

The University of Lancaster

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MAML 17

Willem G Krouwel

Dissertation

An investigation into the past, current and potential role of outdoor development (and particularly) outdoor management development practice in Britain in the light of practice at Vacation School Lipnice and _eska Cesta in the Czech Republic.

ABSTRACT

The dissertation examines philosophical and other roots of Outdoor Management Development, focussing initially on the contribution of Kurt Hahn, Outward Bound and other youth-based development training initiatives. A paradigm shift in outdoor development is identified, after which the focus moves to its half-child, outdoor management development, particularly in a British context.

Reasons for the emergence of outdoor management development as a distinctive school of training are examined and attempts to classify it into types and to identify particular applications are discussed. A tentative thought that outdoor management development has surrendered any pretensions to assist self-development by “chasing the dollar” of compliant competency-fulfilment is discussed and hardened into a conclusion that it has, and has thus arrived in a cul-de-sac.

A potential escape route – the singular methodology of Czech Outward Bound and its two operational arms, Vacation School Lipnice and _eska Cesta is identified and a proposition that it offers British outdoor management development a route back to a less dependent role is explored. This encompasses an examination of the roots of VSL/CC, their philosophies and their methods by a combination of primary research, secondary research and critique.

A conclusion, appendices and bibliography follow.

Personal reflections are included as text boxes throughout the dissertation

METHODOLOGY

I am rarely a quick thinker and find that for me the best way to reach conclusions is to read, write and ruminate. Somehow things emerge from that process. I am thus happy to admit that library research (and my own experience selling and delivering outdoor management development) formed the basis for my “thinking” process. The term is in inverted commas because I am rarely aware of any logical step-by-step process that might be implied by the term. It all goes in and *stuff* emerges. I can claim no particular scientific approach to the process, except that as propositions emerged I *did* try to arrange the items so as to form a coherent argument. Part of the fascination of writing this dissertation has been in recognising items that contributed to whatever insights I may have had, and incorporating them into the text at the right place.

The sources cited represent about half those read.

Having said that, the process was by no means confined to the reading room. A visit was made to the Czech Republic which resulted in 1:1 interviews with Czech practitioners from VSL/_C. These were recorded and transcribed. I also spent less formal but equally revealing time watching interaction, in conversation with small groups, with Vladimir Svato_, (Director of _C) and in running a trainers' workshop for VSL. This latter was serendipitous and may seem an unusual item of methodology, but proved very useful in building relationships (for example It helped to earn the confidence of the interviewees) and in gaining an insight into VSL/ _C methods by the very nature of the questions they asked.

The raw data gained through reading and the visit was sifted, sorted and presented in the form that follows.

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Introduction

Outdoor management development has been central to my life for over twenty years. For most of that time I have made a living from it, finding myself in the enviable position of doing well-paid work which I enjoyed and (in the early days) believed in to the extent of evangelical commitment.

Even in the most committed of minds however, questions can arise. Is it *really* the effective development instrument I believe it to be? Is it a universally beneficial experience? Is process reality *really* relevant to delegates in exercises which eschew any attempt at task realism?

I have asked myself such questions for a number of years and noted a reduction in course length and the emergence of a competencies-based approach to development at work. I mentioned to a fellow MAML student that I felt like starting a "campaign for real development" on the lines of CAMRA. A few weeks later he asked me how CARD was coming along.....and it dawned on me that a dissertation seemed like an appropriate place to critically examine outdoor management development. An opportunity to read, reflect, and draw conclusions on OMD practice, including my own.

The process has been tortuous, absorbing and sometimes uncomfortable. Nevertheless, the journey seems to have been worth the fare; conclusions *have* been reached which contain quite far-reaching implications for my practice. Something resembling CARD may well emerge.

No-one writes a dissertation on their own, and the task has been considerably eased by the help of a number of people. These are listed below.

Acknowledgement is particularly due to Andrew Martin of Massey University, New Zealand who has been extremely helpful in providing papers from Czech sources as well as his own work (before publication). Thanks are also due to Daniella, my excellent Czech interpreter, to all my new-found friends at VSL/ _C (and some renewed old friendships) – *ahoj!*, Thanks also to Maureen for forbearance, and the CM set for criticism (constructive as always, even when I didn't listen). I think Brian Kirtley and Susan Armitage of Lancaster deserve special gratitude for patient help.

On a lighter note, I recommend J.S. Bach and the Spotnicks as dissertation-writing aids.

I sincerely hope that those reading this dissertation get as much from it as I have from the process which led to it.

"Artists do not stem from their childhood, but from their conflict with the achievements of their predecessors; not from their own formless world, but from their struggle with the forms which others have imposed on life...During periods when all previous works are disdained, genius languishes; no man can build on the void"

Andr_ Malraux

"Wise poets and artists....are able to put experience into their work; they offer their wisdom not in deed, but directly in the form of experience. This, then is the special value of art, and nothing in the world can compare with it."

*Karel _apek
All Fools Day, 1920*

ROOT WORLDS AND LOGIQUE DES MONDES

Much of my reading – and parts of the interviews – has been aimed at seeking to identify the roots of that area of management development known variously as “outdoor development”¹, “management development outdoors”², and “outdoor management development”³, but most commonly referred to as “OMD” – the shorthand term I will use from here onwards.

Seeking out roots isn’t merely recreational archaeology. It’s helpful to identify the “root world” of a movement or Company; the world which encapsulates the fundamental principles and values on which the movement/Company was founded. Collin, Delplancke and Raimond, using the term “logique des mondes”, argue⁴ that such “root worlds” attract respect and adherence because they express who or what, in the final analysis, the people in the organisation, movement or nation are. They cite “The pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness” as part of the root world of the U.S. – and point out that “the right to bear arms” may be an outdated temporary expression of the way to achieve that root value. There’s the rub. Sometimes people can’t tell the difference between the “outdated temporary expressions” and the roots themselves. OMD, for example, has occasionally been plagued by “outbreaks of fundamentalism”⁵, often based on a view (by the fundamentalists) that current practise is somehow sacrosanct, whatever the order-book may be saying. Sometimes, of course, they may be right.

Collin, Delplancke and Raimond further argue that the root-world is important because when the need to change arises, perhaps from the inability of an organisation’s current world to cope with new situations, the existence of a root-world enables the organisation to deconstruct

current practices and see the basic patterns through which its people think and behave. This enables the current world to be seen as a construct, not an immutable reality. It's a kind of applied critical realism – acknowledging the existence of foundations allows the essentially transient to be seen as such, enabling the organisation to embrace a new, emergent, world which is congruent with its root-values.

Which raises the question, what are the roots of OMD? These can be sought in philosophical and practical areas:

1) Ancient Philosophy

In claiming ancient roots for adventure education (one of the parents of OMD), Jasper Hunt⁶ cites Plato's view (*The Republic*, book 5) that the virtues of leadership in war – wisdom, bravery, temperance, justice – are best learned through direct experience. Hunt is at pains to point out that the message is not that war is good, but that:

"...as far back as Plato, the notion was put forth that young people could learn lessons about virtue best when impelled into adventurous situations that demanded those virtues to be exercised" ⁷

Hunt also enlists the support of Aristotle in claiming ancient roots for adventure education through his development of the notion that virtue is best learned by practise, which Hunt attempts to extend into adventure education:

"If Aristotle is right about virtues being best learned by the development of right habits and if right habits involve education, then it follows that education is connected with the development of virtue.. .this concern with learning virtue is foundational to any philosophy of adventure education" (p121)⁸

Certainly the Greeks cited by Hunt had things to say about bringing up the young, for example:-

"...have you never noticed the practice in the arts, how for example the sons of potters look on as helpers a long time before they put their hands in the clay?"⁹

And

"...but the virtues we get by first exercising them, as also happens in the case of the arts as well..."¹⁰

Hunt's citing of these and other texts seems tenuous in terms of providing philosophical roots for adventure (or even experiential) education. Plato was no proto-Piaget; he expected the young to learn by watching their elders rather than by actively experiencing slipware, war, or whatever. For idealists such as Plato, *"...the essence of knowledge and truth is to be achieved by thought and contemplation...."*¹¹ A prescription for review, rather than the kind of all-out immersion in action which Hunt prescribes. Aristotle *did* make a case for exercising skills as a way of

learning, but not for a special time or place (a course...) in which to do it.

The leaps of faith required by Hunt in his attempt to give ancient roots to the philosophy of adventure education seem too large to me.

What of more modern philosophers?

2) Modern Philosophy

A more specific philosophical root for the idea of adventure-based training is presented by William James:

"If there were, instead of military conscription a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlisted against Nature, the injustice would tend to be evened out, and numerous goods to the commonwealth would follow. The military ideals of hardihood and discipline would be wrought into the growing fibre of the people; no one would remain as blind as the luxurious classes now are blind, to man's relation to the globe he lives on, and to the permanently sour and hard foundations of his higher life.....such a conscription, with the state of public opinion that would have required it, and the many moral fruits it would bear, would preserve in the midst of a pacific civilisation the manly virtues which the military party is so afraid of seeing disappear in peace"¹²

Shorn of its anachronisms ("manly virtues", "Man's relationships", "the war against Nature"....), James was proposing that war provides a regrettably unique theatre for the exercise of certain virtues, that these virtues are desirable, and that they can be retained without war by some form of adventurous service.

This philosophy is directly echoed in practice by such ventures as Operations Drake and Raleigh, and also by the Airborne Initiative, a "last chance" organisation for young offenders initiated and sponsored by members of the Parachute Regiment. It was also influential on Kurt Hahn, the practitioner who more than any other brought a variety of philosophies together to form the prototype for all outdoor development (and by extension OMD) organisations. If for no other reason than his influence on the roots of outdoor development, Hahn is worthy of detailed examination. He also provides a bridge between philosophy and practice.

Kurt Hahn

Born in Berlin in 1886, Hahn was a man of wide interests and accomplishments – a keen athlete and an able scholar who at an early age gained a position of influence in the Imperial German Foreign Office¹³. A restless pragmatist by nature rather than a philosopher¹⁴, he early decided to make education his life. Influenced by reports on the

liberal Abbotsholme School and by visits there and to more traditional British public schools, he eventually founded Salem Schule in Germany, aiming to combine the best of both “progressive” and traditional English public schools. His objectives were what we would today call “holistic”, seeking to provide an approach to young peoples’ development which aimed to “...*build up a tradition of self-discipline and vigorous but joyous endeavour*”¹⁵ through a curriculum which equally valued the pursuit of personal interests, athletics, community service, the development of the imagination and periods of reflective silence.

A long-term opponent of Nazism and Fascism, Hahn was deported to Britain in 1933 and set up Gordonstoun School along Salem lines. Later, in 1941, he founded the first Outward Bound school at the invitation of the ship owner Lawrence Holt. Outward Bound was thus the product of reflection and practice at two other establishments over a period of twenty-two years. It also benefited from experience gained with young people from a wider range of backgrounds than those available in Public Schools in the County Badge Scheme, a pre-war precursor to the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme¹⁶ All these were informed by Hahn’s oft-stated view that:

“we consider it palpable neglect not to impel every youngster into health-giving experiences, regardless of their inclination” ¹⁷

In a later elaboration, he gave reasons for this impelling into experience:

*“I..... consider it culpable neglect not to guide and even plunge the young into experiences which are likely to present opportunities for self-discovery....”*¹⁸

Hahn reasoned that this impelling into experience/self-discovery was necessary to counteract the malign influence of what he believed to be a diseased civilisation – in effect, a method for inculcating the virtues that may be had from war without actually fighting (and thus, presumably, avoiding the many vices that war undoubtedly generates). Hahn saw the civilisation of his day as suffering from¹⁹:

- A decline in physical fitness
- A decline in initiative and enterprise
- A decline in memory and imagination
- A decline in skill and care
- A decline in self-discipline
- A decline in compassion²⁰

According to Hunt²¹, Hahn, who “*Was revolted by the fascistic movements in Italy and Germany with their disregard for justice*”, who “*Just as William James sought to use nature in the war against war*” and who “*want(ed) to use adventure education as a tool to arm young*

people against the allure of fascism and war..." found that his "educational thought rapidly evolved into the Outward Bound program"

OUTWARD BOUND AND OTHER ROOTS

The term "outward bound" is used in two ways: firstly as a catch-all to describe all outdoor education. (Huczynski (1983), for example, ²² uses the term generically to describe OMD) and as a trade mark for a number of federated organisations across the world, most of which can trace their roots back to the first Outward Bound School.

This began operations in 1941 at Aberdovey in North-West Wales and from its earliest days (Hahn, a restless initiator with a public school to run didn't overly trouble himself with the day-to-day workings of the Outward Bound programme) may not have fully reflected Hahn's anti-fascist, holistic educational philosophy.

Early writings on the Outward Bound programme describe a limited, if challenging, content comprising the sailing of small and large boats, mountain expeditions, climbing, and athletics. There is no description of formal or informal review.

Certainly there is no evidence that interests or hobbies were promoted. Instead, we learn that *"the boys who had kept training conditions (no drinking or smoking, daily cold shower/dip) and in addition had reached certain standards in...athletics and seamanship and had proved themselves on expeditions by sea and land....received badges..."*²³

Indeed, early non-Hahn writings on Outward Bound give more than a whiff of an institutionalising process:

*"You can well imagine the medical inspections, the interviews, the issue of equipment, the allocation of "watches" and dormitories, the search for leaders..."*²⁴

One early Outward Bound figure goes further:

*"Boarding schools are, however, costly; and the system demanded years to produce its results. Was it a system capable of compression into shorter periods? And could it be made of wider application?.....the five wise men – or was it six? – met in the great Elizabethan drawing room of Trinity Lodge and the movement was launched, shortly afterwards to be entitled the Outward Bound Trust"*²⁵

So it seems that the initial Outward Bound movement was powered by a desire to disseminate the benefits of the public school system (of which the overwhelming majority of its founders were either products – Geoffrey Winthrop Young and G.M. Trevelyan, or admirers – Hahn and Captain Fuller) to a wider public. To produce people whom, one imagines, would be a kind of cross between Tom Browne and the young Horatio Hornblower. Fit successors to *"the great empire-builders"*²⁶

To be sure, it was also hoped that Outward Bound would restore some of the independence and community spirit which its early proponents thought the late-Victorian reorganisation of Public Schools had removed – a “*framework of manly endeavour*”²⁷ - but even this can be seen as merely trying to produce a better version of the Public School system, not something different to it.

Of course, Outward Bound is merely the first, not the only, provider of development training. What of the others? The more established organisations band together in DTAG (the Development Training Agencies Group). Several of these (Impact, Lindley, Endeavour Training) are too young to have been in the first wave. Of the others, Lakeside is part of the YMCA and thus at root shares some of the muscular Christianity values of Outward Bound, as does Brathay. This latter has regarded itself as the “*mother house of the development training profession and the pedagogical leader of the pack*”²⁸ but Everard (1993) notes that:

“Both (Outward Bound and Brathay) have their roots in the ideals that the English public schools took from ancient Greece, which sent Whymper up the Matterhorn, Scott to the South Pole and inspired Baden Powell”²⁹1

OUTCOMES OF THE EARLY FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Certainly the training was popular. Outward Bound experienced rapid growth both at home and abroad, opening a second school in 1950, commencing overseas and girls’ work in 1951, opening a third school in 1952 and a fourth in 1954. In Britain alone, over 700 young people each year experienced the month-long Outward Bound programme.

Evidence of the effects of these programmes is limited. A desk at Outward Bound Eskdale contains logbook entries compiled by delegates at the end of all its courses through the Fifties and Sixties. These are overwhelmingly positive, but also overwhelmingly platitudinous (a sample:- “There has never been a finer bunch of fellows working together”) and are silent as to the effects of the programme on the people concerned. One noteworthy fact is that many of them make a point of mentioning whether the group in question won the pennant for athletics (and if not, some consoling or excusing word) – giving the impression that athletic competition was seen by someone – the staff or the groups - as highly important.

¹ It is uncharitable but irresistible to recall that of these role-models, Whymper was responsible for the deaths of half the group he led on the first ascent of the Matterhorn; Scott did rather better, forfeiting the lives of ALL his team whilst achieving *second* place in the race to the South Pole; Baden-Powell is something of a failure, accidentally killing no-one, although it may be said in his defence that there is alleged to be evidence that he took the ancient Greek appreciation of the aesthetics of the naked human form quite seriously.....

James (1957) reprints extracts from six delegate accounts of the experience. Although all are very different from one another (apart from references to the media of the programmes – the hills, the sea, the athletics) – an interesting and enlightening point is that three specifically mention a greater understanding or tolerance for their fellows:

“.....you learn to laugh at steep waves when out in a small boat when really you are very much afraid, you carry 35lb. in a rucksack for fifteen miles and still find time to smile;You work hard for no apparent reward but the satisfaction of a job well done. You meet people with points of view wholly unimaginable to you. In short, the course gives you 26 days of life as it ought to be...”³⁰

“Another thing is my tolerance towards people. I never used to take anybody else's feelings into account....”³¹

“....I have learnt, through necessity, how to live, understand and get on with people that I would never otherwise have wanted to associate with...I used to think it a point of honour to do better than these chaps but now I consider it an honour to have the chance to run and jump and throw together with them..”³²

Another source quotes a recipient of peer-praise:³³ *“This is the first time in my life I have seemed to matter....”*

I reflect that this a considerable vindication of the original Outward Bound programme. For all Dr. Zimmerman's passion for athletic achievement; for all Young's desire to replicate the public school system; for all Captain Fuller's emphatic views on the superiority of sail over steam; for all that teaching forbearance was not part of Hahn's original case - increased tolerance and respect for others seems to have been a key outcome of the programme.

It could be argued that 26 days spent in a confined, physically stressful, and puritanical community *would* have this effect. I don't disagree, but do praise the originators of Outward Bound and the other pioneers for at least providing that opportunity.

PERSONAL REFLECTION 1

This is unexpected. Having done all the reading, I was prepared to patronise the old Outward Bound boys and have fun at their expense. My initial reflections were that it was sloppy, outdated and based on an Imperialist/Jingoist philosophy, using the ancient Greeks and William James as some kind of camouflage. I'm not so sure now. Whatever they set out to teach, what seems to have resulted is an increased tolerance for different others. And (possibly by benevolent neglect) the delegates arrived at this conclusion for themselves. Surely that's a more important lesson than, say, practising the competencies of team behaviour or leadership in a work situation? I feel my self-assurance wobbling.

AMERICAN ROOTS

If Britain's development training is rooted in its pioneers' understanding of the Public School ethos, relevant American rhetoric makes it clear that another root-paradigm operates there:

"To engage in adventurous activity and to fail will necessitate some sort of loss. But what is the price of choosing not to seek or purposely avoiding tenuous situations? The price is torpidity, and the result is stagnation. One must actively seek an adventurous way of life; otherwise there is only a small and narrow world to explore. A diminutive existence then ensues."³⁴

This gives clues to the American paradigm:

- 1) A belief that danger ("tenuous situations") is good for you, because without danger there will only be "torpidity and stagnation".
- 2) The assertion that an adventurous way of life is the only way to avoid "a diminutive existence" and that therefore one "Must actively seek an adventurous way of life" (my underlining).

Other American writers confirm this, mostly using "Adventure" as the key descriptive term (as opposed to the softer British terms "Outdoor Development" or "Development Training"):

"One of the special feelings experienced by outdoor adventurers is the sense of euphoria that is so often felt at the end of a successful expedition"³⁵

Another oft-used American term rarely, if ever, committed to print in British descriptions of outdoor training is "wilderness", as in "*Wilderness Challenges are high in ambiguity....*"³⁶, "*The wilderness is a classroom*"³⁷ and "*Surely someone has tapped the potential of the wilderness lab?*"³⁸

Such rhetoric has little in common with the "Tom Browne" paradigm, giving instead a whiff of more American archetypes – those self-reliant souls who braved the backwoods, killing or being killed, crossing Great Divides, taking great risks, expanding the frontiers of their nation ever-westward.

A different paradigm was always likely to emerge - America has a traditional affection for the rugged individualist and the nation lacks a significant Public School network.

The danger for students of outdoor development is in failing to recognise the differences between the roots of U.S. and U.K. development training (normally and significantly termed "Adventure Education" in the U.S.) is that whilst methods and even outcomes may exhibit similarity, their emotional roots are as different as Tom Browne and Davie Crockett.

This may affect desired outcomes: Early British delegates talk of learning tolerance, of working with a "fine bunch of fellows". Americans, on the other hand, talk of "...an opportunity to understand, test, and

demonstrate their own resources”³⁹ (my underlining). Similarly, U.S. research often looks at the effect of outdoor training on self-concept and self-efficacy. These are laudable objectives, but what is missing is significant – research into the ability to build relationships with others. In a nutshell, British outcomes often seem to be “we” focussed, American ones often “I” focussed.

This essential difference between American and British roots is obscured by common practices and methods, but is vital in any understanding of where outdoor development is (literally) coming from – experience in Britain may not, at root, be appropriate to the U.S., and vice-versa.

What is clear in Britain is that the Outward Bound method – month-long courses high on experience but low on formal reflection and aimed exclusively at young people (latterly of both sexes), remained virtually unchanged until some time in the 1970’s. Outward Bound Wales, for example, was still headlining its brochure with the 26-day programme in 1977.

Three things happened which caused a paradigm shift in the use of the outdoors for development training. These are:

- 1) The advent of Lindley Lodge,
- 2) State sponsorship of a needs-analysis approach to defining business training needs through the Industrial Training Boards,
- 3) The colonisation of the outdoors by management development.

A PARADIGM SHIFT

Lindley Lodge

Until the advent of Lindley Lodge, development training was largely a matter of providing challenging experiences and letting them speak for themselves. Lindley was the first to adopt an approach in which review was seen as crucial, and which a more cerebral attitude to development was adopted.

The rhetoric employed at the time by Lindley is indicative of this:

“As the group and its members are helped to see the effect of their behaviour on others and begin to experience the satisfaction which is derived from working in a team.....so this influences the way they approach the next experience...”⁴⁰

Some years after, Lindley people are still emphasising what they saw as the essential difference between themselves and the others:

“With young peoples’ programmes our approach is a little different from most development training agencies in its emphasis on review and relating back”.....⁴¹

As Everard (1993) puts it:-

*"Lindley.....adopted a more sophisticated approach, using behavioural science concepts, theory and techniques such as organisation development (OD), personality theory, Gestalt, transactional analysis, clinical theology, group dynamics, team roles, counselling, authority and power, decision-making and leadership...."*⁴²

By this heady mix of (then) leading-edge methods, by the offering of a twelve-day course as standard¹ and by adopting a coherent (if simplistic) training cycle, Lindley helped set off a seismic changes in British development training. After a thirty-year predomination of 26-day programmes, Outward Bound had to offer their own twelve-day programme to industry. Review became an item on both Outward Bound and Brathay's agenda. "Soft Skills" became recognised as important.

The Medium as Vehicle

Something else happened at about the same time as the advent of Lindley. Before the 1970's development training providers had set the agenda for programmes, seeking only that industry and other suppliers of course members agree with those objectives. The medium was the message (or at least the messenger.....).

In 1970, the Industrial Training Boards began to exert strong influence on the way industry trained its people. Soon losing any independence they may have had, and being subsumed into the Manpower Service Commission, they adopted a "systematic" approach wherein those wishing to avoid levy were expected to take a methodical and transparent approach to analysing training needs and setting training plans. One result was that a medium-based approach became less acceptable to levy-risking sponsors, who wanted to see more focussed efforts from their money.

Lindley, for one, reacted accordingly, claiming that training offered would directly benefit the employer in a variety of specified ways (principally by promoting a responsible approach to work and colleagues) and offering to tailor courses closely to sponsors' needs⁴³, adopting such employer-friendly themes as communication, teamwork, and leadership (Everard, 1993). Even Lindley's more "far-out" offerings, wherein group process was explored in a way that was as "near as development training has got to the "touchy-feely style of a Tavistock or

¹ Although 12 days seems an impossibly long time nowadays, the author recalls that as late as 1989, such a duration was being criticised by Outward Bound instructors as "too short to get anywhere".

NLT T-group" (Everard, 1993) were governed by learning objectives agreed with the client.

To take another example, Brathay, Everard (1993) notes that "*More is done to link the experience with the sponsors' objectives*"⁴⁴

The third contributor to the paradigm-shift – outdoor management development – becomes the main focus of this paper hereafter, and thus is dealt with in more detail in the next Chapter. Suffice to say at this stage that the exposure of outdoor development people to the skills and requirements of management developers for more focussed training with less time to deliver added fuel to the fire of change in outdoor development.

For now the two streams – outdoor development and OMD – bifurcate, with the focus of the paper moving to the latter.

A Reflection

The basic approach had shifted from "We do *this*, and we'd be delighted if you'd like to buy some...." To "What would you like us to do?....."

On the face of it, this is improved customer service. It does, however, mask the less attractive fact that in adopting a more "customer-facing" stance, OD (and come to that OMD) providers run the risk of failing to maintain their particular philosophical stances, becoming mere "providers", whose wares become changeable with every whim of HR fashion. This has two effects:

1) The eclipse of idealism: Most long-established OD/OMD organisations were formed as a result of crusading attitudes and ideologies emanating from their founders. Outward Bound had Hahn's theories; Brathay had the thoughts of (the splendidly-named) Dick Faithfull Davies and Francis Scott. Both had overtly religious components to their work. Endeavour Training had the inspirational attitudes of Dick Allcock. Although a late arrival, Lindley's religious attitude went further than most, with recruitment (*via* the Christian press) limited to evangelical Christians who lived as a religious community.

The rhetoric surrounding the work of all of them was couched in the language of evangelism: "Endeavour", a "mission" to "spread the word".

Whether or not we agree with the attitudes embodied by the early organisations, all involved had enthusiasm and a sense of mission not primarily connected to financial or lifestyle reward. And what they were purveying was, in every case, a "method" of their very own. The attitude

was “this is what we believe in, this is what we do...” ...the subtext was “take it or leave it”.

A key underlying factor to all this was that, combined with the zeal for their particular method was a desire to see it work, to see lives made richer by exposure to their efforts.

2) A tendency towards commodification: Once the distinctive philosophies had been abandoned, OD organisations had to compete with each other to meet needs expressed by their clients. Courses became “products” and the *essential* difference between one organisation’s offerings and the next became less easy to discern.

Summary - Causes of the Paradigm Shift Within Development Training

The paradigm shift seems to have resulted from two pressures:

1) For developers to become more “professional”, borrowing and using techniques from the fields of gestalt, counselling and group-process work, and incorporating these into a do-review-relate back cycle. The outdoors, formerly thought to contain *messages* in itself, was effectively reduced to a *medium*, a vehicle to convey other kinds of message.

2) The market demanded changes:- Shorter courses which, if they were to meet needs more thoroughly prescribed by buyers, must perforce be more focussed, adopting pre-set objectives rather than letting the learning go where it may.

The paradigm shift can be summarised thus:-

OLD PARADIGM	NEW PARADIGM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Character Training" • Medium contains message • Long courses (26 day norm) • Client buys-in to offered objectives • Heavy physicality • Absence of process review • Limited media (sea, mountains, athletics) • Root worlds– public school team players/ wilderness pioneers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Development Training" • Medium is vehicle for message • Shorter courses (12 day norm) • Client dictates objectives • Wider physicality range • Presence of process review • Wider media (as old plus small grounds, Pfeiffer & Jones, etc.) • Emergent World – social psychology

PERSONAL REFLECTION 2

At the time, first as a buyer and then as a trainer on early OMD programmes, I was utterly in favour of the shift to needs-meeting. It seemed the right thing – the smart thing - to do. I now find that for the first time – although I suspect this has been growing in me for quite a while - I very seriously question whether this was an unmixed blessing. I feel that the move to a more professionally developmental stance was the start of a slippery slope towards utter subjugation to the wants of the client over whatever the needs of the delegate might be. At the time it was so easy – we, the new people were the smart, quick mammals, all set to take over the world. The mountaineers and retired regular officers who made up the old guard were the dinosaurs. But what if the dinosaurs were right? This is uncomfortable – I was aware of my own discomfort with the way things have been going lately, with a pressure to run one-day (or part-day) courses so that sponsors can "tick the box", but I'm beginning to think that I was part of the original push in this direction when – for all the right reasons – I started demanding more focussed training from my providers, and then leapt into the breach when they couldn't or didn't want to do it....I fought for that.

But I need to have "rightness" (what a theologian would call "righteousness"?) in my work, or it counts for nothing. It's alien to my nature to do work I don't believe in (and I do it badly). Above all, I must not fool myself into thinking I believe in something if at heart I don't. That way lies (literally) madness.....

OUTDOOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

At around the same time that development training was in the throes of the change outlined above, a growing interest in using the outdoors as a vehicle for developing managers began to manifest itself.

Why this should have happened may be a comment on the state of indoor management development at the time: Beeby and Rathborn⁴⁵ note that Creswick and Williams, two early practitioners with extensive conventional management development experience, were drawn to the outdoors through “complaints from managers ...of unreality, of lack of bite, of a lack of relevance to their jobs”, of (indoor) training which seemed “inadequate when dealing with issues related to managers’ actual behaviour”⁴⁶

Others echoed that dissatisfaction:

“Those for whose development I was responsible weren’t complaining, but equally it became clear to me that what they were experiencing was seen as something very separate from the job, and with no bearing on it.....”⁴⁷

and found a rationale:

“The power of the outdoors comes from the immediacy of the consequences of success and failure. The tasks involve the whole person, not just the intellectual part”⁴⁸

Outward Bound began to offer “adult” programmes although these merely transferred the content of young peoples’ programmes into an adult setting. More promisingly, Brathay and H.P. Bulmer ran a series of ten-day “Management in Action” programmes from 1971 (Everard 1993)⁴⁹. Although these focussed on action-centred leadership, they still, as late as 1977 (when I sent a number of managers on one....) harked back to an earlier era, featuring daily early-morning cutter races and “pure” outdoor activities.

A more avowedly “management” focus on the outdoors with Industrial Training Board backing and drawing on extensive experience in group process work was promoted by Roy Williams and Chris Creswick⁵⁰. This approach was highly influential in shaping British OMD. As one admirer wrote⁵¹:

“Their influence cannot be over-rated.....because they pioneered the application of real management development disciplines to outdoor programmes....Among other things they established effective methods of review; they allowed groups to live with the consequences of their own actions, they designed exercises to address particular developmental needs; they used the physical, but dispensed with the unnecessary and pointless cult of physicality”

The snowball had started rolling, and by 1980 sufficient interest had been generated for the Leadership Trust to have become an established and active participant in the U.K. management development scene, and for Challenge Training (the first British business entirely dedicated to OMD beyond action-centred leadership) to have commenced operations.

THE RANGE OF OMD

OMD is, of course, a hybrid and from its earliest days took elements from the worlds of outdoor development and organisational development. This is illustrated graphically by two articles which appeared in the same edition of the same magazine. The first sees things from an outdoor development perspective, the second from the management development angle:

1) The first article is by David Williams⁵² and is interesting for the fact that what it describes is Mortlockian Adventure Education – pretty much at the Davie Crockett end of the development training spectrum. The author displays his youth-work based roots, speaking of transitional learning for those on the threshold of adulthood more than of OMD. Although the article was “badged” as OMD, the focus is clear:

“The courses are designed to develop personal qualities, attitudes of mind, and skills in those attending them.....a progression of experiences and situations in a number of contrasting environments can bring about an increase in personal and social awareness....”

and

“The aims and objectives of courses of this nature vary according to the position of the employee and the particular requirements of the industry involved, however they can best be described as involving social needs of the individual, e.g. creating a sense of achievement or an increase in self-confidence....”

The final two lines (see below), one speculates, may have been added to fabricate a relevance to the audience being addressed:

(the aims and objectives of courses vary with) “the needs of modern industry, e.g. bringing about improved communication skills, a better understanding of industrial relations or the principles of work organisation....”

Rhetoric largely of the old paradigm – of bringing out personal qualities, of the *environment* delivering increases in personal and social awareness.

2) The second article was written by Krouwel⁵³, who (at the time) had far greater “Indoor” provenance than outdoor - unlike Williams, a former Outward Bound trainer.

The rhetoric is strikingly different:-

"Our objective is limited to providing a framework of exercises within which managers can test their powers to cope with an accelerating rate of uncertainty and change...a number of other management development needs can be satisfied by the outdoor programme.....These include the ability to organise, to persuade, to motivate others and to work as a team.....the age of the equation-solving manager is passing, and all of us are being put into an equation-formulating role...."

And

"That's where much of the learning takes place – in review sessions. It's vital that these are given as much consideration as the actual exercises.....it is vitally important to get the right balance between exercises and review

Different rhetoric – recognisable for a competency-driven approach (although the actual word was not in much use then), management-development jargon, and emphasis on review....

Within a few years, the latter approach was in the ascendant as the basis for a business which experienced mushroom-like growth, incidentally transforming the approach adopted by the likes of Brathay and (eventually) Outward Bound. It also gave birth to a host of organisations whose brutal names - Challenge, Adapt, Impact – often belied some subtlety of approach.

Nevertheless, some survivalists survived and even prospered, especially during the years when OMD became quite a fad in HR circles. The result was the coming into being of a range of OMD offerings, the differences between which were not always apparent to prospective users¹. A number of writers have therefore attempted to sort OMD into classes. These are discussed in the next section.

CLASSIFYING OUTDOOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT – UNCERTAINTY AND CONFUSION?

Beeby and Rathborn noted in 1983 that *"it is possible to detect amongst many managers and trainers a degree of uncertainty and confusion about the operation of the outdoor approach and what it seeks to achieve with relevance to the workplace"* ⁵⁴ adding that *"....the very richness and variety of programmes, reflected in these numerous objectives, make the outdoor approach a difficult one to communicate easily.....the immediate requirement is for greater clarity of terms in future discussions and presentations of the approach"*

These are understandable sentiments (especially to this writer, who is constantly asked at parties "What is it you do, exactly?", and has yet to

¹ The tendency of even the most cerebral OMD practitioners to produce brochures which featured prominent pictures of the more visual aspects of the training did not help to clarify this confusion.

find a reply which satisfies curiosity without getting him a reputation as a crushing bore), and various writers have tried to classify types of OMD.

Doughty⁵⁵, in asserting that “Perhaps some of the discontinuity between the understanding of providers and clients lies in the confusion over the differing outcomes of management development and personal development” believes that OMD and personal development training can be classified by what he terms “generations”. These are:

FIRST GENERATION	SECOND GENERATION	THIRD GENERATION
Growth through physical challenge	Growth through physical activity	Seeks to balance physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects of personal development - Indoor or outdoor as need dictates, in a programme aimed at holistic learning
Little review or facilitation	Process assisted by facilitation - review may take a large part of the course indoors	Equality-centred style
Participants take from the experience as they are able. A confused, painful experience for many	More participant-centred than Generation 1	Power lies equally with the trainer and the participant

Figure 2: Doughty's three generations

Krouwel and Goodwill⁵⁶ identify and develop definitions of classes of practice which display some similarities to Doughty's: **Endurance trainers**, who emphasise challenging physical activity and rarely, if ever, review; **outdoor educators**, who emphasise activity but seriously review it, and **development trainers**, who see review as fundamental and also attempt to design tasks which have relevance to interpersonal and managerial processes at work.

Without a specifically management agenda, Priest and Gass (1993)⁵⁷ also adopt a generational approach. They list five generations:

1) Letting the experience speak for itself: Letting the learning which may take place on an activity take place (or not as the case may be). They point out that “when properly designed, adventure activities are inherently enriching” but add that “this approach is fine provided the intrapersonal and interpersonal goals of adventure education are not sought” (p23)

2) Speaking for the experience: The instructor interprets the experience for the learners – telling them what they (should have) learned from it. Similar to part of Doughty's first generation

3) Reflection, inquiry and discussion: *"In this model, participants enjoy learning through reflection under the facilitation of an instructor introducing carefully designed questions and guiding them to discover their own learning".* The authors correctly note that this model was popularised in the U.S. as the "Outward Bound Plus" model from 1987, but fail to point out its adoption in the U.K. as early as 1974⁵⁸

4) Frontloading: In the model as presented, the instructor:

"(before the briefing, possibly during, or just after it)explains several key learning points. These points may include, but are not necessarily limited to: sharing the learning objectives for the activity and any related motivational benefits, stressing the desired positive behaviours in advance, warning learners of the consequences of negative behaviours and asking learners to review or revisit earlier commitments to change before beginning an activity" (p 24).

5) Isomorphically framing the experience: Trying to turn the experience into a metaphor for work, for example by reframing a "spider's web" exercise as a distribution network.

A rather different approach to classification, arising out of their perception that OMD resists neat categorisations is made by Jones and Oswick⁵⁹, who content themselves with listing and sorting a number of variables:

- (1) Participants – potential managers, trainee managers, procedural, operational or strategic managers*
- (2) Aims – intrapersonal, interpersonal, team building, team development, organisational development*
- (3) Location – residential/non-residential, hotel/bunk house, environment*
- (4) Duration – of outdoor component, of overall development programmes*
- (5) Inputs/reviews – content, duration, frequency, timing, focus, activities, personnel*
- (6) Actual or perceived challenge – cognitive, physical, emotional, risk"*

Beeby and Rathborn (1983)⁶⁰ cite two classes of OMD: **adventure education** – where the medium (the outdoors – climbing, caving and so on) is the message – so review is seen as unnecessary, and **development training** (in an employment context) as a training method which is:

".....a special class of experiential learning which distinctively incorporates use of the outdoors (experience) with process reviews (assessment)" (p 171)

Dainty and Lucas (1993)⁶¹ present a framework for evaluating Outdoor Development (their term) rather than defining classes, but which has similarities to Beeby and Rathborn. They suggest that evaluation should come from looking at three continuums, one of which (outcomes) is

dealt with in the next section. The other two are **Tasks undertaken** - from highly prescribed (high technical support required, structured, narrow objectives) to very flexible (low technical support, unstructured, broad objectives); **Review Processes** - from low intensity (General focus, low personal focus) to high intensity (specific focus, personally challenging and direct). With seeming inevitability, these two are combined to form a matrix (fig. 3)

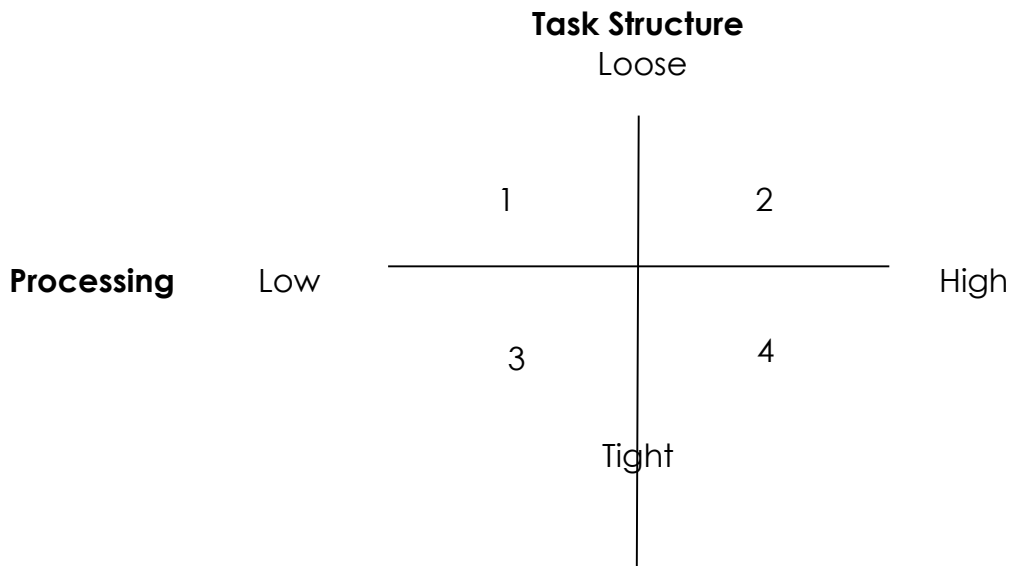


Figure 3: Task/Process structure (After Dainty and Lucas)

Classifying OMD –Critique

Whilst a desire to classify OMD is understandable in terms of clarifying the confusion (cf. Dainty and Lucas, 1992), this can be reframed as “limiting the options”. As an example, Dainty and Lucas characterise abseiling (the descent of cliffs by use of ropes and a friction device) as an activity requiring high technical support and structured, narrow objectives (Dainty and Lucas, 1992).

Whilst prudence does dictate that properly trained technical staff are in attendance in an activity requiring abseiling, there are still a number of ways in which it can be used as part of a highly flexible task. More significantly, to limit the learning allowed to that dictated by one’s narrow objectives seems to be a remarkably confining thing to do. An abseiler (particularly a first-time one) might experience a wide variety of thoughts, feelings, emotions, as a result of the experience; the learning potential for each individual is different. For one, the support of fellow team members may trigger-off reflection about their behaviour in managing their own people. For another, it may provoke reflections on trust, for yet another it may highlight ways of coping with fear. The experience of abseiling (or indeed of choosing *not* to abseil) provides a wide range of learning opportunities. What if we then review an abseiling exercise around structured, narrow objectives? We limit the experience,

corralling it to our own purposes, whatever they might be. We dictate the learning agenda by only *allowing* people to learn whatever it is we wish them to learn.

The idea that an activity (even one where people are told what to do a step at a time) can meet structured, narrow, learning objectives denies the essential autonomy of human thought – the “*active sense-making process which addresses itself to all experience, external events impinging on the person, sensations of seemingly inner awareness and offered pre-structured knowledge*”⁶² It also limits the potential of outdoor development to meet real (but different) people’s real (but different) needs.

Although Dainty and Lucas provide a convenient example, this underplaying of human autonomy also applies to Beeby and Rathborn, Krouwel and Goodwill, Priest and Gass, and Doughty. All imply that people only learn (or at least learn best) through some form of structured (although maybe democratic) “review” process when an expert – a teacher or facilitator - is present.

This case seems to be most strongly presented by Doughty, who treats it as a “taken-for-granted”. He demonises the purely activity-based approach as “*a confused and painful experience*” (Doughty, 1991). It may be, but – my experience tells me – so can facilitated events. Further, powerful transformational learning is often, whatever the medium, confused and painful. Doughty seems to be suggesting that “third generation” learning, in which the facilitators and participants work together, each being effectively indistinguishable from the another is somehow better. This writer has never seen such a group in anything like pure form. No matter how much trainers would like to create these situations, they are privileged by virtue of their professional knowledge and skills, and by the fact that they are probably being paid and are probably obliged to be on the course.

Priest and Gass privilege the trainer even more. The first three of their generations bear a strong resemblance to the three generations posited earlier by Doughty. Thereafter the potential for instrumentalism creeps in. The fourth generation (front loading) is particularly open to this, seeming to enable trainers to tell people what they will learn. A kind of ersatz experientialism, a substitution of free group process with a training cycle set up to prove the trainer’s point rather than provide material for reflection. The main objective of such an exercise can only be to send delegates home at the end of a programme carrying with them *exactly* the lessons the designer wanted them to take away, whether or not these have relevance to their actual lives.

The fifth generation (isomorphic framing) is more pathetic than problematical. Telling people that a rope spider-web is a distribution network (the example given by Priest and Gass) may simply not work. They can see that it's an arrangement of ropes and frames. If the experiences aren't already metaphors, no amount of window-dressing will make them so.

Another problem with hard categorisations is that they impoverish perception by lumping together various characteristics which may have nothing to do with each other. Thus Doughty's "generations" ignore the fact that it is perfectly possible to combine little formal review and facilitation (first generation) within a warm and caring atmosphere which utilises outdoor activities (second generation). Similarly, Krouwel and Goodwill's (1994) three categories gloss over the fact that there is much overlap; some people use survivalist tasks but review them, others using development training tasks but let them speak for themselves. Dainty and Lucas seek to avoid this by using continuums but lose flexibility by combining them to form a four-choice box diagram.

To summarise, dividing OMD into hard classes may be unhelpful in two ways:

- 1) It unnecessarily "freezes" various approaches to the medium into "good" and "bad" classes.
- 2) It does the same for the media themselves, for example by characterising a particular technique as having narrow or broad objectives.

Some of the classes seem to be potentially dangerous (in terms of providing subtle forms of manipulation), and others are just silly.

For me, Jones and Oswick's (1993) categorisation is more satisfactory, if only by virtue of its descriptive (rather than prescriptive) content. It's simply an attempt to describe what is, rather than what should be.

As well as attempts to classify OMD, various writers have tried to define its purpose. The next section examines these.

Personal Reflection 3

It seemed simple. We, the new guard, arrived with our clever review techniques, our talk of “trusting the group – trusting the process”, our zeal to see to it that each individual in each group learned exactly what they needed to learn, with exercises as a kind of blank sheet onto which each group – each individual – projected their needs, which we helped them to deal with. Somewhere along the line, things got messed up and we started to seek to make money instead by doing whatever it was that the buyers wanted, content to have satisfying, well paid work, whatever its purpose. To front-load if necessary. And we got rewarded for it . Should we have stuck to our guns? Could we? Has OMD gone too far down the road of one-day “teambuilds” which need to be front loaded to meet clients’ ever-more margin-motivated requirements?

The big picture behind all this seems to be a migration by the client-base to the most short-termist of views. So our role has become not so much “help people to develop.....” and has become (at worst) “contribute to an upturn in our Q3 results!”

Maybe it's time to find a new client-base?

APPLICATIONS OF OUTDOOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT – ACTS OF FAITH?

As Dainty and Lucas put it,⁶³

“There are a number of commonly held beliefs some accurate, some erroneous, about outdoor development programmes. These range from a view of it as a masochistic experience and SAS training, to claims that it can foster emotional rebirth.”

They also point out that:

“Programmes can differ quite considerably not only in terms of the type of tasks that participants are asked to perform, but also in terms of the type of review process utilised, and the overall outcomes that are intended by the course organisers.....the problem is that there is a real danger that its diversity is misunderstood rather than managed, ignored rather than used for improving programmes, and can lead to confusion rather than clarity about the advantages and disadvantages of using this development activity”⁶⁴

So for what purposes is OMD used?

A number of writers, usually with some first-hand knowledge, have examined this issue and arrived at conclusions which can be categorised into two distinct classes; skills development, and a wider, more ambitious type of human development, characterised by Chapman and Lumsdon (1983)⁶⁵ as behaviourally specific or non-

specific.

They reflect that:-

“Development training (their term for OMD) provides the opportunity for individual needs to be met through the less structured format and delegation of responsibility to the individual participant for deciding his own role, level of participation and, therefore, performance”⁶⁶

These thoughts are developed in a construct which seeks to categorise learning into four classes – long- or short-interval are added to behaviourally specific or non-specific, (fig. 4), and add that they believe outdoor development best addresses quadrant 4 - behaviourally non-specific short-interval “insight” skills such as coping with ambiguity, and change, building trustful relationships, developing realistic negotiating skills, and working effectively in groups. They interestingly speculate that these are important but more difficult to evaluate than the Quadrants 1 and 3 skills that many traditional management development programmes of the day sought to address.

I would argue that OMD has extended its influence into box 1 - context skills such as goal-setting and building commitment to those goals. In a kind of punk-Pavlovian way, outdoor exercises often underline these competencies through tight time-schedules and penalties for late completion.

BEHAVIOURALLY.....			
Specific	Non-specific		
Context Skills (Box 1) Goal-Setting Work Planning Decision Making	“Wisdom” (Box 2) Charisma Entrepreneurship Strategic Management	L O N G	I N T E R V A L
Practice Skills (Box 3) Performance - Appraising Report writing Active listening	Insight Skills (Box 4) Working in groups Coping with ambiguity Coping with change Building trust Negotiating	S H O R T	

Dainty and Lucas themselves (1992) categorise (perhaps in descending order of cognitive significance) four classes of outcome from OMD¹:

- 1) Development of self and other awareness (Similar to Chapman and Lumsdon's box 4)
- 2) Broad concrete skills (Similar to Chapman and Lumsdon's box 1)
- 3) Narrow concrete skills (Similar to Chapman and Lumsdon box 3)

¹ Dainty and Lucas assert that Chapman and Lumsdon saw outdoor development as a tool for box 1/3 learning. Chapman and Lumsdon are actually unequivocal in seeing the outdoors in box 4 terms, so I have been guided by this in making my comparisons.

4) Fun/enjoyment (not relevant to Chapman and Lumsdon)

Of these, the second and third clearly fall into the category of skills development, the first is behaviourally non-specific, depending on the different needs of different individuals.

Bank's⁶⁷ claims for outdoor development seem to include both behaviourally specific and non-specific items but are so all-encompassing and sweeping as to make categorisation difficult. For the record, he claimed that OMD was

- ◆ A positive experience of team building
- ◆ A cure for burn-out
- ◆ A successful way to alter human behaviour
- ◆ A commitment in the manager to pursue a better lifestyle

And that using it led to a range of behaviourally specific and non-specific outcomes:-

- ◆ Dealing with change and uncertainty
- ◆ Change in attitude about oneself and others
- ◆ Enhanced self-respect
- ◆ Development of communication skills

Dainty and Lucas's (1992) comment that some see the outdoors as all things to all men seems appropriate when one reads Bank's lists. He seems to see the outdoors as a kind of developmental snake oil, a miracle cure for all ills.

Mossman⁶⁸ (1983), like Dainty and Lucas, also notes a dichotomy in OMD, claiming that it works at two distinct levels:

"There seem to be two distinct manager development philosophies at work outdoors just as there are in more conventional MD....the Management Training approach and the Self-Development approach.... At the most basic level two questions distinguish Management Training from Self Development (after Boydell and Pedler 1981 p7):

- *To what extent are learning needs defined by the delegate (as opposed to the trainer or manager?)*
- *To what extent does the delegate take responsibility for meeting those learning needs (as opposed to the trainer)?"*

He asserts that it was important to take the orientation (towards self-development or management training) into account when selecting programmes and compares the two in a table, summarised below ¹ (see figure 4). He also describes OMD as a combination of

"- tasks designed to simulate the process involved in tackling typical problems

¹ the table also includes two other categories - adventure education and assessment centres, which I have omitted as *ultra vires*.

back at work;

- tasks which require the participants to engage their whole selves - intellectual emotional and physical – fully and with great intensity;
- tasks that often do this outdoors (cf. Beeby and Rathborn 1983, p174);
- tasks that often put delegates under pressure”

In highlighting approaches which “require the participant to engage their whole selves” Mossman takes a slightly different tack to Chapman and Lumsdon, Dainty and Lucas or Bank, all of whom specify particular skill-sets or areas of competence for which OMD might be useful. Mossman specifies what he perceives to be the benefits of the *medium*, not the *messages* for which it might be a vehicle.

This may be too vague for those wishing for Bank-like lists but works well for me, emphasising intensity of experience over a competency-driven approach. In a rather shaky analogy, the difference between the various “what you can use the outdoors to teach” approaches and Mossman is like the difference between ways of viewing the advent of the internet. One group says “you can use it to advertise, send cheap mails, join chat rooms, post bulletins, read academic papers, research any topic you like, buy books!” - what might be, in Jungian terms a sensing and thinking approach. Another group says “it can transform your life!” - in Jungian terms, an intuitive, feeling approach. Mossman supports this approach to OMD by asserting that:-

“In pursuit of certain of the personal growth objectives the programme may also include various activities designed to stimulate individual creativity or personal awareness.....” P184

It is perhaps useful to explain the extended visit to Mossman’s paper. In my view (resulting from the reflection - occasionally intense - which this dissertation has provoked), he raises issues which have practically been forgotten in the rush by OMD to commoditise itself - that there are options other than competency development which can be fulfilled by the medium, such as facilitating self-development, the importance of which is addressed below.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT

***“...without judging me, diagnosing me, appraising me, evaluating me.....
When someone really hears you without passing judgement on you,
Without trying to take responsibility for you, without trying to mould you,
It feels damn good!⁶⁹***

In attempting to facilitate self-development,, practitioners might make a more long-term and far-reaching contribution to human potential, fulfilment and, (who knows?) happiness.

A last quotation from Mossman⁷⁰ is apposite:

“David Hall has the nice notion of the difference between the role-person and the whole-person. Role-persons have a restricted set of behaviours open to them – those that they perceive as appropriate to their role. It is almost as if the whole-persons hang

up a certain range of behaviours with their coats when they arrive in the morning and only resume them when they leave in the evening."

Perhaps OMD has a role in releasing the whole-person, rather than just making better role-persons? As Dainty and Lucas say:⁷¹

"The development of self and other awareness is possibly the least straightforward outcome, yet potentially the most important. Nevertheless, it is an aspect which seems to be minimised by executive developers Without this self-understanding and an ability to be "other" centred, it is difficult to see how the development of skills in other areas will necessarily be effective

Philip Kirk (1986)⁷² in a paper that betrays some hostility to the outdoors but also makes constructive points about it, asserts that:-

"Pre-prepared packages of outdoor management development events which are applied in the same way to any and every group of participating managers will limit the usefulness of the programme, especially if the design rests on the premise that managers are the same everywhere"

MANAGEMENT TRAINING	SELF-DEVELOPMENT
<p>Uses outdoors to help delegates learn specific skills. The needs of the delegates are assumed to be similar.</p>	<p>Uses outdoors to help delegates develop in areas identified by delegates as important. Serendipitous learning is also experienced and welcomed.</p>
<p>Tasks and activities are formally reviewed, focussing on social and interpersonal issues of a group or intergroup nature</p>	<p>Review focuses on personal as well as interpersonal / Intergroup issues.</p>
<p>Based on a desire to improve delegate behaviour in the workplace</p>	<p>Based on holistic ideas of humanistic psychology</p>
<p>Delegate is seen as a manager</p>	<p>Delegate is seen as person</p>
<p>Philosophical basis is that there are experts who know what is best, what managers need</p>	<p>The delegate knows more about their own needs than do others</p>
<p>Objectives pre-set by trainers and/or sponsors</p>	<p>Objective negotiated personally by each course member with staff /course members</p>
<p>Tasks are pre-set to meet trainers/sponsors objectives</p>	<p>Delegates work with tutors to select tasks to explore the issues they have decided upon. Specific tasks may surprise, but the learning objectives will not.</p>
<p>Delegates control the way in which they tackle the task (no frontloading), which may be influenced by trainer inputs/learning from previous tasks</p>	<p>Delegates control the tasks, but roles may be set within them based on individual learning objectives</p>
<p>Review dominated by trainers who draw out the learning points they wish to emphasise</p>	<p>Management of the review process is shared by all – delegates and trainers.</p>
<p>Group tasks, with little individual focus in review.</p>	<p>Group tasks, with individual, as well as interpersonal and intergroup matters reviewed.</p>
<p>Course designed without reference to delegates</p>	<p>Course designed with delegates</p>
<p>Limited programme flexibility</p>	<p>High programme flexibility. Event process can be re-negotiated</p>
<p>Delegates can choose to opt-out of a given task. A straight on/off decision.</p>	<p>Delegates have which needs they should work on and the tasks and activities to meet those needs</p>
<p>Staff roles are safety, technical instruction, and process consultancy.</p>	<p>Safety, instruction, technical instruction, process consultancy, and feedback</p>
<p>Attitudes: Staff - "we know what you need"</p>	<p>Attitudes: Staff – "delegates know what they need, our job is to help them find it"</p>
<p>Delegates – "You're the experts" Sponsors – "This event is designed to meet our definition of your needs"</p>	<p>Delegates – "How can you help me?" Sponsors - "How can we help you develop yourself"</p>
<p>Delegates are sent or volunteer to attend</p>	<p>Delegates seek to attend, sometimes volunteering on the advice of trusted others.</p>
<p>Actively engages the intellectual, social, and physical, and sometimes also the emotional</p>	<p>Actively engages the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, aspects of each person</p>

Figure 5: Management Training and Self- Development (After Mossman)

and echoes Creswick and Williams and Chapman and Lumsdon in declaring that:-

“By the very nature of the outdoors and its immediate and direct impact on participants, the OMD programme has the capacity to address all the dimensions of management: physical, intellectual and emotional. This, perhaps, is its greatest strength.”

Of particular interest to me, he also cites Stuart and Binsted⁷³ in raising one of the more exciting potential outcomes of OMD:-

“A third possibility however is that they may suddenly realise that their new behaviour as learners (which may be very tentative and experimental) could perhaps be put to some future role and experience at work. In this case, there will be what Stuart and Binsted call a “flash-over” and the learners’ perception of the learning event will change from one of low reality to one of high reality and with it will come the prospect of increased learner-transfer.....”

These “flashovers” (evidenced by unsolicited and embarrassingly gushing testimonials) are recognisable to me as a phenomenon which sometimes occurs during longer (5-day, for example) programmes. For me, they generate an exciting fulfilment which (and I speak only for myself) transcends professional satisfaction. They rarely occur (for me, at any rate) on the one or two-day fare which is now the OMD staple. They are powerful moments of revelation to people, often extending into relationships outside the work environment. At its most extreme, this type of flashover is a kind of developmental Damascus road experience, leading people to fundamentally realign the way they do things, often (especially if that’s how the course design is biased) in terms of human relationships.

“‘Tis Mystery All...” an attempt to comprehensively examine applications of OMD

The writers cited above have taken a rather intensive look at OMD, making points about what OMD *could* be used for as much as what it *is* used for. In 1993 Philip Jones and Clifford Oswick⁷⁴ conducted a fairly thorough review of OMD literature (sadly, reaching the public a year before the two new (and one rewritten) books on the subject) which, although focussed on outcomes, also gives clues to applications.

In their introduction, they point out that the articles range “*from wholehearted endorsement.....to scepticism*” and go on to assert that

“a review of the literature in this area suggests a bewildering array of beneficial training outcomes being attributed to this form of training intervention (during the review of the literature the authors identified over 200 different claimed benefits). Supporting evidence is most commonly in the form of the personal testimony of those providing the training or selective, positive accounts from participants” p10

They therefore attempted to set out on a systematic consideration of:

- “(1) What is OMD?¹*
- (2) What training outcomes do its advocates claim it achieves?*
- (3) What training outcomes can it be empirically demonstrated to achieve?”*

What is OMD?

They are forced to concede the impossibility of operationally defining OMD because: *“...ifcommon features do not... exist then it will not be possible to arrive at a universal definition of OMD. The authors believe this to be the case and, as such, any definition of OMD will almost certainly result in errors of omission and/or commission...”* p11

They do impose some criteria in order to limit the definition to a one they consider manageable but realistic by suggesting the following common criteria which unpack Mossman's (1983) name for the medium into its components:

- 1) **Outdoor** (as medium rather than message)
- 2) **Management:** recipients are managers or incipient managers
- 3) **Development:** Desired outcomes are changes within the participants resulting directly in increased effectiveness of work performance²

Claimed outcomes

They found that management skills development and team building/development (both falling into Mossman's "management training" category) were cited in over 70% of the articles, individual/self development (closer to Mossman's "self-development") in more than 60% of articles. Development of learner autonomy, on the other hand, was cited by less than 10% of authors.....which leads me to wonder what the individual/self development items were.

Empirically demonstrated outcomes

Systematic evaluation (not defined by the authors) was attempted in only 16% of the articles but 36% - mostly the ones written by providers – suggested that certain outcomes were “proven facts” – minimal overlap

¹ Jones and Oswick limit themselves to British OMD, interestingly stating that *“a number of articles related to training did not concern UK providers or sponsors. An examination of the content suggested, in many cases, fundamental differences in the nature of these courses when compared with their UK equivalents, for example aims/objectives, activities, location)”*

² Which seems a very short-termist view of development to me.....

led to the conclusion that those who do the systematic don't make claims regarding reliability. Another interpretation (mine) might be that those making bold claims unsupported by evidence were writing free advertisements.

Further doubt is cast on even the "systematic" evaluators through attribution theory (p14), the tendency to view the training - being off-site and presumably expensive - as a sign of the sponsor's confidence in the delegate, and because it is alleged by Jones and Oswick that:

"There is a strong tradition of, and widespread use of, OMD in which it takes the form of rights (sic) of passage, enhancement and/or renewal, through which organizational values are transmitted, and thereby sustained or changed"

Their findings are summarised in appendix A.

Given due respect to the work put into making their survey, the material therein has forced Jones and Oswick to arrive at findings which raise more questions than answers. Their eventual classifications - intrapersonal and interpersonal attitudes, knowledge and skills are so broad as to lack usefulness, so that the most interesting fact uncovered is the width of claims made for OMD.

Not surprisingly, they conclude that purchasing OMD is an "act of faith".

Applications of OMD - Summary

Bank seems to have an optimistic view of OMD, seeing it as all things to all people. Jones and Oswick, having valiantly attempted to pin it down through thorough investigation of the literature available are forced to a similar conclusion - that the claims made for it are so sweeping that the medium defies analysis except in the broadest possible terms.

Chapman and Lumsdon, Mossman, and Dainty and Lucas all in their own ways point to two schools of practice in OMD.

The first - which Mossman has termed management training - is one in which delegates learn, through a process of activity and review, what the sponsor wants them to learn. The most extreme manifestation of this is frontloading, but a more subtle approach, with cunningly designed exercises and review questions crafted to bring out the "right" answers amounts to much the same thing.

There are all kinds of good reasons for this approach - it can help people to understand how best to work in organisations which have travelled the "downsize-and-empower" route, it smooths the human path of reorganisation, it allows practice in and adoption of externally-imposed new ways of doing things. It can level the path of imposed transition. It is

a useful tool of human resource management.

The second school of practice – akin to Mossman's self-development (see figure 5) – holds out a different promise. Chapman and Lumsdon allege that OMD is more effective than traditional management development at “*dealing with the idiosyncratic needs of the individual*”⁷⁵. Dainty and Lucas state “*the development of self and other awareness is possibly the least straightforward outcome, yet potentially the most important*”⁷⁶. So it would seem that OMD has (at least potentially) an application outside (some might say beyond) its competency-fulfilment and coping-with-change functions.

Does it often attempt to do this?
If not, what might the reasons be?

I will briefly explore these questions in the next section.

Does OMD explore self-development?

Several things have happened in the world in which (British) OMD operates which may have worked against its use as a vehicle for the self-development of managers (or others). These are:-

- State intervention in training provision, from YTS to IIP
- In business, a shift towards a shorter-term focus on the bottom line
- A change in the way Human Resource Development (HRD) people view their function.
- A perception that people are more busy now than twenty years ago

Working the System - State Intervention

Starting in the early 1970's, the state has made many attempts to intervene in adult training provision.

The first of these was an Industrial Training Board (ITB) for each industrial sector – paper and paper products, construction, food drink and tobacco and so on. The boards had statutory power to raise a levy from companies in their industry.

Each ITB had some autonomy but was required by its paymaster (the Manpower Services Commission from 1975) to promote an approach to training which required companies to publish training policies, write annual training plans derived from a training needs analysis, and to prove (by a kind of OFSTED inspection) that these plans were being met. The reward for active compliance was exemption from levy. This “systematic” approach was seen as self-evidently correct by the ITBs,

and seemed to do little harm; any reasonably intelligent company training manager could ensure that the company got the training he or she adjudged appropriate and still got levy exemption.

In addition, the boards put money into training where they considered it especially worthwhile or interesting. So Williams and Creswick (both Training Board employees) were able to underwrite their early experiments in OMD.

On a more negative note, hindsight shows the systematic approach to have been very rigid. It required very formal systems - which limited flexibility and gave official blessing to the reductive attitude that there were universal "big" answers to complex, fragmented issues. Thus this writer found himself spending days on the factory floor analysing every last move of a machine operator's job in order to produce a 50-page training manual incorporating a one-week step-by-step training period - which replaced two days of rather informal instruction which had done the job perfectly adequately. This attitude - that there is a universal "right" way - is something which militates against development training seeking to address the differing needs of individuals. It sends the message that it is better to find the right way - by attending a course which tells you how to, for example, manage relationships - than to work at discovering a better way *for you*. The ITB method also sent the dangerous message that the best a training professional could do was to work the system.

The Training Boards lasted until 1980, when they were summarily closed during an anti-QANGO pogrom.

The main focus of State interaction with training then moved to the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) itself. Given the economic conditions of the time, this was something of a lifeline for development training centres as their supply of young employed delegates had drastically reduced (partly because Training Boards no longer offered incentives to employers to recruit apprentices). So Youth Training Scheme (YTS) residentials funded by the MSC became a prime source of income. This had two effects. Firstly, the MSC was only prepared to fund five-day residentials. Secondly, it wasn't prepared to fund them very well. As a consequence, many providers chose to concentrate on quantity rather than quality, turning out courses on an almost assembly-line basis. The idea of focussing on *individual* needs tended to fall by the wayside - which was a pity, as (my exhausting two years' experience running YTS residentials tells me), many of the people in YTS schemes clearly *had* individual needs, particularly in the area of self-esteem.

All things must pass, and the MSC found itself supplanted by Training and Enterprise Councils (TEC's), semi-autonomous bodies set up on a

geographical rather than an industrial basis to promote effective training in their areas. One of *their* offerings is Investors in People (IIP), which replicates some of the features of the ITBs' systematic approach but without the statutory powers. There has been wide uptake of this scheme, demonstrating (at least) that the state has moved along a continuum from the earlier "tells" position of levying transgressors to a "sells" position of promoting the systematic approach as a desirable positive¹. Once again, a systematic approach (with all its strengths and weaknesses) is being encouraged. Once again, smart HR operators are working the system.

Domination and Submission – OMD and the business scene

The notion that organisations have responsibilities other than to their shareholders has taken something of a pounding in recent years. Lewis and Lawson⁷⁷ assert that individuals feel alienated as their employer's expectations become more task-centred. My own work in career development confirms this – the people involved often complain of overwork, and of a feeling that they are a disposable function, not valued for themselves. They also complain of policy on, for example training expenditure, being subject to wild swings, apparently dictated by the needs of a short-termist bottom line (typically of capital expenditure and recruitment policy being governed by quarterly results).

Such short-termism militates against the long-term view (and reasonably long periods away from the job) that self-development implies and requires. So does the oft-expressed view that people are more busy. This has been famously characterised as "half the people working three times as hard for twice the money". Greenaway⁷⁸ notes that staff at Brathay remarked in the 1980's on the diminution of course duration from four weeks to five days. This latter seems remarkably expansive now – courses usually last one or two days, sometimes three. Serious self-development in an OMD context is problematical in such circumstances, and clients are more likely to buy (and OMD providers to sell) the ever-popular "teambuild". Pre-agreed competencies can also be addressed. Self-development becomes a back number by default – hard to sell, no apparent demand.

A survey of OMD promotional literature confirms a neglect of the self-development approach by OMD practitioners:

*"The working combination of established and new staff will give us a market lead in the Team building field....and help you develop your staff through competency lead (sic) initiatives and personal aspiration that provides for a competent and flexible workforce of the future"*⁷⁹

¹ Although they may revert to "tells". A government Peer has recently floated the "new" idea of a levy

The same organisation also takes the jargon route to business success, claiming an ability to:-

"...deliver a step change in performance linking strategic business objectives with on-the-ground actions so important for delivering a seamless transition and workforce participation" ⁸⁰

Other organisations offer competency-based programmes using less extreme versions of business rhetoric:

".....we can help you to create a realistic competitive advantage. Plus, by showing you how to develop continuous improvement tools and techniques for your organisation, you can ensure that your advantage is sustainable"⁸¹

The same brochure promises that:

"Our innovative, client-centred courses are designed to be exciting, challenging and dynamic. Typical programmes include: Teambuilding, visionary leadership, change management, cultural change, personal development, communication, effective decision making, problem solving tools and techniques, multi-skilling"⁸²

"Personal development" is at least included in that list – sandwiched between "cultural change" and "communication". A discussion with a member of the provider's staff clarified that in their case it was seen as a desirable but incidental benefit on, for example, teamwork programmes, wherein a delegate might experience individual development as a result of facing a difficult challenge. This seems a valid use of the term, but is not part of any intentional self-development programme.

In the chase for business, less is sometimes promoted as more, and wild promises are made. One organisation, promoting a one-day team challenge event, asks "What will your organisation get out of the day?"⁸³ and responds:

*"Improved – Teamwork – Planning – Communication
Help employees manage change within an organisation more effectively
A neutral base for learning and team building
Cost effective and flexible training programme
Help staff work towards a common goal
Course participants will learn to think on a more lateral basis
Progress from working as individuals in an organisation to working as a team" ⁸⁴*

All the above are from sales brochures, so may not totally reflect what the organisations concerned actually do. Nevertheless, two facts remain:-

1) The jargon of modern HR management is much to the fore; the organisations presumably believe that this will attract customers. My own experience reflects this. One has to be able to at least talk the talk if one is to seek and find corporate work.

2) Providers are anxious to meet whatever the clients say are this year's

(or this decade's) needs. One successful provider acknowledges this pragmatism:

*"...if we look back on course content and titles we can see that it has reflected the themes that have been prevalent in training in recent times: Leadership in the 70s – Team-Building in the 80s – and Empowerment in the 90s"*⁸⁵

Both of which point to an attitude of compliance on the part of providers. "You tell us what to do, and we'll do it!"

Fade to Grey – a dissolving paradigm

Of such pragmatism may paradigm shifts be sometimes made. Not necessarily by people *starting* to do things, but by people *stopping* doing things – not from antipathy but simply by a taking a line of least resistance. Very understandable for those with expensive buildings and business infra-structures to maintain. Perhaps even more so for those (like YMCA Lakeside) whose surplus income is channelled into unprofitable work with young people.

The quotations from brochures listed above also serve to illustrate that OMD has become a commodity, ready to be sold in the service of whatever its buyers desire. The application of imagination and a questioning approach are no longer welcome. Interesting how times have changed. Chapman and Lumsdon, writing in 1983 said:

*"Development training (their term) provides the opportunity for individual needs to be met through its less structured format and the delegation of responsibility to the individual participant for deciding his own role, level and participation and therefore performance..."*⁸⁶

Creswick and Williams (1979)⁸⁷ and Mossman (1982)⁸⁸ spoke of the "potency" of the outdoors. Beeby and Rathborn (1983) put much the same case:

*"....use of the outdoors which is both potent and perturbing would seem to us to be the first distinctive characteristic of development training insofar as it is used as a means, not an end"*⁸⁹

By 1992, about ten years after the quartet of early writers cited above, Dainty and Lucas were writing:

*"The development of self and other awareness is possibly the least straightforward outcome, yet potentially the most important. Nevertheless, it is an aspect which seems to be minimised by executive developers."*⁹⁰

As if to underline the impoverishment of OMD's potential, in the same year as Dainty and Lucas, one of those executive developers was saying:-

“Just as there are only a limited number of plots for a novel¹, there are only a few basic exercises which, with embellishment, serve a variety of needs”⁹¹

Potent?

Perturbing?

I don't think so.

Complacent and limiting, more like. And there is no reason to think that things have changed much in the ensuing eight years. OMD is in a blind alley.

Or is it? I explore a potential escape route in the next Chapter.

PERSONAL REFLECTION 4

I think I'm finding the worm in the apple. OMD has become a trade. No longer the domain of trailblazers, it provides a steady living for good people who just want to do a decent job in beautiful surroundings. If that involves going along with the latest HR-speak – and even learning what it means – then so be it. But leading edge it isn't. If OMD was a film or musical it would be “Paint Your Waggon” or any one of those Westerns where law-abiding folks move in to a town populated by pioneers. Maybe the world's made up of pioneers and homesteaders – and maybe I'm a pioneer?

And maybe the world needs that pioneer spirit – to challenge rather than comply; to push the boundaries rather than accept them. To see the centre more clearly through being at the edge.

Because from my edgy perch, the way business is going doesn't seem healthy. What is the point of never-ending growth if the world is mortally damaged in the process? What is the point of wealth without time to enjoy it?

Big thoughts.

For me, the small thought is “do I carry on taking the benefits that professional OMD offers, or seek to do something on the edge again? Prosperity has its consolations, but I'm not at all sure they compensate for the loss of that sense of mission that what can now be termed “conventional” OMD can no longer provide?

Need to reflect on that – there's a lot to lose.....

¹ Excuse me?

IN NATURE'S REALM – ESCAPE OR ESCAPISM?

Introduction

An intuitive discomfort with OMD as it is currently practised has been growing in me for some time. At the start of this research it was a gnawing irritant. Secondary research served to amplify rather than mollify the irritation. Primary research (see below) has turned it into the ideological and psychological equivalent of raging toothache.

A Route to a Proposition

A fistful of Dollars

In an email conversation with a New Zealand colleague, he chanced to remark that a particular Outdoor Development/OMD provider had forgotten its idealistic roots and was “chasing the dollar”.

The phrase struck me as a fine description of the state in which British OMD finds itself.

Research and reflection persuades me towards the conclusion that a fresh start – or another paradigm shift - is required if OMD is to slough off its dollar-driven complacency and become a more radical, less compliant, force for human – or at least management - development.

A justification that it should is provided by Reynolds, citing Reed and Anthony:

“Reed and Anthony (1992) regard management teachers and trainers who intentionally perpetuate morally impoverished programmes of education for managers as deserving of contempt and working against their own interests. They contend that management educators should work to help managers: . . . to an awareness of their own significance and responsibility by encouraging in them a consciousness of the difficulties with which they are engaged. They must be encouraged to think about the unprogrammable complexities which face them without the distracting and specious assistance of codes, competencies, catch phrases and mission statements”⁹²

This eerily sums up a how I feel about the current state of OMD, as well as what it might be – a veritable means to “*help managers to an awareness of their own significance and responsibilities*”.

One development training method which I know from close experience (see appendix B) might be a way to achieve these goals is the method practised in the Czech Republic by Prazninova Skola Lipnice (Vacation School Lipnice/VSL) and in Slovakia by Studio Zazitku (Studio of Experience). Both these organisations (formerly one and divided by the

partition of Czechoslovakia) are part of Outward Bound International, but have roots very different from those provided by Hahn.

Reflection in the early stages moved towards a conviction that Czech practice might both inform my growing conviction that British OMD was in a blind alley and provide hints to a route out of that alley.

As a result, I resolved to learn more of the Czech/Slovak method, and to revisit the Czech Republic to add to my experience of VSL (the larger of the two organisations) and to interview its members. Both of these things were done with a growing perception of the need for a change in UK OMD in the forefront of my mind.

A Proposition

1) That the practices and method employed in the Czech Republic by Vacation School Lipnice (VSL) and in Slovakia by Studio Zazitku (SZ) offer an alternative means for the practice of outdoor management development (OMD) in Britain.

2) That such means can be harnessed to provide OMD which can be an active arena for the self-development of managers.

Testing the proposition

The proposition was tested in a number of ways:-

1) Secondary Research – Written sources on what ways (if any) does the Czech¹ approach to development differ from the British method. In searching these resources, I was seeking clues to the Czech/Slovak background and Logique de Mondes.

2) Primary and other secondary Research

By visiting VSL I was seeking to find clues as to:-

- Philosophy and methods
- Practice – what was the view of those involved in the day to day operations of VSL of its philosophy. What were *they* trying to achieve?
- Organisation – how did practice of the Czech method work out “on the ground”

¹ I am very happy to acknowledge the shared roots, methods and philosophies of VSL and Studio Zazitku, but in the event was only able to conduct first hand research on the former, so will refer to the Czech method from here onwards.

- Outcomes – what did trainers see as desirable outcomes of the method. Did delegate-testimony support this?
- Current applications of the VSL method to OMD, particularly by the management development arm of Outward Bound Czech Republic (OBCZ), _eska Cesta (_C), which shares offices and staff with VSL.

Secondary Research

Background and *Logique de Mondes*

Enquiry into the roots of VSL reveals an interesting root-world. The British root can be seen to originate from adult educators interested in the development of young people. The Czech root seems to have been set up by the young people themselves. Neyman and Brtnik⁹³ inform us that:-

“In the beginning of the 20th Century an interesting movement happened in this field – the tramping. It was in many ways inspired by similar movement in USA (the stories of J. London, woodcraft..).”

Marek and Kössl⁹⁴ expand upon this, giving details of the world and the philosophy of tramping:-

“The Czechoslovak movement of tramping is a singular phenomenon (and it may be better to call it camping or hiking), it has no analogy in the history of European nations. The Czech campers were seeking inspiration in North American tramps. However the American tramping was developed in different historical and geographic conditions, its form and content were different. The Czech camping concerned above all a week-end movement of the Czech youth for a stay in nature. That movement was inspired in the main by American literature of adventures (J. London, Z. Grey, B. Hart, E.T. Seton,, J.O. Curwood) and by movies mainly with Tom Mix. The Czech campers produced a specific culture with their own habits, dress, slang and above all songs. The camping songs became the most popular hits in the thirties.

The Czech campers were seeking for romantic corners since the beginning of the twenties, they visited especially the valleys of rivers in the outskirts of greater cities, they used to sit at the campfire, they were singing, making jokes, and later on also sporting.....They were sleeping at first in the open air and later on they began to build primitive log cabins.

The campers always protested against bourgeois mentality and social hypocrisy and therefore they were more or less persecuted – both by gendarmes in the period between the wars and by the communist police after the year 1948. In spite of it, that movement continues to live in the Czech countries even today preserving its specificity.” (p21)

This root is interesting for many reasons, of which three are apposite to its role as the root-world for VSL:

1) It was a spontaneous movement with its own values, attitudes and (at least implied) philosophy.

2) Its members tended to reject the bourgeois mentality. This contrasts quite strongly with the Establishment positioning of Hahn and the other founders of British Outward Bound (which even now strongly values its royal connections, and is chaired by a retired Major General).

3) Its adherents espoused an intoxicating compound of radicalism and romanticism, combined with a strong sense of community.

The radical influence seems to have been pervasive in Czechoslovak society at the time, having an effect on organisations more usually considered to be pillars of the establishment:-

".....a great number of scouting organisations were founded..... A considerable number of those, mostly with a low number of members was of leftist till anarchist¹ focus corresponding with the then radicalism of a considerable part of the Czech youth"

Marek and Kössl also significantly note that after the Communist coup d'etat:-

"for a considerable part of youth, outdoor activities became....one of the possibilities to escape from the "totalitarian reality". Although persecuted in the fifties and seventies, camping continued to be living.....(p22)

in a conversation with Ota Holec, until recently head of VSL, he provided the link between the trampers and VSL. This was that trainers in "nature stays" – the techniques and philosophy of tramping – had been forced by government to decentralise their organisation, with VSL emerging from that decentralisation, commencing operations in 1977.

I conclude that the root-world of VSL is very different – indeed even alien - to the British root world. It is a root which challenged the *status quo*, rejected conformity for its own sake, and embraced the attitudes and values of community, these no doubt finding reinforcement in the harassment to which it was occasionally subjected by the authorities. I can think of no British equivalent except, perhaps, for those Edwardian youths who took up scouting before adults became involved – and who soon found themselves supplanted by an adult-run, citizenship-based organisation. The public school ethos which I have implied is a strong root for British Outward Bound is even more divorced from tramping. For the British we have Tom Browne as a model. For the Americans, Davie Crockett. For the Czechs, the nearest I can come is a persecuted socialist/anarchist singing hobo. Perhaps Woody Guthrie – but (I hope)

¹ Anarchist scouts? Did they wear uniform? Who were the leaders? Did they have a "bomb-a-job" week?

without the selfish egoism.

Primary Research

Primary research consisted of a visit to VSL in the Czech Republic and face-to-face, telephone and email conversations with former delegates (although the VSL people are all former delegates, their continued involvement with VSL, apart from providing testimony to the power of the method, makes them unsuitable to interview as ex-delegates).

Although the ostensible purpose of the Czech visit was to conduct 1:1 interviews with VSL trainers, the formal interviews formed only a part of the research: I was able to engage in many informal conversations and interactions with VSL people. These often proved at least as valuable as the formal interviews, giving a wider perspective and involving several-person discussions which by their very nature were dynamically more active than 1:1 interviews.

I also derived some benefit from running question-and-answer sessions on OMD with VSL people. The nature of the questions, for example, pointed up review as an area to explore in discussion.

Can you put a value on just watching people? I think so, I hope so – I spent a day just doing that, observing the nature (but not the content) of interactions, letting it all go in. I believe that the primary benefit was that my own interactions were thereafter more relaxed, more in key with the ambience of the group. In effect, I was able to join it, to play people's guitars, to be *inside* the research. For me, and perhaps others, this was important. I was not particularly seen as some externally-imposed "researcher" but as a mildly exotic group-member. I'm sure there was still some researcher-effect, but am equally convinced that this was seen as "Bill asking questions" rather than "watch out, the management snoop's about".

Outcomes of the primary research are included in the text from this point onwards. The text will indicate where this information is being used.

Philosophy and Methods

Holec asserts that the philosophical roots of VSL are very deep indeed, citing Hellenistic ideas about the body and soul:-

"....vacation School, cut off from foreign experience and methods was seeking its own way. The philosophical roots of its programme were far reaching to the ancient world: at the background of many experiments was kalokagathia¹ as an idea of the beauty of body and soul."⁹⁵

¹ From the Kalokagathia website: "Kalokagathia is a Greek word made up of two others: kalos-beautiful, agathos – benign. In ancient Greece Kalokagathia stood for an

In describing VSL methodology, Martin and Leberman allude to the balance implied in kalokagathia:-

"...its peaks and dynamism are based on interweaving a balance of effort and relaxation, physical and mental activities, individual and group events"⁹⁶

VSL's philosophy runs counter to the idea of frontloading or of using developmental methodology in the service of pre-prepared learning objectives, instead idealistically seeking to help people discover solutions to their own issues within themselves:-

"All the problems and conflicts of the world are reflected in each of us and the world is a reflection of ourselves. Therefore we must seek the key to their solution from within.....by inducing powerful experiences and intensive human relations, our objective is to help everyone find within themselves unsuspected sources of energy, self-confidence and spontaneous creativity....."⁹⁷

The aims of the training are succinctly put by Martin and Leberman as being to enable people:

" To understand themselves and their world; to discover the power and meaning of relationships; to improve citizenship; to develop power of thought; to "go against the flow"⁹⁸

Methods:

1) Dramaturgy

A method peculiar to the Czechoslovakian-rooted training organisations is termed dramaturgy. This has been described thus:

"This term, known rather from the sphere of theatre, film and TV, became one of the most often used in the recent years. Dramaturgy is a method of selection and time order of the programmes with the aim to reach the maximal pedagogical effect. It integrates, within itself, the questions (and also answers) concerning the participants of the course (their age, mental and physical maturity,...) time and space. The key thing for all dramaturgical consideration is to determine and realize the pedagogical, educational, recreational and other aims, which the course wants to reach" ⁹⁹

As Holec implies, this term has been borrowed from the theatre. It is more than a catch-all term for a course design process however, conferring on the Czechs a unique mental framing of that process.

My own (and many others') working experience is to design programmes to meet the needs of delegates (as expressed by whomever is the

ideal nurture concept that featured harmonious development of outward merits and inner world based on spiritual moral principles" -.

buyer), moving systematically forward in an orderly manner so that I can demonstrate at each stage how my proposal will meet the expressed need. Very professional. Very systematic.

The paradigm is one of logical positivism – seeking to find the “right” answer to the need expressed by the client.

Move the paradigm to a theatrical one and the logic changes – it becomes more important to produce an event which will stimulate and touch the heart than to produce one which will fulfil training needs. A kind of relativism is introduced where all is open – actual objectives and ways of achieving them may change on a daily – or even more frequent – basis, and it is acknowledged that there is no universal “right” way to put a programme together. What is right is what is felt to be right for each individual at the time – and is subject to long and sometimes painful debate, within the training team and the delegate population.

Formal interviews with VSL trainers confirmed that dramaturgy was seen as vital to the work, displaying an understanding of the process (one went so far as to take me through a flipchart presentation of the sequence of events!) and excitement when talking on the subject:

“...its taken from the theatre theory and it's all about the fact...what to put on the programme, how to do it, and why to do it, and maybe when – exactly – to do it. So it's like an art of putting pieces together so that it's a balance of activities – so that it's on the right place at the right moment for these people who come on this course, and it has to be flexible so that you can change it....”

“Dramaturgy is the way how to put different programmes together to have in a whole picture a balanced result.creating the course is, can be, is an art thing sometimes”

“...the most important thing is the theatre – it's dramaturgy in a course as well as to design it. The dramaturgy is in the course as well as before it”

A key point regarding dramaturgy that emerged from the interviews is that it allows for – even encourages - changes in programme content. A different sort of professionalism is at work, one which constantly re-examines what the goals might be and rewrites the programme (sometimes on a nightly basis) to meet those objectives.

One of the interviewees was able to point out the difference the dramaturgical approach made in practice, having worked in France on a course in which the staff were drawn from development training centres around the world. She was very clear that working with the trainer-to-delegate ratio expected elsewhere limited the ability to change the dramaturgy, and was a little critical of the “standard” process, with its early evening shutdown and low staff ratios. The VSL approach is one of very long days, followed by extremely long staff

meetings at which the next day's tasks may well be totally rewritten, followed by preparation of whatever has been finally agreed.

Another feature of dramaturgy is that it is not exclusive. It allows - even encourages - the use of as wide a variety of training media as possible, and promotes the use of imagination in the delivery of training. The outcomes, in terms of exercises employed warrants more detailed examination and forms the body of a later section.

It is important to understand that dramaturgy is **not** theatre. In the VSL context it is a process for conceiving and perceiving courses. It may involve theatre, but the unrolling plot of a programme (see it more as a dramatic event) is not the same as, for example, the increasingly popular use of actors *qua* actors in training courses in Britain. Neither is it the same as teaching managers theatrical techniques to help them with presentation skills. It is the wholesale adoption of a paradigm in which each course is viewed through the lens of drama, and by which courses have the potential to be infinitely varied in terms of content and outcomes. This is *not* seeing the course as a play or as a theatrical production, any more than the "outdoor" paradigm means that every course in a British outdoor centre is seen as a replica of a Himalayan expedition.

In attempting to describe dramaturgy, I feel a certain frustration. Many people immediately think "ah, Theatre!" but that's not correct. If you mention "Outward Bound", another picture can pop into people's heads. These terms are used as convenient mental pigeonholes. Dramaturgy runs that risk, even in the Czech Republic. An interviewee put it plainly - "*you cannot really tell them what it is about unless they come and have the experience....*". It comes as no surprise when she also tells me that VSL relies largely on word of mouth to promote its courses. A pictorial outline of the dramaturgical approach is attached as Appendix "C"¹⁰⁰ I found it useful, when attempting to clarify the difference between the dramaturgical and outdoor approaches to contrast them in tabular form. This table is reproduced below:

DRAMATURGICAL APPROACH	TRADITIONAL OMD APPROACH
Multiple media – art, outdoors, music, , video, drama, audio, "happenings"	Dominated by outdoor media, others also used.
Constant on-course staff reflection and redesign of programme, based on evolving perception of delegates' needs.	Constant on-course staff reflection on whether the course is meeting its pre-agreed objectives.
Multiple (changing) objectives	Objectives clearly fixed beforehand
Programme subject to constant change as objectives change	Programme subject to some change if change is seen to meet objectives better
Long, indeterminate days. Often unreasonable hours	Duration of days determined beforehand. Usually reasonable working hours.
Surprises expected. Unpredictable outcomes expected	Predictable outcomes valued
Very high staffing ratio (about 1:4)	Staff ratio 1:8 or thereabouts
Staff (unpaid) drawn from all walks of life	Staff (paid) often outdoor or group work full time trainers.

2) Other features of VSL methods

A) No standard programmes: VSL has no such thing as a "standard" programme. Interviewees were emphatic about this:

"There are not standard people!"

"Well, one of the things which is interesting is every course is unique, it's original which is created by a team of three instructors which only comes together for the purpose of this course...."

The effort put into preparing each and every programme is striking. Interviews and conversations revealed that to prepare for one programme the team for that programme (all of whom hold down full-time jobs outside VSL) will meet for around *eight* weekends in the preceding year, designing the pre-course dramaturgy.

B) Wide choice of media: In OMD and British development training generally, the outdoors is seen as the main medium, although others may be used from time to time. In VSL the outdoors is just one option. Others are particularly art and drama, but anything may be brought into play: The reason for this multiplicity of media is that:

"We think that every person has something which is easy for them to do and other things which are beyond their, you know, zone, whatever you call it..... we don't do it only for the art or, you know, it's not art itself; it's finding creativity in people....."

"I think our philosophy is that it's not important what the person creates exactly, but the process. And some people, they're afraid of the result.....so they don't like – or think they wouldn't like – the process as well"

This wide use of media has other benefits in that it allows instructors and delegates to exercise their imagination. This mind-opening approach seems to me to be increasingly important to any management development with pretensions beyond compliance with competency-dictated demands. The ability to learn specified sets of behaviours only equips managers to deal with the immediate demands of their current (and maybe next) job. Provoking the imagination may well be infinitely more useful, helping them to think (and see) for themselves, not to simply behave as they've been programmed.

Interesting that such an approach should come from a nation whose main contribution to the world's vocabulary is the word "Robot".

C) Exercises – “No-one expects the Spanish Inquisition!....”

“It was like a lifetime of experiences/lessons compressed into two weeks. It was like an experiment where I experienced tests of every capability I thought I had as a human being, and more. I used every sense, every skill, every limb, every milligram of energy in the shortest space of time possible”¹⁰¹

During discussion with trainers and former delegates, details emerged regarding some of the exercises designed and used by VSL. I am reluctant to give too much detail, as dramaturgy requires that each exercise (commonly called “games” by VSL staff) is only part of a whole. Nevertheless, it is fair to record that much energy and creativity goes into them. A common factor seems to be to aim for the unexpected, with the result that a kind of surrealism often features. A dance at which delegates find themselves interacting with people and events from earlier generations, experiencing world war, pogroms, the roaring twenties. A concert in the middle of a forest. A garden party populated by iconic characters from fiction. A “blind walk” ending in a planetarium. Exercises based around the milieux of science fiction novels (Fahrenheit 451, the Day of the Triffids). I speculate that this surrealistic approach may open the mind. Some delegate rhetoric seems to confirm this:

“..... I used neurones I knew I had, and created connections between neurones that have never been used..”¹⁰²

“...you don't know what's going to happen next.....it kind of makes you more alert...to expect the unexpected and just cope with it” (delegate interview)

It may not work well with everyone. Another delegate expressed irritation, seeing them as “mind games”.

Nevertheless, I speculate that the emphasis on variety and surreality, when combined with the intensity of the experience, may have beneficial effects in terms of allowing people to address a multiplicity of abilities and talents. In the rhetoric of management development, to

employ multiple intelligences. Gardner¹⁰³ makes a case for this approach to education as being more effective at helping people to cope with the complexity of life than what he terms the “single chance” method (See appendix “D” for a summary of the “intelligences” listed by Gardner).

Some critical thoughts

That the programmes can have a strong impact is clear from testimony:

“The critical element is that this “experiment occurred in a cocoon of safety/support/compassion/caring, allowing me to play full out. The cocoon allowed me to go on this emotional rollercoaster of the highest highs and the lowest lows without wanting to get off. I wanted to stay on because I knew that during this journey of 2 weeks I was learning what would possibly take me 2 years or more in my “normal” life....”

It is also clear that such impact can have a lasting effect, as a delegate who attended in 1993 testifies:

“I think it changed the way I look at things – to be positive about what I can do about them, and to have fun”

Nevertheless, conversation and reflection during and after the Czech visit left me with some grounds for critique. Summarised, these concern:

- 1) The place of review in VSL
- 2) The universal applicability of the method
- 3) The ability to deliver the method within a “professional” framework

1) The Place of Review

Formal and informal discussions with VSL staff strongly tended to focus on exercise content, programme design, and the dramaturgical method. These elements provoked excitement and energy – there was no difficulty in triggering streams of interesting, animated, intense discussion and debate. Review was slightly different and tended to figure in conversation as a difficult area about which they were keen to learn more from me. Sessions with the full group provoked discussion along the lines of “how can we do this better?”. I hope I was able to help, but for me it highlights what may be a weakness in the VSL approach. The exercises are so exciting and full that review may become an afterthought. It may not even be utterly necessary –over twelve days of intensive, surreal, constantly modified activity the lessons may emerge in an unforced way.

It may be my conditioning (“always review everything”!) that causes me to see this as an issue, but certainly when talking with trainers about

_eska Cesta (_C) management programmes which last around three days and are offered on a commercial basis, there was an anxiety about how best to review. As _C is entirely staffed by VSL instructors working on a paid freelance basis, is part of the same organisation (OBCZ) and sees VSL experience as necessary in its instructors, this may be a weakness. More than one interviewee mentioned the need for more complete “psychological” training, which may also imply a perceived weakness in the review/group process field.

2) The universal applicability of the method: In discussion it became clear that VSL recruits its instructors (of whom there are over 100) exclusively from the ranks of delegates perceived as having had a successful course. One interviewee estimated that about ten percent of delegates were approached. Only a very small core of full-time staff exists, so the voluntary instructors are absolutely vital to the continued provision of training.

It seems possible, therefore, that an unconscious social Darwinism may take place. This could be characterised as “They liked and benefitted from what we provided, let’s ask them to join us so that they can provide more of what they – and we – provide”. Which may lead to amplification of the talents and values already in place. This is fine if those values meet the needs of delegates but may be problematical when other values are encountered.

Evidence that this may indeed be so is provided by a course which struggled to succeed. This was a brave effort, combining Czech youths who volunteered to attend on an individual basis with a young people from a housing estate in Northeast England. The latter had a pre-existing history as a group, being from the same school and having worked together for some time before the course. The resultant clash of values and attitudes led to an extremely difficult time for the instructors, although they did feel that the course was eventually successful. There is no plan to repeat the experiment and when probed, one (highly idealistic, articulate and intelligent) instructor responded that the VSL method was best for those judged to have the potential to be active in society. The interviewee saw this as a counterbalance to the recent past (when quiescence was an effective survival strategy) and to the disillusioned present. This may be so, but it seems to me that another anti-quiescence strategy might be to work with the most, not the least, disillusioned.

3) The ability to deliver the method within a “professional” framework: The level of preparation for a VSL programme is awesome. Interviewees talked of the full training team working for eight weekends to prepare one course which would never be repeated. I find this exciting – everything is tailor-made – but extremely daunting, and cannot imagine

such a level of preparation being financially viable in a commercial setting.

Summary of Critique (and a way forward)

VSL demonstrate its roots in all of the above areas of concern. I reflect that I too demonstrate mine in raising them. Nevertheless, if the lessons that VSL can give to providers of OMD are to be taken on board, they will need to be addressed.

Fortunately an OMD provider with deep knowledge of VSL methods exists - _eska Cesta. They are already working on the issues raised above and are keen to blend the distinctive methodology of VSL with western practice – and not to lose the good from VSL – thus the name _eska Cesta, which translates as “the Czech way”. Trainers were emphatic that the relationship between the two is symbiotic, with the focus of debate being how to keep the essence of VSL methods, but to translate them into a management context and to include more focussed review. I am now part of that debate, but from a different angle – how can I include VSL thinking in British OMD.....

A conclusion -benefits of VSL methods to British OMD

Reflection leads me to the conclusion that OMD in Britain could benefit from incorporating some of the Czech methods:-

1) A wider range of exercises

I have indicated that I think British OMD is in a blind alley. This is partly due to the adoption of a narrow range of media and the acceptance of an almost standardised range of tasks. Release from the confines of the outdoors into a wider use of, for example, arts and drama as an experiential tool may help to reintroduce the element of the unexpected which once featured strongly in OMD.

2) The tailor-making approach

In the mid-late 1970's, OMD was a new method. Consequently practitioners were inventing exercises on a daily basis to meet new needs as they presented themselves. As time passed, the repertoire of exercises grew and people wrote less and photocopied more. This leads to professionalism, but the “edge” so necessary to exciting and effective programmes may have diminished. One thing VSL people do (brilliantly, but expensively in terms of time) is to maintain that edge. If OMD can *genuinely* offer tailor-made development, that inventive energy can be recovered. The principal leaf from the book of the Czech approach seems to be the ability and willingness to redesign “on the hoof” – the

benefits are:

- for trainers – a much more flexible, energised approach and
- for trainees – the benefit of programmes aimed exclusively at them as the people they are, not as functions, vessels for competencies, or whatever else someone else wants them to be.

3) Self-development

Part of the blind alley in which OMD finds itself is in the demise of self-development (as defined by Rogers¹⁰⁴, described by Mossman and promoted by Chapman and Lumsdon in the early 1980's, and bemoaned for its absence by Dainty and Lucas in the early 1990's). The VSL approach is, at root, focussed on self-development (although without fulfilling all of Mossman's criteria). In particular, the surreal nature of exercises at least broadens – and opens - the mind. I believe this surrealism neatly avoids the trap of isomorphic framing - one doesn't pretend that a rope spider's web is a distribution network at VSL. The skill is to make these highly colourful exercises act as a blank sheet onto which delegates project themselves as they are, opening them up to self-examination and the counsel of others.

Difficulties with applying the VSL method in a British OMD Context

1) "Educating the Customers"

There seems to be no ready market for self-development in Britain. The easy sales are in team-building and (to a lesser extent) leadership. If self-development is to be a realistic item on the agenda, there would need to be a very serious effort to promote its benefits to the customer base. As Dainty and Lucas point out, "*The development of self and other awareness is possibly the least straightforward.....yet potentially the most important*"¹⁰⁵ outcome of OMD.

The challenge is to find ways of educating the customer, (already being bombarded with advice by proponents IIP, Firo B. El, SI, MBTI and all the other baggage of the HRD trade) to actually consider what might help their management colleagues to address "*their own significance and responsibility*"¹⁰⁶

2) Other difficulties: Intensity of staffing might prove a problem. The Czechs have addressed that, and according to one _eska Cesta trainer, have found that the symbiosis between the OMD practice of _eska Cesta and the essentially voluntary VSL pays dividends. The _C trainers take on VSL courses as a way to really stretch their abilities and as part of their own personal development, whilst actually making their living from _eska Cesta. VSL gets professionals but avoids cost; _C keeps the

creative juices flowing among its people.

It may be possible that British development trainers would see the benefits and do the same..

The other difficulty is that OMD itself may now be seen as “old hat” in Britain. It is interesting that two of the oldest and most “switched-on” British OMD-based organisations no longer feature the outdoors at all in their brochures, speaking instead of claimed outcomes and using customer testimony. A senior staff member of another confided to me a month ago that it was looking for new directions. Is there a yawn factor with OMD?

If so, attempts at rejuvenation may be too late.

The proposition revisited

I proposed that the practices and method employed in the Czech Republic by Vacation School Lipnice (VSL) and in Slovakia by Studio Zazitku (SZ) offered an alternative means for the practice of outdoor management development (OMD) in Britain and that such means can be harnessed to provide OMD which can be an active arena for the self-development of managers. Following research, I believe that to be the case, but I am conscious of a number of things (see text) which would need to be modified to make it work in a British setting. I am also conscious that British OMD may not be in any state to take on the difficult task of marketing self-development or be seen by potential customers as a medium through which to do this.

What *may* work is a new “Logique de Mondes” – one that owes nothing to Tom Browne, Davie Crockett, Woody Guthrie or the competencies approach. Perhaps the new logic for me is about working out the best way of helping people to a “*consciousness of the difficulties with which they are engaged*” and to “*be encouraged to think about the unprogrammable complexities which face them.....*” ¹⁰⁷

And in that, I will be attempting to synthesise the philosophy of dramaturgy with the more complex and surreal features of my own work.

Another Conclusion

The evangelical gleam is back.

I think I see what has happened to British OMD. I think I see the results of taking the line of least resistance, of easy sales. It doesn't add much to the world. Outdoor Management Development, to paraphrase Hahn, can be better than it thinks it is. I think my responsibility is (again

paraphrasing Hahn) to impel it into experiences which actually result in self-development. For course members, but also for the medium.

Watch this space!

APPENDIX "A"
Jones and Oswicks' survey summary

(1) Intrapersonal outcomes – changes in participants':

- Attitudes 62%
- Knowledge 47%
- Skills 56%

(2) interpersonal outcomes – changes in participants'

- Attitudes 31%
- Knowledge 49%
- Skills 67%

NOTE: This is the percentage of articles which claimed the above, not a measure of how many delegates experienced the above. It's also based on a sample of 45 articles only.

Appendix "B"
Prior knowledge of Vacation School Lipnice

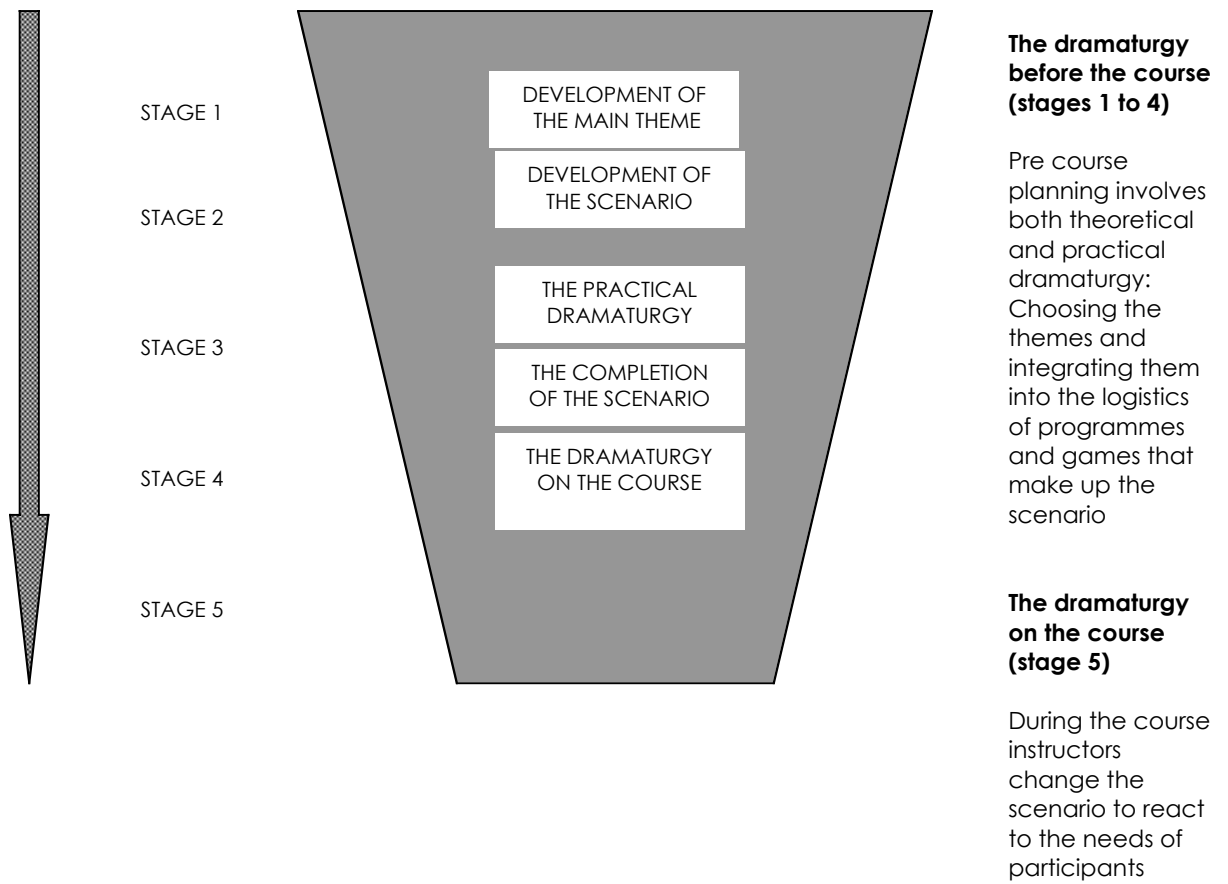
In 1993 I cajoled my older son into attendance on a VSL international programme, and observed major changes in his attitudes and actions when he returned. It really *did* positively affect his self-confidence and self-esteem, leading to his displaying a far more proactive attitude to work and study. Not that he became a conformist. On the contrary, he seemed to have gained the courage *not* to conform; to think things through for himself, to come to his own conclusions, and act accordingly.

Of course, it could simply have been a matter of the right time – post A-level, pre-university. However, I was also impressed by the enthusiasm displayed by Richard Alexander, then a British Outward Bound tutor, who was the first non-Czech/Slovak trainer to make contact with VSL.

A consequence of Richard's enthusiasm and my son's experience was that I visited VSL in 1994, was impressed enough to write on the subject, and filed the encounter away in the "interesting experience" drawer, where it remained until the start of this research.

APPENDIX "C"

The five stages of developing dramaturgy
(With acknowledgement to Andrew Martin and Sarah Leberman (see bibliography))



APPENDIX “D”

A summary of Gardner’s seven intelligence’s

Logical-Mathematical: An aptitude with numbers which transcends the mere ability to accurately record them and includes the facility to see and understand relationships between them.

Linguistic: A sensitivity to, and ability with, the meaning, order, sounds, rhythms, inflections and meter of words.

Spatial: The ability to recognise resemblances that may exist between seemingly disparate forms and the differences in seemingly similar forms.

Musical: Music is so pervasive in human culture that to paraphrase the anthropologist L_v_i Strauss, a failure to take music seriously weakens any account of the human condition. Music is, at least, a way to endeavour to capture and transmit feelings.

Bodily/Kinaesthetic: The evolution of humans has been characterised by increasingly sophisticated manipulation of tools. So the exercise of bodily/kinaesthetic intelligence affects many parts of our lives

The personal Intelligences: Of which there are two - one outward-facing (interpersonal) and one turning inward (intrapersonal). These are much more closely linked to each other than are the other intelligences. Summarised, they are:

Interpersonal: The ability to make distinctions among other individuals, in particular their moods, temperament, motivations and intentions.

Intrapersonal: The capacity to access, discriminate among, label and control one’s own range of emotions. At one level, this amounts to no more than the ability to distinguish between feelings of pleasure and pain. At another level, it allows one to detect and symbolise highly complex sets of feelings.

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