause he is Te Arawa and still lives in Rotorua”, *adds Tipene.*

“Yes Tipene please talk to your Koro”

“Miss, can I take my fishing rod, can we bring our fishing rods”, *as Jared indicates himself and his two friends.*

“Yes, it would be great to eat some fresh fish – especially to put in the thermal hangi. I will sus out how to get the fishing permits”.

“We better take some back up food Miss because Cameron is a shite fisherman”, *teases Jordy.*

“ I have heard Cameron is pretty handy with a fishing rod but yes we will take extra food as a back up just in case you scare the fish away Jordy”.

“Aaaaaayyeee” *retorts Jordy.*

“We are also going to have two Hīkoi or journeys this year. One will be a locally based Hīkoi where we will start and finish at school. You will learn in and all about our significant places on foot, bike and on kayak. Whereas in the past outdoor eders would have competed in a multisport event, this year it isn’t a race – we will stick together as a class and you will be presenting research on a significant place we visit on our Hīkoi at the actual significant place”.

“Awww miss, I wanted to do that multisport race – why can’t we race????” *asks Lewis, who is a top national mountain bike rider.*

“You get to race all the time Lewis, this is your chance to do something different. When you’re not racing you can take in your surroundings and learn about all the special places in our area with your classmates”.

“Oh my goodness Miss T, that sounds so fricken cool”, *exclaims Ruth.*

“I am excited too, this is an awesome opportunity for all of us. I hope we can all look back on this year and feel like it made a positive difference to our lives. I hope you will learn the skills to go to these places in the future with family and friends no matter what career path you take in your lives”.

“I can’t wait”, says Jared.

“Our second Hīkoi will be a tramp over the Kaimais. You guys will decide on the route you will take. You will learn about the area and decide on the places you want to see and learn more about. For instance, did you know some of the tracks through the Kaimais were originally trading routes between Tauranga Moana Iwi and Tainui? I will guide you but ultimately it will be your journey”.

“You will come along though aye Miss – or will we be in the bush by ourselves and have to find our way back through the bush?” asks *Tipene*.

“Oooosh!” says *Jared*.

“No, there won’t be any solo experience because I want you to learn and experience the journey together. I will be coming along but I will leave the decisions up to you unless I get super worried you are lost or getting separated”.

“How do we get credits Miss? Just from going on camp?” asks *Nils*.

“No way! You get assessed on your level of social responsibility for the first and on your planning and evaluation of the second”.

“Do we get to rock climb this year?” asks *Gina*.

“You sure do! We will do a lot of it at Moturiki, which you might know as Leisure Island, your parents might know it as Marine Land. You will learn all about the island and what it has been used for in the past, now and into the future. There are rock climbing routes set up but you can also just boulder and if you fall off you will fall into the water”.

“What if a shark eats us miss”, says *Brodie*, while others in the class laugh.

“Brodie, you are more likely to choke and die from eating a shark than be eaten by a shark”.

“Can we going paint balling miss?” asks *Cameron*.

“What about zorbing?” says *Tim*.

“Nah you guys can do that stuff in your own time. They are one off fun activities and don’t reflect the approach this course will be taking. This is a new course, it is your course, and I want you to have ownership of it. I have planned a place responsive course – but only as the rough outline, we will be co-constructing this course together and we will adapt it as we go. To make a start please write me a paragraph explaining the reasons why you chose outdoor education as a subject and what you hope to get out of the course”.

While the students complete the task I walk around the room talking to different students about their expectations and goals for the year. When I get to Brodie he says “I already know my goal Miss, can I share it?”

“Do you want to share your goal with the class?”

“Yes, yes I do” Brodie pauses, takes a deep breath, and then announces to the class,

“I really hope to meet a walrus named Beatrice”.

The whole class is cracking up laughing, and two of them have tears flowing down their cheeks.

“Although that is very funny Brodie (although I am unsure why exactly), you might want to have a think about changing your goal”

The sound of the bell pierces the air to mark the end of the period. I stand at the door and say, ‘see ya’ to my new outdoor education class as they leave the classroom. As I walk to my next class I have a huge smile on my face and a spring in my step. I feel excited and exhilarated about the learning journey my class and I are about to embark on. I just know we are going to be part of something really special.

A Place Responsive Course

I have often reflected on the year 12 outdoor education course at Mount Maunganui College and the outdoor industry as a whole and have felt the Māori history and significance of place or ‘whenua’ (land and placenta) has been largely overlooked (Townsend, 2011). The uniqueness of biculturalism is not reflected in the dominant structures and practices of outdoor education that have been established in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Irwin, 2010).

A place responsive approach represents a possible solution to shortcomings in current outdoor education pedagogies that have not generally been responsive to the social, historical, cultural and geographical affordances and constraints in which New Zealand outdoor education teachers and their students teach and learn (Brown, 2009). This requires a significant pedagogical shift from skill and risk focused outdoor education to programmes that focus on the significance and

relationship with 'place(s)'. One aim of a PRA approach is to build a lasting relationship of care between students and local places of significance. The learning that may occur can be historical, cultural, environmental, as well as including appropriate outdoor activities that resonant with both students and place(s). An example of such an approach has been explored in a recent publication advocating an alternative vision for outdoor education practice (Wattchow & Brown, 2011) with the emphasis upon responding to, and empathising with, the outdoors as particular places, rich in local meaning and significance. Brookes (2002) argues that outdoor education curriculum should be developed as a response to specific social, cultural, and environmental contexts. He asserts that outdoor education should pay particular attention to environmental and social issues. He advocates a concept of outdoor education based on developing knowledge of local regions through ongoing personal experience with particular places. This point was also emphasised by Brown (2009) when he stated that, "Learning cannot be separated from, and treated independently of, the social, political, historical and cultural context in which it occurs" (p.8).

As has been argued (Brown, 2008b; Relph, 1976), places are not simply locations, but sites of lived experience and meaning in which ongoing activities can be framed. As such they "are important sources of individual and communal identity, and are often centres of human existence to which people have deep emotional and psychological ties" (Relph, 1976. p.141). In an article specifically focusing on outdoor education, place, and identity, Brown (2008b) provided an example of how paying attention to the significance of place(s) in an outdoor education programme assisted participants in both forming, and making sense of, personal and community identity. Brown's article had a profound effect on me. I was inspired by his experiences and could see the possibilities for elements of the programme to be applied in outdoor education at MMC. I was inspired by the potential of outdoor education to make a positive difference not only to their academic work but also in other areas of participant's lives. The Aoraki Bound programme provided opportunities for people affiliated to Ngāi Tahu to connect with their significant places, people and culture, and to have the knowledge of their whakapapa to truly identify as Ngāi Tahu. I had an overwhelming desire for my outdoor education students to have the same opportunity. I felt I had found the

solution to the niggling doubts that had built up over the years about the focus and philosophy of outdoor education. I had an overwhelming sense that I may be doing my Māori students a disservice. Essentially my outdoor education course was leaving my Māori students 'out of place'. As Brian Dickson (Cavill, Ngatai, Dickson, & Ngatai, 2010) contends, every iwi has its' maunga, its river, its' mana, its' people, and its' whenua and "that's the whole essence of who you are". (p. 2)

Moreover, as Park (1995) and Wattchow (2006) contend that experiences of places are fundamental and inseparable from our lived experiences of the world. If human experience, identity, and culture are intimate with, and inseparable from, our relationship with places, places deserve much attention in discussions of education (Gruenewald, 2003a). Casey (1994) writes, "to live is to live locally, and to know is first of all to know the places one is in" (p. 18). The reciprocity, ongoing meaning making and interaction between people and the places we inhabit are indicators of the inherently experiential nature of place (Wattchow, 2006). PRA represents an approach that can potentially provide rooted, empathetic experience in a world that is increasingly globalised and abstracted from the lived experiences of many of our students. Sobel (1996) contends that if we want students to become truly empowered, then they should be allowed the opportunity to love the earth before they are asked to save it. Gruenewald (2003a) concurs when he explains; "what's important is that children have an opportunity to bond with the natural world, to learn to love it, before being asked to heal its wounds" (p. 10). That is to be to act as kaitiaki over our significant places. A kaitiaki according to the Māori worldview is a person or group that cares for an area such as a lake or forest.

According to Relph (1976) the concept of place is not restricted to a location, rather is the integration of elements of nature and culture that form a unique ensemblage, which distinguishes a particular place from all other places. Thus Mount Maunganui, which may have elements in common with other places (e.g. a beach, a harbour), is in its own way unique due to the interactions and meaning making that occurred in this place from the early settlement of Māori through to the current forms of urbanisation occurring today. Relph (1976) states, "A place is not just the 'where' of something; it is the location seen as an integrated and

meaningful phenomenon” (p.3). Sobel (1996) wants educators to create experiences where people can build relationships of care for places close to home. A PRA approach emphasises the relationship between people and place. As Relph (1976) contends, this relationship; “is indeed a very powerful one in which each reinforces the identity of the other, and in which the landscape is very much an expression of community held beliefs and values and of interpersonal involvement” (p.34).

It has been argued that although culture and place are deeply entwined, our relationship with places has, in the past, been obscured by an educational system that currently neglects them (Basso & Casey, cited in Gruenewald, 2003b). That is, schooling often distracts our attention from, and distorts our response to, the actual contexts of our own lives (places). For example, the study of history or ecology in ‘far-off’ countries abstracts and distances issues closer to home. Integration of a place-based pedagogical approach might go some way to addressing a number of contemporary issues identified above in some New Zealand outdoor education programmes. These issues include the neo-colonist, anthropocentric view of nature and the outdoors, and the emphasis placed on action, risk and challenge with personal development as the central pedagogical goal (Andkjaer, 2010; Hill, 2008). These pedagogical goals and emphasis were inherent in the Year 12 outdoor education course at Mount Maunganui College.

Our Kura Tuarua/School

Mount Maunganui College is a co-educational state school with a roll of approximately 1300 students. The school population consists of 60% European/Pākehā students, 29% Māori and 11% from other ethnic groups (The Education Review Office, 2008). The Māori population of the school is estimated to increase over the next five years and a major goal of the school is to improve Māori achievement levels. Mount Maunganui College staff and management have been involved in the Te Kotahitanga professional development initiative since 2005. As discussed in previous chapters, Te Kotahitanga is a professional development initiative with the overall aim to establishing a culturally responsive

pedagogy of relations in mainstream secondary school classrooms (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2007).

We are fortunate at Mount Maunganui College to have the beach, our Maunga, rivers and bush in close vicinity. The College is situated four kilometres from the main township of Mount Maunganui, a coastal town in the Bay of Plenty, located on a peninsula to the north of Tauranga. It is also the name of the extinct volcanic cone, which rises above the town, officially known by its Māori name Mauao. The mountain is a dominant feature of the landscape, and a climb to the summit offers views of the surrounding city, the ocean, and the Kaimai Ranges to the west. Mount Maunganui is a popular holiday destination, particularly during the summer months. The town itself is located on top of a sand bar that connects Mauao to the mainland. The formation of the sandbar has resulted in both visitors and residents of Mount Maunganui being fortunate enough to have both a harbour and an ocean beach within a short distance (Mount Main Street, 2010).



Fig 4: Motutau Island from Mount Maunganui Beach

Within the school's catchment zone are three iwi (tribe), Ngāi Te Rāngi, Ngāti Ranginui and Ngāti Pūkenga (Black, 2009). Ngāi Te Rāngi are regarded as Mana whenua of Tauranga Moana, Mana whenua means Ngāi Te Rāngi have customary authority over land to which they lay claim. It is the area over which particular iwi and hapū claim historical and contemporary interests. All three iwi's history and legends are based in the places they have occupied over generations and the land provides the sustenance for the people and a duty of hospitality for guests.

Each iwi have many marae (meeting area for whanau or iwi) and hapū (sub-tribes). The school also has a marae on campus with the Wharenuī (meeting house), Tane-nui-a-rangi, named after the ancestor who ascended through the heavens to obtain the three baskets of knowledge. The local Maunga (mountain), Mauao, Kōpūkairua, and the Tauranga Moana (harbour) are significant to local iwi and are rich in Māori legend and history. The tangata whenua (people of the land) of Tauranga Moana belong to the landscapes in which their whakapapa (ancestry) embeds them. These landscapes are those places made sacred by the lives and deaths of their ancestors. They include natural features such as forests and rivers; mountains, valleys, harbours and estuaries; and cultural features such as pa, kainga, mahinga kai, and wahi tapu (Kāhotea, 2006).

The ancestral landscape defines the relationship between tangata whenua and the natural environment. It is, quite literally, the embodiment of their cultural heritage. The state of their ancestral landscapes is therefore 'inextricably linked to Māori spiritual, emotional, physical and social well-being and is expressed through the ethic and practice of kaitiakitanga' (Kawharu, 2009).

The Maunga, Mauao is the sacred keeper of the mauri (life principle) of the iwi and the final resting place of esteemed Rangatira (Chief) and other important ancestors. Testimony of this enduring relationship is also borne by archaeological evidence of storage pits, whalebone clubs and shells found on his slopes. Mauao is a taonga (treasure) which has immeasurable value, and which symbolizes the endurance, the strength and the uniqueness of each iwi. For each, Mauao is a link between the metaphysical and the physical worlds, and between the past, the present, and the future (Waitangi Tribunal, 1998).

Cultural Identity and Pepeha

Māori tradition obliges its descendants to begin every formal association that brings different groups together to greet each other and address the questions: “Who am I?”, “Whose place is it?”, “What is this place about?”, “Whose place is it?”, “How do we fit into it?” and “what are we doing here?” (Penetito, 2004, p. 12). A pepeha is an introductory speech, based on whakapapa, which is recited during mihimihi (Kawharu, 2009). The pepeha involves at least three spatial metaphors. The first, is of ‘connectness’ or whakapapa and whakapapa is also about our connections to places and people, and our relationship with them (Kawharu, 2009). The second is the ‘inside – outside’ metaphor, or rights or lack of them, that is turangawaewae. The third, of ‘grounding’ or responsibilities and obligations, illustrates part of the meaning of kaitiakitanga. “The metaphor of the pepeha has multiple levels of understanding, which signals to the listener: Who I am, and where I come from” (Penetito, 2004, p.12).

In my classes over the years I have observed that many of my Māori students have little or limited knowledge of their whakapapa. I also found through my involvement in the Te Kotahitanga professional development initiative that a number of Māori students did not identify as such on their enrolment information. When I questioned these students further explained that they did not want to be associated with negative educational statistics or stereotypes. Recent research undertaken at Mount Maunganui College has highlighted that Māori students identified a range of perceptions in relation to being Māori. These included perceptions of physical appearance, personality traits and behaviours. Being Māori at MMC was perceived by these students as having involvement in negative behaviours such as theft, drugs, smoking, alcohol, gangs and violence (Robertson, 2014).

Identity and Success

Māori students also identified key elements of Māori success. These elements included the ability to give back to one’s whanau and community, achieving goals, being connected to whakapapa, competence in Te Reo Māori, and

achieving academically (Robertson, 2014). Despite Māori students identifying connection to whakapapa as an element of Māori success only three percent of Māori at our school have high competency in identifying pepeha information and only eighteen percent had reasonable competency (Robertson, 2014). This research further reinforces my belief in implementing a place responsive outdoor education course and ensuring that the course appeals to our Māori students. I want the students I teach to have the opportunity to learn about their identity through a place responsive approach.

The concept of identity can also be explained as a person's sense of belonging, of knowing and understanding your individuality and place in the world (O'Regan, 2001). Weeks (1990) notes that "Identity is about belonging, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others. At its most basic, it gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core to your individuality. But it is also about your social relationships, your complex involvement with others" (p. 88).

Kāretu (1990), describes whakapapa as the glue that connects individuals to a certain place or marae, locating them within the broader network of kin relations. This in turn creates a sense of turangawaewae or belonging. "Whakapapa is not simply about having "Māori blood" but knowing about that descent and having a meaningful relationship to it"(p.235). It is believed in Māoridom that a meaningful understanding of one's place in the present can only be understood by reflection and knowledge of one's past (Ihimaera, Williams, Ramsden, & Long, 1993). Hence, knowledge of whakapapa is a crucial element in developing mana-tangata through the provision of a culturally responsive localised curriculum.

Māori students are more likely to thrive in a culturally responsive environment that 'localises' curriculum (Penetito, 2004). That is it ensures the learning experiences are as closely linked to the Māori students's whanau/hapu/iwi whakapapa, traditions and stories as possible (Webber, 2011). Research shows that cultural practice, tribal structures and whakapapa are all significant in the development of Māori identity (Durie, 2002; Murchie, 1984; Broughton, 1993; Moeke-Pickering, 1996). Where Māori students are encouraged to use their own

whanau/hapu/tribe as a starting point for better understanding for both their cultural and educational lives, they will feel empowered to embrace the gifts they possess and use them to progress educationally, culturally and spiritually (Webber, 2011). For those who whakapapa to other places, the research skills and experience can open the door for students to learn about their own hapu or iwi's significant places and the historical and ancestral links between the places.

Through implementing a place responsive approach I aim to create a context for learning that responds to the culture the student bring to the classroom. Outdoor education students' should be able to bring who they are and how they make sense and meaning of the world to the learning interactions (Bishop, Berryman & Richardson, 2001). This would hopefully affirm and validate the language, culture and aspirations of Māori students in outdoor education (Bishop et al, 2003).

Implementation of a place responsive approach could potentially have significant implications on outdoor education at Mount Maunganui College by providing a course that is more relevant and meaningful for the learner, more accessible to students both financially and physically, and most importantly students may establish responsive relationships of care with local places of significance. The potential implications for Māori student achievement may also be significant with PRA incorporating and valuing traditional ways of learning through place and the stories attached to them. The cultural context of learning about and through place has the potential to provide learning opportunities that are relevant and meaningful to learners. This approach supports the provision of an appropriate cultural context for learning, which is one of the aims of the Te Kotahitanga programme. To create an environment where Māori language, knowledge, culture and values are normal, valid and legitimate, and indeed are a valid guide for classroom interactions. This implies that we need to create contexts where to be Māori is to be normal and where Māori cultural identities are valued, valid and legitimate - in other words, contexts where Māori students can be themselves (Bishop and Glynn, 1999).

I hope the PRA outdoor education course will place both myself, as teacher, and my students at the centre of developing an outdoor education pedagogy that

reflects their needs and aspirations. A place responsive approach presents an opportunity to meet the needs of Māori and provide students with the opportunity to engage with the unique histories, geographies and cultural understandings associated with their particular places.

Through my personal learning around Māori education and a place responsive approach in outdoor education, I have been challenged to think about how the exploration of places can be part of how outdoor education courses can be organised and conceived. Implementation of a PRA Year 12 course, which recognises the role place(s) have in both forming and making sense of personal and communal identity, undoubtedly has some challenges. The benefits however include the opportunity for students to learn about the historical and cultural significance of the place(s) where they live and visit. They will have the opportunity to examine the impact they have on their local environment and the impact the environment has on their sense of identity, as well as gaining skills and competency in and through their 'place'. Most importantly, a PRA approach offers an opportunity for Māori students to achieve success as Māori and potentially to make outdoor education more appealing to Māori students at Mount Maunganui College. A PRA represents recognition of the relationship between people and the land, an acknowledgement that land does not belong to us, but we belong to the land, *'Ko au te whenua, te whenua ko au – I am the land, the land is me'*.

CHAPTER FIVE:

‘Ehara te ara horipa haerekoa it e anna awhio’

Go by the thorough route rather than the quick one

I have chosen to use the above whakataukī to illustrate the implementation of a place-responsive approach for my Year 12 outdoor education course. The words of the whakataukī express the focus on the journey rather than the destination both for the writing of this thesis and the Hīkoi concept inherent in my outdoor education course. The place-responsive approach involved a slowing down and allowing students to build connections with place in contrast to the ‘quick raid’ where participants are rushed through, and the place in which the activities occur becomes irrelevant (Brookes, 2002).

In this chapter I share my interpretations of my experiences, and my reflections of the process of planning and implementation of a place-responsive course and the how the ‘four signposts’ offered by Wattchow and Brown (2011) were utilized to negotiate connections between participants and place. I focused the learning around three Hīkoi, which was reflected in the planning and design of the 2011 course. I have focused specifically on the ‘place – responsive’ Hīkoi in this chapter, as the experience has had immense significance for both my students and me as their teacher. Prior to 2011 I could have never have imagined how all the elements would come together so magically in an embodied experience in our significant places.

I will use the stories from my experience and ‘student voice’ from the evaluations to illustrate how the place responsive Hīkoi was relevant and meaningful to my students, and in particular contributed to the appeal of outdoor education for the Māori students in the course.

Hīkoi -The Summit of Mauao



Fig 5: *The Summit of Mauao*

As I stand on the summit of Mauao with my outdoor education class, my eyes follow the route that connects the places we had visited over the last two days as we journeyed by bike, kayak and on foot. Standing at the summit of our Maunga (mountain) I look across to Kōpūkairua, the maunga (mountain), who along with Mauao, had been watching over us like majestic guardians over every leg of this Hīkoi. Kōpūkairua was significant to this Hīkoi as the father whale of the Maungatawa three whales legend. This legend was the first to be presented on our before we kayaked over the Raungataua tidal harbour. The story of the three whales was also the prominent legend of Tahuwhakatiki (Romai) marae where we were welcomed with a pōwhiri and spent the previous night. The marae faces out to the Raungataua harbour with Kōpūkairua directly behind.

I look out to the harbour as the sun glistens off the sparkling blue water, across to the islands of Moturiki and Motuotau, and beyond to the islands of Tuhua and Karewa in the distance. I could see Mount Maunganui College where we begun

our journey, Matapihi Point where we practiced our waiata before kayaking to Welcome Bay, and the Welcome Bay hills that proved a challenge on the bike ride up, and an enjoyable cruise on the way down. I couldn't see Reid's Road but the ache in my quadricepsa and glutes reminded me of three kilometre winding uphill.

As I turn my head and see the three bridges we had kayaked under and the Tauranga Harbour Bridge we rode over prior to being here on the mountain of Mauao. I could see the large container wharf we kayaked under, the beach at Sulphur Point where we pulled our kayaks up to enjoy a barbeque on the beach with Mauao and Matakana across the water.

I saw the student's change from not knowing how the different places connected on the first day, and asking lots of questions to them having a new understanding of where they had been and where they were heading.



Fig 6: *The class of 2012 kayaking on the Tauranga Harbour.*

I reflected on our day. I could still taste the salt on my lips from the kayak this morning. The water was like glass as we paddled with the tide over the Raungataua tidal waters, under the Maungatapu and Matapihi bridges, and

alongside the bustling streets in Tauranga before paddling underneath the Tauranga Harbour Bridge. The sound of the students' laughter and singing filled the air along with the rhythmic sound of paddle blades moving through water. I reflected on the significance of all the presentations I had heard along the way. To see and feel the stories and histories to come alive at the 'place' as an embodied experience was a meaningful experience. From the history of our college where we began our journey, to the Maungatawa Three Whales legend presented as Kōpūkairua came into view, to standing on the Pa site at Papamoa and seeing all the places referred to in the historical account. The curiosity that was ignited in the students when they completed their kayak to Welcome Bay, and one of their peers explained the origin of the place name and the naming of streets and suburbs in the area. To see and hear the roar and power of the Kaiate Falls and feel the spray from the rushing water on our bodies as we heard the history and stories of the Te Rerekawau waterfall, and to finish the day at Romai marae where the experiences of the day came together with a sense of wonder and awe.

Today the pace had been slower with fewer kilometres to travel, this allowed for further time for reflection. After our kayak from Welcome Bay to Sulphur Point Boaz shared with the class that Sulphur Point was reclaimed land and was built with the sand that was dredged from the harbour. This dredging was done to allow the entry of larger ships into the port. As we stood under the Tauranga Harbour Bridge with the sounds of traffic rumbling overhead, and the tidal waters flowing fast in front of us, Ivan and Daniel presented on the history of the Bridge. We then rode our bikes over the bridge with a new appreciation of what surrounded us as we headed towards Mauao. On our final leg of the journey we heard and saw presentations on the legend of Tangaroa as we looked over the water to the Tangaroa statue, the legends of the islands of Karewa and Tuhua, and the final presentation as we stood here on the summit, the legend of Mauao.

I can hear my students talking about the places they had been and two of them have their arm outstretched and are indicating the route we have taken with their forefingers. As I take in the sights and sounds an overwhelming feeling of happiness swells from within my chest. My muscles, tired and achy from two days of kayaking, cycling and walking, suddenly feel light and springy.

I have stood on this summit hundreds of times before, but today felt different. Today I could hear and feel my students develop a new appreciation and knowledge of our special places. I could hear and feel them understand where they were in relation to these places, a fresh understanding of their place in the world.

Implementing a Place-responsive Approach

As previously discussed, current outdoor education practice (including the courses I taught prior to 2010) focus on concepts such as risk and adventure, and the development of personal and social skills in an outdoor context. Place/s where these activities occur are irrelevant as place becomes merely the empty space or venue of these endeavours (Wattchow & Brown, 2011). One of the disadvantages of this approach is, “that place is silenced as the mere backdrop to human action and this impoverishes opportunities for learning”(Wattchow & Brown, 2011, p. 181).

A place-responsive approach is an alternative pedagogy that focuses attention to the connection between people and place/s, “and this focus is at the centre of the planning process “(Brown, 2012, p. 2). If a particular programme is intended to help participants to learn about the cultural, historical, or environmental aspects of places being visited, then these foci should be reflected in the planning, organisation, and facilitation of the experience. As Brown (2009) contends, “Learning cannot be separated from, and treated independently of, the social, political, historical and cultural context in which it occurs” (p.8).

Wattchow and Brown (2011) offer four signposts for outdoor educators who wish to implement a place - responsive approach: Being present in and with a place; the power of place-responsive stories and narratives; apprenticing ourselves to outdoor places; and, the representation of place experiences. These ‘signposts’ underpinned the planning and direction of the 2012 outdoor education course. In this chapter I will share how signposts one and two guided the planning and implementation of the Hīkoi.

Our Place -responsive Hīkoi

“Journeys seem to emphasise the path not the destination; allow for deviations and detours, and focus on being ‘so somewhere’” (Straker, 2012, p. 170).

The 2011 outdoor education course was based around three Hīkoi. The first was a kayaking journey on Lake Tarawera where students kayaked from the Tarawera outlet to Te Rata Bay (Hot water beach) where we camped for the night. We all brought vegetables to contribute to a shared dinner that was cooked in a thermal hangi. Students had the opportunity to visit sites, learn about and hear stories and history about the Tarawera eruption, the ghost waka, the pink and white terraces, and the villages that were destroyed by the eruption throughout the journey.

The second Hīkoi was the locally based journey that is the focus of this chapter, and the third was based in the Kaimai Mamuku ranges, with the route negotiated and decided by the students according to their areas of their interest. The route involved tramping from Katikati (with Mauao, Matakana, and Tauranga Moana in our view) to Mount Te Aroha via the site of the Waitewheta sawmill, ancient Tainui and Ngāi Te Rāngi trading routes, and many other sites of historical and cultural interest.

I was inspired to implement the concept after reading Mike Brown’s article about his experiences as an instructor on the Aoraki Outward Bound Course and the Hīkoi (journey) they undertook. The Aoraki Bound programme provided opportunities for members of Ngāi Tahu to connect with their significant places, people and culture, and to have the knowledge of their whakapapa to truly identify as Ngāi Tahu (Brown, 2008b). I had an overwhelming desire for my outdoor education students to have the same opportunity at Mount Maunganui College. I wanted students to learn about their significant places, the history and the stories through an authentic and embodied experience. I sought to provide a culturally responsive learning environment through implementing a place responsive approach. A learning environment where Māori knowledge, culture and values are normal, valid and legitimate, and where Māori students can be themselves (Bishop and Glynn, 2002).

In response to my desired aims, I set the following objectives for my outdoor education class's 'place responsive' Hīkoi. We would start and finish at Mount Maunganui College so that the students could experience the places in relation to their school, and because our school is the centre of our learning community. We would complete the journey self - propelled through kayaking, mountain biking and walking, rather than travelling to far off places by mini-van or car. Self - propelled journeys provide students with a sense of satisfaction and an opportunity to take responsibility for their actions. We would use simple low-technology equipment that was readily available and inexpensive. We were fortunate that the Perry Outdoor Education Trust (POET) lent us the mountain bikes we rode at no cost to the students. We also hired the double sea kayaks from a local provider for a minimal fee. Travelling self-propelled meant we could take the time to pause and understand the local history of the places through which we traveled together. The planning of the route would ensure the journey would be safe and within everybody's capability with the focus placed on challenge rather than risk.

A key objective of the Hīkoi was for students to learn about the places they would be travelling through. Prior to the students were given an assignment and class time to research one of the legs of the journey which they would present at the appropriate location. They were given a choice of questions and could choose an area of interest or could negotiate to come up with their own question. Topics included: The history of Mount Maunganui College, Māori legends of Tauranga Moana, how did Welcome Bay get its name? What is the environmental impact of the wharf on the Tauranga harbour? The Pre-colonial history of the Papamoa hills/pah site, the history of Kaiate Falls, the flora and fauna of the Waikareo estuary and the history of the harbour bridge. These questions were based on the questions posed by Greenwood (2008): What happened here? What is happening now? What should happen here?

It was while the students were researching their topics that one of my students, Jared, began to reflect on his Māori identity and connections with his home marae. The following narrative is my recollection of what occurred in the computer room that day.

My Marae aye Miss

My outdoor education class is in the computer room researching the history, legends, and stories of specific place(s) of interest for the upcoming Hīkoi. There is a buzz of excitement in the air as the students are busy researching and planning their presentations on their significant place. I can hear students' in my class having quiet conversations about their upcoming camp, and sharing the history and stories they have been researching.

“Hey Ms Townsend, sorry to disturb you while you are teaching but the camping ground we were going to stay at has fallen through. They have lots of people living there over the kiwifruit season and with all the rain we have been having the sites we were going to use are too swampy to pitch tents on”

Reece (the teacher of the second outdoor education class) and I are planning this together. We have been meeting regularly to connect the dots between the places we enjoy training on, prominent landmarks, and putting the whole experience together so we can start and finish at school, be comfortable the course is safe, and that the route was within all the students' capabilities.

“What else is there in Welcome Bay?”

“That's why I came and saw you because I can't think of anywhere and I don't want to change our route”

“What about the marae on the water, we went there a few years ago for a Te Kotahitanga hui, I can't remember exactly where it was but I remember they have pictures of crabs on their china”.

“I know it, that is Romai marae. It is near where we come in on the kayak and would work in for the bike ride. I will stay here with your class if you want to see if you can book it right now”

Jared, one of my students who had been quietly researching on his own, looks up and makes eye contact with me. I can tell from the expression on his face he has been listening to our conversation. As I rush out to make the call I notice his expression change, it looks like he is about to ask me a question but he decides against it when he sees I am in a hurry. I ring the secretary of Romai marae and the dates we planned are available. As we are talking my excitement is starting to build – we will also be welcomed on to the marae with a Pōwhiri. Staying at a

marae is going to make this Hīkoi even more special. After I hang up I jog back to my class and can barely contain myself as I burst in the door to the computer room.

“Hey Reece we are all booked, we just have to sort out a cheque to take as a koha and confirm a time for the ”.

“Hey Miss”, says Jared, as he finally sees his opportunity to ask his question, “Did you say we are staying at Romai marae, the marae in front of the water in Welcome Bay?”

“Yes that is the one, I’ve stayed there before years ago, and I remember there are pictures of crabs on the pottery”.

“That is my mother’s marae Miss, and it is just around the corner from my house”

“Cool, that makes it even better. So it is your marae as well then?”

“I haven’t spent much time there lately but I know all of that area really well”

As the date of the Hīkoi got closer and closer the students were having difficulty curbing their excitement. At the beginning of every class or even when he saw me around the school Jared would say, “We are staying at my mother’s marae aye Miss”, then about a week before the Hīkoi, Jared said something different, “We are staying on my marae aye Miss?”

“Yes we are”, I reply, “and I can’t wait, and I think we had better have another practice of our school waiata.”

Through the Hīkoi experience Jared’s knowledge of the Welcome Bay area, and Romai marae contributed to the success of the Hīkoi. Jared knew where the channels were through the Raungataua tidal flats through fishing with his father and uncle, and was able lead us through the deeper water during the kayak leg. Throughout the first day of the Hīkoi, and during our time on the marae, Jared was the first port of call for the students. They asked him a myriad of questions: how far do we have to go? Where the plates were kept? Can we wear a hat inside the Wharekai?

Jared begun to shine through as a leader and he gained respect and recognition from his peers through his specialist knowledge of the local area and Māoritanga. I had the pleasure of witnessing him move from downplaying his Māori identity to

a young man who shone in an environment where he had the opportunity to bring who he was as Māori, to his outdoor education class. Being a part of the Hīkoi, and staying on his marae allowed Jared to display cultural competence and connections.



Fig 7: Tahuwhakatiki (Romai marae) with Kopukairua in the background.

Signpost 2: The Power of Story and Storytelling

People’s experience of places, their spiritual or numinous encounters, the names and naming of outdoor places, and the stories that people both tell and listen to in a place, provide outdoor educators with important clues in thinking about what a place-responsive form of practice might look like (Wattchow & Brown, 2011, p.98).

The facilitation of the sharing of knowledge of history, myths and legends on the Hīkoi was a valuable pedagogical strategy in connecting students with place(s) through an embodied experience. Wattchow and Brown (2011) urge outdoor educators and learners to attend to the values of their senses, and strive to understand the cultural meanings they attach to them. An effective and appropriate way to do this, they suggest, “is through the power of story and storytelling” (p. 185). Stories are a powerful pedagogical tool to stimulate further

questioning and discussion. Stewart (2008) suggests that it is essential that outdoor educators consider carefully the ways in which outdoor experiences introduce participants to particular ‘stories’ of the land, whose land it is or has been, and how it has changed over time.

The areas of cultural and environmental history have much to offer outdoor education in regard to learning how to ‘read’ the landscape for stories of past activities that have shaped a place (Stewart, 2008.p. 85). The words and meanings inherent in the presentations created and cemented social relationships,” created the story and create understanding” (Bishop & Glynn, 2003). Lauritzen and Jaeger (1997) further suggest that learners are empowered/facilitated through stories to grow from their prior knowledge to new understandings appropriate to their own experiences.

Through the power of storytelling and listening to stories both as creators and recipients, students had the opportunity to gain an understanding of the meaning and cultural significance of the place(s). For the Tarawera camp I modeled the telling of the stories and sharing of information. I also invited the kayak operator who affiliated to the hapu of the lake to share her stories. The experiences shared by a Kaumatua from Matakana Island were also valuable to create understanding of different ‘stories of the land’. Hauata (the kaumatua) spoke about the historical and current struggles of the Matakana residents through the land courts to ensure the island isn’t sold to property developers. He also explained the history of the barren ten acres we saw during our visit and conveyed that the land was taken from Ngāi Te Rāngi to erect safety lights for ships coming into port. This was despite the actual works only requiring less than a quarter of an acre. A student teacher also contributed to the sharing of stories. Damion, who affiliated to Ngāi Te Rāngi, had extensive knowledge of the pre-colonial history, myths and legends of our local area. He shared his stories with the outdoor education class while he joined us on a walk around the base track of Mauao. For the locally based Hīkoi and the Kaimai Mamuku journey I felt the students had the skills and would benefit from researching and presenting on a topic of interest at significant sites. This sharing of knowledge that was lead by the students, in and about the significant places encountered on the journey, proved to be a highlight of our

place-responsive Hīkoi. Students responded positively to the research assignment and took pride in presenting their information at the place that was significant to the story during the Hīkoi. It was apparent in the student evaluations that significant ‘real world’ learning took place. Comments such as “It was nice to know more about the stories”, “It was good to learn about the environment around us”, “I think it was a nice idea to hear about myths and legends around this area, “I learnt a lot about the place where I live”, “the stories that were told” and “listening to the stories and finding new stuff out” were reported as highlights by the students (Hīkoi student evaluations, 2011).

This learning strategy reflects the Te Kotahitanga element of Ako. Ako means reciprocal learning, or to learn as well as to teach. It is both the acquisition of knowledge and the processing and imparting of knowledge. More importantly ako is a teaching-learning practice that is culturally specific and appropriate to Māori pedagogy (Bishop et al, 2003). “Historically, Māori as an oral culture, devised methods to pass on the multiplicity of knowledge that any culture gathers and constructs about itself. Story was and still remains a strongly culturally preferred method of imparting knowledge”(Bishop & Glynn, 2003, pp. 178-179). One type of story fundamental to the identity of Māori people is their whakapapa and the associated raranga korero (stories of people, events, and places associated with the names of the whakapapa). “Stories of whakapapa are located in specific places and ‘tell’ the uri (descendants) how they relate to that place. The stories are particular to the people of that place and time” (Bishop & Glynn, 2003,p. 179)

As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2002) argues, “What is taught, and learnt, emerges through interaction rather than being delivered through set activities with pre-determined outcomes. All participants become creators of knowledge rather than the consumers of knowledge created by others” (p. 593). Through stories and the conversations that flowed from them students critiqued and discussed their views of the environment, Māori land claims and development of sites we visited. For example, some of the students lamented the loss of Leisure Island, a water park that used to exist on the island of Moturiki. They couldn’t understand why it could be just left empty. After many visits to the island and learning its history and stories, these students gained a new appreciation for the place. After asking ‘what

had happened here?’ they discovered that Hapu from three different iwi had lived on the island, and there was a carving school and cultivated gardens on Kopukiore (Mt Drury) adjacent to the island. In the nineteen fifties it was used as a quarry to supply gravel for the development of roads in Tauranga then became a marine park, then a leisure park. During this period Moturiki was known as Leisure Island and was dominated by pools, slides and bumper boats. In 1990 the council in consultation with the Iwi of Tauranga Moana decided to return the island to its natural state and it became classified as a scenic reserve. Those students who considered Moturiki a wasted space (re)considered ‘What is possible here’ as they gained a new appreciation after learning the stories and history of the place. They spent time at the ‘blow hole’ watching the surging waves blow into the air and over the rocks, clambering over rocks, exploring the rock pools, and watching the waves form on either side of the island. Through these embodied experiences students began to recognise the uniqueness and significance of their natural environment. As Wattchow and Brown (2011) contend, “experience includes interpretation and reflection, the cognitive sense we make of our situatedness in the world”(p. 185).

Although the sharing of presentations and stories was a highlight for most students, one student suggested the experience could be improved through sharing personal stories at our significant places. For instance a grandfather of a student once lived on Moturiki, as a caretaker and during his lifetime saw it transform from a quarry, to a marine animal park then to a leisure park. Jo Straker (2012) argues if,

outdoor educators are to help others develop relationships with the outdoors in Aotearoa New Zealand, it is important to seek out stories and ways of knowing the land from other cultures, especially tangata whenua. However it is equally important not to rely on past stories and nostalgic imagery but to blend these with contemporary meanings that resonate with the students. In that way the outdoors can become more than the backdrop for adventurous activities, it can become a meaningful location in which to learn and ask critical questions about the way we live, cultural attitudes and beliefs, depictions of the natural environment, and relationships with nature. (p. 121)

For the students in my outdoor education class, weaving stories through an outdoor experience transformed it from people-less landscape into place with a rich history and uncertain future (Stewart, 2008). The weaving of stories and the embodied experience of the Hīkoi was illustrated when we were welcomed onto Romai marae with a Pōwhiri. The Hīkoi further weaved together the experiences, the legends and the history we had felt, seen and heard throughout the day and added to the significance of the Hīkoi experience. The following narrative is my recollection of the Pōwhiri during the first Hīkoi in 2010.

Pōwhiri at Tahuwhakatiki (Romai) Marae



Fig 8: The view from Romai marae over the Raungataua harbour towards Mauao

As I listen to the Kaumatua's Whaikōrero (formal speech) I focus on his words and try to piece together what he is saying through my limited understanding of Te Reo Māori. His voice is strong and deep, yet his tone is warm and welcoming. There are prickles of tension in the air, it seems some of the students are as nervous as me as the time approaches for us to sing our school waiata.

I feel so fortunate to be here on this marae surrounded by the significant places we have visited and heard stories about today. The Raungataua tidal flats and Mauao on one side of us, and Kōpūkairua towering up from behind the Whareniui (meeting house) on the other. As I look towards Kōpūkairua I wonder why I haven't properly noticed him before. I was born and bred in the Bay of Plenty and had lived in Mount Maunganui for over eleven years and I hadn't paid attention to Kōpūkairua. Mauao is so special, flanked by both the beach and harbour that he has stood in his shadow.

I can hear the tidal waters of Rangataua gently lapping behind me. I hear the kaumatua say, 'rangatahi', 'whenua' and '' until my other senses take over and the korero shifts gently like the lapping waves into the background. My eyes are drawn to the mural behind the seat where the Tangata Whenua are seated. It is the three whales from the Maungatawa legend, the mother whale, Maungatawa; the father whale, Kopukairua; and the baby whale, Rangataua. Then as a I look at the carvings that frame the area I recognise the images of the three whales carved out in the red painted wood.



Fig 9 : *The carving of The Three Whales legend and Romai marae.*

After the Kaumatua had finished his korero in Māori he spoke in English. He commended us for undertaking the journey and discovering and learning about

our local places. He specifically commended us as teachers for providing the opportunity for 'real world' learning. He shared his wish that he was given the opportunity while he was at school and his pleasure that these students were given the opportunity. He spoke of his own schooling experience of learning maths, science, english with stories from another peoples' culture and the histories of other lands and how his experience with education had little relevance to his 'real world'.

Listening to him speak I was reminded of the 'narratives of experience' from my Te Kotahitanga professional development hui (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh & Teddy, 2007) and the value of a place responsive pedagogy in enriching the educational experience of Māori.

The Romai marae experience was significant in that it tied each of the stages of the together. For many of the students, including some of the students who are Māori it was their first Pōwhiri. After our Head of Māori spoke we sung our school waiata both loud and in tune, "Ko tatau te au, tatau te iwi....."

Signpost One: Being present in and with a place

Through experience I wanted the outdoor education students to 'live in the moment' and 'in the here and now' when they visited their everyday places and significant sites during their Hīkoi. (Wattchow and Brown, 2011). I believe it is impossible to be 'present and with a place' when students are texting or engaging in social media. From my recent experiences as an outdoor education teacher I understand, more than ever, the value of being present to experience what is there in front of you, and all around you rather than images of second hand experiences on a screen. To hear the sound of pounding surf and to talk and interact with other people rather than being shut off by a pair of headphones. For this reason, I discussed my concerns with the class and they made the decision that earphones and social media would not be used and engaged with in outdoor education class and during the Hīkoi. They also desired to engage in the experiences undistracted and with all their senses. This also involved us taking our time, without anybody rushing ahead or leaving anybody behind, keeping the Hīkoi local so students

could revisit and completing the journey self-propelled and an emphasis on challenge rather than risk.

Keeping it in the Neighbourhood

Before the Hīkoi when a colleague asked me where I was going on camp I replied, “we are doing a journey around here”, he looked at me with a concerned look, “what do you mean, that you aren’t going to take your outdoor ed class on camp?” “Yes I am, but our camp will be based around our local area and our significant landmarks”

“Well if you decide you want to take them to the snow I would be keen to come along”

What my colleague considered was adventure was a trip to a far away unfamiliar place, or a day at a high ropes course. However, It is arguable that these journeys in local neighbourhoods might actually have a much higher degree of authentic adventure than highly regulated ropes courses and rock climbing sessions that are common in most outdoor education courses (Beames & Ross, 2010). Moreover, localised programmes can provide opportunities for students to be challenged and engaged in learning that is contextualised and relevant to them (Brown, 2012).

In their Hīkoi evaluations, students reflected on the various highlights of their journey, and many were based around ‘staying close to home’. Comments such as: “It was good to learn about the environment around us”, “I think it was a nice idea to hear about myths and legends around this area”, “I learnt a lot about the place where I live”, “It was a great opportunity to get to know the area better. We went to places where I would never have gone to without the camp” and “It was fun because I knew where to go and it was near my house” were prominent (Hīkoi student evaluations, 2011).

The students also recognised the value of spending the night at a local marae; “I found it a really interesting experience to sleep in a wharenuī and learn more about Māori culture” and “a highlight for me was staying at the marae and the introduction/ Pōwhiri” (Hīkoi student evaluations, 2011). Through the place-

responsive Hīkoi the students gained an enhanced appreciation of the cultural dimension of their experiences of the places they visited.

Many students reported that they had revisited areas they had been during the with family and/or friends. This resonates with the research of Beames and Ross's (2010) whose investigation on Outdoor Journeys yielded evidence that as a result of participating in an outdoor journey, some young people may be more likely to undertake their own adventures outside of those provided in school outdoor education courses. One mother told me recently she felt she had found adventure in her life as her daughter now initiated and planned outdoor activities in their local area during weekends and holidays.

As discussed in chapter four our significant places, and our relationship with them, contribute to individual and communal identity. A place responsive in our local area, close to the students 'everyday lives' encouraged and enabled students to feel comfortable in place(s). For some "the sense of being adrift and placeless", and of being a 'stranger' was "replaced by a sense of belonging and connection" (Brown, 2012, p.3). This was particularly relevant for those students who had been existing in a 'cultural no man's land'. Park (1995) and Wattchow (2006) contend that our experiences of places are fundamental and inseparable from our lived experiences of the world. Moreover, as explained in chapter four, place is an integral part of Māori identity. As Penetito (2004) argues, "no one experiences feeling 'out of place' more than those who have been colonised (p.10). If human experience, identity, and culture are intimate with, and inseparable from, our relationship with places, places deserve much attention in discussions of education (Gruenewald, 2003a). Casey (1994) writes, "to live is to live locally, and to know is first of all to know the places one is in" (p. 18). The reciprocity, ongoing meaning making and interaction between people and the places we inhabit are indicators of the inherently experiential nature of place (Wattchow, 2006). As Relph (1976) contends, this relationship; "is indeed a very powerful one in which each reinforces the identity of the other, and in which the landscape is very much an expression of community held beliefs and values and of interpersonal involvement"(p.34).

Challenge over Risk

For our Hīkoi we travelled in a self - propelled manner and experienced our significant places as a group. There were times that the fitter faster students would get ahead but they always waited for the rest to catch up. This approach was initially hard for the more competitive students but they adapted and appreciated the experience. For example, Sam said “I started with an attitude that I would beat everyone, but later on I began helping people and being more responsible” (Hīkoi Student Evaluations, 2012). There was no time during the Hīkoi where the students felt any fear or that they were at any risk of injury but there were plenty of times they felt challenged. The Reid Road hill was a challenge that had an impact on all the students. Reid Road is a winding steep country road that ascends for over three kilometres to Summerhill Farmpark, descends for two kilometres then ascends again. Challenges ranged from trying to beat the teachers to the top, to the student who cried with happiness that she rode her bike all the way.

None of the activities involved in the Hīkoi would be considered ‘high risk’ and there was no learning occurring in the ‘deep end’. As Brown (2008b) suggests, we should “seek to develop a modest pedagogy which acknowledges our relationships with place(s) as a way to understand who we are, how we connect to others and how we both give and take meanings from the places in which we live and learn”(p. 7).

Slowing down the experience and staying as a group meant students’ had the opportunity to make connections with the places we visited and learnt about. Cuthbertson (1999) and Stewart (2003a) found that participants struggled to feel connected to the land when their personal comfort (physical and emotional) was challenged. It is unlikely that students will build a relationship with place(s) if they feel threatened by unknown hazards they imagine will be found there. As Humberstone (2003, p.183) has pointed out, “The rhetoric of being outside one’s comfort zone, or danger and risk, is not immutable nor necessarily intrinsic to outdoor education”. Therefore it was important to me that I planned a safe, enjoyable but challenging experience for the students. This was stated simply by

one student who said after the Hīkoi, “It was safe and fun” (Hīkoi student evaluations, 2012).

Reflecting on the Hīkoi Experience

Many of the places we travelled through on our Hīkoi I already visit at least once a week to exercise and take time for myself away from the pace of school and home. I feel I already have a strong connection to these places from my many years growing up in the Bay of Plenty and twelve years living in the Mount. There are many times I look out from the summit of Mauao, run along the beach front, or along Pilot bay at sunset, that I feel a strong feeling of love and connection to this place. Being a part of the outdoor education Hīkoi made me view these areas with new eyes and the journey was quite significant not only for my students but for myself personally. The connection between all the places, the staff and students involved, the stories, and the new stories that we have to tell of our individual and shared experience have further fuelled my enthusiasm towards the changes that I have made to the outdoor education course. In planning the experience I had no idea of the extent of the meaningful learning potential of the Hīkoi for everybody involved. The Romai marae experience, to see Jared gain pride in his identity as a Māori, and to see how much others in the class valued his skills and knowledge reinforced my belief that a place-responsive course would make outdoor education more appealing for Māori students at Mount Maunganui College.

Most of all the Hīkoi was a significant experience for all involved and added to the appeal of outdoor education for not only my Māori students but all of my students. Comments such as, “It was a blast! I’ve never had so much fun on a camp anywhere else” and “I learned so much about different places in my local area” (Hīkoi student evaluation, 2011) served to fuel my enthusiasm for a place-responsive approach. The outdoor education class was on a high for several weeks after the Hīkoi before their excitement and enthusiasm was re-directed towards the Kaimai Mamaku journey.

CHAPTER SIX:
He moana pukepuke
E ekengia e te waka
A choppy sea can be navigated

I have chosen this whakataukī to represent the place responsive outdoor education course that my students and I co-constructed and experienced together. The seas were rough at times and there were also times where I felt the waka was getting swamped, but throughout the journey I felt we were all paddling in unison and heading in the same direction. Below are my personal recollections of some of the challenges and rewards, tensions and revelations experienced on our place responsive waka.

Tarawera floats the boat

I am in my tent writing in my diary and reflecting on the Lake Tarawera camp so far. We have had so much fun over the last two days setting up camp, exploring the track to the Tarawera Falls, and swimming in the beautiful clear water of the Tarawera Stream. Some of the students found a rock suitable for ‘Manus’ (jumping into water trying to create as much splash as possible) and we all just went with the flow. Being in this environment, and without phones and ipods the students were genuinely interacting with each other and the adults. We played spotlight in the evening and it was hilarious – mainly because it was almost impossible to spot Jared in his ‘ghillies’ suit. Jared had spent countless hours making this suit, which consisted of a khaki green boiler suit with a layer of netting over the top. He had spent countless hours knotting individual strips of sacking on to the netting to create a camouflaging effect. I was ‘it’ and shone my torch right on him. I wouldn’t have seen him at all except for the glistening of his eyes and the sound of him holding in a laugh.

As I reflected on the camp so far, the activities we had done, and the conversations I had with many of the students my views about the values of outdoor education were reinforced. These students don't need contrived hardships; real life can be hard enough. What they needed was time to talk, to laugh, to explore and be curious. They wanted to know the genuine stories and history of this place. The 'Ghost Waka' that was seen on the lake prior to the Tarawera eruption, to visit Lake Rotomahana and the sites of the pink and white terraces, and to find out how the area had changed since the Tarawera eruption. They wanted to know how the Australian wallabies came to be in the Tarawera bush. The adults in the group shared their knowledge of the area with the kayak operator sharing her knowledge from her affiliation to the Te Arawa Iwi and stories of her ancestors who had survived the eruption. I brought in books, copies of stories and legends I had found online, and copies of a replica local newspaper from the time of the Tarawera eruption, and gave them the opportunity to research areas of interest online prior to the camp and to follow up on their curiosity afterwards.



Fig 10: *Kayaking on Lake Tarawera*

The kayak from the Tarawera Outlet to Te Rata Bay the next day was beautiful. The wind had died down and the water was like glass. We kayaked together as a pod and the students chatted, laughed and sung the whole way. A couple of the girls sung waiata and the words to our school Haka. The songs added to the atmosphere of paddling across the lake surrounded by native bush. We paddled over to a golden sandy beach and pull our kayaks onto the hot sand. We took our time, eating and drinking, then some of us swam in the cool clear water. It felt like we were in paradise. Once everybody had rested, we paddled around to Te Rata

Bay, also known as Hot Water Beach. As we approached the Bay we saw the steam rising off the water hugging the shiny surface before evaporating into the afternoon sun. One of the students requested that we 'raft up' so he can share his presentation on the 'ghost waka' that was seen the morning of the Tarawera eruption. As he shared the story of the 'Ghost Waka' I can imagine a waka laden with Māori warriors appearing through the mist.

The Thermal Hangi

"Jared! Kane! Tipene! It's hangi time!" The boys come running out of their tents and Jared is clutching a giant trout.

"Did you catch that?" I ask

"Nah. I haven't caught anything. You know that boat that stopped – well I asked the guy if he had caught anything. I said 'Nah I haven't' so he gave me this!"

"What a tin arse" teases Tipene.

I get the sacking, rope and tin foil out of my drybag. Jared wraps the trout with foil and Tipene and Kane carry all the vegetables, while I carry the sacking and rope down to the natural hot pool. We use the spade that is available for bathers to dig out their hot pools, and take turns digging the coarse sand to form the thermal hangi pit. We place the foil wrapped trout and vegetables into the sack and tie the top of the sack with one end of the rope, we then lower the sack into the pit before covering it over with the wet hot sand. Jared then tied the other end of the rope to the pole on the hot pool warning sign to ensure we can pull the hangi out later. The boys appear to enjoy the responsibility and when the meal is finally cooked, they appear extremely proud. It was honestly the most tender, tasty fish I have ever eaten.

I had asked for volunteers to cook the thermal hangi and these were the boys who were keen to be involved from the beginning. They had been interested in the process of cooking a thermal hangi, and had expertise in preparing a hangi pit in the ground. The rest of the students wanted them to take on the responsibility, as they knew their evening meal was at stake. The process of preparing and cooking via thermal activity was a new learning experience for all of us.

The students appeared to thoroughly enjoy Lake Tarawera, the Te Rata Bay campsite with its thermal underground heating and hours spent soaking and chatting in the natural hot pools, around the camp cooker, and night fishing. As I stop writing and take off my head torch to try and get to sleep, I realise it is times like this I feel so happy and fortunate to be an outdoor education teacher.

When I reflect back on the Tarawera camp, it was the down time that appeared to be the highlight for many of the students. The times when students chatted to each other while doing tasks that would normally be menial, like putting up tents and preparing food. The conversations while eating dinner, or while enjoying a hot chocolate beside the torchlight were the most genuine reflections of an experience I have ever heard. This was a world away from the contrived, 'tell the teacher what she wants to hear' reflection circles that had been a big part of my outdoor education practice in the past. The students had the time to make their own fun. They played spotlight, talked for hours in the natural hot pool, and laughed and joked within and through the tent walls. Jared went fishing and took a group to catch fresh water crayfish all the while dressed in his ghillies suit.

My experience resonates with the research of Zink (2010) who found that the down time between the activities were not just a series of dots connecting the activities. She stated “When the students talked about what was important to them in the interviews after the camps, it was clear that for many of the students the activities were actually the dots that connected those spaces between the activities”(p. 34). The students did talk about the kayaking and the assessment when they evaluated the camp. When I asked them in their evaluations what were the highlights it was largely those in-between moments that they described. A lasting memory was Jared camouflaging in his ‘ghillies’ suit, which he wore for the entire camp; even at the Kawerau supermarket where we stopped for food on the drive home. The games of spotlight after dinner, the discussions they had in their tents, and the hours spent in the natural hot pool. When I asked them why these moments were important one student captured the general sentiment of many of the comments when she replied that “before camp there were several different friendship groups in this class, after this camp we are all friends with each other, we are one group” (Tarawera kayak camp evaluation, 2011). I hadn’t

considered the value of the in-between moments prior to this camp, the moments that students found the most valuable; the times where they were able to build their own connections with each other and with place/s.

As Zink (2010) contends,

as outdoor educators I think we need to take more heed of what students think are the important aspects of outdoor education to begin to understand the relationships at work and how those relationships might, or might not, work to foster our capacities to connect with others and with the environments we are moving and living in (p.35).

The Highs and Lows of the Kaimai Mamukus

After the success of the Tarawera kayak camp and place-responsive Hīkoi I was feeling enthusiastic towards the upcoming Kaimai Mamuku camp. I enjoyed exploring the different tracks with my partner who although fit, was new to tramping. It was also an opportunity to experience the places my class had been researching and learning about, and added to my excitement towards bringing my outdoor education class to the Kaimai Mamuku ranges. The tramp to Waitewheta hut was estimated to take five and a half hours from the Lindemann road end but when my partner and I did our 'reccie', we tramped to the hut and back in under seven hours with only five of that actually walking. Some sections of the tramp felt pretty steep but overall we both found the tramp manageable and enjoyable and suitable for the level of fitness of the students. Our maunga/mountain Mauao, Matakana Island and the sparkling waters of the Tauranga Moana harbour were in view as we embarked on the tramp and as the views of the Bay of Plenty came out of view, the views over the Kaimai Ranges and Mount Te Aroha came into sight.

Unfortunately when it came to taking my class to the Kaimai Mamukus many didn't find the track manageable and enjoyable. With heavy packs on their backs, and some students not 'sure' on their feet, there were some who were not able to look up for long in the fear that they would trip over a root. I was able to prompt students who were within close proximity to me to look at the views, but for some

of the students the extent of what they saw was the three metres of track ahead of them.

We stopped for lunch at the Wairoa shelter and Ruth, who is the highest achieving, and most enthusiastic student in the class, did her presentation on the pre-colonial Māori history of the Kaimais. To my surprise, the usually rowdy Cameron, Brodie, Keanu and Jordy were listening intently to her presentation. After she had finished speaking Cameron yelled out from where he was sitting at a picnic table,

“Hey Miss Townsend! Did you know that I am Māori?”

“No I didn’t. Where are you from?”

“I’ve been talking to Mum about wanting to know more recently and we are trying to find out more about our Māori side but we are Ngati Whatua from Auckland”

“Tāmaki Makaurau - that is awesome Cameron. What has brought on your interest in your Māori side?”

“It started at the Tarawera kayak camp and then during the Hīkoi. Hearing about all the stories of the places and staying on a marae, it just made me want to find out more about myself and where I am from”.

At one stage as we were walking up a steep ridge, one of the fitter students, Cameron yelled to me,

“Miss Townsend! If I were to cry like a baby right now would you carry me out of here? How can your thighs not be burning? How come your lungs aren’t collapsing in your chest?”

Then Brodie chipped in,

“Miss Townsend, you are a tank. I reckon you could carry me and Cameron one on each of your shoulders up this ridge, then go back down and carry Keanu and Jordy”.

Both boys were joking about the situation and although I laughed at what they were saying their words made me feel uncomfortable. I had gauged this tramp on my own level of fitness and not of that of my students. I also felt uncomfortable that tomorrow would be harder than today and we would be tramping for longer.

Just as my niggling worries about the plummeting morale were beginning to escalate we came to a waterfall with a swimming hole below it. We stopped to eat and drink and several of the students swam, laughed and screamed in the icy cold water. The morale picked up straight away, and for the remainder of the tramp to the hut it felt like a huge weight had been lifted from their shoulders.

On the second day the students woke early, had their breakfast and readied themselves for another day of tramping. Several of the students said they had sore muscles, and many of them asked me if there was going to be more hills today. I felt a little impatient, as the students had planned this route as a class so I assumed they would have understood exactly where they are going and what to expect on this tramp. I had negotiated the route with the class weeks ago because the original route they had planned (to include all their places of interest) involved tramping over twenty kilometres a day. They agreed to shorten the route when I explained to them they would have to tramp ten to twelve hours a day. I got them to get their maps out, and reminded them that Mount Te Aroha was almost one kilometre above sea level.

Then Brodie yells out,

“It’s alright for you Miss because you’re a tank”.

I was really hoping that Brodie and Cameron’s hilarious sense of humour would keep up the group’s morale today. I smile to myself even now when I think about their ‘shenanigans’ on locally based Hīkoi. As we set off towards Matapihi they sung ‘we are going on a bear hunt and we’re not scared’ as we walked past the bus of sports science students who were waiting to leave on their high ropes camp. Brodie had made himself known during the very first class of the year by stating proudly to the class that his goal for the year was, “to meet a walrus named Beatrice”.

The track was well formed and gently undulating for the first section, then there were numerous steep ridges to negotiate, each one climbing higher than the last. At the bottom of each ridge was a stream, and one of them had a beautiful waterfall cascading down from the mountains above. From the ridge tops we could see an incredible view over the Kaimai ranges and could see clearly the

transmission tower that dominates the summit of Te Aroha. Many of the students began to get excited at being able to see how far they had come over the last two days. As we got closer to the summit of Mount Te Aroha the students found a second wind and picked up the pace. When we arrived at the summit the sun was shining and the conditions were perfect to enjoy the view. We could see as far as the Firth of Thames, Paeroa, Waihi and all the way down the Bay of Plenty coast including Mauao to Whale Island. We could see Mount Edgecumbe and the snow-covered peaks of Nguarohoe and Ruapehu. When we looked to the south we could see Maungatautari, and farmland presented as far as the eyes could see. The students were incredibly proud of their achievement in tramping all the way from Katikati to Te Aroha. The 360-degree view from the summit endorsed their feelings of satisfaction. While we were identifying all the mountains, towns and islands within our view, Keanu, normally a quiet student, spotted Mount Pirongia and explained with pride that was his Maunga. We talked some more about his marae and his limited experience of the place. He told me he wanted to change that and that he planned to spend some time there during the next holidays. I was so pleased he could share this with me, as he initially hadn't expressed interest in anything Māori.

We spent a long time on the summit eating lunch, identifying places and listening to research presentations on the legend and history of Mount Te Aroha. After finishing off all our food and numerous photos on the summit we set off for the final descent down the mountain track to complete our journey.



Fig 11: View over the Kaimai Mamuku Ranges

The student evaluations of the Kaimai Mamuku journey were generally positive. Some students suggested we should have stayed an extra night and split the tramping into three days. Others would have liked more time swimming and doing ‘manus’ (jumping) in the water holes and it was also suggested that the group be picked up from the summit of Te Aroha. One student suggested we select a route that has, “less up hills and more down hills”

Highlights/positives included; “The views were amazing and there was a lot to see”, “seeing the Central North Island from the top of Te Aroha”, “the trip was interesting as I learned a lot about my surroundings”, “It was good, because you learnt stuff you didn’t know, and because you can share stuff you learnt”, “It was hard but the hard work rewarded itself with the accomplishment at the end”, “I liked the fact that it was challenging – often school outdoor camps don’t have much challenge...the uphill parts of the walk were good as it gave me satisfaction afterwards”. One particular student summed up the majority of the evaluations when he wrote,

I enjoyed the fitness aspect of the trip, plus the scenery and views along the way. The stories shared helped me appreciate the environment more because I had a better understanding of how tracks came to be. Reaching the

summit was rewarding and gave me a sense of achievement. However, towards the end the distance and change in incline added to the weight I was carrying started to tire me out (Kaimai Mamuku student evaluations, 2011).

For me, although not totally stress free, the camp erased all the negative memories of the Kaimai Mamukus I had from when I was a child, and more recently as a teacher. As a child I remember endless rain and a dangerous river crossing where a teacher got washed away. As an adult I have memories of kilometre after kilometre of knee-deep mud and I being surrounded by the echoing sounds of endless moaning and complaining. Prior to the camp, Reece (also an outdoor education teacher) dared me to find an enjoyable track through the Kaimais, as all his memories of the place were also negative. When I reflect on the Kaimai Mamukus now I don't think about the endless mud, and feeling like every tree is identical to the last, I think of the Kaimais as a place rich in beauty, history and legends. I no longer consider it as a place to be feared (of drowning, getting lost, of hypothermia), but consider it a familiar like a friend I have known forever.

As I looked over the farmlands of the Waikato from the summit of Te Aroha I thought about my time living in Hamilton. Firstly as an undergraduate student living in a city for the first time, and then later to start my full time teaching career at Hamilton's Fraser High School. I met some of my best friends in Hamilton, and felt a connection with the Waikato River through running along it, playing with my children, and swimming in it. For me, the journey from the Bay of Plenty to the Waikato reflected my learning journey. From the University of Waikato place where I developed a passion and love of learning to Mount Maunganui College where I was applying my knowledge and continuing to learn through putting my knowledge into practice.

As I stand on the summit and wonder what each student is thinking I feel privileged and proud that this outdoor education course has contributed to both Keanu and Cameron embracing their identities as Māori. This was a real highlight and further convinced me of the benefits to my students of implementing a place responsive approach.

Swearing from the Bunkroom

I snuggle into my duck down sleeping bag and feel the heat soak into my body for the first time today. I feel a warm wave of sleepiness come over me as my body and mind start to relax.....

then the loud shouting and laughter starts again. Then I hear swearing – it sounds like Adam and one of the girls are having a heated argument. I am reluctant to move out of my warm sleeping bag and out into the cold again, “You guys better go to sleep now if you want to have a good day tomorrow”, I yell through the thin hut wall to my students in the bunkroom next door. I would have thought they would be tired out from a long day tramping. They should have been asleep hours ago! They had already spent hours cooking, keeping the fire going, and playing cards by candlelight in front of the roaring fire. My muscles were tired and aching and I longed to be warm and fast asleep in my cosy sleeping bag. The continual disruption of hysterical laughter, chatter and the banging noise of playing cards being smashed down on the wooden floor was starting to seriously frustrate me. Yelling through the wall wasn’t having the impact I hoped for (although I shouldn’t have been surprised as the strategy had never worked before) and the swearing is escalating next door as other students take sides.

I drag myself from the comforting warmth of my sleeping bag, knocking over my torch and drink bottle with a loud bang on the wooden floor in the process. I was trying my best not to disturb the other teacher and two student teachers who are also trying to sleep. I burst into the students’ bunkroom grumpy and irritated. “What is all the swearing going on in here? You guys are not kids any more and it shouldn’t take me to growl you for you to go to sleep!!! You are old enough to know it will be difficult to enjoy your day tomorrow if you are tired and grumpy” “Well miss I am not going to have a good day tomorrow and I have had a fucking horrible day today! This camp sucks! Walking for hours up steep hills with a heavy pack on my back, how come you like it so much? It sucks!” screamed Adam.

“Who the heck do you think you are cussing out a teacher!” said Alex, “You are the selfish prick who is keeping us awake being an egg and farting and stuff”

“Well, (*I was feeling well and truly pissed off by now*), your attitude sucks Adam. What about the views we saw looking back at Mauao, Matakana and Tauranga Moana? What about looking over the Kaimai ranges and seeing Mount Te Aroha ahead? What about learning all those interesting stories and histories of this area? What about the beautiful streams we crossed, and the achievement of tramping right across the Kaimai Mamukus from Bay of Plenty to the Waikato?”

“I’m sorry miss I’ve had a bad couple of weeks”

“There is no need to swear at people and get nasty, try and focus on the positives of this experience Adam and I can bet you will have a better day tomorrow. You are usually keen as for everything and positive Adam, after the I looked forward to what you would bring to this camp. I will never forget your Jordy Shore version of the Karewa Island legend on the Hikoi.”.

Adam did have a better day the next day but he wasn't his usual cheery self. His girlfriend had broken up with him just before the camp and he was heartbroken. The camp wasn't planned to be hard, I just wanted them all to have the opportunity to see all of the different places that they were interested in. The incident affected my relationship with Adam for some time after and also had a negative impact on his friendship with Alex and a couple of the other girls in the class. By the time they were Year 13 the whole class had become really close and although not forgotten, he was forgiven, and we were all able to laugh at what occurred in the bunkroom that night.

What I learnt from the Kaimai Mamuku was the importance of allowing some in-between time as had happened by chance at Lake Tarawera, and the importance of students' feelings of ownership of the experience and gaining an understanding of the impact of their words and actions on the experience of others in the class.

I responded to the student feedback and made changes the following year. I co-constructed the aims and objectives of the journey with the class. The agreed aims were to have fun, learn the history and stories of the Kaimais Mamuku ranges, and to gain the skills to plan and prepare for the camp. I wanted the students to take greater ownership of the experience and the route they would be taking. I gave the students maps and track guides and got the students to write their own

route descriptions. They negotiated and decided as group when and where they will stop and the most appropriate order and place to share their presentations. To work towards achieving these aims represented a move away from asking the teacher, ‘How far’, ‘How much longer’ and ‘when do we stop for lunch’ and allow them to work it out for themselves themselves. They reflect on how their words and actions impact on the fun and enjoyment of others, and they recognise the need to not have every minute of the camp structured to allow for those in-between moments.

From Rushing to Racism

It has been a busy day and I feel stressed from all the rushing today as I walk briskly to the classroom. Our place responsive is in two days and we have two periods of class time and a lunchtime to check that everybody is organised, and to load the mountain bikes into the trailer. I check the papers I’m carrying to make sure I have my plan and notes for this lesson and the copies of our school waiata. The plan today is for students to work in their groups and check all their logistics for Thursday and to practice our school waiata for the Pōwhiri. I move around the room checking that the groups are organised with their food, clothing and equipment, and that their research presentations on significant places has been planned. Once I am confident that every group has everything in place I stand up the front of the class to get their attention. I tell them the story of the origin of our school waiata,

“There were a group of twenty MMC teachers and we participated in a two day hui at a marae in Bethlehem. The focus of the hui was to look at ways to raise the achievement of Māori students at our school. It was a fantastic opportunity to work with colleagues and share ideas and insights to improve the educational experience of our Māori students. During one of the activities a small group of teachers decided to write a waiata for our school. The song is called ‘Te Kotahitanga’ and it is about unity and is based on the principles of Te Kotahitanga and Mount Maunganui College. As you all probably remember from when you learnt it on Year 9 camp it is sung to the tune of ‘We are the world’ which was sung by USA for Africa and written by Michael Jackson”.

I go on to explain the protocol for the Pōwhiri and emphasise how important it is that we support our speaker by singing our school waiata. I share my embarrassing experience that occurred at a sports exchange when I ended up singing solo and flat at a because nobody else had learnt the song. We practice the waiata a few times and we were actually starting to sound pretty good. Then Jordy, a Pākehā student, whom I have had a few issues with his behaviour in the past calls out,

“this song is shit, and this school is shit”

After a rather tiresome day I had lost the last of my patience and I wasn't up to Jordy's negative attitude and I replied,

“Jordy I think your attitude is shit and with a shit attitude it will be difficult for you to gain anything positive from school”.

After my outburst I talk to Jordy one on one. I ask him why he says the things he does. He apologises and says he doesn't really mean the things he says. I apologise for swearing at him in front of the class but tell him I find the things he says offensive and I get fed up with it, especially when his comments are often racist. Other students in the class used the situation to express some of their thoughts on things Māori.

Cameron (who is Māori but has not identified himself as yet) kicks off with, “Miss, did you know there is a page on facebook that says ‘you have no culture if you are white’? Don't you think that is racist?”

“Māori are racist towards us and then they get heaps of scholarships and I think that is unfair” says Laurelle.

“and they give their land away and then want it back!” chips in Brodie

I am utterly shocked at their comments and look at the Māori students in the class to see if they are feeling offended as well. Keanu has put on his earphones and turns up the volume, Jared moves his seat back, leaning his chair precariously against the wall and puts his head down. Ruth starts talking a million miles an hour about how excited she is to go on the tomorrow and pretends the other conversation isn't happening.

“Even though the things that some of you have said are racist and somewhat offensive, I am not going to call you racist. I think you believe these things because there is so much you don't know. Through the media and your education there has been so much of our history you haven't been aware of. So I am going

to tell you all about it during our , starting with you Laurelle. You and I are going to share a double kayak on the Hikoi ”.

“I look forward to hearing all about it” (*she says this sincerely not sarcastically*).

I genuinely liked the students in my outdoor education class but felt angered and disturbed by their ignorant racist beliefs. How could these students believe in Māori privilege when the ‘gaps’ between ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’, between ‘rich’ and ‘poor’, between ‘those who succeed’ and ‘those who fail’, and between ‘Pākehā’ and ‘Māori’ are so blaringly obvious (Penetito,2002). These disparities are also reflected at all levels of the education system (Bishop et al. 2009). In comparison to Pākehā students the overall academic achievement levels of Māori students is low. Their rate of suspension from school is three times higher; they are over-represented in special education programmes for behavioral issues; tend to be over-represented in low stream education classes; are more likely than other students to be found in vocational curriculum streams; leave school earlier with less formal qualifications and enrol in tertiary education in lower proportions (Ministry of Education, 2010). Then we wonder as teachers why our high achieving Māori students do not identify as Māori – they don’t want to be associated with these negative statistics.

Many commentators argue that New Zealand’s education system has long been discriminatory – in curriculum content, the language subjects are taught in, and government educational practices that brought about the assimilation of Māori culture into Pākehā culture with the consequent loss of identity and self-esteem for many Māori children (Bishop and Glynn 1999). Such policies resulted in Māori political and economic marginalisation and, consequently, impoverishment” (Wearmouth, Bishop & Berryman, 2010).

There are a number of negative stereotypes of Māori that exist in our society. These stereotypes are reinforced by the use of racist jokes; biased media coverage and the portrayal of Māori in movies such as *Once were Warriors (1994)*. When Pākehā watch and listen to these views they are already aware of the negative stereotypes of Māori (e.g. poor, uneducated, violent and troublesome; as shown in the Heke family), so they believe these images to be honest and ‘real’, reinforcing

the view that the violence and lifestyle of this film represents normal life for Māori (Hayes, 1995). This results in Māori being treated negatively in society. This is defined as interpersonal racism. As Moewaka et al (2013) contend, “Interpersonal racism is defined as differential assumptions of the abilities and intentions of others based on their race and differential actions towards someone because of their race”(p. 69). These assumptions can be used to exclude, treat unfairly, ignore and disrespect someone on the basis of their racial background.

For Māori these views contribute to the negative stereotypes of Māori and to ‘Internalised Racism’. For many Māori internalised racism “centres around internalising racist stereotypes, believing them to be true and justifiable and then acting on that internalisation” (Moewaka, Taiapa, Borell, McCreanor, 2013, p. 67). The influence that racist stereotypes have on Māori can have an impact on decision- making and the naturalisation of particular behaviours for Māori. This leads to Māori believing they are not Māori unless they fall under the racial stereotypes (Moewaka, Taiapa, Borell, McCreanor, 2013). As highlighted in chapter four, research undertaken at MMC found that Māori students identified a range of perceptions in relation to being Māori. These included perceptions of physical appearance, personality traits and behaviours. Being Māori at MMC was perceived by Māori students as having involvement in negative behaviours such as theft, drugs, smoking, alcohol, gangs and violence (Robertson, 2013). Internal racism reflected in how Māori males perceive themselves and this has a negative impact on self- perception and can compromise success in institutions such as education (Hokowhitu, 2004). For Māori that do ‘fit’ the definition of Māori according to the negative stereotypes in society, these perceptions can result in Māori to feel shame of their own culture and a reluctance to belong or learn of their cultural history, “The influences of racialised assumptions are manifest in feelings of shame, occasional contestation and a general sense of the low value assigned to Māori culture” (Moewaka, Taiapa, Borell, McCreanor, 2013, p. 68).

How do we overcome interpersonal and internalized racism in our schools and in our society as a whole? I believe having no tolerance for racist jokes or behaviour is vitally important. Students know that racist comments will not be accepted in outdoor education or any other forum, in any shape or form. I believe

Interrogating and confronting the racist beliefs of others is vitally important in order for students to reflect on the origins of their opinions. Many of these racist opinions are based on ignorance and knowledge of our colonial history, including the land wars and subsequent confiscations. Education about these events, could contribute to dismantling these beliefs.

An opportunity for all students to learn history and legends through their experiences of place/s can also contribute to a greater respect and understanding of the Māori worldview and culture. The implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies, and in particular a place responsive approach means students can learn the significance of place/s not only for themselves but how they link with the culture and history of iwi and hapu. Research shows that cultural practice, tribal structures and whakapapa are all significant in the development of Māori identity (Broughton, 1993; Durie, 2002; Moeke-Pickering, 1996; Murchie, 1984). When Māori students are encouraged to use their own whanau/hapu/tribe as a starting point for better understanding of both their cultural and educational lives, they will feel empowered to embrace the gifts they possess and use them to progress educationally, culturally and spiritually. As Straker (2012) contends, “direct intimate encounters allows for sensory and emotional experiences, which enhance our connection to the outdoors, enrich our knowledge of ecological systems, and provide opportunities to reflect on how certain places influence who we are” (p. 170). A place responsive approach allows Māori students to connect or reconnect with their customs, values, traditions, art, music, whakapapa, and te reo. These experiences in the outdoors rekindled the participants’ sense of being Māori or to further their understandings of Māori perspectives (Brown, 2008b).

A strength of a place-responsive pedagogy is that it encourages responsiveness to both place and its peoples. Students, both Māori and non- Māori, can begin to appreciate how the social, cultural, and environmental history of places influences what they know and what they believe. The beauty of a place responsive approach in outdoor education is that it allows students to engage with, and learn from, the environment as we travel along the trail (track, harbour, road) and “provides opportunities for exploring ideas, but so too does the communal sharing of stories and ideas” (Straker, 2012, p.172). Through positive embodied experience, and

building a connection with place(s), students can develop empathy towards their significant place(s). This connection and empathy leads to questioning and critiquing of race based beliefs and how relationships to the land are perceived. Questions such as those presented by Wendell Berry (1987) might shift or reshape attitudes; whose place is this? Who has lived here? Who lives here now? What is the history of this place? How am I connected to this place and its history?

This shift in attitude was illustrated on our locally based Hikoī. We arrived in Welcome Bay after kayaking across the Raungataua harbour from the Matapihi peninsula. Once we had loaded up the kayaks we listened to a presentation by one of the students on the origins of the naming of the local streets. For example, Victory Street in Welcome Bay was named after Nelson's flagship at the battle of Trafalgar in 1805, and Dunkirk Street was named in the 1950s to commemorate the dramatic evacuation of British troops from the French coastal town in 1940, then later streets were named after New Zealand Navy ships (Bellamy, 1982). The students discussed the origins of these names at length and asked questions as to why streets were named after ships that had no relevance to Welcome Bay, or its histories and stories. This led to further investigation and students discovered the links between the naming of places and our colonial past (Byrnes, 2002).

After a day rich with connections forged from embodied experiences, through listening to stories and legends that related to significant features such as the harbour, and our Maunga, the lack of significance of the naming of Welcome Bay and its streets created a shift and re-shape of their attitudes towards place and naming of places.

As illustrated in the example above, place(s) can be experienced in a variety of ways. One of outdoor education's strengths lies in the provision of embodied experiences (e.g., the feel of a rock face, the smell of the bush). However, as Wattachow and Brown (2011) argue, outdoor education does have the potential to play an important role in connecting people and places in a way that can enrich learning for both individuals, communities and the places they live. As has been argued, places are not simply locations but sites of lived experience and meaning in which ongoing activities can be framed. As such they "are important sources of

individual and communal identity, and are often centres of human existence to which people have deep emotional and psychological ties” (Relph, 1976. p.141). The significance of place is expressed by Casey (cited in Gruenewald, 2003b) when he argues,

To be at all – to exist in any way – is to be somewhere is to be in some kind of place. Place is as requisite as the air we breathe, the ground on which we stand, the bodies we have. We are surrounded by places. We walk over and through them. We live in places, relate to others in them, die in them.

Nothing we do is unplaced (p.624).

CHAPTER SEVEN:

‘Ko te pae tawhiti whaaia kia tata, Ko te pae tata whakamaua kia tina’

Seek out distant horizons, and cherish those you attain.

I have chosen this whakataukī because it represents the personal interpretation and reflection of my goals for this learning journey I have embarked on for the last three years. In this chapter I revisit the guiding research question, which was to evaluate my experiences as a secondary school teacher seeking to enrich learning for Māori outdoor education students, and reflect on how could these experiences might inform the professional practice of other educators I will also revisit and evaluate two other questions that were derived from my major research question. Why is it that traditional outdoor education is not appealing to the majority of Māori students?; and, How might the implementation of a Place Responsive Approach make outdoor education more desirable for Māori students?

Cherish the horizons you attain

Statistics just ‘don’t do it for me’, numbers just don’t float my boat, graphs don’t ‘spin my wheels’, quite the opposite actually. I find graphs and number tables yawn inducing and boring. When I am at presentations or reading a research article and come across graphs and tables my mind wanders off to somewhere more interesting – usually outdoors with the feeling of sun on my skin, with the sweet sound of a paddle moving through the water and the gentle lapping noise of waves brushing against the hull of my kayak.

At this moment I am analysing statistics for my Board of Trustees report. This isn’t my favourite part of my Head of Department role, but what I see in front of me fills me with excitement. I am so elated I could jump on my desk and do the celebratory running man. At least I could if my desk wasn’t such a mess!

The statistics in front of me tell me this. The number of Māori opting to take outdoor education have doubled in one year, and have more than tripled from the numbers in 2010. The numbers of Māori opting to take Year 12 outdoor education increased from 3.8% in 2010 to 45 percent of in 2013 (kamar markbook). Not only are more Māori opting to take outdoor education as a subject, a higher percentage are experiencing NCEA success since the implementation of a place responsive approach. Since 2010 Māori students have increased the percentage of achieved grades by twenty percent, merit grades by sixteen percent, and excellence grades by five percent. Overall grades in Year 12 outdoor education have also increased since 2010 with a twelve percent increase in achieved grades, eight percent increase in merit grades and a four percent increase in excellence grades.

The number of outdoor education classes have also increased. In 2010 there was one Year twelve outdoor education class with over half of the students comprising of International fee paying students. In 2014 there are two Year eleven classes, two Year twelve classes and one Year thirteen class.

After work I stand on the summit of Mauao and reflect on this journey and the places I have been with my students and I feel exultant. The statistics I analysed do not tell the full story of what I have experienced with my students over the last three years; - the tensions and the revelations, the joy and exhilaration, the frustrations and conflicts. My hope is that my thesis will be an expression of the learning journey I have travelled.

Wider spheres of influence

Although I have been central to this learning journey, I am acutely aware that “one’s stories are constructed in and through the stories of others” (Holman-Jones, 2005, p. 784). Moreover as Nudd, Schriver and Galloway (2001) argue, when we place our lives and bodies in the texts that we create, engage and perform, they are “no longer just our own; they become part of the community experience” (p. 113).

The students involved on this journey have had their own spheres of influence. They have experienced outdoor education in their own way and have built their own memories, and have their own stories to tell of their experiences in the outdoors and of their significant places. They have shared these experiences with family/whanau, and friends. Through word of mouth between students and their younger siblings, relatives and relationships the appeal of outdoor education has grown and subsequently so has the number of Māori opting to take outdoor education as a subject.

Through my own sphere of influence as head of department (HOD), my recent involvement in the TRLI project and applying for and receiving an internal initiative grant, I was able to share the place responsive approach and discuss with colleagues how the approach could be implemented in other subject areas through HOD meetings. This contributed to the introduction of a professional development initiative, and subsequent development of a working party, to implement a place responsive approach across the curriculum at Year 9. The cross curricula unit built on these camp experiences and was named 'Kō wai ra' which means 'who we are' and is named after our school haka. A colleague who was also involved in the TRLI project lead the implementation of a PRA for the Year 9 camps with Mauao and our coastline a central theme. The 'Kō wai ra' unit builds on the momentum of Year 9 camps and aims to create connections with each other as a school community and our significant place/s. Once the approach is embedded, the goal is to build on this learning at Year 10 and in other subject areas across the senior school.

The sphere of influence also spread to the student teachers who were a part of the learning prior to the camp experiences and accompanied my class on various Hīkoi. I observed them change their perceptions of what constituted an outdoor education course and there have been a number of student teachers whose enthusiasm contributed to the experience. Those who have gone on to teach outdoor education have made contact to obtain ideas and assessment resources to initiate their own place responsive outdoor education course.

My parents and siblings also had roles in designing the route of the Hīkoi and were involved in supporting the journey through driving a support van and accompanying the class. My daughter, and her friends were part of the 2012 place-responsive course. The inclusion and influence of family/whanau has also had a positive influence in the lives of the school community. Many parents have shared with me examples of their child planning family excursions to the places they went as part of the locally based and Kaimai Mamuku Hīkoi and how the experience has enriched them as a family.

The place responsive approach also affected a colleague on a personal level. I was keen to get the head of Māori involved in outdoor education as I felt his skills and knowledge would complement the outdoor education programme at Mount Maunganui College. I invited him to join me on a PRA Year 10 activity which included one day of learning about and exploring the Waikareo Estuary, Matua, Otumoetai, and Bethlehem via mountain bike, one day involving a walk up Mauao, and a day on Matakana Island swimming, kayaking, visiting the spotted dotterel nesting area, Moko's (the dolphin) grave and picking up rubbish along the shoreline. Through this experience he got to learn about the history and legends of Ngāi Te Rāngi, which he is affiliated to through his mother, and learn about his prominent ancestors and place/s. This experience spurred him to learn more and he returned to these sites two weeks later with his young son as he wanted to pass on some of this knowledge to him.

I hope through writing this thesis this sphere of influence will spread wider. Through utilizing autoethnography as my method my experience on this learning journey should be accessible to a wide audience.

The appeal of a place responsive outdoor education course for Māori

Outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand has been developed from colonist roots with the aim to prepare young men for war and for life in the colonies. The 'place' where these activities took place was largely irrelevant as outdoor education used the land as a venue to undertake 'a quick raid' (Brookes, 2002) or a location to move through like an 'express train' (Loynes, 1999) where groups

are racing through the countryside without thought of the very landscape through which they pass. Culture, the history and significance of places were largely ignored and the outcomes of participation tended to be predetermined (Brown, 2008). Therefore Eurocentric values have tended to dominate the subject and consequently Māori perspectives of the outdoors have largely been ignored.

Through my postgraduate study and having the time away from the school environment, I was able to step back and reflect on my outdoor education practice and the activities I offered as part of my Year 12 outdoor education course. I became aware of cultural assumptions that underpin particular activities and investigated strategies to change what I taught to suit the needs of my students, in particular, my Māori students. Through reading about other educators' experiences of implementing a place responsive approach I became excited about the prospect of introducing it to outdoor education at Mount Maunganui College. A place - responsive approach represented a significant pedagogical shift from skill and risk focused outdoor education to programmes that focus on the significance and relationship with 'place(s)'. The approach appealed to me because although culture and place are believed to be deeply connected, our relationship with places has, in the past, been obscured by an educational system that neglects them (Gruenewald, 2003b). If human experience, identity, and culture are intimate with, and inseparable from, our relationship with places, places deserve much attention in discussions of education. Park (1995) and Wattchow (2006) contend our experiences of places are fundamental and inseparable from our lived experiences of the world. If human experience, identity, and culture are intimate with, and inseparable from, our relationship with places, places deserve much attention in discussions of education.

Māori students are more likely to thrive in a culturally responsive environment that 'localises' curriculum (Penetito, 2004). Through the implementation of a place responsive approach the learning experiences more closely linked to the Māori students' whanau/hapu/iwi whakapapa, traditions and stories. This is implemented through appropriate outdoor activities such as the Hīkoi, that resonant with both students and place(s).

Through my experiences as an outdoor educator seeking to enrich the experiences of Māori rangitahi in my outdoor education course I found that the implementation of a place responsive approach had a significant effect on student's sense of identity, and allowed students to bring who they were as Māori into the outdoor education class. I had the privilege to see students such as Jared and Ruth thrive in outdoor environments where they were able to demonstrate their cultural knowledge and skills. For Māori students who did not have the cultural knowledge, they had the opportunity to develop their knowledge in a non-threatening environment and gain pride in who they were as young Māori. I saw this with Lara and Cameron who changed their enrolment information to include their Iwi affiliation half way through the school year and began to identify themselves as Māori.

For the non- Māori in the class, the experiences were also significant in connecting students to each other, the school community and our significant place/s. The International students in the course shared their gratitude for having the opportunity to explore the significant place/s in what they considered their home for six months and relished the opportunity to learn the history, stories and legends of their place. They were able to contrast the experience with their experience as tourists loaded onto buses, to visit far offplaces, and they felt empathy towards those without the opportunity to get to know the place in which they lived.

Māori tikanga has become an authentic part of what we do in outdoor education and I have found I am no longer questioned or asked by students why we do things. For instance, before every journey we recite a karakia (or prayer) to ensure a safe journey. Making Māoritanga part of everything we do has removed the cringe factor that the 'cultural add ons' initiatives such as 'taha Māori' have created in the past.

The removal of contrived activities such as adventure based learning, high ropes and strategies such as reflection circles and debriefing sessions has allowed for more authentic reflection of experience. The conversations students had while tramping, biking, and kayaking as well as preparing meals and eating together, provided more honest insights into their experiences and their learning.

Through my own experience I have learnt the importance of students having the opportunity, time and space to create their own activities and in doing so, to add their own stories to the place(s) we visit.

Future Directions

A number of students (both Māori and Pākehā) shared in their evaluations that they would have liked to have improved their place responsive evaluations through taking more time on practicing speaking in front of others and improving their Māori pronunciation (student evaluations, 2011; 2012). In response to this feedback I had several conversations with the Head of Māori at our school, and after inviting him to join me on a Year 10 PRA experience I discussed with him the possibility of him continuing his involvement in outdoor education and working with me to develop some cross curricula units. This would mean that students would get credits for doing their presentations and would have the opportunity in class to improve their Māori pronunciation. Previous to 2014 the research and presentations were not assessed even though they were the major focus prior to the . They were in fact assessed on their level of social responsibility and their contribution to the experience. Te Manaakitanga (Head of Māori) and I added two Māori Tourism unit standards to the course. The first one required students to ‘Explain the importance, and demonstrate correct pronunciation, of Māori place names in tourism’ and ‘Identify, and explain the history of, natural attractions and significant sites in tourism Māori’ (NZQA, 2012). Te Manaakitanga joined the class for four lessons prior to the Hīkoi and taught the class how to pronounce Māori correctly and students’ gained a basic understanding of Māori terms. Te Manaakitanga spoke on our behalf at the Pōwhiri for the first Hīkoi in 2011 and accompanied us on the entire in 2014.

I see the potential of creating full cross curricula courses of study in the future where students can study units from history, English, geography, education for sustainability and biology based around our significant places. This is a vision shared by the Principal and Senior Management and I have shared with them a

proposal for a 'Mauao Studies' course for when constraints like the timetable allow it to go ahead.

A Place Responsive - Approach and Te Kotahitanga

Bishop, Berryman, Richardson & Tiakiwai (2007) found that effective teachers of Māori create a culturally appropriate and responsive context for learning in their classrooms. This includes the rejection of deficit theorizing as a means to explain Māori students educational achievement levels; and an understanding of pedagogical strategies and approaches to bring about change in Māori students' educational achievement and are professionally committed to making a positive difference.

Bishop et al offered The Te Kotahitanga (2003) Effective Teaching Profile (ETP) as a professional development tool to evaluate teachers. The ETP consists of six elements: *Manaakitanga* where teachers care for their students as culturally located human beings above all else; *Mana motuhake*, where teachers care for the performance of their students; *Nga whakapiringatanga*, where teachers are able to create a secure, well-managed learning environment; *Wananga*, where teachers are able to engage in effective teaching interactions with Māori students as Māori; *Ako*, where teachers can use strategies that promote effective teaching interactions and relationships with their learners; *Kotahitanga*, where teachers promote, monitor and reflect on outcomes that in turn lead to improvements in educational achievement for Māori students.

I believe the significant improvement in academic results of Māori in outdoor education, and the increase in Māori who are now opting to study outdoor education as a senior subject reflect the elements of *Mana motuhake*, *Nga whakapiringananga*, and *wananga* in my teaching approach. *Ako* was demonstrated through the students' investigations of significant places and the leading and sharing of knowledge with their peers and myself as teacher. The process of reflecting on the outdoor education course, teacher inquiry, and through the personal learning undertaken in writing this thesis reflect the element of Kotahitanga.

All six elements have been crucial to enriching the learning of Māori students in outdoor education. However, as I argued in chapter five, *Tangata Whenuatanga* has been the most significant element (Ministry of Education, 2011). *Tangata Whenuatanga* utilises a place responsive approach and all learning and interaction occurs within an authentic cultural context. *Tangata whenuatanga* also links with *manaakitanga* in that teachers know the *whakapapa* of whom they teach. This means knowledge of who their students are, where they are from, what hapu and iwi they belong to, and their significant places such as maunga, awa, moana that they *whakapapa* to (Ministry of Education, 2011). This to me is the essence of a place responsive approach and encompasses all six elements of Te Kotahitanga.

Tensions and frustrations

There were frustrations and tensions on this learning journey. On my return from study leave in 2010 the rest of the physical education team were puzzled when I explained why I thought that we should no longer teach adventure based learning (ABL) or include high ropes challenges in our courses. This was puzzling for them because I had been the person who wrote the ABL units and took my class on high ropes courses. For some on staff, it took time to change and adapt to a new approach. This was highlighted when my outdoor education class begun their Hiko they walked past a bus of sports science students who were about to leave on a high ropes course. It took a colleague to attend a conference presentation I ran about my outdoor education course to finally convince him there was more value for our students if we change our approach.

As I had presented in the past and it was known I had been studying at post graduate level I was asked to present workshops and courses on ABL to other teachers and caused offence when I explained at length why I no longer taught 'de-contextualised' outdoor education that originated from colonial roots. My offer to run workshops on implementing a place-responsive approach was not met with enthusiasm. When my Year 13 outdoor educator students designed and lead activities with the focus on the connections between people and place a well-meaning observer emailed me information and tools on how to run de-briefing

sessions and ABL activities and offered to assist me to teach the students to facilitate. Although I could see the irony of the situation, I was offended and frustrated that this person couldn't see the wonderful job these students had done as leaders. They designed engaging activities and had genuine conversations with the Year 9 students. They made a positive impact on the students and their connections with each other and our place(s). I felt angered that I had to defend them when they had done such an outstanding job.

Through this learning journey I became very close with the students who learned alongside me and were very much a part of the changes I made to Year 12 outdoor education at Mount Maunganui College. I was excited to see where the journey would take these students from here, as I saw potential for some of the Māori students, particularly Ruth and Jared, to forge careers in the outdoors and influence the future practice of outdoor educators.

A Great Outdoor Eder is Lost

“Hey Ruth. I just wanted to catch up with you before you go.”

It is the last day of school for our senior students and we are both at the Year 13 morning tea. The thinking behind the staff and student morning tea is that if we treat the Year 13s like young adults and invite them to have cakes, savories, and juice with staff we can then surprise them by telling them they can leave school early. This usually prevents the mass water bomb fights that have occurred in the past.

Ruth gives me a hug.

“Miss...”

“Yes?”

“You know how you were always asking me how I was going in outdoor ed this year?”

“Yes, and you would hardly even talk to me”

“Well when you asked me that I didn't say much because I was scared I was going to cry”

“Oh no, I have been worried about you – especially when I heard you hadn’t gone on camp. I was really surprised...wondered what was going on because you contributed so much to the class last year and you were my top student”

“I just didn’t have a good relationship with Miss Smith. Outdoor ed wasn’t fun anymore. I told you on the Kaimai camp that you needed to take the Year 13 class this year. It just hasn’t been the same this year. Did you know Jared and Tipene stopped coming to class after about three weeks.”

“Do you still want a career in the outdoors? Like I said to you could be part of a big change in the industry and you are such a good role model for Māori girls”.

“No miss. I am going to study design next year”

“I hope you will still enjoy the outdoors in your spare time and take your family and friends to all the places you loved”.

“I do miss and yes I will”

“Last years class will always be special to me. We completely changed the outdoor ed course together. I felt like everybody was part of it and everybody was onboard and I felt we all became close because of it”.

“Even Jordy miss?”

“I did find Jordy’s argumentative nature difficult but he was still part of the class. Actually I should go and tell him that”.

“It was amazing that he would argue about wearing jeans on the Hīkoi Thank you miss... for everything. I did tell you you should have taught the Year 13 class!”

“Yeah I know, I wish I had now. Hey come back and visit and maybe you could come back and join in on one of the camps during your Uni holidays”

“I would like that miss”.

We give each other a big hug. I then walk off to find Jordy.

Ruth hasn’t been in and hasn’t joined me on any camps. The pain of losing her to outdoor education still hurts me today. She was so enthusiastic towards the subject and spoke of the place-responsive approach enriching her life. I deeply regret that I didn’t follow the 2011 class to Year 13 as I could see they couldn’t go back to a traditional approach after they had constructed a place responsive course alongside me. I followed the 2012 class up Year 13 and we created a place –responsive course that built on their previous skills and knowledge.

Intimidated by Autoethnography

I have found the process of writing of this thesis a journey of discovery. At the beginning of this journey I was introduced to autoethnography and became convinced that this was the best method for representing my journey. I read so many wonderful stories that touched me, permeating warmth from the inside, and stimulated me to share the stories and discuss the messages in the narratives at length. I learnt the meaning of sensual, evocative, insightful and engaging, when it is used in texts. I could feel, and relate to the words with all my senses, and I felt emotionally connected to the writer of these stories.

My problem was I had real difficulty writing stories that were sensual and evocative and I was intimidated by the autoethnographies I had read. I had only just returned to study after teaching for eleven years and had only just begun to feel confident in my ability to write in an academic style again. Autoethnography turned my academic world upside down. After meetings with Clive and Mike (my thesis supervisors) over my early attempts with this method, I would have a huge lump in my throat and be fighting back tears. I believed autoethnography was the best way to represent my learning journey through writing this thesis and to make it accessible to a wider audience; my problem was my writing was absolute crap. Through this learning journey have been times where I have been overwhelmed with feelings of self - doubt and I questioned whether I would ever finish this thesis. I suspect at times, I was also a source of frustration for Mike and Clive, as weeks would go by without me sending any writing in for feedback as I became engulfed in my life at school.

However, in many ways I never stopped working towards this thesis. I have never waived my belief in the value of this research. I have spent the last three years putting the theory into practice, re-writing two full NCEA courses and experiencing with all my senses the connections my students made with each other, with me and with our place(s). I have learnt so much throughout the learning journey and despite the frustrations and tensions also incredibly rewarding as it has enriched my life and the life of my students.

Through this learning journey I have rediscovered a passion for outdoor education and can see the great potential a place responsive approach could have across the curriculum and the profound difference it has made and could make to the educational experience of Māori.

Inā kei te mohio koe ko wai koe,

I anga mai koe i hea,

kei te mohio koe.

Kei te anga atu ki hea.

*If you know who you are and where you are from, then you will know where you
are going.*

Ko au te whenua, Ko te whenua ko au.

I am the land and the land is me

Glossary of Māori Terms

Word or Term	Meaning
āhua	feature(s), aspect(s); shape, look, nature of a person
Ako	to learn
Aotearoa	New Zealand
Aroha	kindness, affection, love, compassion
Atua	deities, gods
Awa	river, channel, gully
Haka	vigorous dances with actions and rhythmically shouted words
hāngi	earth oven; food cooked in earth oven
hapū	sub-tribe(s) that share a common ancestor
Harakeke	Flax
Iwi	tribal kin group; nation
kaiāwhina	helper, assistant
Kaikaranga	person making a ceremonial call of welcome.
kaikōrero	speaker, orator
Kaimahi	worker, staff
Kaikōura	a town of the north-eastern South Island of NZ
Kaikōura-Wakatu	part of the north-eastern South Island coastline of NZ
Kaimoana	sea food
Kaitiaki	guardian, minder; custodian over natural resources
kaitiakitanga	guardianship; cultural and financial guardianship; accountability
Kanikani	to dance
Kaumatua	Elder
Kaupapa	topic, basis; guiding principles
Kauri	a native forest tree of Aotearoa
Kawa	professional practice, ethical practices, protocols
Kawakawa	a dark variety of greenstone
Kete	basket made of flax strips

Kina	sea egg
Kiore	Rat
Koha	gift, token, pledge
kōrero	speak, talk, discuss; discussion
Kotahitanga	unison/unity
Kupu	word, anything said
Kura	school; red; precious
māhakitanga	Humility
Mahi	Work
Mana	prestige, status, authority, influence, integrity; honour, respect
mana motuhake	autonomy, independence, authority
mana whenua	authority over land and natural resources, tribal estates
manaakitanga	respect; hospitality, kindness; mutual trust, respect and concern
Manuhiri	visitor(s)
Māoritanga	the very essence of being Māori
Marae	tribal meeting grounds; village common
marae ātea	village forecourt, village gathering point
mātauranga	knowledge, tradition, epistemology
mātauranga Māori	Māori knowledge
mātua	Parents
Mauao	The name of the extinct volcano at Mount Maunganui
Maunga	Mountain
Mauri	life essence, life force, energy, life principle
mauri ora	knowing who we are
Moana	sea, ocean
mōteatea	Lament
mōteatea	song, chant
Mt Maunganui	a mountain east of the Tauranga Harbour also known as Mauao. Tamatea-arikinui gave the name Maunganui as another name for Mauao in memory of a similar mountain in Hawaiiki.

pā	home; a term used for a row of weaving; fortified Māori village
Pākehā	a person of predominantly European descent
pōwhiri	to welcome; welcome ceremony
Rangatahi	Youth
Ranginui	Rangi for short: the name given to the Sky Father
Reo	Language
Taiaha	close quarters combat weapon
Tāne	a son of Ranginui and Papatūānuku
tāne	male(s)
Tangata	person(s), people
tangata whenua	indigenous people of the land, first people of the land
Tangaroa	(personal name) <i>atua</i> of the sea and fish, he was one of the offspring of Rangi-nui and Papa-tū-ā-nuku and fled to the sea when his parents were separated.
Taonga	precious; an heirloom to be passed down through the different generations of a family; protected natural resource
Tapu	sacrosanct, prohibited, protected, restricted
Tautoko	Support
Taurima	treat with care
Tawa	a native tree; fruit of the tawa tree
Te Ao Māori	Māori worldview
Te Arawa	name of a central North Island Māori tribe
Tikanga	customs and practices
tikanga Māori	Māori customs and practices
Tinana	Body
tinu rangatiratanga	self-governing; having absolute independence and autonomy
Tipuna	Ancestor
tīpuna	ancestors; ancestral
Tohunga	expert, skilled, learned
tuakana - teina	elder-younger sibling
Tūhoe	name of an inland eastern Bay of Plenty Māori tribe, North Island, NZ

Tukutuku	ornamental lattice work on interior walls of a wharenuī or meeting house
Tuna	Eel
tungāne - tuāhine	male – female
Tupuna	ancestor; ancestral
tūpuna	ancestors; ancestral
tupuna awa	ancestral river
tūrangawaewae	a permanent place to stand, a place where one has the right to stand and be heard
Wai	Water
Waiata	sing, song, chant
Wairua	spirit, soul; attitude
Waka	Canoe
waka huia	treasure box
waka taua	war canoe
wānanga	Māori houses of higher learning, tertiary institute; conscious thought-processing discussion; transmitting the knowledge of the culture from one generation to the next
Wero	Challenge
Whaea	mother, aunt
whaikōrero	formal speech, oratory
Whakapapa	genealogy, ancestry, familial relationships; unlike the Western concept of genealogy, whakapapa crosses ancestral boundaries between people and other inhabitants in the natural world
whakapapa Māori	Māori genealogy
whakapiringatanga	a secure, well-managed environment
Whakatau	critical assessment
Whakataukī	Proverb
Whakawhanaungatanga	kinship, links, ties; facilitating a more open relationship than mere researcher and researched; network of interactive links
whānau	family; nuclear/extended family

whanaungatanga	The interrelationship of Māori with their ancestors, their whānau, hapū, iwi as well as the natural resources within their tribal boundaries such as mountains, rivers, streams and forests; recognition of relationships iwi and waka.
Whare	House
whare tipuna	ancestral house
Whareniui	meeting house
Whenua	Land; afterbirth

Appendices

Appendix A

202 Outdoor Education 'Place Responsive' Research

'The Journey over the Destination'

As an important part of the upcoming /journey you will be required to learn about the places you will travel through. For the purpose of this assignment you are required to research one of the legs of the journey. Possible topics include:

- The history of Mount Maunganui College
- The history of Matapihi
- Māori legends of Tauranga Moana
 - Maungatawa, The three whales
 - Taurikura
 - The Kuia Rock
 - Motuopae
 - Tuhua – Mayor Island
- How did Welcome Bay get its name
- Stories and History of Matakana Island
- What is the impact of the Wharf on the Tauranga Harbour
- Pre-colonial history of the Papamoa Hills/Pah site
- The history of Kaiate Falls
- The environmental impact of the Te Puke Quarry
- The history of the Harbour bridge
- The pre-colonial history of Sulphur Point
- The swamp flora and fauna at Waikareo Estuary
- The history of the board walk/Waikareo Estuary track

Possible Topic of Interest:

Significant sites on our Hikoi:

Discuss with your teacher which topic you would like to research or if you would like to research a topic different from that on the list.

You will class time and your own time to organize an informative talk to be presented on the appropriate leg of the journey. You can complete this assignment individually or work in pairs.

Appendix B

202 OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Please answer all questions honestly and as fully as you are able. Do not put your name on the evaluation.

When circling the numbers **1** = the **lowest** and **5** = the **highest** grade

1. Circle the grade you think you have gained for Social responsibility

Not achieved Achieved Merit Excellence

2. Provide three examples of behavior that you demonstrated while on camp

*

*

*

2. Circle the grade you think you would have got prior to the camp

Not achieved Achieved Merit Excellence

3. How much improvement did you make throughout the two day journey

Little Improvement 1 2 3 4 5 Large

Comment:

4. How valuable do you think the 'place based' concept was to you?

Not very valuable 1 2 3 4 5 Very valuable

Comment:

5. How enjoyable did you find the journey:

1 2 3 4 5

Comment:

6. How well did you think the class worked together and were supportive of each other on the camp

1 2 3 4 5

Comment:

How useful did you find the 'story' concept on camp?

How do you think you could have improved your presentation?

Outline the positives of the journey experience:

Outline the negatives of the journey experience:

Outline the interesting experiences on the OED Hikoi :

If a family member or friend asked you what the Hikoï involved what would you say?

From the Summit of Mauao.....

Appendix C

201 Outdoor Education Kaimai Mamuku 'Place Responsive' Research

'What has happened here?'

As an important part of the upcoming tramp in the Kaimais you will be required to learn about the places you will travel through. For the purpose of this assignment you are required to research an aspect of the Kaimai Mamukus. Possible topics include:

- The Pre-colonial history of the Kaimais
 - who lived there?
 - where have they gone?
 - what were the original tracks used for?
- What else have the Kaimais been used for?
 - history of mining
 - history of forestry
 - what is the history of the tracks in the Kaimais?
- How did people come to own land in the Kaimais?
- How has human activity affected the ecology of the Kaimais?
- How did the Kaimais become a national park?
- How old are the Kauris in the Kaimais? How are they protected?
- What impact has arson had on the Kaimais?
- How has human activity affected the rivers and streams in the Kaimais?

Discuss with your teacher which topic you would like to research or if you would like to research a topic different from that on the list.

You will have one period in class time and your own time to organize an informative talk to be presented on the appropriate leg of the tramp. You can complete this assignment individually or work in pairs.

Appendix D

202 OUTDOOR EDUCATION Kaimai Mamuku Tramping Journey

Please answer all questions honestly and as fully as you are able. Do not put your name on the evaluation.

When circling the numbers **1** = the **lowest** and **5** = the **highest** grade

7. Circle the grade you think you will gain for AS.2.9

Not achieved Achieved Merit Excellence

2. Provide three examples of behavior that you demonstrated while on camp that can provide evidence of you meeting group goals.

*

*

*

Comment:

8. How valuable do you think the 'place responsive' concept was to you?
(Learning the history and stories about the areas we travelled through)

Not very valuable 1 2 3 4 5 Very valuable

Comment:

9. How enjoyable did you find the tramp along the Wairoa stream to Waitewheta then return to vans along Waitengue stream?

1 2 3 4 5

Comment:

10. How well did you think the class worked together and were supportive of each other on the camp

1 2 3 4 5

Comment:

How useful did you find the 'story' concept on camp?

How do you think you could have improved your presentation?

Outline the positives of the Kaimai experience:

Outline the negatives of the Kaimai experience:

Outline the interesting experiences on the Kaimai experience:

Outline any suggestions you have that you think would improve the experience:

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