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Feminist Outdoor Leadership: Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity through Outdoor Education

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Feminist Outdoor Leadership: Challenging hegemonic masculinity through Outdoor
Education

by

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Portland State University

2016

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“It is by acting in the face of danger and by developing the habit of feeling fear or confidence that some become brave men and others cowards” (Aristotle, 350 B.C.E./1962, p. 34).

Abstract

Through an intersectional Marxist, Post-Structuralist, Eco-Feminist lens, this study responds to Humberstone’s query if outdoor activities can challenge and transform gender inequalities or if outdoor activities must maintain and reproduce these inequalities (2000). I begin by discussing hegemony and hegemonic masculinity in order to critically assess traditional sport, outdoor activities, and the hegemonic constraints in accessing leisure experienced by women. The examples and discussion I provide demonstrate that extraordinary constraints persist in the 21st century, especially in the form of sexualization, infantilization, marginalization, and delegitimization of female athletes.

I argue that Outdoor Education, due to its unique goals and values, is an excellent venue for challenging hegemonic masculinity. I distinguish Outdoor Education as having different goals than other forms of activity in the outdoors; Outdoor Education is an experiential method of learning that aims to explore intrapersonal, interpersonal, ecosystemic, and ekistic relationships in outdoor environments (Priest 2005). Outdoor Education is capable of manifesting challenges to hegemony most when coupled with what I call ‘Feminist Outdoor Leadership.’ Feminist Outdoor Leadership shares power horizontally, acknowledges expressions of domination in space and language, invites participants to participate with their whole, emotional and relational selves, and is attentive to how gender role socialization affects technical skill development and confidence.

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Introduction

20th century Marxist Feminists presented that gender could no longer be an add-on factor to economic class in an analysis of access to leisure. Researchers found many women, despite their ethnicity, class, marital status, employment, or age, experienced some constraints in accessing leisure. These women are thus experiencing a common world despite their varying other group identity memberships (Wearing 1998). Women's experience of lack of access to leisure is connected to gendered power relations in a capitalist society (Deem 1986, Green et al. 1900, Wearing 1998). Part of this limited inclusion to leisure is perpetuated by hegemonic masculinity. Hegemony is a theory that domination occurs through ideologies that make inequality and oppression appear natural and rational (Humberstone 2000). Hegemonic masculinity is the culturally honored way of being a 'real' man in Euro-American cultures, which is oppressive to most women and many men.

Outdoor activities like Outdoor Recreation, Outdoor Adventure Recreation, and Outdoor Education (including Adventure Education and Environmental Education) are manifestations of cultural ideologies. In this paper I distinguish Outdoor Education as having different goals than other forms of activity in the outdoors. Outdoor Education is an experiential method of learning that aims to explore the self, others, and the environment in the outdoors (Priest and Gass 2005).

Barbara Humberstone, managing editor of the *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*, wondered if Outdoor Education could challenge gender inequalities rather than reproduce them (2000). Due to its unique goals and values, I argue that Outdoor Education is an excellent venue for challenging hegemonic masculinity when coupled with what I call 'Feminist Outdoor Leadership'. Feminist Outdoor Leadership includes: conscious skill and confidence development, empowering communication, critical relationship building, emotionality and emotional safety, and horizontally shared power and space.

Defining Hegemony

The basic premise of the theory of hegemony is that people are not ruled by force alone, but also by ideas. Antonio Gramsci, one of the first, among many, thinkers about hegemony, believed ideas are a vital function of society which preserve the “ideological unity of a whole social bloc” (Bates 1975). According to Gramsci, ideology, as well as violence and coercion, maintain control. Dominant ideologies present themselves as universal and common sense rather than sectional interests of a particular group (Humberstone 2000). A dominant ideology also helps individuals and groups feel secure by defining their identity and their place in society. For example, the ideology of biological distinction of sex is central to individuals’ perceptions about themselves while normalizing conventional relations between the sexes. The ideologies of femininity and masculinity define what constitutes being a ‘real’ woman and ‘real’ man, and make gender power discrepancies seem totally natural and rational. Therefore, other forms of manliness and all forms of womanliness can be subordinated without consideration (Humberstone 2000).

In a gendered society individuals are exposed to powerful socialization processes which reinforce their assigned gender and establish behavioral expectations according to their assigned gender (Humberstone 2000). However, definitions of womanliness and manliness vary across cultures and the differentiating and assigning of attributes, behaviors, and characteristics to a gender is debatable and controversial. The inherent nature of feminine and masculine is not of concern in my analysis of hegemony. This paper is concerned with the idealized roles and shared experiences of oppression of each assigned gender in Euro–American culture.

A. Feminist Applications of the Theory of Hegemony

Marxist Feminists were critical of the notion that leisure is equally accessible by all, and focused their leisure research on perceived structurally based gender inequalities that disadvantaged women (Wearing 1998). Gender is relevant in critiques of capitalism because,

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like the proletariat, women are held in a subordinate position all while they labor to ensure their own domination. Marxist Feminists such as Eileen Green et al. (1990) and Rosemary Deem (1986) agreed that hegemony is the process by which dominant groups win the consent to dominate subordinate groups. In other words, women collude with their oppression because the naturalization of gendered behavior serves to conceal contradictions and antagonisms.

Women's unequal position in society is seen as natural or not seen at all (Green et al. 1990).

Betsy Wearing (1998) researches leisure from a Poststructuralist Feminist perspective. Unlike Marxist Feminism, Poststructuralist Feminism moves beyond the view of women as a powerless victim of oppressive structures and presents women as able to resist, negotiate, and transform aspects of their lives that are oppressive (Wearing 1998). Wearing found Poststructuralist Feminism useful because it moves away from the belief that the economy alone determines the social, which opens space to realize how other factors like gender, age, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation also contribute to power structures. Her Poststructuralist Feminist perspective coincides with the theory of hegemony, as I present it, because she realizes the ability of ideologies to create and transform social control (Wearing 1998).

The hegemonic process and its construction of power involves constant struggles that occur within social institutions like education, family, media, and religion. The theory of hegemony also realizes the possibilities of social change through contestation of hegemonic practices by subcultures. For example, in the struggle against hegemony, newer ideologies of masculinity can replace older forms.

B. Hegemonic Masculinity

Tim Carrigan, Bob Connell, and John Lee (1985) proposed a model of multiple masculinities and asserted that there are power discrepancies among these masculinities. They proposed this to help explain the existence of violence and oppression of homosexual men by heterosexual men. This hierarchy of masculinities (hegemonic masculinity) is understood as the

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practice (i.e. behaviors and actions) that allows some men to dominate other men and women (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). These behaviors include violence, aggression, stoicism (emotional restraint), courage, toughness, risk-taking, thrill-seeking, and competitiveness. Only a minority of men may enact hegemonic masculinity, but it is certainly the honored way of being a 'real' man in Euro–American cultures, which is oppressive to most women and many men.

Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) more recent writings, analyzes the concept of hegemonic masculinity in comparison to critiques of the theory over the past 20 years. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) reveal that there are some flaws in the original theory that must be revised. For example, hegemonic masculinity may not be gender specific. The theory oversimplifies class relations with regards to gender; an upper-class woman may appropriate hegemonic masculinity in constructing her career.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) also reject the usage of hegemonic masculinity as a fixed character type. This is because humans have many identities in addition to their gender, such as race and class, which contribute to the interaction of power and domination. Variations on the standards and expectations of white male hegemony are possible according to race and class. Extreme forms of masculinity may be exhibited by non-white persons or lower class white persons in response to their experiences of white male hegemony and to compensate for their diminished social status. Just as Deem (1986), Green et al. (1990), and Wearing (1998) agreed that gender must be added to class analysis, race, ethnicity, ability, size, sexuality, age etc. must be considered when discussing hegemony.

Women, Leisure, and Traditional Sport

In their analysis, Green et al. (1990) asserts that in order to study leisure we must understand the ideologies of gender which are rooted in the sexual division of labor. The ideology of gendered labor creates a cultural paradigm that appropriates types of leisure to each

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gender. Primarily, women and femininity are associated with domesticity and maternity while men are associated with society and culture. Men's labor and leisure occurs outside the home while her labor and leisure occurs in the private realm of the home, therefore leading to a higher cultural value of men's leisure because it is seen as necessary. Women's pleasure is supposed to come from the family and when she seeks leisure away from the home, it is often viewed as selfish (Green et al. 1990).

Leisure provision reflects patriarchal ideologies about the roles of women and what is appropriate for women to do and where it is appropriate for them to go. Often these provisions are stereotyped notions of femininity. Women seeking leisure are either young sex objects, who need clubs and bars, or homemakers who need sewing and cooking classes. Deem (1986) argues there are fewer services available to women who want to learn outdoor recreation like climbing mountains, traditional sports like playing football, or other typically male dominated hobbies like learning electronics or mechanical repair. Part of this is due to the commercial nature of leisure providers who do not recognize women as an important and varied client group (Deem 1986).

Wearing (1998) thinks in most western cultures sport is positively valued and associated with economic benefits and social status. Jennifer Hargreaves (1994), a sport sociologist, describes sports as exemplifying, "masculinity and chauvinism, embodying aggressive displays of physical power and competitiveness" (p. 43). Boys are taught that sport is a significant part of manliness while women are often excluded and used to symbolize poor sport performance (i.e. 'to throw like a girl'). Since sport is positively valued, talent in sport is translatable to value in society, both socially and economically. This is evidenced through enormous salaries of professional, especially male, athletes. For example, upon filing for wage discrimination in April 2016, Megan Rapinoe of the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team stated, "Recently, it has become clear that the (U.S. Soccer) Federation has no intention of providing us (women) equal pay for equal work" (Fagan 2016). Women's inclusion in sport maintains gender hierarchies and

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creates barriers to women's value and success in sport, which thus excludes her from reaping the social and economic benefits of sport.

Even decades after Deem (1986), Green et al. (1990), and Wearing's (1998) analyses, when women show talent in sport and thus disrupt male hegemony, female value and success can remain diminished or marginalized by reinterpretation of her skills. This discredit and marginalization may come in the form of innuendos about a female athlete's sexual orientation, i.e, the view that she is talented because she is not really a woman; the view that her performance remains inferior to men's performance; or the view of surprise that she can be attractive, heterosexual, and athletic.

These views reinforce hegemonic femininity. Hegemonic femininity is a culturally ideal form of being a woman and is also exercised, maintained, and reproduced through sport; however, hegemonic femininity is different than masculine hegemony in that it maintains women as an object for men. Hegemonic femininity implies that a woman has some power to dominate others; however, she is still not powerful. She is still oppressed under the umbrella of hegemonic masculinity. According to hegemonic femininity, she must maintain a heterosexually attractive appearance with traditionally feminine hairstyles and clothing that disguises any excessive muscle or fat. She shouldn't be too loud or aggressive.

By highlighting their femininity, women in sport become more culturally acceptable, as it does not defy or threaten gender norms. The consequences for women in sport who do not maintain a heterosexually feminine appearance include negative treatment and verbal harassment by administrators, coaches, fans, lack of media attention and endorsements, and negative bias by judges (Krane 2001). Alternatively, however, when female athletes appear too feminine, they are sexualized, trivialized, and infantilized. The controversy over the Serena Williams *Sports Illustrated's* "2015 Best Sportsperson of the Year" cover illustrates this concept well; as a muscular, talented, black, and attractive female athlete there has been significant anti-Serena backlash and stigmatization (Williams 2015). Therefore, female athletes must

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constantly police themselves in order to balance their feminine and less feminine attributes.

Engaging in sports is empowering for women athletes but does not entirely challenge gender norms since they must constantly maintain this careful representation of femininity.

21st Century Examples of Hegemony in Outdoor Activities

The representation of female athletes in media covering Outdoor Recreation demonstrates the feminization of women as a response to challenged gender norms. Appearance is an important part of women's success or lack of success in professional Outdoor Recreation.

Surfer Silvana Lima despite winning several national and international surfing competitions was denied sponsorships for the first 13 years of her surfing career because she was not conforming to hegemonic femininity. In a personal narrative, she describes, "the surf-wear brands, when it comes to women, they want both models and surfers. If you don't look like a model you end up without a sponsor, which is what happened to me." (BBC 2016). Ironically, Teton Gravity Research, a media and film outlet for snowboarding, skiing, and surfing, in their coverage of Silvana Lima's story, reassures everyone that, "Silvana Lima is a babe, and the surf industry was sorely mistaken" (Hunger 2016). Even media coverage on the objectification of women in Outdoor Recreation cannot refrain from making comments about her appearance.

On the opposite spectrum, climber Sierra Blair-Coyle, despite climbing at difficulties way below other climbing professionals, receives constant media attention for her attractiveness. In an article titled, "Athlete or Model: What is Sierra Blair-Coyle?" male climbing blogger Andrew Bisharat simultaneously belittles and mocks her self-representation on social media while admitting he follows her athlete page on facebook because, "She's totally hot" (Bisharat 2015). Sierra Blair-Coyle's self-representation in revealing clothing and in seductive positions while climbing evokes an interesting debate; Post-feminist perspectives suggest that although her

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body will be fetishized in the male gaze, she is also experiencing freedom and pleasure on her own terms according to her own ethics and values. She may represent her body in this way, which is empowering personally, socially, and economically. On the other hand, professional female climber Alex Johnson in an interview with DPM climbing magazine, stated that she thinks the provocative clothing in climbing is pushing the sport in a negative directions. She states:

Yes, we all know sex sells, and that sadly it seems the less you wear, the more you're photographed. But I believe trying to gain publicity using your body is pushing our sport in a negative direction and it's sincerely disappointing. My desire is for women climbers to be notarized for their personalities, ethics, morals, professionalism, etc. (Alex Johnson: Pro Climber 2012).

She continues that she believes over sexualizing women in climbing enforces the belief that it is looks, not talent and personality that gets you attention. More so, Sierra Blair-Coyle's appearance still first has to be accepted by men as attractive and then transfigured into images of sexuality in order for her appearance to reap social and economic benefits. No matter her self-determined freedom and pleasure, Sierra Blair-Coyle will continue to be fetishized in the male gaze (Carty 2005); it is up to her values and ethics to decide if it is appropriate to reap the benefits of that objectification.

Language evokes controversy in regards to female access to leisure at a popular climbing gym in Portland, Oregon, where there is a monthly women's climbing event titled, "Beta Babes." In a personal narrative by one of the facilitators of this event, she describes how the title of this event, intended to provide space for female climbers, diminishes female climbers to their attractiveness and asking for 'beta' (help) (Monahan 2016). Monahan (2016) states:

The word 'babe' in the title of this only women climb night reflects a widespread acceptance that women climbers are just objects of sexual beauty. There is an

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underlying violence. Violence lies in the word, 'babe,' because it threatens the integrity of women climbers. It threatens our competence.

Using the word 'babe' to refer to a female athlete is problematic because it perpetuates objectification and discourages female camaraderie, rather than commenting on her skill and dedication.

Female First Ascents or 'FFAs' distinguish when a route is first successfully climbed by a woman in climbing and mountaineering media. In the past, this system worked to celebrate women's accomplishments as they entered a previously male dominated sport. However, some female climbers argue this distinction minimizes their accomplishments and belittles their membership in the climbing community. Paige Claassen, a professional female climber, hesitates to report FFAs because they reinforce the gender gap (Ketchum 2015). She explains that other sports divide genders, but in climbing each climber can interpret the route to play to their strengths. The accomplishments of female climbers aren't impressive because they're women, they're just impressive (Ketchum 2015). More so, with such focus in competitive climbing on checking off iconic climbs, FFAs encourage women to follow men's accomplishments rather than encouraging women to develop their own new routes.

Hegemonic paradigms are also maintained and reproduced through options for women's gear. Women's harnesses, layers, and packs most frequently are available in pink, purple, and teal. Many women may seek other color options and for women who do not want to conform to hegemonic femininity this limited selection is frustrating and disempowering. In general, gear specialized for women's bodies is less available and comes with less selection of features. It is not unusual for women's gear to prioritize fashion over function. For example, the female version of a piece of technical clothing is likely to have fewer pockets and to be cut in a style that sexualizes the woman's body. This may imply that gear manufacturers do not perceive women to be legitimate outdoor participants and consumers of outdoor supplies.

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Considering the maintenance and reproduction of oppression of women in leisure, traditional sports, and outdoor activities, it is important to question if Outdoor Recreation and Education must be similar in their reproduction of gender hierarchies or if they can challenge hegemony (Humberstone 2000).

Defining Specific Outdoor Activities in Regards to Hegemony

In a 2015 personal correspondence with Barbara Humberstone, she stated that there will always be both sides of outdoor activities: the sides that reproduce hegemony and the sides that challenge it (Humberstone, personal communication, November 21, 2015). In this section, I define various forms of outdoor activity and their relationship to hegemony. I describe Outdoor Education and its goals in contrast to other forms of outdoor activity in order to support my argument that Outdoor Education is an excellent venue to challenge hegemonic masculinity.

Outdoor Recreation is any leisure activity done in the outdoors, including snowmobiling, dirt biking, gardening, base jumping, rock climbing, etc. (Priest and Gass 2005). This means Outdoor Recreation is a wide and general form of activity, with widely varying ethics. Also, it is important to note that Outdoor Recreation includes a motorized and non-motorized activity which dramatically diversifies the environmental ethics and values within this subset.

Some Outdoor Recreation may challenge hegemony and some Outdoor Recreation may maintain and reproduce hegemony. Since Outdoor Recreation is so broad and usually self-initiated, there are no explicit practices in Outdoor Recreation that consistently and intentionally aim to challenge oppression. Therefore, Outdoor Recreation is more likely to maintain or reproduce hegemony similarly to other institutions (i.e. traditional sport, family, and religion) unless the explicit goal of the recreationist or recreation program is to challenge oppression.

Outdoor Adventure Recreation is similar to Outdoor Recreation, except that the outcome of the event is uncertain and dangerous. Ewert and Hollenhorst's popular definition of Outdoor

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Adventure Recreation describes “a variety of self-initiated activities utilizing an interaction with the natural environment, that contain elements of real or apparent danger, in which the outcome, while uncertain, can be influenced by the participant and circumstance” (1989, p.125). The necessitation of danger in the common Ewert and Hollenhorst (1989) definition establishes Outdoor Adventure Recreation as exclusionary and not for individuals with goals differing from thrill seeking. This thrill seeking may align Outdoor Adventure Recreation, and some forms of Outdoor Recreation, close to Warren’s (2016) description that for men and boys, “proscribed roles in the outdoors focus on rugged individualism and a conquering mentality that further make gender role socialisation concrete and influence the field of outdoor adventure in maintaining its male dominated paradigms” (p. 361).

Outdoor Education, a subset of experiential learning, can range from attempting summits of Himalayan peaks to taking children out of the classroom for birdwatching. Kolb’s (1984) Cycle of Experiential Learning begins with a concrete experience, then reflection, abstraction, and experimentation; Outdoor Education applies Kolb’s Cycle in an outdoor environment. The purpose of Outdoor Education extends beyond recreation and aims to teach about relationships among people and to their environments through reflection and abstraction. Specifically, Outdoor Education is concerned with four relationships: intrapersonal, interpersonal, ecosystemic, and ekistic, and is broken into two subsets: Environmental Education and Adventure Education (Priest and Gass 2005).

Environmental Education concerns itself with ecosystemic and ekistic relationships (Priest and Gass 2005). Students learn about living organisms, ecosystems, how humans influence the quality of the environment, and how the environment influences their quality of life (Priest 1999). Adventure Education is concerned with interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. Themes that may be explored in Adventure Education include communication, cooperation, trust, conflict resolution, and leadership. The overarching premise is that change may take place in groups and individuals through direct and purposeful exposure to adversities

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in the natural environment (Priest 1999). Therefore, Outdoor Education also includes danger and thrill; however, the intentional application of danger and thrill within the pedagogy of Outdoor Education differs extraordinarily from the goals of Outdoor Recreation and Outdoor Adventure Recreation.

Challenging Hegemony In Outdoor Education Specifically

Humberstone stated that perhaps good education can help transform hegemonic masculinity (Humberstone, personal communication, November 21, 2015) . Through several case studies of leisure programs, Aitchison and Henderson (2013) evidence the ability of leisure to resist inequality. They state:

Although leisure can sometimes reproduce inequality, leisure projects, programmes and research are also powerful means of addressing and resisting inequality, and thus foster equality through social change and empowerment for individuals and communities (Aitchison and Henderson 2013, p. 202).

I argue that the unique educational goals and values of Outdoor Education create an excellent venue for challenging hegemony. Especially, by applying Feminist Outdoor Leadership, Outdoor Education can provide women and men opportunities to challenge hegemonic paradigms and create social change. For example, in Outdoor Education, rock climbing may be used to explore group dynamics and the participants' relationships to their climbing location. The tasks completed by the group are intentionally facilitated, with front loading, reflections, teambuilding initiatives, and debriefing. In short, the purpose for climbing is not to display strength, whether physical or mental; the purpose of participation is to learn experientially about themselves, their community, and their environment. Through these practices, Outdoor Education challenges hegemonic masculinity.

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Feminist Outdoor Leadership

The following section recommends strategies for challenging hegemonic masculinity in Outdoor Education. These recommendations are a product of my experience working in Outdoor Education, in particular through conversation, observation, and practice as a mentee and mentor at the Portland State University Outdoor Program. These strategies are not all encompassing, nor do I suggest they will apply to all women. To suggest these strategies will apply to every woman's struggles in accessing the outdoors as well as the oppression experienced in everyday moments, would be essentializing femininity and masculinity. Rather, these are pedagogical suggestions in order to account for and facilitate the recognition of differences that lead to privilege, and may also be relevant for empowering other subordinated identities. Feminist Outdoor Leadership values horizontally shared power, emotionality, relationship building, and critical pedagogy that challenges oppressive behavior and communication. Feminist Outdoor Educators also encourage skill development that challenges gender role socialization.

A. Horizontally Shared Power and Space

Lao Tzu said a good leader is one who walks beside the people. A horizontal power structure in Outdoor Education distributes power by sharing responsibilities. For example, facilitators may want to develop a schedule in which individuals rotate authority, decision making, and camp tasks. Some organizations do this by assigning Leaders of the Day: one or two group members conducting decision making for the group for the entire day. This inclusive sharing of power does not have to happen in the field only; empowering participants with agency to adapt the trip plan according to their desires may increase commitment and learning. Horizontal educators can also invite participants to teach skills to one another, thus creating a culture of equality, while valuing and solidifying existing knowledge.

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Space in outdoor learning environments should be used carefully to reflect values of Feminist Outdoor Leadership. Territorial sexism occurs when women do not feel comfortable asserting themselves in the outdoor learning setting, and instead listen from the back, often behind men, who they perceive to own the space (Warren and Loeffler 2006). Territorial sexism can also manifest between sitting and standing participants, which creates a power imbalance, as one individual towers over the other asserting their dominance. To mitigate this, facilitators should develop awareness for spatial positioning of men and women in educational settings and learn ways to invite the group to arrange themselves as to not express differentiating power and authority. Sitting in circles during frontloading, learning, and debriefing time manifests a tangible equality within the group that values and hears every member.

B. Emotionality

Welcoming emotional responses and vulnerability within an outdoor learning setting may increase growth cultivated from exposure to adversaries. Donna Little (2002) learned in her research that women often define adventure in a flexible way; adventure is something new, challenging, an exploration and discovery of both an area or of themselves rather than something inherently dangerous or thrilling. In other words, adventure is not confined to an activity, but is also an emotional state of mind. By incorporating these definitions, Adventure Education can “move away from being elitist and extreme, masculine and alien, and a site where women are often denied access, toward being more inclusive and acknowledged for the flexible experiences of personal challenge” (Little 2002 p.67, Humberstone 2000) . This means facilitating support for physical adventure as well as internal, emotional adventure. Internal, emotional adventure can be facilitated in many ways: setting daily intentions, sharing and responding to poems, silent hikes and meditations, group journaling, and life story sharing exercises.

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Feminist Outdoor Educators can encourage emotionality via regular feeling check ins. During circle ups, participants can position their hands according to a spectrum of emotional wellbeing or participants can be asked to describe their emotional wellbeing in more abstract ways, like through a color observed that day. By inviting participants to engage with their whole self, exemplified by the above activities, both males and females can challenge hegemony by existing beyond idealized (especially gendered) personas.

C. Critical Relationship Building

Emphasis on relationship building and non-oppressive interactions is prioritized alongside other learning objectives in Feminist Outdoor Leadership. Feminist Outdoor Educators should model respectful and equal relationships with co-instructors that embody interactions that both challenge and support. Relationship building in Outdoor Education begins simply; facilitators may want to encourage interaction and community development through icebreakers and get-to-know-you activities. Then, they can further develop a sense of cohesion and a culture of respect through group contracts where the group identifies values they want to embody together. Unlike in Outdoor Recreation, relationships in Outdoor Education that challenge hegemony should be founded on collaboration rather than competition. One way facilitators can elicit this is through team building initiatives. Team building initiatives challenge the group to complete a task together and then reflect on the group dynamics and process afterwards. A well-developed group will be able to communicate respectfully and will honor each individual's contribution to the solution.

Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator and activist, (1970) said, "No oppressive order could permit the oppressed to begin to question: Why?" Outdoor Education that encourages critical inquiry can lead participants to question how economic and cultural structures create inequality, injustice, and oppression of human and nonhuman life. Feminist Outdoor Educators accept that participants inevitably interact with, reproduce, and/or suffer from these systems, and education

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without acknowledgement of these systems is an act of domination. Part of critical inquiry is making space for a variety of perspectives.

One of the greatest tools of Feminist Outdoor Educators is debriefing. Debriefing engages the experience and perspective of every individual, from conflicts to decision making to emotional stress and success. By uniquely inviting all participants to share, debriefing embodies horizontal power, emotionality, relationship building, all while critically assessing experience. In addition to debriefing, Feminist Outdoor Educators can also encourage diverse perspectives by sharing stories and experiences of marginalized individuals or by asking participants to imagine themselves as various actors and victims in resource conflicts.

D. Empowering Communication

Communication norms can reflect hegemonic paradigms existing within a group culture. Feminist Outdoor Educators value communication that honors the identities of group members and other individuals. Communication that does not honor group members includes degrading language like addressing women as 'girls,' describing weakness as being a 'pussy'/'sissy,' or referring to a disliked or unwanted experience as a 'bitch'. Feminist Outdoor Educators interrupt this type of communication when it surfaces in the outdoor learning setting. More so, Feminist Outdoor Educators must avoid using gendered pronouns in their teaching, as to not imply that one gender is more welcome in the activity than another.

In Outdoor Education, the commonly used terms 'hard' and 'soft' skills demonstrate underlying sexist values that do not encourage a community of equality. 'Hard' skills are technical skills that are often easily harnessed by men. 'Soft' skills are interpersonal facilitation skills that encourage group cohesion and conflict negotiation. Since soft skills are closely related to domestic, mother-like behavior, they are often associated with women. However, the term soft implies that mastery of interpersonal facilitation is weak, less challenging, and less important. Replacing hard and soft skills with the terms 'technical' and 'interpersonal' is not

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adequate; these terms operate in a gender binary similarly by continuing to associate relational and emotional competence as feminine and gear systems and athleticism as masculine. To challenge hegemony in Outdoor Education, and to foster a more balanced leadership style for all facilitators, non-sexist terms like 'Human,' 'Educational,' and 'Outdoor' skillsets should be used (Nicolazzo 2007).

E. Conscious Skill and Confidence Development

Karen Warren, a scholar in Social Justice and Outdoor Education at Hampshire University, states that women in outdoor learning settings often struggle with technical outdoor skill development and confidence in their competencies (2006). Women's lack of success in these endeavors can be attributed to their gender role socialization which often does not privilege technical skills (Warren 1985). Hazel Findlay, a professional female climber, in a personal narrative validates Warren's correlation between gender socialization and barriers in confidence for women. She states, "I do think there are some mental barriers for women. And I do think they are largely socially molded...as a girl you're supposed to be weaker; you're supposed to be less brave" (National Geographic n.d.).

T.A. Loeffler (2000), a professor of Outdoor Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland and an accomplished female mountaineer, recommends educators provide female participants with information in regards to how gender role socialization may affect their competence and confidence development. According to Loeffler (2000) this can be achieved by using her G.R.A.C. facilitation methodology (2000). G.R.A.C. is a process by which participants gain, recognize, assess, and claim their competence. This includes providing opportunities for female participants to perform tasks on their own as a way validate their skills sets (Loeffler 2000, Warren and Loeffler 2006).

While challenging females to develop gendered technical skills, Feminist Outdoor Educators should simultaneously encourage male participants to attempt skills that their gender

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role socialization does not privilege, especially in times of challenging conditions. These include providing emotional support for the group, interpersonal (emotional and relational) facilitation, and camp tasks like cooking, cleaning, and organizing. Feminist Outdoor Educators can help model this by also teaching outside of their gender role expectations. By practicing diverse skills perhaps dominant culture can move away from discriminate gender socialization into a more balanced skill development for all.

F. Maintaining Hegemonic Transformations

Feminist Outdoor Leadership strategies like sharing responsibilities and roles, acknowledging power dynamics, and interacting with one another in honest and intentional ways can challenge hegemonic masculinity and should be incorporated into Outdoor Education. Of most importance when facilitating as a Feminist Outdoor Educator, in order to effectively transform oppressive paradigms, the lessons from the outdoor learning environment must be transferred into the participant's post program life. Transference is the integration of learning from the Outdoor Education program to the participant's real life (Priest and Gass 2005). Transference can be facilitated by drawing metaphors between outdoor activities to healthy lifestyle habits, empowering relationships, awareness of others, personal self-worth, and personal value systems. For example, practicing trust through belay partnerships can be practices of trust applied to other relationships when effectively facilitated by the Feminist Outdoor Educators.

Future Research: The Woman/Nature Binary

Humberstone (1998) and Hargreaves (1994) analyze the ideological link between women and nature. Women as consequence of their biology are believed to be nurturing and caring, like 'mother earth,' and are symbolically aligned with the natural, their reproductive systems, and their roles as mothers. It is important to not stereotype women as 'wild' or

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'natural,' however, it is useful to analyze the parallels between the subordination of women and the domination and exploitation of nature. For example, nature is often referred to as virginal or an untouched landscape and waiting to be explored and mined for discoverable valuables. This language of discovery poses Outdoor Recreation and Education as conceptually not that different than sexual pursuit and colonization. For example, Karen Warren (2016) paralleled outdoor exploration and domination in her recent study where she stated that for men and boys, "proscribed roles in the outdoors focus on rugged individualism and a conquering mentality" which maintains male dominated, colonialist, and environmentally destructive paradigms (p. 361).

Humberstone (1998) presents that analysis of gender and the outdoors is important and relevant in light of the current environmental crisis. An underpinning of ecofeminist perspectives highlights the dual oppression of both nature and woman by recognizing the devaluation of the women/nature binary in comparison to the man/culture binary. Many outdoor educators are concerned with environmental degradation, but widely ignore social injustices. Alternatively, much gender research in outdoor studies equally ignores oppression of the nonhuman world. Humberstone argues that feminists researching sport must reconceptualize "woman/nature and man/culture (sport) binaries and nonhuman exploitation" (1998, 2016). Because of the dual oppression of women and nature, challenge of gender inequalities in outdoor education also opens opportunities to challenge non-human oppression and to understand individual, collective, and global responsibilities to nature (Humberstone 1998).

Conclusion

Humberstone (2000) wondered if outdoor activities must maintain hegemonic masculinity or if a potential to challenge gendered inequalities existed within the field. In this study, I argue that hegemonic masculinity can be transformed in Outdoor Education due to its unique goals and values that differ from other forms of outdoor activity. Despite the enduring

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sexism within traditional sport and outdoor activities described in this study, no one constraint is unmanageable for women adventurers, educators, and providers (Little 2002). No one constraint is unmanageable because of Outdoor Education's intentional focus on interpersonal, intrapersonal, ecosystemic, and ekistic relationships and its application of Kolb's (1984) cycle of concrete experience, reflection, abstraction, and experimentation. These inherent values and practices in Outdoor Education provide an excellent stage for challenging, resisting, and negotiating gendered power discrepancies and oppressive norms.

Little (2002) stated, "with knowledge of a variety of management strategies, recognition of women with analogous situations, and various support networks, constraints to outdoor adventure can be overcome" (p. 191). This means that if Outdoor Educators are receptive to feminist discourse, oppressive paradigms can absolutely be deconstructed within Outdoor Education. More so, rather than pondering if outdoor leisure can or cannot resist inequality, Outdoor Educators should equip themselves with skills to challenge inequality in all of the ways they possibly can. Feminist Outdoor Leadership is a framework of necessary management and support strategies for this challenge. Feminist Outdoor Leadership includes: conscious skill and confidence development, empowering communication, critical relationship building, emotionality and emotional safety, and horizontally shared power and space.

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