

A large waterfall cascading over a rocky ledge. The water is white and foamy as it falls. On the right side, a person is standing on the rocky edge, and another person is sitting on the ground. The background is a clear blue sky.

Extreme Sports

Ecotourism

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Some pointers



Death is a real possibility if
something goes wrong!

Particular sports

- Big Wave Surfing
- Waterfall kayaking
- Extreme Mountaineering
- Rope Free Climbing
- Extreme Skiing ...
- Base jumping
 - Heather Swann and Glenn Single man
 - <http://www.baseclimb.com/MediaClip.htm>
 - [Jump Web Clip.mov](#)

Extreme Sports



NO FEAR

Young and free

- Death Wish
- No fear
- Risk focus
 - Sensation Seeking
 - Type 'T'
 - Edgeworks

The Natural-world relationship

- *Other*
- Insulated and therefore something to fear and control
 - Power
 - Nature's laws do not apply
 - Identity construction vs powerless society



The Natural-world relationship



Innate human drive :

Conquer

Battle

Vanquish

POLYMER LETTERS

ELECTROLYTE

112

of the polymer electrolyte membrane (PEM) is a major concern for the commercialization of the fuel cell. The PEM must be able to conduct protons and separate the reactants. The PEM must also be mechanically and chemically stable in the presence of the reactants and the catalyst.

The PEM is typically made of a sulfonated polymer, such as Nafion, which is a perfluorinated polymer with sulfonic acid groups. The sulfonic acid groups are responsible for the proton conductivity of the PEM. The PEM is typically used in the form of a thin film, which is sandwiched between the anode and the cathode.

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Extreme sports as Tourism

- Mavericks
- BASEclimb3
- Everest
 - Tourist trade
 - independent

Ecotourism

- *minimize impact*
- *build environmental and cultural awareness and respect*
- *provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts*
- *provide direct financial benefits for conservation*
- *provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people*
- *raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate (TIES, 1990)*

Research

- Phenomenological
- Participant Interviews plus other sources
- No specific pre-determined expectations
- Specifically no assumptions about risk or the relationship to the natural world



On conquering

Mountaineering is more of a quest for self-fulfilment than a victory over others or over nature. The true mountaineer knows that he has not conquered a mountain by standing on its summit for a few fleeting moments. Only when the right men are in the right places at the right time are the big mountains climbed; never are they conquered (Houston, 1968, p. 57).

You cannot conquer a river. How can you defeat something that is never the same twice, that is unaware of your presence? To the river, we are so much flotsam, and if we forget that the results can be decidedly final. It is often difficult to remember the force of the river in places like this; the water can smash a swimmer to pieces on the rocks and leave them broken like a doll or a piece of rubbish bobbing in the backwaters of an eddy.

There was enough force in ‘The thing you strain spaghetti through after you’ve cooked it’ [*the name of a particular rapid*] to rip us from our frail craft and pound us like so much drift wood. And the river wouldn’t even know we were dead. There can be no competition, no way we can fight against the huge forces we travel on
(Guilar, 1999).

The Relationship

Talking about a comparison with something that people can relate to, you can only really experience total love if you open your heart to it, and that makes you vulnerable, doesn't it? And I would say that in a wild environment, even if you don't open your heart to it, you are vulnerable because that's just the way it is. You are just a tiny little thing, very fragile ... It's about feeling at one with the whole world, the whole universe. It's about understanding why, and you can't put it into words. You can't. ... You have to experience it to really know what it's about. I mean you can't describe to someone what an orgasm is like. I mean you can try to, but unless you have it, you'll never know. Of course there are orgasms and *orgasms* as well. You can go for a walk in the woods or you can have an amazing experience in the woods (BM, female mountaineer, mid 30's).

[The beach has] given me a great appreciation of the aesthetics of the ocean, from whales to sharks to dolphins to penguins to the rocks or to whatever, you know. Every aspect of, it's a magnificent thing to do ... You get great energy, fantastic energy on the sort of coast where there's big surf; you feel the energy, it's just amazing ... You know, there's a lot of energy, and you get off on that energy (RM, male surfer, early 50's).

- Perspectives from ecopsychology suggest that individuals are most likely to adopt eco-practices if they feel part of, or connected to the environment.
- Extreme sports participants learn to treat the environment with greater care and initiate sustainable behaviours.



All of a sudden you're totally connected to the environment. You're no longer an I. You're not bound by constraints, by a physical body anymore. It's a life altering insight (HS, female B.A.S.E. jumper, mid 30's).

A large, powerful blue wave is crashing over a surfer. The surfer is wearing red shorts and is riding the wave. The water is a deep blue color, and the sky is a lighter blue. The surfer is in the lower right corner of the image, and the wave is in the upper left corner. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Laird Hamilton:

You're not going to protect something that you don't appreciate and that you don't care about. So you have to make people care and nothing... no better way to make somebody care about it than to participate in it, with it. And then they get a feeling - "Hey, I care about it! What's going ... how can we help it?"

- Kirsten Ulmer
- Jacobs



- Work with participants to determine the best way of providing facilities as opposed to banning the activities.
- As management professionals we should move away from the current obsession with thrills and risk. For example marketing should focus more about truly connecting with the natural world.
- Extreme sports are here to stay and are growing; they are not about instant thrills but long term commitment. Perhaps a better understanding of this aspect might help with the development of commitment in other areas of ecotourism.