A collection of articles addressing the Historical educational, philosophical psychological ethical epinical and social lustice foundations of Experiential Education



Theory & Practice

Experiential Education

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Editors

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The Historical Roots of Experiential Education

Mary Breunig

I wish to open this chapter with two short vignettes. A friend of mine recently asked me what kind of expectations I had for my students related to their employment postgraduation. He asked me if the program that I teach in was preparing students for teaching in the K-12 classroom, or if the program was alternatively preparing students to serve as wilderness trip guides and leaders, or if the program was offering students a broad-based curriculum related to recreation and leisure theory and practice and thus preparing them for work as recreation professionals. My response to all of his proposed employment prospects for my students was "yes." I responded that the mission and vision of our program was to use recreation and leisure studies curriculum, specifically outdoor recreation curriculum, to prepare students to serve as agents of social and environmental change in the World. My friend's response was an awed "wow," but I was quick to follow up with a confession that I wasn't sure how well we were yet doing with this intended programmatic "end" given that our program was relatively "new." The method for accomplishing this end vision in our outdoor recreation program is to offer an outdoor recreation curriculum that experientially educates students with a set of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that prepares them to serve as agents of social and environmental change in the world (Brock University Calendar, 2008).

Obviously, the program that I teach in is not the only experiential education program doing this. In fact, at a recent annual conference of the Association for Experiential Education (AEE), I was struck by the number of conference workshops and conversations that addressed the importance of intent, aim, and purpose in experiential education. I was particularly intrigued by the diversity of purposes that were being discussed. A large number of

these workshops highlighted the potential for experiential education to serve as a vehicle for social change, particularly within academic programs. Given my experience in co-authoring the vision statement for the postsecondary program in which I teach and given my experience at the conference, I felt impelled to revisit the philosophical roots of experiential education in an effort to better understand how the aim of social change has come to the fore.

The discussion that follows—about both the philosophy of experiential education and its modern-day principles and practices—will reveal that experiential education is rooted in the educational ideal of social change. The purpose of this historical overview is to provide the reader with some background of these roots and to additionally compel the reader to consider how well experiential educators fulfil the intended aim of social change.

Experiential Learning and Experiential Education

Experiential learning and experiential education are buzz words within many educational circles. These terms are often used interchangeably. There are numerous published definitions of experiential education (Joplin, 1981; Luckmann, 1996; Itin, 1999). The Association for Experiential Education (2004) defines experiential education as both a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection to increase knowledge, develop skills, and clarify values. Central to this definition is the distinction between experiential education as methodology and experiential education as philosophy. This distinction suggests that there is a difference between experiential learning and experiential education.

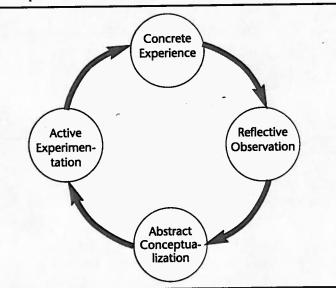


Figure 1. Experiential Learning Cycle

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David Kolb (1984) provides a useful model to illustrate experiential learning as a cycle (see Figure 1). According to Kolb (1984), experiential learning consists of four distinct segments: "(a) active student involvement in a meaningful and challenging experience, (b) reflection upon the experience individually and in a group, (c) the development of new knowledge about the world, and (d) application of this knowledge to a new situation" (Knapp, 1992, pp. 36–37).

Many experiential education initiatives are based on this learning cycle but do not prescribe an intended learning outcome or aim. Employing the experiential learning cycle without an intended educational aim represents experiential learning as methodology, implying that there is a certain way of teaching that makes the learning experiential.

Experiential education as philosophy employs both methodology (an experiential way of teaching) and philosophy as part of the educative process. Experiential education as philosophy implies that there is an intended aim toward which the experiential learning process is directed. In this sense, the intent of experiential education is just that—an intentional, purposeful approach to teaching and learning.

This next section will provide the reader with a glimpse into the philosophical roots of experiential education theory, with a particular view toward the themes of social change and social justice. It will also highlight the distinctions between experiential education and more "traditional" forms of schooling.

Philosophical Roots

Experiential learning represents one of the earliest forms of education in the Western world. In fact, examples of experience-based learning are found in some of the earliest forms of teaching, including learning passed through storytelling and oral tradition, particularly in First Nations and Native cultures. However, with the advent of the printing press in 1470 and the economic changes resulting from the industrial revolution, the idea of providing a universal and compulsory system of education at the state's expense was born. The first state public school was founded in Europe in the late 1660s by an order requiring student attendance (Good & Teller, 1969). The result was an educational trend that supported what was thought to be a socially efficient means of educating young people to prepare them to enter a work force that was rapidly changing and evolving. More students in schools meant that more efficient means of transmitting information were required. As a result, school curriculum evolved into an assembly line by which economically and socially useful citizens were produced en masse (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2002). Social utility was the sole means by which school curriculum was judged.

Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841)

In reaction to this "traditional" and supposedly socially efficient approach to teaching and learning, an educational project that focused on the learner and the development of the student's character was also gaining momentum. At the forefront of this educational initiative was the German philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart. Herbart was influenced by the Italian educator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, who believed that students were inherently "good" and should be governed by the principle of love and not fear. Herbart suggested that school curriculum should be developed in accord with the following principles: (a) preparation: teachers take into account students' previous learning experiences; (b) presentation: learning materials are outlined; (c) association: new information is compared with what is already known by the student(s); (d) generalization: rules and general principles are derived from new information; and (e) application: generalizations are applied in practice (Herbart, 1895). The similarities between Herbart's five learning principles and Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle in Figure 1 are remarkable. Herbart's first principle, that teachers consider students' previous learning experience, provided the child-centered advocates with further endorsement of the importance of this idea. In the book On the Education of Man, Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel (1826) purported that child-centred, student-initiated play was the best method for both learning and development, providing further evidence of some of the early educational initiatives that provided an "alternative" option to the predominant model of social efficiency.

William James (1842-1910)

This early evidence of the importance of concrete experience led to the development of pragmatism, which represents both a method for analyzing philosophical problems and a theory of meaning that turns away from abstraction toward concrete facts and actions. Charles Sanders Pierce is considered the founder of pragmatism. He and fellow pragmatic William James concluded that humans generate belief through their "habits of action," or that ideas and truths are developed through experience (Noddings, 1995). James considered pragmatism to be both a method for analyzing philosophic problems and a theory of truth. Theories, he felt, are "instruments" that humans use to solve problems and should be judged in terms of their practical consequences for human conduct.

Colonel Francis Parker (1837–1902) and John Dewey (1859–1952)

Colonel Francis Parker, who many regard as the father of progressive education, used the pragmatic educational ideals to argue the case of child-centered curriculum reform. In what became known as the "Quincy system,' children learned to read, write, spell, and think simultaneously" (Pinar et al., 2002). Progressive education was inaugurated in Quincy, Massachusetts, with Parker's work (Pinar et al., 2002). A more well-known progressivist and

colleague of Francis Parker's was John Dewey, who is often regarded as one of the "founders" of experiential education. Dewey believed that the child's experience must form the basis of the school curriculum. He believed that subject matter should not be learned in isolation and maintained the importance of acquainting students and teachers with the conditions of the local community (physical, historical, economic, and occupational) in order to utilize them as educational resources. Dewey believed that the main aim of education was the preparation of individuals to participate in social change (Dewey, 1904; 1938).

Dewey (1916/1944) believed that experience is one means to broaden students' knowledge, bringing awareness to bear and leading in a constructive direction toward "intelligent action." Intelligent action is considered rather than impulsive and is shaped by information garnered from previous experiences while bearing in mind one's goal or purpose (one that serves society) (Dewey, 1916/1944). According to Dewey, the aim of progressive education is "to take part in correcting unfair privilege and unfair deprivation, to perpetuate them" (p. 119).

Dewey's theoretical principles were formulated into a practical application with Kilpatrick's project method. According to Kilpatrick (1918), a project was a wholehearted purposeful activity occurring in a social environment. To achieve a project's aim, students should practice all four aspects of any given project, including purposing, planning, executing, and judging. For Kilpatrick, the project method became an organizing principle of the curriculum. He conceived of the curriculum as a series of experiences in which a child makes his/her own formulation and conclusions, guided by induction (Kilpatrick, 1925). For both Dewey and Kilpatrick, isolated experience was not enough. Experiences needed to be formulated based on both previous experience and the intended outcome of the present experience. Dewey (1938) referred to this as continuity of experience. He further argued that an experience was genuine only when it met the above criteria of continuity and was purposeful and directed toward some intentional end. It is clear that the early work of the progressivists laid the groundwork for our present-day understanding of experiential education and the importance of education as a means for social change.

Maria Montessori (1870–1952) and Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925)

Many school reform efforts were also influenced by progressivism. Numerous educators brought the progressive ideals of experience-based teaching and learning into the class-room. Maria Montessori (The Montessori Method) and Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf School), in particular, deserve mention. According to Montessori, the aim in education is twofold: biological and social. From the biological side, the goal is to foster the natural development of the individual; from the social standpoint, the aim is to prepare the individual for the environment. Discipline, reflection, muscular education, nature in education, and education of the senses and intellect are all important aspects of schooling (Montessori, 1974).

The basic premise of the Waldorf School is that reconstruction of society must begin at school, and education has the potential to develop new understanding and human values appropriate for the times. Waldorf schools, acting upon the insights of Rudolf Steiner, use a curriculum and methodology that fit the child's various stages of development. The schools are based on the concept of free play in a classroom environment that is homelike. Language is developed through songs, poems, and movement games. The schools are full of all natural materials (Toronto Waldorf School, 1972).

Another fundamental insight Steiner brought to education was the intimate relationship between the physical, the psychological, and the spiritual in the human being. In September 1919, the first Waldorf School opened its doors in Stuttgart, Germany, and the first North American school was founded in New York City in 1928 (Toronto Waldorf School, 1972).

It is thanks to the vision and work of these pragmatic and progressive philosophers and educators that the foundation for implementing experiential education in the K-12 school system was laid. In the past quarter-century, the Association for Experiential Education (AEE) and its allied organizations have attempted to bring American public education back to the fundamental proposition that all genuine education comes through experience (Warren, Sakofs, & Hunt, 1995, p. xii). Some of these more recent educational initiatives will be discussed in the section that follows.

Early Experiential Education Initiatives in K-12 Schools

It is hard to say when and where experiential education formally entered the North American school system. This section explores some of the ways in which the above progressive principles influenced the early experiential education initiatives in schools, including: adventure education and the organized camping movement, Outward Bound, K-12 public school initiatives, outdoor and environmental education centers, folk schools, and Quaker schools. It will provide a brief overview of each of these programs as a means to explore the ways in which K-12 experiential school-based initiatives have built upon the educational ideals of the progressivists.

Adventure Education and the Organized Camping Movement

One means by which experiential education entered the modern day K-12 school system was through adventure education. The purpose of adventure education is to bring about an awareness of positive changes in individuals through an outdoor or adventure activity (Priest, 1999). Activities may include hiking, ropes courses, rock-climbing, skiing, snow-shoeing, and camping. The organized camping movement of the early 1900s served as a model for the development of many K-12 school programs. Within the camping movement, educators began teaching using expeditions, camping, and challenge activities in North

America as early as 1861 (Raiola & O'Keefe, 1999). YMCA Camp Pinecrest, near Toronto, is one of the oldest youth camps in North America. Pinecrest was established in the early 1900s with a focus on outdoor living skills, environmental education, cultural diversity, and leadership development. The central mission of the camp was to offer opportunities for personal growth and service to others (Hirsch, 1999).

K-12 schools began to adopt the wilderness-trip model used by camps as early as the late 1800s. At the Gunnery School in Connecticut, the whole school went on a two-week, 40-mile journey at the end of the school year. Laura Mattoon was one of many activists in the early 20th century concerned with the instruction and personal growth of young women. She led an expedition in the summer of 1902 to the New Hampshire wilderness with her private girls' school students, integrating the outdoor experience with geological field studies (Raiola & O'Keefe, 1999).

Outward Bound

In 1941, Kurt Hahn established Outward Bound (OB), which represents another example of the application of adventure education in the school environment. Outward Bound, along with Hahn's other educational initiatives—Gordunston School, United World Colleges, Salem Schule, and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme—were all based on the notion that educating youth for the purpose of building moral character was just as important as training the intellect.

The founding of OB was a reaction to the fact that many young British men were dying in lifeboats during World War II. Hahn believed that "character" could be taught to these young men, and character development was what was needed for young people to withstand the harsh and close-quartered living conditions on the lifeboats. Twenty-one years later, the founders of the Colorado OB School raised similar concerns about the character of Americans (James, 1995). Young people in America were seen to be increasingly apathetic and self-centered. The purposes of the OB school were to use the mountains as a classroom to produce "better" people, to build character, and to instil a collective spirit into a group of individuals.

Project Adventuré and Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound

As principal of Hamilton-Wenham Junior-Senior High School in Massachusetts in 1970, Jerry Pieh and his colleague Gary Baker were interested in how to "mainstream" the OB process into a secondary public school setting. Their goal was to have the OB process become a part of the standard high-school curriculum. To that end, in 1970 they founded a new program they called Project Adventure (PA). The largest component of the initial program was focused on 10th-grade physical education, but English, history, science, theatre, and counselling were also explored in the context of what came to be known as "adventure activities" (Prouty, 1999). For more than 30 years, Project Adventure has been successfully bringing

adventure education into the classroom as an integrated, experience-based approach to teaching academic curricula.

In 1992, Outward Bound further developed its K-12 school-based initiatives with the introduction of the Expeditionary Learning OB program, which represents a proven model for comprehensive school reform for elementary, middle, and high schools. It is based on the following 10 design principles:

- 1. the primacy of self-discovery;
- 2. the having of wonderful ideas;
- 3. the responsibility for learning;
- 4. intimacy and caring;
- 5. success and failure;
- 6. collaboration and competition;
- 7. diversity and inclusivity;
- 8. the natural world;
- 9. solitude and reflection, and
- 10. service and compassion. (Cousins, 1998)

Now midway into its second decade, Expeditionary Learning OB operates within more than 60 schools throughout the United States. It emphasizes learning by doing, with a particular emphasis on character growth, teamwork, and literacy. It connects academic learning to adventure and service. It provides a framework for educators that informs them about how to teach traditional academic curricula (reading, writing, science, and math) through a challenging set of real-world projects called learning expeditions.

Integrated Programs

Project Adventure and Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound represent just two examples of an integrated approach in the United States. Experiential education exists in a variety of forms within the K-12 school system. In Canada, for example, there exist a number of integrated Environmental Studies Programs (ESPs). Students in these integrated programs spend the full day with one group of peers and one or two teachers for the full school semester. Four or five academic subjects are grouped together and taught by those teachers who have expertise within that particular area of study. A number of these integrated programs that exist in Canadian schools. Ontario has a growing number of integrated environmental studies programs at the secondary level, and in 2000 there were approximately 30 of these in existence (Russell & Burton, 2000).

Outdoor and Environmental Education Centers

Outdoor and environmental education centers in North America represent another setting in which experiential education is employed. These centers are often funded by both state and provincial school boards. A visit to an outdoor center integrates students' class-room learning in science, math, social sciences, and health and physical education with an outdoor experience (Henderson & Potter, 2001). These centers offer traditional outdoor activities and environmental programs, as well as project-based work that integrates academic curricula with outdoor activities.

Many school programs offer adventure-based experiences as extracurricular or "add on" activities: Options include field trips, community service projects, wilderness trips, or even a trip to a city museum that has little or no link to academic curricula. Many outdoor clubs exist within the K-12 public school system, providing camping and outing experiences during non-school hours or holiday breaks. Some schools offer adventure-based experiences as part of the physical education curriculum (Breunig, 2001).

Many of these K-12 school-based initiatives are founded on the principles of progressive education and act upon the ideal that experiential education is both methodology and philosophy. In essence, the ideal would be that the outdoor and experiential activities are the means. The intended educational aim of these initiatives would follow the pragmatic and progressive ideals of social change, preparation for citizenship, an ethic of service, and/or character development. The query that needs to be addressed here is: how successful are the present day K-12 experiential education initiatives at identifying an educational "end" and at achieving that intended end? Is the aim of experiential education as a means for social change being achieved as a result of these K-12 educational initiatives? Are these initiatives staying true to their philosophical roots? Are programs employing experiential education as both methodology and philosophy or are K-12 initiatives employing experiential learning and outdoor activities as the sole ends of their programs? While hard to answer, these questions are important ones to ask as part of an examination of experiential education as a potential vehicle for social change.

Folks Schools and Quaker Schools

A number of folk schools established in the United States by Danish-Americans predate the initiatives discussed above. These are discussed here because they were based on an implicit outdoor education context that distinguishes them somewhat from some of the more explicit efforts outlined above. The main mandate of these schools was for people to obtain not only knowledge that was practical, but to obtain the sorts of values that would prepare them to be good citizens. These folk schools were particularly attractive to progressives wanting to bring together economic, political, and educational experiences (Kett, 1994).

In 1786, Friends Seminary opened its doors in New York City. Its name derives from the Quaker belief that "if Friends were to be useful members of society, Quaker schools were needed to teach both basic subjects and the particular viewpoint toward life by which Friends try to live" (New York Yearly Meeting, 1974). It is believed that the "[t]hree R's of reading, writing, and arithmetic should be taught as deliberately as material that educates to the purposes of imagination, reflection, and intuition. A Friends school should so educate experientially that the word and life become one" (Heath, 1979). Experiential education in both folk schools and Quaker schools was reflected in the curricular emphasis on physical activity, hands-on learning experiences that were both useful and practical, and wilderness trip experiences. Service-learning experiences that integrated the curriculum with an intentional social change agenda emphasized the importance of intentional, purposeful action. The intended aim of these experiences was to prepare people to be good citizens and to participate in society, helping to bring about the world that "ought to be" (New York Yearly Meeting, 1974).

Higher Education

This section provides an overview of some of the experiential settings and many of the principles and practices of experiential education involved in higher education. It serves as a reminder of the variety of contexts that comprise experiential education practice. It will be up to the reader to consider in what ways these contexts fulfill the intended aim of experiential education as a vehicle for social change. Hopefully, the reader will feel impelled to examine the educational aim of his/her own practice as a result of this overview.

Experiential Education in Higher Education

L.B. Sharp was one of the early pioneers of camping education and the first person to receive a doctorate in camping education from Columbia University in 1929 (Raiola & O'Keefe, 1999). The Chicago School, Teachers College at Columbia University, and the Laboratory School of the University of Missouri were some of the earliest experience-based colleges and universities influenced by Dewey and other progressivists. The curriculum for these schools focused on primitive life activities, domestic occupation, nature study, and construction work. Reading and writing were closely related to these activities and arithmetic was connected with the activities as far as seemed feasible (Good & Teller, 1969).

In 1974, a large number of college and university professionals met for a conference that led to the development of the Association for Experiential Education (Miner & Boldt, 1981). According to Michael Gass (1999) of the University of New Hampshire, however, most existing university programs have not developed through a general need perceived by higher education professionals, but rather through the self-designed efforts of select individuals at particular institutions. The applications of most early adventure education programs in higher education were varied: student orientation, student development, residential life-training pro-

grams, physical education activity classes, outing clubs, and to a lesser extent to enhance academic curricula.

More recently, there has been growth in the degree-granting programs that award both undergraduate and graduate degrees for outdoor education and recreation (e.g., University of Minnesota, State University of New York-Cortland, Brock University, University of New Hampshire) and experiential education (e.g., Prescott College, Minnesota State University-Mankato). Experiential education programs in higher education have just begun to receive external professional acceptance, and perhaps this is an area that represents the greatest growth potential within the industry.

Two additional outdoor schools deserve mention here. The National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), founded in 1965, is a nonprofit school, recognized as the international leader in the field of wilderness-based education and outdoor leadership. The main program objectives of NOLS are leadership development, outdoor skills, minimum-impact conservation techniques, and expedition dynamics. Today, NOLS is regarded as the premier wilderness-leader school in the country, with a particular emphasis on technical skill training (Bachert, 1999). The Wilderness Education Association (WEA) is dedicated to certifying wilderness course leaders who are capable in planning, outfitting, conducting, and teaching certification courses of at least four weeks duration in an actual wilderness environment (Teeters & Lupton, 1999).

Higher education, degree-granting programs, and certification programs represent sites of experiential education that may provide great potential in emphasizing the importance of identifying an educational "end" toward which the teaching and learning is directed. At the moment, many of these programs emphasize experiential learning without identifying the potential for experiential education to work toward an intended educational aim. More work needs to be done in this area.

More Recent Offshoots

Although every experiential program, application, setting, and population cannot be mentioned here, there are a number of closely connected experience-based programs that are noteworthy. Mark Lund (1999) makes note of many of these in a paper entitled "Outdoor Education—From the Roots to the New Branches." Those that will be mentioned here include service learning, experience-based training and development, therapeutic recreation, and women's outdoor adventure programs.

Service learning. Service learning provides a bridge between the various forms of experience-based teaching and learning. Service learning is more than simple volunteerism or community service; it is service that is integrated with academic curriculum and is based on real community needs. People providing the service recognize their own learning and the growth gained from engaging in the service project (Breunig, 2001). The Minnesota Department of Education defines community service learning as an instructional strategy in which

students are involved in experiential education in real-life settings and where they apply academic knowledge and previous experience to meet real community needs (Minnesota Department of Education, 1992). Service is one of the pillars of Outward Bound, it is a basic tenet of Quakerism, and with the passing of the National Community Service Act of 1990 in the United States (Nathan & Kielsmeier, 1991), service has gained prominence in public education as well as colleges and universities. Adventure-based programs throughout North America incorporate service as a component to their field experiences. Service learning provides a practical means to apply experiential education in working toward social change.

Experience-based training and development. Experience-based training and development (EBTD) emerged in the early 1980s. EBTD goes by many names: corporate adventure training, outdoor management development and, originally, executive challenge programming. EBTD is adventure education used with managers and executives of corporations that focuses specifically on teamwork and group processes. The overall goal of EBTD is to improve workplace performance. Activities include problem-solving initiatives, personality inventories, challenge course elements, and wilderness or high-adventure programming (Miner, 1999).

Therapeutic recreation. Wilderness therapy, also called adventure therapy or therapeutic recreation, emerged from some of the early camping movement programs, including Life Camps, a camp for underprivileged city children under the direction of L.B. Sharp. Adventure therapists have taken adventure education principles and applied them to diverse groups of clinical clients. Adventure therapy is the deliberate, strategic combination of adventure activities with therapeutic change processes with the goal of making lasting changes in the lives of people (Gillis & Ringer, 1999). The use of adventure experiences for therapeutic purposes is documented with such clinical populations as substance abusers, adjudicated youth, and clients served in private practices and psychiatric hospitals (Gillis & Ringer, 1999).

The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (1990) has increased accessible adventure-based programming as well. Programs that include persons with disabilities and programming adventure for older adults are two areas that have received increased focus as a direct result of ADA. Persons with disabilities are going to private and public facilities to experience the benefits of participation in adventure activities. According to Leo McAvoy and Greg Lais (1999), the most integrated setting is one that enables interaction between persons with and without disabilities. Wilderness Inquiry, Inc. of Minneapolis is one such organization that integrates persons with and without disabilities on wilderness trips. According to the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors, the demand for outdoor recreation is steadily increasing, with 90 percent of Americans seeking enjoyment from the outdoors. The commission also found that the average age of outdoor enthusiasts is steadily climbing (Lucas & Krumpe, n.d.). Consideration needs to be given to designing outdoor programs for this growing population.

Women's outdoor adventure programs. Women's outdoor adventure programs and outdoor programs that support a crosscultural perspective are continuing to grow and develop within the field of experiential education: "Forming networks of women who have found value in the outdoors, promoting adventure options through women's educational, social and cultural organizations, and offering short courses which allow women to sample the wilderness without making a huge time or financial commitment are all possibilities for adventure institutions to pursue to avert inaccessibility" (Warren, 1999). Programs such as Outward Bound, Woodswomen, and Women Outdoors have all experienced success in offering programs for women.

Targeted programs for teaching crosscultural perspectives (Washington & Roberts, 1999), programs for at-risk youth (Davis-Berman & Berman, 1999), and targeted programs for Native populations (Roberts, 1996) are also on the rise.

Many of the contemporary offshoots of experiential education would suggest that there is great potential for these programs to emphasize their capacity to effect social change. For example, using adventure and experiential education as a means to serve a community, enhance therapy, and/or support a crosscultural perspective has great potential to evoke social change in a very tangible way. Further exploration about how to work toward the educational end of social change through meaningful contemporary experiential education initiatives is also worthy of mention.

Conclusion

Despite its early roots in the progressive education movement, experiential education as a practice is still relatively new. This may be in part because experiential education practice has not yet found its way into more mainstream school environments. As future trends are considered within the field of experiential education, educators need to consider how to better mainstream experience-based programs into more traditional schools and environments. It is time for experiential educators to "come inside" and enter the public school system as a means to engage in a more meaningful and integrated experiential education practice.

It is interesting to note how our philosophical roots share the common educational ideal of social change. Herbart, Froebel, James, Parker, Dewey, and Kilpatrick were all dedicated to using education as a means for social change. Hahn developed a number of modern day experiential schools on this same ideal. Montessori, Steiner, and the early K-12 school initiatives that employed experiential education shared this common goal as well. Experiential education has widespread applications and transformative potential as both an educational philosophy and as a vehicle for social change.

One question that I am often asked by students in my fourth-year experiential education course is, "Since educating people to be actively engaged in social change was such a seminal part of pragmatism, progressivism, and experiential education, why is it not employed in practice more globally in the K-12 school system today?" This question reflects the need to develop both the theory and practice of experiential education. I believe educators need to further develop ways of integrating experiential education more fully into various sites of learning. Experiential education needs to continue to explore how to implement a more widespread application beyond the field of adventure education. Identifying and emphasizing the potential of experiential education as a vehicle for social change may be one way to better accomplish that.

Additionally, more work needs to be done to integrate experiential philosophy into a more meaningful classroom practice. It is easy to espouse the theory, but it can be time-consuming and challenging to actually engage in meaningful experiential practice within the classroom. Clearly, we need to better understand our philosophical roots and the transformative potential of experiential education.

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