Women and Adventure Recreation: Reconstructing Leisure Constraints and Adventure Experiences to Negotiate Continuing Participation

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This paper presents results from a study of women with a history of participation in adventure recreation. Semi-structured in-depth interviews and 6-month activity diaries were gathered from 42 women involved in adventure pursuits. Qualitative analysis revealed that while the women experienced varying sources of constraint similar to findings in previous leisure research, they could also successfully negotiate these constraints by restructuring their adventure experience or by reinforcing their commitment to adventure as a life priority. The findings are discussed in terms of negotiation theory, focusing on the women's resistance to constraining factors. The findings challenge previous deterministic assumptions of the restricting impact of constraints and reinforce more recent analyses that acknowledge women's ability to take some measure of control for their own leisure.

KEYWORDS: *Adventure recreation, constraints negotiation, women, resistance*

Introduction

Constraints on women's access to leisure have been well documented over the last fifteen years. Both sociological and social psychological perspectives have demonstrated that despite differences in age, social class and region, Western women experience common constraints to leisure. Among the first to be recognized were structural factors including family life course stages, financial resources, weather factors and work time (Crawford & Godbey, 1987). Intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints have also been identified as inhibitors of leisure activity participation (Crawford & Godbey, 1987). Intrapersonal constraints include stress, anxiety, socialization, perceived self-skill, family attitudes and personal evaluations of the appropriateness of an activity. Interpersonal constraints revolve around the effects of our relationships with others such as the ability to find partners, the influence of family obligations or time availability (Crawford & Godbey, 1987).

While these constraining factors have assisted our understanding of leisure participation, further refinement has been achieved through specific studies of social sub-groups. When applied specifically to women and girls for example, constraints have been identified to include not only those categories identified above, but also limitations of low self-esteem (Raymore,

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Godbey, & Crawford, 1994), and a lack of skill or belief by women that they are sufficiently talented or competent in recreational activities (Bolla, Dawson, & Harrington, 1993). Structural factors have also been found to include such aspects as the double shift of paid work and home duties, responsibility for child care (Bialeschki & Michener, 1994; Green, Hebron, & Woodward, 1989; Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw, & Freysinger, 1989), and an "ethic of care" for other people in their lives (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1991; Gilligan, 1982; Sharpe, 1984). While this list is not exhaustive, it serves to highlight that women are often highly and uniquely constrained in their leisure.

In seeking to understand and explain these influences, it has been suggested that Western women have been constrained by being women in capitalist patriarchy's (see Dempsey, 1989; Green, Hebron, & Woodward, 1990; McRobbie, 1978; Scraton, 1995; Wearing, 1998). Constrained by dominant institutions and structures in society, which reinforce the status quo and the power of particular social groups, it has been found that leisure access and resources are not freely available. Rather class, race, ability/disability and gender inequalities for example, are reinforced through leisure space and organization (Clarke & Critcher, 1985; Coalter & Parry, 1982; Scraton, 1995). In the case of women, inequalities manifest as structural, interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints as women are influenced by social expectations of motherhood and femininity, by financial limitations based on male dependence and/or lower wages, and by trivialization of women in activities such as sport and leisure (Bryson, 1987; Green & Woodward, 1990; Hall, 1985; Scraton, 1995).

These varying sources of constraints have been reported and measured throughout the literature on constraint research. Hierarchical models of constraint have been proposed to explain how people encounter constraints to achieving leisure goals (Crawford, Jackson, & Godbey, 1991; Raymore, Godbey, Crawford, & von Eye, 1993). This approach was subsequently extended to incorporate how people negotiate existing constraints (e.g. Henderson & Bialeschki, 1993). This phase of research development led to a progression away from viewing constraints as absolute barriers, toward a conceptualization recognizing a range of negotiation strategies and a range of interactions with constraints. The resultant mind-shift has raised hopes for a more realistic understanding of people's leisure behaviours (Henderson, Bedini, Hecht, & Schuler, 1995; Jackson & Rucks, 1995; Samdahl & Jekubovich, 1997).

With such developments our understanding of the role of constraints on people's participation in leisure is widening. Recent studies of leisure constraint negotiation reveal people's abilities to use various processes to manage constraints they encounter in their leisure. These processes are based not only on the immediate constraint (Crawford et. al., 1991; Henderson & Bialeschki, 1993; Jackson, 1990; Jackson, Crawford, & Godbey, 1993), but also on antecedent contexts and an individual's stage in the life course (Iso-Ahola, 1986; Krumboltz, 1984).

The view of constraints as "negotiable" that emerged in the early 1990's, extended the discussion of constraints to include not only the nature of

constraints and how they limit participation, but how people's leisure is incorporated into their everyday lives (Henderson & Bialeschki, 1993; Little, 2000; Samdahl, 1992; Samdahl & Jekubovich, 1997). The study presented here continues to support the view of constraints as negotiable by explicitly researching women who have continued to experience adventure recreation despite constraints. Unlike early findings that tended to be anecdotal and implied, emerging *ex post facto* from studies of other issues, the current findings emerged from a qualitative study of the negotiation process itself and indicate the power women have to restructure limiting circumstances to create positive results.

Background

Adventure recreation is a specific form of leisure that tends to be physically and intellectually challenging and predominantly accessed in natural environments. Traditionally it has been perceived to be a male dominated arena requiring "masculine" qualities of strength and risk-taking, and as a result, constraints for women in outdoor adventure can be multiple and correlate with the range of constraint categories previously identified.

For example, in Western culture girls and women have tended to be socialized to certain culturally acceptable roles such as homemaker and are expected to take most responsibility for childcare (Mitten, 1985; Summers, 1994). It has been suggested that this social conditioning may explain women's traditional patterns of self-doubt in outdoor pursuits. Here, they have tended to display a general lack of confidence in their ability to cope physically and emotionally, to develop new skills or to believe in their existing abilities (Dawes, 1984; Galpin, 1987; Green, 1987; Humberstone & Lynch, 1991). With outdoor adventure identified as including activities that incorporate challenge and risk in pursuits with an unknown outcome (Ewert & Hollenhorst, 1989), this lack of confidence and social conditioning may be particularly limiting.

In a similar vein, Nisbet (1988) identified that women may feel role conflict as they struggle to fulfill their socialization to be caring, nurturing and compassionate, while also seeing a need to be aggressive, self-reliant and risk taking when pursuing outdoor activities. Warren (1996), also noted that the outdoors are not automatically an egalitarian environment and women can struggle to find the outdoors accessible (financially, socially or personally), welcoming or matched to their learning preference.

Increasingly though, it has also been recognized that women do participate in adventure recreation (Bialeschki, 1992; Henderson, 1992); and that they can competently and successfully participate in outdoor adventure recreations (Little, 2000). Women-only programs and those that focus on the specific needs of individuals, have been found to offer women successful opportunities for engagement in outdoor challenges (Culp, 1998; Mitten, 1996; Rohde, 1996). In addition, women independently access adventure recreation (McIntyre, Burden & Kiewa, 1993), despite the existence of constraints (Little, 2000).

The Power of Resistance

Feminist research has questioned the diversity of responses women exhibit to leisure participation. While constraints have been seen as barriers to participation and as factors which influence individual's participation (Jackson & Scott, 1999), they have also been identified as part of women's resistance against institutionalized power (Freysinger & Flannery, 1992; Shaw, 1994; Wearing, 1990). As indicated through the compilation of constraint literature identified in previous research, there are clear patterns of women's lack of power in leisure and adventure recreation. Social practices that limit women's access, organizational power and individual relations all indicate that some individuals in society have greater political, financial, social and emotional power, while others are encouraged to be subordinate. Theories of power focus on domination of one or more individuals by other/s, but the nature of that power has diverse sources. The structure of power may stem from cultural interests in capitalist societies which advantage individuals who control productive processes (Connell, 1987). Others suggest that the basis of power is gender related with male/female power relationships heavily in favor of men (Irigaray, 1985; Kuhn, 1978), while some suggest power resides with an individual's ability to accumulate resources and thus is not necessarily attributable to gender relationships (Rossi, 1972).

Whichever theory is most relevant is not the issue. What is important is that external "powers" have varying effects on individuals and the results of this study suggest that women do have an ability to exert personal power in their daily lives. Though personal actions may not be easy to enact, they do allow women to exercise power, though such individual power may do little to redress macro imbalances in society (Talbot, 1988; Wearing, 1996).

While adventure recreation has traditionally been seen to be a male arena there are women of diverse backgrounds and circumstance who do participate actively in adventure pursuits. Women with partners and with children; women in full time employment; older women; those with multiple commitments to volunteer organizations, churches or sporting clubs; single women and physically challenged women all participate in adventure recreation. By exploring how these women maintain their involvement and understanding the processes and beliefs this group of women bring to their continuing experiences and perceptions of adventure recreation, it is anticipated that outdoor educators and facilitators will be in a better position to offer viable options for women. In addition such an understanding should provide us with knowledge of successful strategies other women may wish to implement to create the space for their adventure opportunities.

Methodology

To study women's leisure participation within an adventure context, qualitative data were collected on the women's constraints, adventure pursuits and negotiation techniques. To achieve this, an interpretive grounded approach to theory was deemed appropriate (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The

aim was to understand and examine the meanings of women's experiences in adventure and how these meanings related to their current adventure behaviour.

The research is based in the belief that respondents are central to the study and their reality is best described through their own words. This emphasis on the women's "lived experience" (Ellis & Bochner, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994) allows the researcher to locate the meanings women give to events, processes and structures of adventure in their lives. In this way the researcher can uncover through the individual's own words, their definitions of a situation from within the context (Schwartz & Jacobs, 1979) and explore the women's unfolding definitions of themselves and their social situations (Deutscher, 1973).

The Sample

The respondents were 42 women who had participated in adventure recreation at some stages in their adult lives. Although there was not an equal representation for all age groupings, the participants did represent most phases of adult life and ranged in age from 30 to 86 (30-39, $n = 10$; 40-49, $n = 12$; 50-59, $n = 12$; 60-86, $n = 8$). They participated in a range of adventure leisure pursuits such as rock climbing, kayaking, sailing, skiing, flying and cycling. While the majority of the women lived in Australia, 2 were raised in New Zealand, 2 in the United Kingdom, 2 were from the Netherlands, 1 from Germany and 4 were raised on the North American continent. The length of time they had participated in adventure activities varied, with some women introduced to outdoor adventure opportunities only once their children had left home, while others had begun as children.

The basic demographics of the women differed in a number of ways. Though the women tended to be highly educated, 12 of the women had only high school or partial high school education, and many had experienced periods of financial strain. Fourteen of the women were married, 10 were single, 10 were divorced, 8 had live-in partners and 3 were widows. Heterosexual and homosexual relationships were apparent. Twenty-six of the women had children and 8 had dependent children still living at home. Nine of the women were retired, though 5 of these continued to work as guest speakers, writers or leaders in their field. One woman was unemployed, 2 listed home duties as their occupation and 30 were working at least part time.

Purposive sampling methods were used to increase the range of data exposed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Different cases were therefore identified in a search for a broad perspective of women's experiences but it must be pointed out that no women of Asian or indigenous backgrounds were found.

Data Collection

In-depth interviewing and six-month diaries were used to study the processes and choices of the women's adventure lives, both from the perspective

of memory and recall, and as they unfolded in the context of the women's current lives. In these ways an overview of the past was revealed and a contemporary picture of current experience also emerged.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the women at a location of their choice and varied from 1½ to 4 hours in length. The interviews followed an exploratory schedule accommodating the women's preparedness to answer and following their path of description (refer to Table One). The set questions acted as prompts for the researcher and were adapted to suit the respondents state of readiness (Minichello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1995; Neuman, 1991; Stainback & Stainback, 1988).

Following the interview, the data were transcribed and interpreted by the researcher for meaning. This analysis was then given back to the women to check for personal validity. At this time a reminder was also sent to the women to encourage maintenance of their adventure journal. These were maintained for up to six months with the women focusing on reporting their personal experiences of current adventure opportunities—actual adventure activities, missed adventures, frequencies, locations, motivations and companions.

TABLE 1
Sample In-Depth Interview Questions

Participation

What adventure activities do you participate in now?
How often do you participate in these?
What adventure activities have you done in the past?
If you are no longer pursuing adventure recreation, what factors influenced you to stop?

Choices

Why do/did you want to do these types of activities?
How did you get started?
Why do you continue –motivations?
What structures are in place in your life which allow continuation?

Priority

You are a busy person (mother, employee, own business, carer . . .), how do these factors
    influence your adventure?
If other factors do limit participation: Do you mind? Do you have any regrets about the
    circumstances of your (lack of) participation?
For women content with choices: If adventure recreation did provide stated benefits and
    value, why were you happy to tone down or opt out?
If not content: What prevents you from overcoming these limitations?

Negotiation

Have your priorities changed over time? How? Why?
Has your participation/choice of activities changed?
Are you satisfied with the amount/intensity of your participation?

Data Analysis

As interviews and journals were received the data were transcribed and combined to create meaningful blocks of information to begin to identify relationships. A developing process of coding was used to tag these units of meaning and to identify and organize recurring themes and sub-themes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss, 1987).

Progressive coding occurred throughout data gathering and analysis. As each source of data was received it was coded and continually compared, both for consistency within the source and with other respondent's data. In this way codings were clustered into smaller, more meaningful units where common themes and discrepancies could be identified.

To reduce the likelihood of reaching erroneous conclusions or being researcher-biased, critical friends were used to extend data reduction, analysis and interpretation beyond one-person research. This included cross-coder checking and reliability analysis, discussion with respondents and critical friends, and the process of constant comparison to search for conflicts, multiple meanings and new categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Results

The constraints identified in the research reflect core commonalities with previous findings. Subsequently, the following results section is divided into two parts. The first highlights key constraints specifically influencing women in adventure recreation. Using this as a context base, the second part focuses on an examination of how women negotiate adventure recreation participation.

Constraints

The constraints identified by the women fall into four inter-related categories, however the first, socio-cultural, provides an umbrella under which the other constraints are experienced. Analysis of the data revealed that the women experienced constraints relating to their commitments, their perception of self and the "technical" nature of adventure, but that these factors did not wholly exist separate from the socio-cultural context. Instead there was an integration of self and context identified through the women's comments that reflected the cumulative nature of their constraints.

Socio-cultural.   This over-riding category was based on the observation that the social and cultural context of adventure activities and individuals' life situations influenced participation. Influenced by gendered role expectations, women's opportunities, knowledge and experiences of outdoor adventures were restricted. The expectation to offer care and support to significant others, and a focus on the overriding value of the work ethic, limited women's access. As one 50-year-old woman noted, restrictions for her participation stemmed from beliefs that women were caregivers and dependents:

"I was from a migrant family. Boys were always the important ones and we were raised to know that and to look after them. That was our responsibility."

Similarly, the social contexts of adventure recreation were occasionally found to be restricting. Traditional male dominated activities reinforced stereotypical attitudes of the inability of females to cope with the activity. A 71-year-old who took up gliding in her 50's found the instructors were *"very anti-female. If he's male and you're female (particularly if you're 54), he doesn't think you are ready."*

In addition, the social era in which the women matured was also found to be influential. Those who were raised during the Depression of the 1930s or World War Two particularly expressed the impacts of gendered role expectations. Similarly, the suburban focus of Western society that predominated in the 1940s and 1950s reinforced these influences. Raised to be wives and mothers, the women's expectations focused on the needs of their children, husbands and homes with little knowledge of outside opportunities. As expressed by a 66-year-old woman discussing her lack of freedom and the inappropriateness of outdoor adventure activities: *"The women of my generation were rather inhibited in any activities like that. It wasn't accepted that you could do it, it wasn't favorable anyway. There was no opportunity because it was part of the good wife and mother generation."*

The Family and Other Commitments. Strongly linked to socio-cultural constraints are the roles and responsibilities women experience throughout the life course. Responsibilities to the home, to their partner, children, friends, work, parents or study influenced the time, energy and ability women had to pursue outdoor adventure. As one 72 year old commented: *"I was a wife and mother. I raised 4 children and helped my husband build our home. I hadn't even thought about doing these activities or know they existed."*

The role of being a mother influenced the women's participation, but so did their commitment or relationship with their partner. While many perceived they were married to supportive husbands, others were restricted by the role of wife: *"It wasn't having a child and being a mother so much as being a good wife and mother. And when your husband didn't want you to do something you didn't do it"* (G, 66)[1]. Commitments to others also included women's sense of responsibility for supporting and comforting loved ones, including aging or ill parents. As a 44 year old explained: *"I was left with a mother when my father walked out of a 37 year old marriage and I ended up with the parent role for a period of time, caring for her constantly."*

Study was also seen to limit women's time, energy and finances for adventure. A mature age student indicated: *"The first year (of university) was very demanding for me and I had very little free time for leisure of any sort."* Commitments to employment and professional development were also seen to reduce the time the women had available, and also often limited their interest

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[1]Participant identifier: alpha letter represents name, number is indicative of age at time of the interview.

if the adventure required organization of equipment or companions. A 40-year-old summed up the demands, stating: *" I need to get more skills to do my job better. So there's time involved in that as well . . . sometimes I just can't be bothered with adventures."* Another with responsibilities for others felt her work demanded enough of her *"time and tact".* If she was going to do adventures they *"had to be easy, with not much preparation from my end"* (J, 37).

Self. The women explained personal constraints that tend to exist because of cultural notions of gender and adventure. A number of women were constrained by private concerns such as self-doubt, fear, guilt and their perception of adventure. Some of the women noted that a lack of experience or too much experience led to fears, which limited their participation, while others struggled with their perceptions of what outdoor adventure meant and who they perceived could participate in those types of activities. As one rock climber said, *"I'm not into mountaineering. I've seen those pictures in magazines and the news. I'd die of exposure up there. I don't mind trekking and going over the high peaks . . . but I don't think I could get to the top of a mountain. They're all rugged types"* (M, 39). Another clearly reinforced a perception of high-risk adventure as masculine and irrelevant to self when she identified some activities as unrealistic: *"I think of things like mountaineering as things that you only do if you're a seasoned adventurer. . . . You have to prove yourself over year and years of doing other things before you get to that stage. When I think of people doing that sort of thing I instantly isolate them from me"* (D, 48).

Guilt was expressed by many of the women based on their sense of commitment to others. Guilt was expressed by mothers for leaving their children and going on adventures: *"I have felt guilty about going and leaving him at home"* (PA, 43); and for wives for leaving their husbands, *"At times I do feel greedy. I feel guilty and greedy as I'm the one doing and going and enjoying myself while he doesn't do much"* (G, 56). One woman with no familial ties found her commitment to friends could create a sense of guilt if her priorities to adventure eliminated them from her life: *"Working full-time I just really find it hard to balance time with your friends. I feel guilty when I don't spend time with my friends, so sometimes the adventures have to stop and I give them something"* (M, 48).

Physical issues of personal ability were also evident limiters. Low levels of fitness, injury and poor health periodically restricted women's participation as they endeavored to meet the outdoor adventure challenge. As one woman noted, physical limitations combined with lack of support by others were a contributing factor to her lack of confidence and subsequent lack of participation: *"My body is aging . . . I've had health problems. And I've had a relationship with a husband which is damaging to self-esteem and both those things put doubt in your mind"* (G, 66).

Technical. Less obviously related, but still linked to socio-cultural issues, this category of constraint stemmed from the technical nature and structure of adventure recreation. Generally reliant on companions, open to the influence of natural elements and often incorporating or enhanced by specific equipment, adventure recreation can be expensive, remote and skills based.

As one woman clearly noted: *"Gear is very expensive. If you're going to do it properly as in you are going to carry your gear you have to have extra lightweight gear"* (Li, 44). These issues were particularly highlighted by smaller women, but were also a factor for women with injuries. Interestingly, all women noted the "gear" focus of adventure as an issue they had to negotiate. An active proponent of outdoor adventure for women stated: *"What I've found throughout my life is that all the equipment is so very heavy and so bloody hard to manage . . . the paddles were too heavy, the equipment too hard"* (G, 51).

The financial costs of outdoor adventure were also found to be prohibitive, with 26 of the women at some time mentioning the limits of time and money. Even when referring to walking in natural areas, there was evidence of substantial costs: *"You need a car to get there and you need a pair of shoes. So you still need a certain amount of money. The biggest constraint all the way is money"* (J, 42).

The similarity of these constraints to previous studies is obvious. Individual circumstances, interpersonal issues, considerations of companions and expectations all played a role in limiting the women's ready access to adventure recreation. In addition, cumulative constraints were evident in the data. Socialization and perceptions influenced women's access as did basic access issues such as equipment, money and companions. How women negotiated these constraints in the context of their lives however, offers insight into the inter-related nature of leisure and adventure participation and how women can claim power over circumstance.

Negotiating Women

While a broad pool of constraints were identified as part of the women's experiences of participating in adventure recreation, this group of women also managed to negotiate those constraints. The strategies identified for maintaining, continuing or creating participation in adventure recreation stemmed from the women's resources, perspectives and interpretations of constraints, and their motivations and opportunities for participation. Analysis of the women's comments showed that their individual biographies and the historical and social patterns of their lives linked with discrete constraints to define their actions.

A number of key techniques for negotiating participation were evident through the women's stories. These are described below.

Prioritize. Many of the women considered participation in adventure as an important aspect of their lives for which they would always make space: *"Adventure is our life"* (J, 53). For other women prioritization of adventure activities emerged when they experienced changes that led them to consider themselves as a priority. These changes included change in relationship status, children leaving home, retirement, and illness or injury. One woman who took up adventure recreation only after her children left home and she had been diagnosed with cancer pointed out: *"I know now I can be important and it's time to focus on me. These types of activities are important for me"* (E, 71).

Prioritization occurred not only through personal recognition, but also in very practical ways. The women managed their time more effectively, cut down on work hours and domestic chores, made the time for learning new skills and training for participation. One avid windsurfer and remote trekker reduced her need to do domestic chores by establishing practices that reduced their necessity" *"We intentionally have a small home, everything has its place and we touch things once. Why do things twice when you can deal with it first time?"* (D, 52). Another who suffered from a serious injury set specific goals for recovery that allowed her faster access to her outdoor adventures. In efforts to rebuild her mind and body she started recovery by rebuilding her health as soon as she could: *"When I couldn't get out of the house I would watch those series on television and I'd be standing even with my crutches doing the exercises in front of the television. All so I could get out and about much quicker"* (B, 71).

Prioritization can also be seen in some women's ability to clearly outline their personal importance: *"I finally decided I was important enough and recognized the benefits for me from these types of activities. That's when ways to find time, to find a way, to make something for me, became a priority"* (R, 45).

Compromise. The women had an ability to adjust existing activities and seek alternative methods of adventure that allowed them to adapt to changing circumstances. Through adjustment, the women altered the intensity or frequency of adventure recreation to permit a continuing connection. This was done by managing their time and resources and/or accommodating domestic and professional demands by extending, shortening or intensifying the time they devoted to adventure participation. Women with children noted, *"We did similar activities, but easier. You go shorter distances, you carry the kids initially"* (J, 53). *"Even with children we used to do day trips"* (S, 54). Similarly a lack of equipment and money was managed by altering the challenge: *"So I went out and tried another way and it worked. There's always a way. Money is not a criteria"* (G, 51); or by altering the intensity of the activity: *"You tailor what you are able to do within the finances that you have available"* (D, 63).

Compromise was also seen through the women's ability to adopt alternate activities in order to negotiate constraints. Though many of the women had a predominant outdoor adventure activity, they all displayed evidence of replacing their pursuits, either with other outdoor adventure recreations (e.g. surfing to white water kayaking) or new challenges they created or accepted in their lives: *"We moved so I no longer had the opportunity to explore the moors and wander off into the mountains. So I took up sailing and paddling. There was water you see and these became new adventures"* (C, 60).

A number of the women took up expedition planning or club organization when they could no longer participate in major adventures. To maintain contact with their adventure and to encourage others to find similar benefits, they found purpose and satisfaction through coordinating others adventure. One woman who suffered a spinal injury commented, *"I am in the middle of planning a climbing expedition to the Himalayas . . . and tonight we will make the slide presentation to potential participants. This is an exciting milestone to reach after all the planning, negotiations and correspondence"* (D, 55).

Creative Adventure.   Another form of compromise through finding alternate activities could be seen in the women's responses to changed circumstances. Here, rather than substituting one form of physical adventure with another, all of the women at some stage reconstructed their definition of adventure to incorporate less physically or environmentally reliant leisure. For them, adventure could incorporate not only the outdoor activities so often identified as adventure pursuits (e.g., rock climbing, kayaking, white water rafting, mountaineering; Attarian, 1991; Ewert & Hollenhorst, 1989), but also included the challenge and risk to be found in other environs. As one woman who suffered debilitating injuries for a time commented, *"I dearly missed it [adventure activities] and I tried everything I could to compensate for that. So I got involved in the arts and there is real, but different adventure there for a time"* (R, 51). Their broader perspective of "adventure" allowed the women to find it in more geographically accessible sites (e.g., the home), in less physically demanding activities (e.g., building a garden) and through their current life circumstances (e.g., as a mother).

For the mothers, adventure was often found in the challenge of encouraging their children in the outdoors and sharing in their learning and growth: *"It is an adventure. It's great seeing the young develop into what you would like them to be. They [my children] all became climbers and mountaineers and bushwalkers"* (D, 83). Others extended this interpretation and included creative learning as new adventures that substituted for outdoor adventure when need required: *"My adventures include building the house [mud brick], raising children, illustrating the book, learning the violin, expanding my mind and extending its limits. It is life—you create your own adventures and opportunities"* (R, 51).

Anticipate.   While it was necessary for some women to leave outdoor adventure for a period of time, those committed to the benefits they received from involvement expressed anticipation as they waited for the chance to return to their adventures of old. Rather than regret the lack of opportunity (though some did), many of the women perceived their reduced participation as a temporary state. As a result they used the time while not participating to plan for future adventures thereby maintaining an emotional connection with their experiences of the past and expecting positive outcomes in the future. One of the younger women with a demanding job expressed this idea clearly: *"In some ways having six months off next year is my compensation for having worked five days a week for the last four years without a break. I've said to myself that something I would like to do is a long cycle trek. And I've got a number of things like that in my mind . . . So I guess I have got this list of things in my mind that I would like to do and I'm working towards them"* (P, 36).

Though the women had different issues impacting on their limited adventure opportunities, their responses were often similar. A mother anticipated the freedoms of the empty nest: *"I'm 45 now and she's leaving home in a month's time and so life's really just starting in a way. It's a great feeling"* (R, 45). Another was waiting for her child to be old enough to accompany her. A rock climber who dreamed of mountaineering said she was, *"tempted once my son's older to go and do that just for the experience"* (A, 42).

Women in business and with fewer familial commitments identified similar negotiation techniques. By establishing plans and working toward a future of fitting adventure into their lives, the women anticipated adventure while still pursuing their working dreams. As explained by a full time working woman who was currently finding it difficult to access the adventure recreation she would desire: *"I have tried to lift a few businesses and consultancies whereby I could do the adventure I wanted to do and have a lifestyle and make my vacation my vocation. But they haven't worked yet. . . . I will do my current work until I can put other things in motion. And so eventually I will hopefully return to a lifestyle that is more suited to my personality and needs"* (G, 38).

Discussion

A Model of Adventure Negotiation

The identification of the women's adventure experiences and responses led to the development of a figure to diagram the inter-relationship of women's negotiation patterns. The figure reflects the diverse role constraints can play in women's negotiation process, which at times can lead to actions reinforcing their continued or minimally changing participation in traditional adventure, or to a restructuring of adventure in some other form.

Once the women recognized that they had an ability and desire to participate in adventure recreation, their methods of negotiation were not static. Just as the women did not maintain a consistent practice of participation in one activity, place or time, their processes of negotiation varied. Two pathways of participation were evident in their continuing management of adventure participation. As illustrated in Figure 1, women can reinforce traditional forms of adventure recreation or restructure activities to fulfill their adventure requirements and motivations. Illustrated by inter-linking cycles, the women displayed options of reinforcing outdoor physical adventure recreation or restructuring their leisure to incorporate other creative adventure activities. The joint link at the point of negotiation indicates fluidity, as women are capable of negotiating through the implementation of either cycle.

While there were times when the women did not continue with their outdoor adventure recreation, many of the women found satisfaction and adventurous expression through prioritizing their adventure recreation activity to allow for unchanged participation. Other negotiation strategies included compromising by altering the intensity of the pursuit, or substituting an alternative outdoor adventure activity to maintain a continuity of physical involvement. Such options are modeled in the top cycle of negotiation (Figure 1).

The women also displayed an ability to adopt strategies of finding adventure in different activities. Illustrated by the second cycle, these women continued to seek similar perceived benefits of challenge, newness and learning but restructured the activities to include creative, administrative, social and environmental pursuits often accessed from the home. Examples of
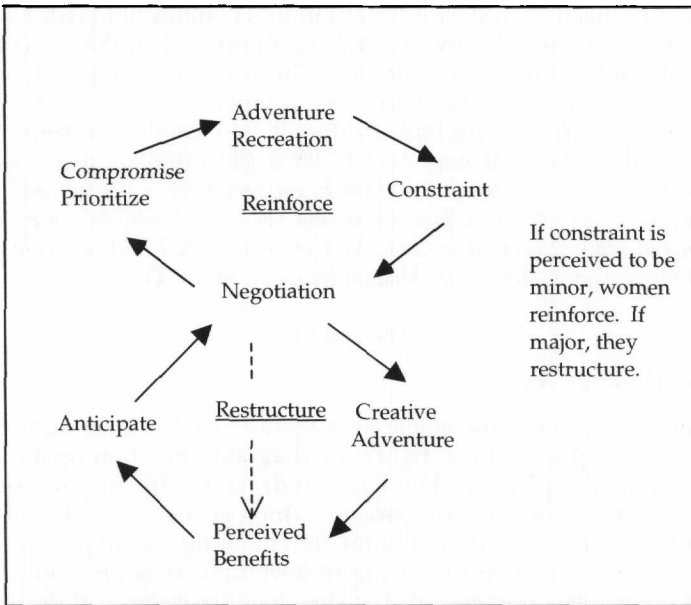
Figure 1: Reinforce or Restructure Adventure

these include women who took up expedition coordination, built mud brick homes or found new adventures in raising their children and introducing them to adventure. Finding similar benefits in these activities through the challenge of matching their "personal competence" to an "uncertainty", they maintained a sense of adventure while also anticipating the opportunity to re-enter more traditionally defined outdoor adventure recreations.

Evidence of the women's ability to negotiate and shift between the two cycles can be seen in one woman's experiences of adventure recreation. Following the top cycle of negotiation R (51) continued her active and frequent participation throughout university and the early years of her marriage: *"No I didn't let things stop me. My husband and I did many extended trips in California and around the Seattle region. We went up to Alaska, chartered a plane to drop us onto a frozen lake, then walked out. There was so much energy from that area and the experience."*

With the birth of her children, the time she had available for personal adventure activities was reduced and her priorities shifted. Still determined to maintain contact with nature, she found adventure in the new experience of raising her children, simultaneously gaining satisfaction from her role as mother and guide, and adjusting her outdoor adventure activities to include her offspring: *"I guess then I started having children which constrained what we could do, but it was a new adventure. We still went walking and canoeing because you can do those things with children."* In these ways R (51) entered the second cycle of negotiation while continuing an adjusted form of outdoor adventure.

As her children became independent, R (51) anticipated a return to her original physical adventure activities, preparing to re-enter the first cycle: *"Now the children are growing up I can get back to my more vigorous, longer type adventure."*

Life events such as the changes noted above provided boundaries within which the women negotiated. However, it must be pointed out that for these women life event changes such as children, marriage and the influence of work were not impenetrable barriers to participation. They were however influences on women's abilities and willingness to negotiate. For a number of women the loss of a companion was a liberating force as newfound independence led them to seek adventure. For others the birth of children created new perspectives of adventure as joy was gained through sharing the beauties and challenges of the outdoors and acting as a role model for their children.

Depending on the circumstances, the women displayed a willingness to reduce participation, adjust involvement, anticipate change and accept new challenges. These forms of negotiation have been identified in studies of women in the family (Bialeschki & Michener, 1994; Richards in Pritchard Hughes, 1994), in the workforce (Branner & Moss, 1991; Hessing, 1993; Poole & Langan-Fox, 1990) and childless couples (Marshall, 1993). Each study has found that women do negotiate to evade or challenge potentially constraining circumstances and perceptions. For the current study of women adventurers, it was also found that the constraining circumstances were not solely defining. Rather, negotiation was dependent on the women's resources, current priorities and the mix of life circumstances impacting on choice and action.

While some of the restructuring women adopted could be seen to be additional chores (children, home) or examples of women servicing others' needs by accommodating and facilitating their adventure (children), these women perceived their commitments as adventures and themselves as role models. As a result, new situations were constructed as challenges, and constraints were structured as adventures as women negotiated acceptable justifications for their actions through their positive attitudes. Rather than be disgruntled with change, the women did what they could with the resources they had available and the knowledge at their disposal. In effect the women extended some control over their lives—the expected and unexpected, the social roles and the emerging opportunities. Instead of accepting the constraints of injury or social expectations, they showed an ability to recognize alternative options, which corresponded to their developing construct of adventure, thereby finding new sources of satisfaction.

Women as Active Agents—Negotiation and Resistance

Although women are seen to be constrained in their leisure by structures such as patriarchal domination, gender stereotyping, domestic work and childcare, they are also capable of exercising some control over their lives. As is evident in women's negotiations to access adventure recreation, indi-

viduals do have a freedom and power to follow their own will even though they may be influenced by social structures, which shape people's thoughts, feelings and actions (Rojek, 1989).

Such a post-structuralist approach recognizes that duality does not exist between structure and agency, but that individuals may move between the two parameters in creating their lives. Given that the breadth of constraints and participation identified incorporate intrapersonal and structural reasons it would seem apparent that people's actions and notions of self can be both independent and conditional.

The study of negotiation reveals there is a comprehensive and complex range of elements impacting on negotiation choices and perspectives. What the results of the study have supported however, is that women can and do negotiate personally satisfying constructions of adventure recreation, which provide a continuation of their life story. Through the act of negotiating individual abilities and perceptions, their changing circumstances and social times, the women can be seen to be resisting dynamic contexts of life that may limit their opportunities.

The intent behind this resistance varies. Conscious, active resistance was evident from some of the women. A 38-year-old limited by injury to her body, sought with determination to resist its debilitating nature and her own self-pity: *"I'm having to rebuild, to accept and find other opportunities"* (G, 38). For others there was a determined effort to resist the role of wife and mother, to live their own lives and control their adventure: *"I came back from trying new adventures all fired up with enthusiasm only to be told by my husband that it couldn't be done . . . I made the life changing decision to leave my husband and try to find myself"* (D, 48). For these women there was a resistance to constraining situations and times in their lives.

Rather than be passively accepting or even acknowledge constraints the women were active, creative participants constructing personally satisfying environments and life stories. Though their resistance and negotiation may have fluctuated as life situations changed, they effectively fought dominant stereotypes that may restrict their freedom. Not all negotiations were uniform and nor were they all followed through if the costs were perceived as too great. As Fiske (1989) found, resistance does not have to constitute rebellion but may be as simple as "making do with what they have" (p. 35).

What is reality is always difficult to know. Were the women just making do and brightening their life stories by feigning satisfaction? Were they entirely proactive, seeking to overcome limiting influences that restrained their actions? In reality the truth probably lies somewhere in between. Eyles (1989) and Clarke and Critcher (1985) noted that people make their own lives and create their own leisure, but the circumstances in which the choices are made may not be of their choosing. For the women of this study, a positive and active approach to adventure was presented but they still operated within a set of constraints and opportunities. What they emphasized was their power to act and react, to control and manipulate influences in their lives: *"Throughout life, one faces situations involving factors beyond one's control. At such times one*

is tested, has personal doubts and uncertainties, and acute unhappiness. This is exactly when one's philosophy of life, the support of friends, good health and above all, the continuation of one's chosen activities (in my case bushwalking) give that opportunity to distil the problem, to put it in its true perspective and ultimately to resolve the issue" (D, 63).

Conclusion

Many of the circumstances that the women negotiated have traditionally been drawn as constraints and in the term's purest sense this is probably true. That which prevents or restricts a person's participation in an activity of choice can be labeled a constraint. However, this definition has been extended through academic discussion to incorporate not only what individuals or groups see as subjectively restrictive, but also what others view as a limitation from an objective perspective. As a result being a mother, taking responsibility for others or being small boned are defined as "constraints" rather than a stage of life, a choice, a desired option or a physical reality. I have no desire to caste doubt on the realities of these factors being constraints, but do wish to remind and suggest that not all things academically or socially deemed to be restrictive are necessarily perceived by the women themselves as negative in their lives. Rather constraints, leisure and adventure choices are part of the package of women's lives in general, not separate compartments of action. Only when constraints and women's opportunities and choices are viewed as part of the whole of their lives can we better understand the gamut of factors influencing their leisure choices and thereby offer realistic and desirable opportunities.

Often when we focus on constraints to participation, or consider people's participation from the perspective of how they have negotiated constraints, we are disconnecting people's lived experience and the totality of their choices. In many ways questions focused on active participants to determine what constrains their leisure or asking how people negotiate leisure constraints implies a disparity where none exists. People do participate; they create personal satisfaction with their leisure and do so in often unconscious ways. What we need to understand is the holistic expression of participant's leisure behaviours so that a decompartmentalized picture of leisure behaviour can be developed. Only then will strategies of access be able to be clearly defined and opportunities focused on the whole individual be devised.

As Kelly and Freysinger (2000) clearly summarize, a third generational understanding of leisure is needed that reflects leisure's inter-connected place in society. More specifically, it has been identified that individual's leisure will best be understood only when it is contextualized in the whole of life, not pictured as a separate entity, independent and measurable (Samdahl & Jekubovich, 1997). The worrying thing is that we continue to delimit people's lives and leisure in order to define them at a micro level. Perhaps what is core is to always recontextualize the detail back into the whole in order to understand the implications of our findings. Perhaps too we need

to stop underestimating individual's and group's abilities to act even in the face of constraining features.

As evidenced by the participants in this study, the constraints and contexts of women's adventure varied. Some women exerted a powerful and determined influence, taking control and reducing the salience of limitations. Other women accepted the influence of the constraint and context but renegotiated their interpretations and actions. In effect they showed that it is possible to flexibly adjust participative style and the construct of adventure in order to act within given limitations, or to move beyond limitations as they negotiate a personal adventure.

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