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# A cultural and comparative perspective on outdoor education in New Zealand and *friluftsliv* in Denmark

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The paper is based on a comparative and qualitative case study of *friluftsliv* in Denmark and outdoor education in New Zealand. Cultural analysis with a comparative cultural perspective informed the research approach. Configurational analysis was used as an important supplement to focus on cultural patterns linked to bodily movement. It is argued that outdoor education in New Zealand is focused on action, risk and challenge, with personal development as the central pedagogical goal. There seems to be a general search for effectiveness and a special relationship to land and nature with both functionalism and personal relationships linked to identity. Outdoor education in New Zealand can generally be understood as a reproduction of political ideas and values in western liberal societies. *Friluftsliv* in Denmark exhibits complexity of forms and settings within outdoor education, with simple life in nature and adventure being two dominant trends. The study identifies differences as well as similarities between the cultural expressions of *friluftsliv* and outdoor education in New Zealand and discusses the results using theories of late modernity.

Keywords: *Outdoor education; Friluftsliv; Cultural analysis; Risk; Late modernity*

## Introduction

*The comparative perspective of an outsider*

Outdoor education in New Zealand has a well-known tradition and practice and can be identified as a cultural phenomenon (Lynch, 2006; Moodie, 1998). This paper takes a particular view; in that the perspective of the researcher is that of an outsider. In this case a researcher coming from Denmark, a small country far away with a

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different cultural context. The research approach is cultural–analytic (Ehn & Löfgren, 1982, 2006) and utilises comparative perspectives on practice and pedagogy.

The overall focus of the research asks the general question: What is outdoor education in New Zealand like? Of specific interest are the questions: what are the basic values and different motives for participating and working within outdoor education; what are the ways of teaching outdoor education; and what effects do different people hope to achieve?

There are definite strengths in being an outsider who is not constrained by cultural baggage (Møller, 1997; Nielsen, 1997). To be a curious outsider looking in with a cultural–analytic and comparative perspective, to understand a different culture with different traditions and other ways of thinking and doing is refreshing for a range of reasons.

The point of taking this perspective and choosing this method of research opens up the following possibilities: it is possible to get to know about a different culture and learn new ways of thinking and acting; it is possible as an outsider to put seemingly unusual questions and in this way to get a new understanding of a culture, which may give a more holistic perspective and a slightly provocative view; and experiencing and trying to understand phenomena in a different culture makes you think about your own culture and question taken-for-granted ways of thinking. Thus it is possible to see your own culture in a new perspective.

In this way the view from the outside adds a comparative perspective to the well-known phenomenon and living culture of outdoor education. Very few researchers have engaged in a comparative perspective to research in *friluftsliv* and outdoor education (Daléus & Sandell, 1998; Mygind & Boyes, 2001; Odden, 2005). Past research methods have generally been quantitative, concentrating on participants' motives for activity, patterns of participation and use of the natural landscape.

### *Possible problems*

Coming from the outside and trying to understand a different culture is not without problems, and cultural misinterpretations may arise. This is the case from a theoretical context and in daily life situations. In daily life, differences arise constantly in discussions about politics, religion or ways of raising children in the modern world! The obvious risk is that one tries to understand the different culture only from the perspective of one's own, focusing on similarities, and in this way it is prone to major misinterpretations by not understanding local cultural meanings and values as a result of history and the larger context. Another obvious risk is a focus on differences and seeing new things in the different cultures; again without a contextual understanding of history, custom and culture. The two possible problems are not mutually exclusive.

A good example of the possible problems of trying to understand a different culture from the perspective of an outsider is the work of Indian anthropologist G. Prakash Reddy. Reddy visited Denmark and studied Danish culture and subsequently wrote the book *Danes are Like That* (Reddy, 1992). Reddy spent three months in a small village in Jylland during the colder period of the year, and he was taken by surprise by

the cold and closed Danish society and its unfriendly inhabitants. This overall impression definitely might have some important elements of truth, which invite reflection on the way Danish people organise their lives and welcome other people. In this author's view, however, it seems to lack a deeper understanding of Danish society and of the context and history of Danish people.

### *Context of the study*

The context for this paper was the PhD study '*Friluftsliv* in Denmark: Young People's Participation in Organised Outdoor Activities Seen from a Cultural Perspective' (Andkjær, 2008).

The aim of the study was to examine organised *friluftsliv* from a cultural perspective as it related to young people with a view to acquiring greater understanding of the range of motives, values and significance attributed to it. *Friluftsliv* is seen as a phenomenon that is a social, historical and cultural construct, that expresses the relationships between people, the body, nature and identity and that derives content and meaning in and through a socio-cultural context (Pedersen, 1999).

The comparative part, which is a minor part of the project, puts the subject into perspective by carrying out a qualitative study of outdoor education in New Zealand, using methods corresponding to the qualitative study of organised *friluftsliv* in Denmark. The analysis of outdoor education in New Zealand both serves to provide a perspective from which to view the study of *friluftsliv* in Denmark and produces and presents new insights on outdoor education in New Zealand from a cultural and comparative perspective.

The research questions in the comparative part of the study were as follows:

1. How is nature being used and what are the predominant views of nature in New Zealand?
2. What are the general characteristics of outdoor education in New Zealand from a cultural perspective?
3. What values and meanings are being produced in outdoor education in New Zealand?
4. Compared with *friluftsliv* in Denmark—what differences and similarities does the culture of outdoor education in New Zealand represent?

The study involved a six-month stay in Dunedin, New Zealand, in the period November 2005–May 2006, based at the University of Otago, Dunedin.

### **Methods and design**

The study is qualitative and takes hermeneutics as its starting point. Case-study design guides the overall research method. Consequently, the study incorporates a series of cases (institutions and programmes) representing outdoor education in New Zealand.

For the analysis, the study employs ethnological cultural analysis (Ehn & Löfgren, 1982, 2006) combined with configurational analysis to conceptualise the data (Eichberg, 2001). Cultural analysis is seen as the primary method of analysis, where the aim is to examine those elements of outdoor education that carry significance. This also reveals how a range of central values and meanings are translated thematically into practice. As Nielsen states:

Through everyday phenomena to analyse deeper cultural patterns, which say something about basic social values and understandings (1997, p. 68).

Configurational analysis represents a method with a particular focus on the body and movement in relation to the social context:

The analysis of configurations is an analytic way to structure the narrative material of historical sources as well as of sensitive experience (Eichberg, 2001, p. 4).

According to the analysis of configurations, movements and bodily activity can be understood as the basis of human culture and society. Bodily practice in interaction can be understood and analysed focusing on the categories of time, space, energy and interpersonal relations (Eichberg, 2001). The analysis of configurations provides support for the cultural analysis.

Five cases have been chosen representing private outdoor centres, polytechnics and high schools with extended programmes of outdoor education. The empirical method involves qualitative semi-structured interviews with participants and leaders in outdoor education taken from the selected cases (Kvale, 1998). In addition, structured and direct participant observation of practice has been incorporated as well as an examination of the documentary material from each programme (Spradley, 1980).

The research design and methods employed in the New Zealand study parallel the equivalent study of organised *friluftsliv* in Denmark, enabling the comparative design. This also promotes an element of criticality.

Working within the hermeneutic tradition and with cultural analysis it is important to make clear the ‘pre-understanding’ of the researcher and to use this as an active part of the analysis (Gadamer, 2004; Møller, 1997; Pahuus, 2003). When analysing the material, it is vital to be aware of the wider aspects and not only the identification of clear patterns that confirm the hypothesis or assumptions of the researcher and his or her ‘pre-understanding’. Furthermore, it is important to identify nuances and differences to the greater patterns of results in order to avoid misinterpretations or simplifications of reality.

My own ‘pre-understanding’ is extensive experience and education within the tradition of *friluftsliv* in Denmark and the Nordic countries. This means that quite a lot of things within this tradition I take for granted and find ‘natural’. It is possible to see this both as an advantage, a close relationship to and extended knowledge about the phenomenon, but it also represents the risk of focusing on the well-known and not questioning the seemingly naturally emerging elements (Møller, 1997).

Working with case-study design as a basic principle of research emphasises the importance of careful reflection in the process of selecting cases (Flyvbjerg, 1993,

2001; Kvale, 1998; Ragin & Becker, 1992). The aim in this study has been to choose paradigmatic cases using information-based selection (Flyvbjerg, 1993, 2001), with expert advice from selected key persons within outdoor education in New Zealand. Also kept in mind was that the cases needed to contain the same formal characteristics as the cases selected for the Danish study (Andkjær, 2008).

A critical point in the study is the selection of cases. In the process of selection no examples of indigenous outdoor education have been included. This does not mean that an indigenous outdoor education does not exist in New Zealand, but rather that—from an outsider’s point of view—Māori culture, as part of outdoor education, does not seem very common or prominent. As we shall see, outdoor education in New Zealand has been influenced by educators, programmes and values from overseas (i.e. the United Kingdom).

## Results

The results are presented in different themes that mirror the process of research:

1. Ambiguities or contrasts within the culture of outdoor education in New Zealand.
2. Central cultural characteristics.
3. Analysis of configurations.

### *Ambiguities or contrasts within the culture of outdoor education in New Zealand*

The ethnological cultural analysis emphasised the importance of focusing on differences and similarities, aiming to point out what seem to be significant elements in a culture or phenomenon and finally to give room for the researcher to question the obvious and seemingly natural elements and be open to the unexpected (Ehn & Löfgren, 1982, 2006).

In order to follow this basic methodological principle, the first results represent the initial impression of the culture of outdoor education in New Zealand, focusing on ambiguities or contrasts within the culture (Table 1).

The list illustrates ambiguities or contrasts experienced in outdoor education in New Zealand as they are experienced and identified in practice (observation), in

Table 1. Ambiguities or contrasts experienced in outdoor education in New Zealand.

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Adventure, challenge and risk vs. safety and technical standards
Personal development vs. teambuilding and social learning
Fun vs. seriousness and professionalism
A functional space for activity vs. a personal relation to landscape linked to identity
Personal skills (‘soft’ human values) vs. technique and professional skills (‘hard’ skills and values)
Apparently no differences related to race and gender vs. different expectations and values related to gender

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interviews and in written or web-based material from the selected cases. The ambiguities and contrasts are not listed systematically or according to specific selected themes. The pairs listed represent contrasts that obviously appear in outdoor education practice in New Zealand and allowed me, as the researcher, to focus my analytic attention.

*Adventure, challenge, risk.* Adventure, challenge and risk seem to be crucial issues within outdoor education in New Zealand. Risk is a major attraction and was closely linked to a more philosophical understanding of what life is all about. For example, it was suggested by some interviewees that it is part of their genetic constitution:

I think human beings are like that. I think—I think to go and do something that appears to be adventurous and risky gives you a bit of a thrill and uhm that's what life's all about I think, a bit of a thrill somewhere (M, C2-t).<sup>1</sup>

Challenge seems to be closely linked to the senses and a specific bodily experience:

M: Yeah. But if you do it right your heart just goes (pooooof). And then it's over.

Interviewer: Okay.

[Lots of laughter].

M: It's just like the heartbeat stops and then it goes back to normal. Oh that wasn't so bad. Where's the next one?

Interviewer: And then you'll have to go higher up.

M: You turn around and do it again. Or do it higher (C3-s).

Some interviewees claimed that challenge and activities that seem risky are obviously attractive and provide a great bodily experience and satisfaction. At the same time challenge represents a constant search for stimulus, excitement and new experiences. As soon as one challenge has been experienced and managed a new one is waiting.

A focus on risk and challenge stands in contrast to a major interest in safety, skills, standards and certificates in the outdoors. Safety and standards on the one hand can be understood as a natural consequence of a focus on adventure, risk and challenge. On the other hand, and seen from the outside, it can seem strange to put a lot of effort into risk and at the same time or subsequently aim and search for safety. In this way it can be understood as a paradoxical spiral.

*Challenge—personal development.* According to the interviewees the issue of challenge seems to be closely linked to an understanding of personal development:

M: To go hard.

Interviewer: To go hard? What do you mean by 'go hard'?

M: Like you've got to put it all in or else you're just not going to get what you want out of it.



M: Pushing boundaries. Like challenging ourselves to do things that we—we never thought we'd be able to do. Facing our fears and overcoming them (C4-s).

The aim of achieving personal development is based on an understanding of the self as something that one can develop and expand. An important idea in working with challenge is the general understanding of a number of zones that are represented by the following terms: risk zone, challenge zone, comfort zone (Bentsen, Andkjær, & Ejbye-Ernst, 2009). This understanding is very well known and used in many pedagogical settings within outdoor education. However, this model has been subject to discussion and critique (that is, Brown, 2008):

M: Um I've been taught that I can do more than I think I can. That's basically why I do it.

F: . . . yeah and then you—you look back on it and say well that was a very scary thing, but I did it. So I know what else I can do now (C4-s).

Meaning, um, finding out who you are really, really, really . . . (M, C1-s).

In contrast to the idea of personal development is the notion, and explicit pedagogical aim, of developing teams and promoting social learning. This seems to be an aim in many programmes as well as a central point in the history and traditions of outdoor education in New Zealand (Lynch, 2006).

*Risk = fun.* Risk is closely linked to the understanding of adventure and challenge. At the same time, risk seems to be connected to the experience of fun:

Yeah. It—outdoor stuff, um, risk is fun. I mean if there's zero risk a lot of it's zero fun. I mean you can't eliminate all the risks. I mean if you did you'd be in a padded room or something and that's not fun. Zero risk is zero fun (M, C4-s).

If there is no experience of risk there will be no fun and (young) people probably will be less motivated for participation. Risk is an attraction and without the experience of risk there will be no fun and no attraction as well.

Seen from a Danish perspective this is interesting. Fun in the Danish sense ('*sjov*') is rarely linked to risk but rather to children's games and to experiences of joy, laughter and play (Bentsen et al., 2009).

The major focus on risk and the link to fun seems to represent a contrast to the seriousness and professionalism that is characteristic for the whole industry and culture of outdoor education in New Zealand. In New Zealand, partly in contrast to Denmark, there are several organisations that organise and manage education, standards and qualifications within outdoor education.<sup>2</sup>

*The outdoors as a functional space for activity.* There seems to be a very distinct ambiguity when looking at people's relations to nature and the landscape. On the one



Figure 1. Rope courses in New Zealand.

hand, nature seems to represent a very functional space, where it is possible to work in a goal-oriented manner and concentrate on certain pedagogical goals; for instance, personal development. Nature and landscape seem to represent a functional space, a vehicle, with very little focus on the special nature of the place, the history. As one interviewee puts it:

I think that going outside is a really powerful medium, it's a good vehicle. It's a good vehicle through which to—to learn these lessons and to think about these things and I think it's a good, you know, it's a good vehicle or it's a good environment or medium in which to do it because it can be quite unfamiliar for students (C1, L).

Ropes courses can be seen as a typical example or expression, perhaps even symbol, of outdoor education in New Zealand.<sup>3</sup> Using rope courses it is possible, in a very controlled and effective way, to involve children and young people in challenge and to create or design an experience of risk. Rope courses show the functional relation to land and nature at the same time as nature and landscape are the background of the whole setting (see Figure 1).

On the other hand, as a contrast and potential contradiction, it is obvious that nature and landscape to most New Zealanders represent something special. For example, according to some interviewees:

Interviewer: Okay. What about, um, what about nature, what does it mean to be out in nature?

F: I just—I just love being outdoors and just, I mean you just appreciate the small things, I suppose, like, well I do, just like you know even sunrises and things like that like and just, yeah, things like that.

Interviewer: Okay, okay. What about you?

M: Like I said before, I've just got to be outdoors (C2, E).

Many people have a personal relationship to nature and to being in the outdoors and this connection seems linked to identity and to the understanding of being a (real) New Zealander. The two perspectives show the complexity and ambiguity related to the view of nature within outdoor education in New Zealand.

*Personal human values and technical skills.* In outdoor education in New Zealand the pedagogical practice seems very focused on personal human skills and a social learning or teamwork context:

F: If you don't work as a team in outdoor education it all turns to real crap and um, like if there's no one, like if no one's committed and no one does what you're supposed to do it doesn't work. You have to be committed to doing outdoor education otherwise there's no point in really being here. You have to have teamwork otherwise it doesn't work.

Interviewer: Oh, right.

M: No fun either (C4, E).

F: To get things done.

M: Yeah you've really got to knuckle down and everyone's just got to communicate.

M: The group won't survive if you don't work together and help each other out, if someone needs help (C1, E).

At the same time, technique and professional skills seem to be of great importance and skills and competence are closely linked to standards and organisations within the industry of outdoor education and adventure tourism in New Zealand:

Knowing that you can do stuff. Whether it's sea kayaking, mountain biking or anything. You just—I can actually do something. Apart from roll my paper or cook a meal (M, C2, E).

Social skills and teamwork can, from this perspective, be characterised as 'soft' human values, which can be opposed to the more 'hard' technical skills. The two perspectives or pedagogical aims are not mutually exclusive and the overall aim seems to be to transfer the skills learned in outdoor education into both daily life and professional jobs:

So we're trying to get quite a bit of transfer from what they learn about themselves and their behavior to actually look at how do we transfer that into their relationships at home. And how do we transfer that into their jobs that they might be going for, or how does it tie in to a job that they might want in the future? (C4, L).

*Central cultural characteristics—discussion*

The culture of outdoor education in New Zealand generally seems characterised by a number of central cultural elements:

- A focus on adventure—action, risk and challenge.
- Personal development and social learning as pedagogical goals.
- Professionalism and mastering techniques in the outdoors as pedagogical goals.
- A general search for effectiveness and functionalism.
- A special relationship to land and nature with both functionalism and personal relationships linked to identity.
- The teacher in the outdoors generally takes the role of an instructor and authority in the practical setting and teaching in the outdoors is therefore rather teacher-centred.
- Masculine values are dominant and other expectations are linked to males.
- A complex system of education, standards and competence-based qualifications with more organisations within the field with different systems and standards.

Adventure, challenge and risk seem to be very vital elements or concepts in outdoor education in New Zealand. The concepts are very closely linked to each other and the understanding is that risk is necessary to experience challenge. Furthermore, challenge is understood as a crucial part of adventure, and adventure leads to personal development. The idea of adventure, challenge and risk seems to be an issue of gender predominantly linked to males and masculinity. Adventure obviously involves and leads to great bodily experiences and seems to be linked to the experience of fun: ‘Zero risk—zero fun’.

*Analysis of configurations*

The central cultural characteristics of outdoor education in New Zealand can be concentrated and understood according to the analysis of configurations in order to extract the essence and make comparative studies and discussions (see Table 2).

It is interesting to see that the pedagogical goals of outdoor education in New Zealand are both personal development and professional competence with certain standards. This ‘production’ can generally be understood as a reproduction of (neo)liberal political ideas and values (King, 2003), where experiences in outdoor education offer both formal and personal qualifications to manage modern life.

On the other hand, outdoor education seems to have significance in the creation and maintenance of identity. In the overall picture, outdoor education in New Zealand seems to have an important function in building character and affiliation to nature, landscape and political ideas.

This analysis is based on case studies and the results might be slightly different if other cases had been selected (e.g. outdoor education in primary and secondary school). However, other research supports the analysis and the conclusions, pointing out that personal and social development are the most important aims within

Table 2. Elements of configurations.

Time	Focus on and (bodily) experience of effectiveness and development Experience of time predominantly characterised by action and speed
Space	Nature and landscape predominantly seen as a functional space (i.e. rope courses) Landscape and the outdoors represent feelings linked to identity (place)
Relations	Hierarchic group structure with the leader or instructor as the authority—teacher-centred
Energy	Focus on seriousness and effectiveness—mastering techniques and achieving personal development Challenge and risk is essential in adventure: zero risk—zero fun
Production	Personal (and social) development is the overall aim Programmes offering and producing professional competence and standards Outdoor education in New Zealand can be understood as a reproduction of (neo)liberal political ideas and values Outdoor education seems to represent and produce identity (a real New Zealander)

outdoor education in primary and secondary school, with an extended focus on outdoor pursuits and adventure education (Boyes & Zink, 2005; Cosgriff, 2008; Haddock, 2007a, 2007b).

There seems to be a development in New Zealand, and the English-speaking countries, of more researchers taking a critical view of outdoor education practice and theory. Concepts of adventure, risk and personal development have come under recent scrutiny (Beedie & Bourne, 2005; Brookes, 2002; Brown & Fraser, 2009; Lynch & Moore, 2009; Zink & Leberman, 2001). The growing body of literature more critical of outdoor education in New Zealand is prominent in a number of journals (e.g. in this journal) and in the international outdoor education research conferences (e.g. [www.sdu.dk/IOERC2011](http://www.sdu.dk/IOERC2011)). Taking the perspective of an outsider, this development is both interesting and positive, and makes it relevant to introduce the comparative cultural analytical perspective to outdoor education.

#### *Comparative perspective on Denmark*

In making comparative studies it is important to take many factors into account and be careful not to make unsubstantiated generalisations. Culture and tradition in small countries like Denmark and New Zealand are highly influenced by other countries, not only in outdoor education traditions but also according to ideologies, ideas and politics. Besides this, the land itself is represented differently in each culture and can be understood as a result of a unique historical development. Part of this unique culture concerns different pedagogical traditions and different concepts and methods linked to education. Each country has its own politics and ways of managing land and landscape, which have an impact on the tradition and practice of outdoor education and *friluftsliv*. The land and landscape in themselves are very different when looking at Denmark and New Zealand, and this may very well have an impact on the culture of outdoor education and *friluftsliv*.

Table 3. Elements of configuration—comparative perspective.

	Outdoor education (New Zealand)	Traditional <i>friluftsliv</i> (Denmark)
Time	Effectiveness, action, focus on product	The situation—focus on the situation and the process
Space	A functional space Feelings and identity (place)	The special place (ideal) Culture and nature
Relations	Hierarchic structure—teacher-centred Gender differences	‘Flat’ structure and democratic ideals—group-centred
Energy	Adventure, risk and challenges	Confidence, positive experiences
Production	Personal (and social) development Professional competence	Holistic perspective Quality of life, health
Ideas	Reproduction of liberal political ideas and values	Critical (ecological) potential

The analysis of configurations offers a useful way of organising and presenting the overall characteristics of different cultures in a comparative perspective.

The analysis of *friluftsliv* in Denmark as it appears in Table 3 is based on an extended case study using the same methods as in New Zealand (Andkjær, 2008). The overall picture, focusing on the tradition of *friluftsliv* in Denmark compared with outdoor education in New Zealand, is that there are major differences in the two cultures according to practice, aims and ideas.

It is interesting to observe the major differences as they appear in this overall, and perhaps simplistic, picture. The pedagogical aims, the character of practice as well as the connections or relationship to nature and place seem different in the two cultures.

According to the overall ideas produced and the philosophies reflected in practice, there seems to be a characteristic and important difference. Practice of *friluftsliv* in the Nordic countries can to a certain extent be understood as a reflection of political and philosophical ideas related to the ecosophistic and ecopedagogical movement (that is, Kvaløy, 1970, 1978; Næss, 1974; Tordsson, 1993) in the period of 1970–1990 in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. According to this perspective it is possible to understand *friluftsliv* as a means, through bodily movement and physical activity, to produce new ways of being and critically reflect on society. The critical potential in *friluftsliv* is linked to a more holistic and ecological perspective than is predominant in ‘general’ pedagogy and wider society (Eichberg & Jespersen, 2001).

Outdoor education in New Zealand on the other hand seems to a much larger extent to reflect and produce the same ideas as are present in western society today—liberal political ideas and values.

*Changes in friluftsliv in Denmark.* *Friluftsliv* is seen as a broad expression that can be compared with both outdoor education and outdoor recreation. This means that *friluftsliv* represents activity in nature and landscape within a pedagogical setting with pedagogical aims and motives. It also represents more recreational, informal and unorganised activities as part of civil society (Pestoff, 1996).

*Friluftsliv* today, in the broad understanding, is not only characterised by the traditional *friluftsliv*, focusing on simple life in nature as described above (Table 3). Within the last 20–30 years, *friluftsliv* in Denmark has been subject to major changes (Andkjær, 2005; Fisker, 2005). These are: increased activity in nature; new groups and more pedagogical concepts; more activity in nature within institutions and more professionalism; and increased focus on risk, challenge and personal development.

It is possible and relevant to talk about new trends and cultures in *friluftsliv* in Denmark (Andkjær, 2005), and the development certainly can be understood and discussed in the light of theories of late modernity (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1984, 1994). Globalisation, more focus on reflection and individual choice, combined with less focus on traditional and communal values, are central elements in this development.

The practice and values of outdoor education in New Zealand in many ways can be compared with adventure activities as a more recent trend in *friluftsliv* in Denmark. At the same time nature and outdoor education in New Zealand seem to have a different cultural significance, which might be related to the historical and cultural development of New Zealand and which involves, among other things, an ethnic aspect. Furthermore, as regards the views of and relations to nature and landscape, there seem to be significant differences between *friluftsliv* in Denmark and outdoor education in New Zealand.

#### *Perspectives and further research*

Outdoor education in New Zealand has been chosen for this study in order to study similarities and differences between the tradition of outdoor education in an English-speaking country and the tradition of *friluftsliv* in Denmark, as an example of the Nordic perspective.

Outdoor education in New Zealand has obviously connections and links, historical and present, to outdoor education in Great Britain, Australia and other English-speaking countries. At the same time it stands to reason that there are differences and contrasts, according to different historical and cultural backgrounds.

In order to get more knowledge about different traditions and trends within *friluftsliv* and outdoor education it is necessary to initiate further research on different ways of using and understanding nature and the landscape. It seems desirable to have more knowledge about different traditions in the English-speaking countries and it seems especially important to initiate projects focusing on traditions in non-English-speaking countries. How do people in the other Nordic countries, in Germany, Italy, France, the Czech Republic, or the eastern countries use nature and landscape, as a recreative element and in a pedagogical context?

Research focusing on these questions may help us learn about traditions of outdoor education and it may help us learn about culture and society, in other countries as well as in our own culture.

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## Notes

1. The following quotations are selected from the interviews. ‘C’ refers to the specific case, ‘t’ indicates that it is a teacher speaking, while ‘s’ indicates it is a student. Furthermore, ‘m’ is male and ‘f’ is female.
2. See [www.outdoorsnz.org.nz](http://www.outdoorsnz.org.nz), [www.nzoaia.org.nz](http://www.nzoaia.org.nz), [www.sfrito.org.nz](http://www.sfrito.org.nz), [www.eonz.org.nz](http://www.eonz.org.nz).
3. See <http://www.panz.org.nz/challenge-ropes-courses.asp>.

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