



**SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
STANDARD LEVEL
PAPER 1**

Tuesday 16 November 2010 (afternoon)

1 hour

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Read the passage carefully and then answer all the questions.

Texts in this examination paper have been edited: word additions or explanations are shown in square brackets []; substantive deletions of text are indicated by ellipses in square brackets [...]; minor changes are not indicated.

*Extract from “An Adventure Tourist Experience” by Maurice Kane and Hazel Tucker in **The Discipline of Leisure: Embodying Cultures of “Recreation”**, (eds) Simon Coleman and Tamara Kohn, Berghahn Publications: Oxford, pages 57–72, (2007).*

This passage examines how the participants on a white-water kayaking package tour negotiate the expectations, roles, images and narratives of this experience. There are several ways that kayakers record and share the narratives of their experiences; through diaries, storytelling and photographs.

Here is an extract from George’s kayaking diary:

“The water pushed the kayak over the steep drop as I was thrown to the left and was pinned onto a huge boulder. I was being pulled underwater by the current [...] I had never thought I’d drown kayaking. I could do nothing, and then I hit the tree. I had a burst of adrenaline, got a hold, reached along to the next broken branch, hoping I was going up out of the darkness, to air.
5 Having survived the near-death experience, all of a sudden I felt more alive than ever before.”

Kayakers like to sit around and talk about where they have been, scripting, telling and re-telling their tour stories, which river rapids they have kayaked and their near escapes from the “jaws of death”. Kayakers like to highlight the importance of experience stories that recount their adventures in prestigious kayaking destinations. These stories help them to gain “social capital”
10 with certain audiences. [...]

In an effort to impress his peers, another kayaker, Roberto recounted his experiences: “I shouldn’t have been there but I was excited by the danger! My guide book said that if I fell out of the kayak there I would probably drown. I was tossed out of the kayak again and again but I survived and swam back to my kayak each time.” Roberto was viewed as heroic for surviving
15 such a dangerous passage but also lacking in skill for falling out of his kayak. Among kayakers skill and not just heroic commitment is valued. [...]

Some kayakers participate in the even more dangerous sport of heli-kayaking where they are transported by helicopter to remote and otherwise inaccessible rapids. On one heli-kayaking trip on the West Coast of New Zealand, kayakers reviewed, selected and exchanged photos.
20 Images taken from the helicopter, or of participants arriving at the riverside by helicopter, were particularly desired as this confirmed their participation in the unique adventure of West Coast heli-kayaking. These images replicated those of the kayaking elite whose promotion of the West Coast had drawn the participants to this tour.

25 What the participants did not have, however, were on-the-water action images that were identical or even similar to the kayaking elite. Also, they had completed easier heli-kayaking rivers than those conquered by the kayaking elite. For the participants to gain “social capital” from their stories they had to focus on the novelty of their helicopter experience complete with verifying images. Participants understood they had not experienced extreme elite kayaking. Yet this tour experience gave them the freedom to create experience stories that could, dependent on 30 the audience, influence their “social capital”. This was only successful if their audiences accepted their stories as qualitatively different from “just a tourist story”.

The constraint on their storytelling was that the stories had to relate and adapt to each audience. Each participant had a specific status amongst the kayakers and their [...] social awareness and knowledge of kayaking was critical to their stories’ success. To gain “social capital”, the stories 35 had to demonstrate the valued qualities of their serious leisure, commitment, perseverance and gaining of skills, but they also needed to be believable in relation to their present status. [...]

The participants had more freedom in telling their tour stories to non-kayaking peers. These were stories of adventure tourism where heroism and thrill replaced tests of skills and perseverance. A non-kayaking audience lacked the knowledge and experience to confirm these stories of 40 thrill-seeking and risk-taking. [...] With this audience they could present reflections of the imagined reality of the kayaking elite.

1. Describe how kayakers record and communicate their experience stories. *[6 marks]*

2. Explain how the authors use “social capital” to understand why the kayakers change their experience stories for different audiences. *[6 marks]*

3. Compare and contrast how kayakers present themselves to their audiences with how another group presents itself to its audiences. *[8 marks]*