STUDENTS CARING FOR EACH OTHER

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The caring person is one who is genuinely other-regarding, who perceives and responds to the larger ecosystem in an empathic, nonprejudicial way. He or she acts in ways that will strengthen, both in themselves and in others, a developing capacity for the healthy expression of life.

(Fuller, R., 1992, p. 74)
Acknowledgements

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Declaration

The content of this thesis is original and the researcher has observed and practiced the ethics of research. The researcher has not knowingly plagiarise ideas or material, and the thesis has not been presented in another degree or at another institution for examination or credit.

John John Quay
Abstract

The major focus of this study is on the outdoor education subject as a learning context in which caring and community are educational achievements. The review of the literature is necessarily selective as the scope of the research touches upon the discipline areas of community, caring, moral development and education, friendship, outdoor education, experiential education and camping. The research is based upon a two step process within which both quantitative and qualitative methods are used. The first step in the process utilises phenomenological methods. The second step in the process uses the survey method.

The evidence amassed in this study supports the outdoor education context as more supportive of learning in the areas of community and caring than other classes at school. The research was carried out with Year 9 students at a coeducational school and identified twenty two different experiential components of caring. These experiential components were used to compare the outdoor education context to that of other classes at school in a questionnaire. Results of the questionnaire can be summarised in the following four statements:

- The level of caring for "close friends" is virtually the same in outdoor education and other classes.
- The level of caring for "other people" in outdoor education is significantly higher than caring for "other people" in other classes.
- The level of caring for "close friends" and the level of caring for "other people" are very similar in outdoor education
- The level of caring for "close friends" in other classes is significantly higher than the level of caring for "other people" in other classes.

What emerged from the investigations was a picture of outdoor education as a unique learning context in its ability to achieve positive outcomes for students in the areas of caring and community.
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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

We all want to be recognised as individuals and we all want to feel a part of a community. Abraham Maslow determined that our "wants" in these areas could be construed as basic human needs. He cites as basic the human need for belonging and love, and some of the trends in our Western society, specifically referring to the United States, which have led to an increased focus on this need.

I believe that the tremendous and rapid increase in T-groups [training groups] and other personal growth groups and intentional communities may in part be motivated by this unsatisfied hunger for contact, for intimacy, for belongingness and by the need to overcome the widespread feelings of alienation, aloneness, strangeness, and loneliness, which have been worsened by our mobility, by the breakdown of traditional groupings, the scattering of families, the generation gap, the steady urbanization and disappearance of village face-to-faceness, and the resulting shallowness of American friendship.

(Maslow, A., 1970, p. 44)

Maslow also cites as basic the human need for esteem. This need can be divided into two areas: intrinsically motivated esteem and extrinsically motivated esteem.

All people in our society (with a few pathological exceptions) have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, usually high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of
others. These needs may therefore be classified into two subsidiary sets. These are, first, the desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for mastery and competence, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom. Second, we have what we may call the desire for reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from other people), status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity of appreciation...

Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world.

(Maslow, A., 1970, p. 45)

The process of meeting our belonging needs is closely connected to the process of meeting our esteem needs, especially where these esteem needs are motivated extrinsically, by factors within the community. A tension can, however, exist between these two needs: how do I satisfy my need to belong in my community and my need to be recognized as an individual? We live with this tension everyday, and it takes on different meanings as we progress through the stages of life from childhood, through adolescence, to adulthood.

In the shifting balance between our attempts to achieve esteem as individuals and our endeavour to find meaning in our relationships within our community, contemporary society seems to support us achieving our need for achieving our individual esteem above our need for belonging in our community. The links between the two needs are often forgotten altogether. Maslow summarizes his thoughts on the effects of the trends of modern society on our need for belonging and love by stating,

In our society the thwarting of these needs is the most commonly found core in cases of maladjustment and more severe pathology.
Thomas Lickona makes a comment which is straight to the point, identifying this issue as one of great importance in our society.

One of the major moral problems of modern societies is the lack of a sense of community.

Attempts to redress this imbalance have involved our education system, amongst other avenues (Sergiovanni, T., 1994). Outdoor education, among the many subjects which exist in school curricula, provides an educational context which could possibly be relevant to this task. As Geoff Cooper states,

> It is clear from working with young people in the outdoors, in informal situations, that some fundamental needs are not being met by education in schools. There appears to be a need for community... There is little doubt that Outdoor Education can provide a powerful means of developing skills and qualities necessary for our future citizens.

(Cooper, G., 1994)

This thesis is concerned with addressing the following broad question:

*Is outdoor education the best context within the school for students to learn about community?*

This study is principally concerned with the outdoor education context as it can be applied to learning which improves human community. Other aspects of community, such as the environmental community (nature) and the
relationships between people and places, plants and animals, are not specifically within the scope of this study.

**Setting - The School, Year 9 and Outdoor Education**

The participants in this study are all students in Year 9 at the one school. The researcher is an outdoor education teacher at this school. The school is a relatively young, coeducational, Anglican, semi-rural school near Melbourne in Victoria, Australia, with a 1998 enrolment of approximately 1000 students from Preparatory to Year 12. The school could be categorised as a traditional, conservative, low fee paying, private school in Australia.

Outdoor education is taught as a subject at this school at Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. At Years 11 and 12 the outdoor education curriculum follows the State directed Victorian Certificate of Education curriculum for outdoor education. At Years 8, 9 and 10 the outdoor education curriculum is developed within the school with outdoor education teachers working together in an ongoing dialectic process to develop curriculum.

A decision was made to focus on the Year 9 level at schools when investigating the broad question outlined above because this Year level, within which students are approximately 14 to 15 years old, is often discussed as the Year level at which the influence of the peer group is beginning to become more important than the influence of parents. John Santrock, commenting on the research of Thomas Berndt (1979) supports this view of Year 9:

> By ninth grade, parent and peer influences were once again in strong opposition to each other, probably because the increased conformity
of adolescents to the social behaviour of peers is much stronger at this grade level than at any other. 

(Santrock, J., 1990, p. 250)

The Year 9 outdoor education curriculum has two key educational goals - for students to increase their understanding of:
1. the structure of caring;
2. the importance, to the community as a whole, of caring for other people.

These two educational goals are achieved via a range of educational strategies, all based around a five day field trip, or camp, experience. In outdoor education the class group of approximately 30 students is divided into two groups, each group operating as a separate entity during the camp. Each group completes a bushwalk/hike in a semi-remote area within a National Park. Further detail regarding the outdoor education curriculum at Year 9 is contained in Appendix 1.

Overview of Chapters

In Chapter 2 (Review of the Literature) a selective review of the vast literature in the areas of community, caring, outdoor education, camping, adventure education, experiential education, and classroom practice is presented. This review focuses on moving from an understanding of community, through to an understanding of caring and the relevance of the outdoor education context to learning in these areas. Gaps in the literature are identified.

Chapter 3 (Methodology) outlines the research questions to be investigated in this thesis. A detailed description is provided of both the qualitative and quantitative methods used and the reasons for selection of these methods.
Chapter 4 (Results) presents the results of the study.

Chapter 5 (Discussion) places the results of the study in the context of current and future practice in outdoor education and explores ideas for future research in the area.
CHAPTER 2 - REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature for this study was not exhaustive, but directed towards the areas of community, caring, and possible links with outdoor education. The aim was to search for and reveal any connections which exist between these areas, as represented in the literature, as well as to determine operational definitions for each. Also fundamental to this literature review was the identification of gaps in the reviewed literature which further research could hope to address.

This review of the literature followed a particular direction, best expressed via the broad question: "Is outdoor education the best area in the school for students to learn about community?". The review of the literature was a philosophical journey based on the assumption that the concept of community is an important variable in the educational outcomes of outdoor education (Quay, J., 1996).

Reviewing the Concept of Community

Our Need for Community

Human beings have a need for esteem and a need for belonging (Maslow, 1970). A number of philosophers, from areas as diverse as anthropology, theology and sociology have commented on human life as existing, on one plane, as a balance between these two fundamental human needs: humans have an existential need for community as well as an existential need to be recognised as individuals. Ernest Becker, a cultural anthropologist, identifies
this paradox, referring us to the "cosmic process" as representative of that larger purpose which we feel the need to identify with. He aligns this cosmic process with the concept of "nature", providing a metaphor for the community concept. Becker claims that the other side of the paradox is the urge to be unique and apart from this process.

On the one hand the creature is impelled by a powerful desire to identify with the cosmic process, to merge himself with the rest of nature. On the other hand he wants to be unique, to stand out as something different and apart... He wants to expand by merging with the powerful beyond that transcends him, yet he wants while merging with it to remain individual and aloof, working out his own private and smaller-scale expansion... Man thus has the absolute tension of the dualism.

(Becker, E., 1973, p. 151-155)

Becker juxtaposes the human need to find connection with the world around us with that of a need to feel unique in the world. These two human needs create a tension because by meeting one we are often detracting from meeting the other. A lifelong process seems to exist within which we are attempting to find a balance between the two needs to reduce this tension.

Robert Fuller, a theologian, emphasises that we need to meet both these needs, labeling them as "agency" and "mutuality". Agency is our need to be recognised as individual agents, in control of the environment; mutuality is our need for community. He focuses on a further notion: that this balance point between agency and mutuality will be shifting as we mature through our lives; and that some "give and take" between the two needs is required.
The important point in all of this is that our effort to understand the course of human development must be sensitive to the need for people to achieve both active mastery of the environment (agency) and to find themselves a part of a larger whole (mutuality). Various stages or moments throughout the course of life witness a preponderance of one of these psychological modalities over the other. Yet, on the whole, happiness and fulfillment require a certain reciprocity between the two.

(.Fuller, R., 1992, p. 35)

Contemporary literature is replete with claims that the balance between agency and mutuality, or individuality and community, is not supported at its optimal point by Western culture. Robert Bellah and his colleagues, writing as commentators on contemporary life in the United States, speak about the need for the experience of community, the expression of the notion of mutuality, without which individuality has little meaning.

The self-interest demanded by the individualistic pursuit of success needs to be balanced by voluntary concern for others. Without the joyful experience of support in such a community of concern, an individual would find it difficult to make the effort to be a success, and success achieved would likely turn to ashes. On the other hand, without some individually deserved success, an individual would have little voluntarily to contribute to his chosen community. It is of course, no easy task to strike a balance between the kind of self-interest implicit in the individualistic search for success and the kind of concern required to gain the joys of community and public involvement.

(Bellah, R., et al., 1996, p. 199)
Bellah and his colleagues endorse the notion that the metaphorical scales which help to determine the state of the balance between a fulfilling individual existence and a fulfilling existence within a community seem currently to be in a position of imbalance, weighted in favour of the individual, and to the detriment of a sense of mutualism and community. Further comments supporting this position come from Robert Nisbet.

Surely the outstanding characteristic of contemporary thought on man and society is the preoccupation with personal alienation and cultural disintegration.

(Nisbet, R., 1953, p. 3)

Nisbet introduces the term "alienation" into the discussion, which evokes thoughts of a community so poor in its manifestation that individuals have trouble connecting with each other. Schwartz is very clear in his view of the need for community in Western culture today. He cites the use of the term in an advertising sense, exploiting peoples' need to right the balance between individuality and community in their lives to attract customers and new employees.

This lack of a psychological sense of community, and a generalized, often unconscious quest for community, are pervasive characteristics of everyday life today. The word community has become ubiquitous. Highway billboards advertise new housing developments as "real communities". Retirement "communities" and nursing homes market to a desire to be a part of community life. Corporations cite the community feeling one will gain by coming to work for them. Titles of articles appear with ever-greater frequency on the covers of popular magazines... Yearning for community seems to have become a modern preoccupation.
If these comments from various authors on the perception of the balance between individuality and community can be accepted as a true and accurate representation of the state of this balance in people's lives in our Western culture today, then our need for community can be rightly stated as great. If this is so, how do we achieve an improvement in the state of this balance - shifting it towards community? Before this question is addressed, however, there is a necessity to more specifically define the concept of community so that further discussion is less ambiguous.

**Searching for a Definition of Community**

Two pathways towards a definition of the concept of community are revealed in the literature. The first is an attempt to deduce the parts or elements of the concept, hoping that this will reveal the essence. The second is an attempt, by the process of induction, to infer the larger more holistic meaning. Attempts at deduction have yielded a range of meanings which break the term into a number of component parts. Irwin Sanders (1975, p. 20-42) speaks of a range of different theoretical uses of the term: "The Community as a Place to Live", "The Community as a Spatial Unit", "The Community as a Way of Life", and "The Community as a Social System". Dennis Poplin follows the same path and refers to three main senses of the term community: a social unit, a condition of relationship, and a territorial unit.

At times it is used as a synonym for such units of social organisation as minority groups, subcultures, social institutions, political states, and so forth. Secondly, the term community has also been adopted by humanists to refer to the condition in which people enjoy meaningful relationship with other people. Finally, community has been used as a
generic term which encompasses those units of social and territorial organisation which, depending upon their size, may also be called hamlets, villages, towns, cities or metropolitan areas.

(Poplin, D., 1972, p. 25)

It would be possible to end this search for a meaning of the term community here and to select the most applicable of the different senses of the term on offer, believing that the term community has no identifiable "essence" of meaning which connects the somewhat disparate parts. The other possibility is that there is some connection between the different senses of the term which functions as a more holistic meaning. Robert French provides support for taking this path. He alludes to the need to move beyond a deductive process to find a meaning which links the different senses of the term.

The meaning of community is not just a place, not just a social system, not just a way of life that is shared by a number of people that identify themselves with a sense of we-ness. All of these elements must be contained in our conceptualization of community, for it is a most complex entity.

(French, R.M., 1969, p. 5)

Following the idea of French, the process of induction yields a meaning which is a generalized abstraction of those parts which were previously extracted. This abstraction more fully acknowledges the influence of the human psyche in any semantic issue by recognising the psychological experience of community, what French referred to as the sense of "we-ness", and what Poplin referred to as the condition in which people enjoy meaningful relationship with each other, as the fundamental connective element in all the referents of the term. Bernard Sarason explains this sense of community by linking it with the way that we think and perceive and
by beginning with the observation that community is an experience which we all recognise.

Precisely because we all experience the presence or absence of a psychological sense of community, however restricted it may be in terms of the size of the referent group, some of its characteristics are not hard to state. The perception of similarity to others, an acknowledged interdependence with others, a willingness to maintain this interdependence by giving to or doing for others what one expects from them, the feeling that one is part of a larger dependable and stable structure - these are some of the ingredients of the psychological sense of community.

(Sarason, S.B., 1974, p. 157)

Noteworthy in Sarason’s explanation of a psychological sense of community is his use of derivatives of the term "depend": interdependence and dependable. The meaning of the term community seems to be closely linked with the nature of the dependence of individuals upon each other. This is further supported by Fritjof Capra who associates the concept of community with that of ecosystems and the study of ecology.

Based on the understanding of ecosystems as autopoietic networks and dissipative structures, we can formulate a set of principals of organization that may be identified as the basic principles of ecology, and use them as guidelines to build sustainable human communities. The first of those principles is interdependence. All members of an ecological community are interconnected in a vast and intricate network of relationships, the web of life. They derive essential properties and, in fact, their very existence from their relationships to other things. Interdependence - the mutual dependence of all life
processes on one another - is the nature of all ecological relationships. The behaviour of every living member of the ecosystem depends on the behaviour of many others. The success of the whole community depends on the success of its individual members, while the success of each member depends on the success of the community as a whole.

(Capra, F., 1996, p. 290)

The conclusion arrived at from the literature reviewed was that interdependence is the essence of any concept of community. It forms the basis of every element of the definition of the term. Referring back to the writing of Sanders (1975), each aspect of community that he identified appeared to be reliant upon this idea that the members of each type of community are interdependent.

If we are to maintain some of the obvious benefits of a complex society, we will have to find our sense of community in two ways: first, we may seek commonality of interests with a relatively few people where intimacy can prevail; second, we may develop some kind of appreciation for and accommodation with the larger community, seeing our connection with it in terms of an acknowledged interdependence.

(Sanders, I.T., 1975, p. 16-17)

Linking the concept of interdependence with that of community helps to define community more clearly. The review of the relevant literature did not end here, however, as the term interdependence itself has a range of meanings and forms of expression. Interdependence is made manifest through the myriad relationships which exist in community. This link between interdependence and relationships was made clear by Capra.
Understanding ecological interdependence means understanding relationships. It requires the shifts of perception that are characteristic of systems thinking - from the parts to the whole, from objects to relationships, from contents to patterns. A sustainable human community is aware of the multiple relationships among its members. Nourishing the community means nourishing those relationships.

(Capra, F., 1996, p. 290)

Capra's view of relationships as the expression of interdependence, especially in an ecological sense, makes links to those community definition options of Poplin and French, where "place" is an important factor. The relationship between a place and the people who inhabit that place is also a hallmark of the use of the term community. Taking Capra's line of inquiry further, the type of interdependence or relationship which best supports community seems to be an important point to determine. Relationships have been investigated by various authors as to their character. Ferdinand Tonnies (1957) developed a typology of social relationships and the motivation that supports them. Tonnies speaks of two types of human will - natural and rational - which are the foundations for differing types of social relationships. Poplin provides an interpretation of Tonnies work, explaining the differences between natural and rational will. Important are the references to the natural will as supportive of others and the rational will as supportive of the self.

In a relationship resting on natural will each individual fully understands the other and takes a direct interest in his welfare. Furthermore, a unity of goals, values, and beliefs which rests upon sentiment and the memory of common traditions and experiences is achieved. All of this adds up to one thing: the relationship which
springs from natural will becomes an end in itself rather than a means to some other end... Rational will, on the other hand, entails the careful weighting of various means to a desired end... Thus, the individual driven by rational will is concerned chiefly with his future well-being and bases his actions upon deliberation and discrimination.

(Poplin, D., 1972, p. 115)

Tonnie, expressing himself in German, defines two types of social relationship based on the natural and rational wills: Gemeinschaft-like and Gessellschaft-like relationships. Gemeinschaft-like relationships, based upon natural will, are closely associated with ideas of community:

[Gemeinschaft-like relationships] are characterized by mutual aid and helpfulness, mutual interdependence, reciprocal and binding sentiment, diffuse or blanket obligations, and authority based upon age, wisdom, and benevolent force.

(McKinney, J., Loomis, C., 1958, p. 558, as quoted in Poplin, D., 1972, p. 116)

Gessellschaft-like relationships can be seen as more closely resembling ideas of individuality:

In Gessellschaft-like relationships, the participating individuals are separated rather than united and individualism reaches its zenith... Because of this the relationships which emerge between members of the Gessellschaft are contractual and functionally specific and frequently involve the exchange of goods, money, or credit and obligations.

(Poplin, D., 1972, p. 116)
Tonnies' Gemeinschaft has been commonly translated into English as "community"; Gessellschaft has been commonly translated as "society" (Tonnies, F., 1957). Tonnies' typology of relationships thus enables the differentiation between types of relationships. There are those that support community and those that support individuality. If relationships can be divided into two types, by extrapolation interdependence should be able to be divided into two types. As well as being used in reference to relationships Gemeinschaft and Gessellschaft may be envisaged as forms of interdependence. There seems to exist the possibility that interdependence can be structured so as to support individuality above community. Tonnies' Gessellschaft may be equated to that type of interdependence which supports individuality above community. Gemeinschaft could then be conceived as that type of interdependence which supports the community above individuality.

This distinction between the two types of relationship or two types of interdependence: Gemeinschaft and Gessellschaft, is made more clear by Mary Rousseau. Rousseau sees community as being supported by a group for whom a naturalistic relationship or interdependence, within which a union between members of the community is taken as something natural and comes prior to any thought or discussion, is a core belief or value. In contrast she relates a group for whom the uniting relationship or interdependence is based on artificial contracts, which do not presume a prior association but rather assume that the association is created through agreement. Belief and practice in this type of unity more readily supports individuality, with no association assumed unless one is created.

Contractual thinkers bring people into unity with each other through various kinds of agreements, negotiations, conventions and arbitrations - labor contracts, for example, or premarital property
agreements, or constitutions. Communal thinkers take people to be in some kind of unity with each other by nature, prior to any choices or negotiations.

(Rousseau, M., 1991, p. 2)

Rousseau's comments complete this selective review of the literature in the area of community. The outcome of this section of the review supports the conclusion that community is represented by an interdependence or relationship between the individual members of a group. This interdependence, or relationship, is of a particular type: natural, supportive of community and founded on the assumption that it precedes any thought or discussion within the community. The community cannot be created, because it already exists.

*Introducing the Concept of Caring*

*Community and Caring*

Having settled upon a meaning of the term community and an understanding of the importance of the concept, the next step in this literature review process asks the question: "How do we improve community?". The feminist literature in the area of "caring" provided key links in searching for ways to act which would support community. Barbara Tarlow provides comments which speak of a direct relationship between community and caring. Caring, according to Tarlow, is a way of putting into practice our beliefs in the fundamental connectedness on which community is founded. Importantly she also comments that caring can work to shift from Gessellschaft to Gemeinschaft interdependence.
To be caring of another provides witness to the sense of community, and of one's identity as a part of it. Caring demonstrated, is yet one more instance of an acknowledgment of and respect for the meaning of the group. Caring can and does spread through the community, perhaps stopping here, but passing on to another there. Caring can be a real and a symbolic counter to self-interest, a sterile or violent social world.

(Tarlow, B., 1996, p. 81)

Robert Fuller makes a further important point in linking care with community. He comments that care brings together community and individuality in the best possible way. *Caring provides a strategy for meeting our need for recognition as individuals as well as our need to belong within a community. Instead of searching for a balance between the two, caring asks us to act as individuals in ways that strengthen community.*

[W]hat best unites these two psychological modalities [agency and mutuality] in ways that enable our personal agency to strengthen, rather than diminish, the final meaning of our personal lives is the virtue of care... Care directs the skills of agency or effective action in ways that enhance, rather than dissolve, mutuality. It actuates growth or fulfillment in the self even as it establishes the self in a wider and more nurturant "network of mutual influences."

(Fuller, R., 1992, p. 35, 38)

Caring can be seen as expressed through a Gemeinschaft relationship, an interdependent arrangement requiring a carer and a cared-for to be complete. This caring relation is the expression of community. Nel Noddings makes the link between caring and connection, a term which is synonymous with interdependence.
A caring relation is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings - a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for. In order for the relation to be properly called caring, both parties must contribute in characteristic ways.

(Noddings, N., 1992, p. 15)

Carol Gilligan supports this view, linking care with relationship and connection.

The ideal of care is thus an activity of relationship, of seeing and responding to need, taking care of the world by sustaining the web of connections so that no one is left alone.

(Gilligan, C., 1982, p. 62)

The role of caregiver in our communities is most closely associated with people who work with those who cannot be reasonably expected to be able to care adequately for themselves: children, the ill and injured, the elderly, the poor. These groups may be the major targets of our care in a larger community sense, but they are not the only people in our communities who need caring for. In essence we all need to be cared for as we are all members of communities.

We all need to be cared for by other human beings. In infancy, illness, or old age, the need is urgent and pervasive; we need caregiving, and we need the special attitude of caring that accompanies the best caregiving if we are to survive and be whole. But at every stage we need to be cared for in the sense that we need to be understood, received, respected, recognized.

(Noddings, N., 1992, p. xi)
As a member of a community or communities, we also need to care. Caring is one of the most fundamental aspects of our relationships with others in community. It is the expression of the Gemeinschaft type relationship and interdependence. Caring for others is a part of caring for ourselves. As we care for others and help them to grow, so too we help ourselves to grow. This is the link to which Fuller referred previously: caring for others assists these others as individuals, it also assists the one who cares to grow as an individual, it also assists the community because it is founded upon the recognition of a Gemeinschaft type interdependence. In essence one cannot meet all of his or her individual needs without the help of the community. Milton Mayeroff supports these comments.

In caring for the other, in helping it grow, I actualize myself. The writer grows in caring for his ideas; the teacher grows in caring for his students; the parent grows in caring for his child. Or, put differently, by using powers like trust, understanding, courage, responsibility, devotion and honesty I grow also; and I am able to bring such powers into play because my interest is focused on the other.

(Mayeroff, M., 1971, p40)

Having determined the importance of caring to the Gemeinschaft type interdependence on which community is founded, the exact nature of "caring" as a concept becomes important. Caring is portrayed in the literature as a concept which can be applied very broadly. It often suffers from an interpretation as being so broad as to defy a clear conceptualization, analogous to the difficulties experienced with community as a concept. Chaskin and Rauner comment on the ambiguity experienced with the term "caring", referring to the lack of academic clarity but juxtaposing this with the general, vernacular understanding of the term.
But what is caring? To the academic ear, the word itself seems soft, lacking in precision and without boundaries, and therefore not a very useful guide to investigation, let alone for policy making or directive practice. However, caring as a concept has value that stems from both its generality - the scope of its meaning - and from its accessibility. As a widely used and richly meaningful vernacular term, it forms the basis of much thought and action. People "understand" caring as a necessary ingredient in the lives of all individuals, families, and communities, and it is not bound to a single religious or political ideology.

(Chaskin, R.J., Rauner, D.M., 1995, p. 670)

The academic community requires a more precise definition of the concept of caring. In searching for this, reference is made to the ongoing dialogue occurring in the area of moral development. In this dialogue caring is represented as a feminine style of inter-relating. Carol Gilligan (1982), while exploring issues of feminine morality based on the work of Lawrence Kohlberg (1981), became aware of a difference in the ways that some males and females perceive hypothetical moral dilemmas. Kohlberg used hypothetical moral dilemmas to deduce a hierarchy of moral development. Males tended to view these moral dilemmas objectively, as closed, "Maths-type" problems which required the provision of a "right" answer. Females tended to look for more information, to see the characters in the dilemma as particular individuals, connected to the world beyond the boundaries of the hypothetical and thus associated with all the complexity that exists in the real world. Females tended to view the circumstances more commonly from the perspectives of those involved, acknowledging a Gemeinschaft type interdependence.
The proclivity of women to reconstruct hypothetical dilemmas in terms of the real, to request or to supply missing information about the nature of the people and the places where they live, shifts their judgement away from the hierarchical ordering of principles and the formal procedures of decision making.

(Gilligan, C., 1982, p. 101)

This feminine approach to hypothetical moral dilemmas is seen as an alternative view of morality relative to the dominant scheme of justice which reflects formal procedures for decision making, made manifest in the legal system which is structured to manage the contractual relationships which are constructed within our society. Helga Kuhse, supporting the work of Gilligan, makes the comment that this difference between male and female approaches to moral issues is expressed in the roles that males and females tend to take in contemporary society, with females tending towards the roles which involve caring.

It is true that many women today are occupying roles in the public sphere. It is, however, also true that women are still the primary caregivers, not only when it comes to the delivery of care in the private sphere of the family, but also in public life. Nursing is, of course, an example of this. We should not be surprised, then, to find that empirical studies, such as Gilligan's, might indeed continue to detect statistically significant differences between the moral approaches of women and men.

(Kuhse, H., 1997, p. 111)

This gender based research leads towards a possible conclusion that females tend towards a Gemeinschaft type paradigm of the way we live and work together, while males tend to view the world as constructed via
Gessellschaft type relationships. Nona Lyons, building on the work of Carol Gilligan, investigated these two possible ways of dealing with moral dilemmas by looking at the way people perceived themselves in relation to others. She identified two general ways of perceiving oneself in relation to others: as separate or as connected. The link between Gemeinschaft and Gessellschaft is obvious. In community an assumption is made that there is a fundamental connection between the members of the community. If a person sees him or herself as connected, then community is more a possibility than if they see themselves as separate. Interestingly, supportive of Kuhse and Gilligan, Lyons determined that women more often saw themselves as connected with others, while males more often saw themselves as separate.

[W]omen more frequently use characterizations of a connected self, while men more frequently use characterizations of a separate/objective self.

(Lyons, N., 1983, p. 140)

Lyons' two ways of perceiving oneself in relation to others are best articulated in her own words:

The perspective of the separate/objective self ... is based on impartiality, objectivity, and the distancing of the self from others. It assumes an ideal relationship of equality. When this is impossible, given the various kinds of obligatory role relationships and the sometimes conflicting claims of individuals in relationships, the best recourse is to fairness as an approximation of equality. This requires the maintenance of distance between oneself and others to allow for the impartial mediation of relationships.
The perspective of the connected self - labeled "response" - is based on interdependence and concern for another's well-being. It assumes an ideal relationship of care and responsiveness to others. Relationships can best be maintained and sustained by considering others in their specific contexts and not always invoking strict equality. To be responsive requires seeing others in their own terms, entering into the situations of others in order to know them as the others do, that is, to try to understand how they see their situations.

(Lyons, N., 1983, p. 134-135)

Lyon's view of the connected self supports community by supporting a belief in a foundational connectedness. Relationships are caring relationships, founded upon Gemeinschaft interdependence. Conversely, her view of the separate self sees the individual as one amongst many, striving for a fair agreement in the course of negotiating one's place amongst others. Relationships are based on justice, with equality or fairness enshrined in rules and grounded in roles. Interdependence is of the Gessellschafter type. If we are aware of our Gemeinschaft interdependence or relationship, then caring is the way we express ourselves and act. If we are not aware of this connection, we look towards creating a system of rules and regulations which aims to provide equal and fair treatment for every individual.

A definition of caring which can be arrived at following this review of the caring and moral development literature is that caring is a way of relating which supports the Gemeinschaft interdependence of community. Robert Chaskin and Diana Rauner support this definition of caring.

It [caring] is built on an often implicit recognition of reciprocity in human interaction. This is not the reciprocity assumed by economic models of exchange, which are presumably driven by rational
calculations of self-interest. Rather, the reciprocity is grounded in social relations and ethical expectations of a more general nature. It assumes the recognition, at some level, that there is a fundamental interconnection among individuals, as well as between individuals and the informal institutions of society.

(Chaskin, R., Rauner, D., 1995, p. 671)

Caring provides a foundation for a way of acting which strengthens community. In this sense it can be applied as an ethic. It can provide a framework from within which one can build an approach to life, focused on the improvement of community. Carol Gilligan (1982) was the first to refer to an ethic of care, providing the link between an ethic of care and community via the concept of interdependence.

This ethic [of care], which reflects a cumulative knowledge of human relationships, evolves around a central insight, that self and other are interdependent.

(Gilligan, C., 1982)

A number of authors have built on the work of Gilligan and discuss caring as an ethic. Alisa Carse makes a direct link between an ethic of care and the improvement of community.

[The ethic of care asserts the importance of community with others and a concern for others' good, of a capacity for imaginative projection into the position of others, and of situation-attuned responses to others' needs.

(Carse, A., 1996, p. 96)
An ethic of care asks a person to be aware of the needs of others in a community context. Noddings' supports this concept of awareness of others needs, linking it to the notion of morality.

[A]n ethic of caring locates morality primarily in the pre-act consciousness of the one-caring.

(Noddings, N., 1984, p. 28)

This comment strengthens the notion that to improve community there must be a raising of consciousness about the fundamental, Gemeinschaft-type connections which do exist between members of a community. Following this raising of consciousness an individual must then act in a way which further supports the interdependence, the relationship, the connection, and thus the community by working to meet the needs of the one being cared for. Nel Noddings is the most prolific of the authors who refer to an ethic of care. Her comments on an ethic of care point towards a way of living which is aimed at improving the intimate myriad relations which exist within a community. Noddings calls it a "needs and response based ethics" which reveals links with Lyons' idea of "response" as an aspect of the connected self. Noddings provides some key points which help to define an ethic of care, commenting on its relationship to other philosophies which impact on ethical thought and action.

[T]he ethic of care dismisses the old distinction between is and ought to a pseudoproblem.

(Noddings, N., 1995, p. 186)

This point refers to the Gemeinschaft relationship or interdependence between members of a community assumed by an ethic of care. Taking the statement, "If there is a relationship between us then I ought to act to help
you if you are in need", Noddings would most likely claim that this rationalisation process between "is" and "ought" would only exist in a Gessellschaft type relationship within which relationships are more a social construction. In a Gemeinschaft type relationship or interdependence, the existence of the relationship would be taken as a given, thus negating the need for an "is - ought" statement. If the "is" can be assumed, then the "ought" should be able to be assumed as well. Belief in our natural, Gemeinschaft relationship as members of a community does away with the need to continually create our relationship in thought or in practice. This belief gives automatic rise to what we "ought" to do, how we should act, without necessitating the construction of a logical rationale.

[...]he ethic of care gives only minor place to principles and insists instead that ethical discussions must be made in caring interactions with those effected by the discussion.

(Noddings, N., 1995, p. 187)

Noddings is here referring to the contextual nature of the ethic of care. The particular context of the situation at hand supplies the information for an ethical decision to be made, building upon an underlying connectedness. Noddings further emphasises this point by stating,

The only universals recognized by care theorists are those describing the human condition: the commonalties of birth, death, physical and emotional needs, and the longing to be cared for.

(Noddings, N., 1995, p. 188)

A focus on universals obfuscates the ability to attend to the complexities of a situation. These complexities provide the person living by an ethic of care with the necessary information for decision. Noddings tackles the ethical
issue of utilitarianism, which "accepts as the foundation of morals 'utility' or the 'greatest happiness principle' [and] holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness." (Mill, J.S., 1891). Utilitarianism sees happiness as the greatest good, which all decisions should work to achieve as a consequence.

Although an ethic of care puts great emphasis on consequences in the sense that it always asks what happens to the relation, it is not a form of utilitarianism; it does not posit one greatest good to be optimized, nor does it separate means and ends.

(Noddings, N., 1992, p. 21)

Again context is more important in an ethic of care. Utilitarianism creates another form of principle, whereas an ethic of care takes each case on its own merits and pays attention to the intimate details.

Noddings downplays comment about the view of an ethic of care as a virtue ethic, that is where caring is seen as a quality which is held by an individual. Noddings refers to the importance of relation in an ethic of care, and that this relational aspect of caring makes it difficult to view caring as an individual quality.

It [an ethic of care] is not properly labeled an ethic of virtue. Although it calls on people to be carers and to develop virtues and capacities to care, it does not regard caring solely as an individual attribute. It recognizes the part played by the cared-for. It is an ethic of relation.

(Noddings, N., 1992, p. 21)
Nodding's philosophical perspective of an ethic of care situates this ethic among those becoming more commonly discussed at an academic level. Another academic perspective is provided by Helga Kuhse whose comments relate it to rational will and relationships, similar to those made by Tonnies (1957), linking an ethic of care with the Gemeinschaft paradigm. According to Tonnies the rational will perceives the world objectively, as a means to an end; the natural will sees the world as subject, as an end in itself, taking into account the contextual complexities of any situation.

[A]n ethics of care rejects a model of moral deliberation that requires us to adopt the detached and rational perspective of an impartial spectator which in turn requires us to strip away, or abstract, certain contextual details from complex emotion infused situations, until they can be subsumed under general and rationally derived principles or norms. Rather, the care perspective identifies as constitutive of the moral life the elements of mutual interdependence, of emotional response, and the particularity of individual situations, people and circumstances.

(Kuhse, H., 1997, p. 117-118)

Kuhse goes on to note the common themes in an ethic of care.

[T]here are some common themes discernible in the care approach to ethics: that it should be sensitive to context, to relationships, and to care and responsibility to particular others.

(Kuhse, H., 1997, p. 121)

Kuhse's comments complete this selective review of the literature in the area of caring and its link to community, expressed as an ethic of care. The literature is supportive of the notion of an ethic of care, as represented as
sensitive to context and relationships, as the most plausible method to improve community.

**Education for Caring**

Having determined that pursuing an ethic of care is a valuable method to use in improving community, the next step in this review of the literature is to ask: "How do we educate to increase awareness, understanding and practical application of an ethic of care?". The literature concerning education about caring comes from the same fields which provide information on community and caring: the feminist caring literature and the literature which is included under the umbrella heading of moral development. Authors in these areas refer to "moral education" as that area of knowledge to which discussion of an ethic of care and education pertains.

Two authors in particular identify, in detail, educational strategies which could be used to achieve goals in this area of curriculum. Nel Noddings (1995, p. 190) suggests four major components of moral education from the care perspective: modeling, dialogue, practice and confirmation. Sheldon Berman, another proponent of the development of moral education, writes about the development of social responsibility, which is very closely related to the concepts of community and caring as is evident in the following comment.

Social responsibility has a number of dimensions. First, socially responsible people understand that the individual is rooted within a larger social network, within interlocking communities that range from the local to the global. They are conscious of the ways one is influenced by and influences the social and political world. And they experience a sense of connectedness and interdependence with
others... Second, relationships with others, and with society, are 
framed by the ethical considerations of justice and care. These two 
moral voices ... are complementary but address different concerns. 
The justice voice addresses claims of inequality and is often framed in 
terms of rules, principles, and obligations. The care voice, on the other 
hand, is sensitive to suffering and is often framed in terms of 
compassion and response to those in need.

(Berman, S., 1997, p. 12-13)

This comment recalls the typology of Tonies. Berman juxtaposes care with 
justice as Tonies juxtaposes Gemeinschaft with Gessellschaft. Berman 
(1997, p. 85) identifies four processes which support the development of 
social responsibility. These are: prosocial modeling by parents, teachers, 
and significant individuals; cooperative and nurturant relationships with 
others; perspective taking and perspective taking dialogue; and learning to 
manage conflicts effectively.

When comparing the work of Noddings and Berman in this area of moral 
education, there are some similarities and some strategies which are 
particular to one or other author. Both authors put forward modeling as a 
means towards the end of achieving an ethic of care. About modeling 
Noddings comments,

We are mainly concerned with the growth of our students as carers 
and cared-fors. We have to show in our own behaviour what it means 
to care. Thus we do not merely tell them to care and give them texts to 
read on the subject; we demonstrate our caring in our relations with 
them.

(Noddings, N., 1995, p. 190)
Berman links modeling with caring in stating that,

It [modeling] involves the development of caring relationships where parents reason with their children about moral and other conflicts, involve them in family decision making, behave in prosocial and socially responsible ways, and set high moral expectations."

(Berman, S., 1997, p. 86)

Modeling, in the formal educational context, can be said to involve the teacher living by an ethic of care in his or her relationships with students, as well as working to support an ethic of care when appropriate behaviour is exhibited by students.

Both Berman and Noddings advance practice as a method for the teaching of caring, though the terminology used by Berman is "cooperative and nurturant relationships with others". Berman views cooperative and nurturant relationships as the context for practicing an ethic of care. He refers to an ethic of care as the basis for these cooperative and nurturant relationships.

The basic idea here is clearly expressed in Gilligan's (1982) ethic of caring. This means that persons in a close relationship cooperate to help and protect each other... They practice mutual aid because they care about one another.

(Berman, S., 1997, p. 91).

Noddings supports practice as a sensible strategy in educating people in caring.
If we want to produce people who will care for another, then it makes sense to give students practice in caring, and reflecting on that practice.

(Noddings, N., 1995, p. 191)

The importance of the relationship an individual has with his or her peers as the context for practice is extolled by Jean Piaget. Piaget speaks for the importance of peer relationships in student communities when he contrasts the adult-child and the child-child relationship in his study of the child’s moral reasoning. The child-child relationship provides an arena within which the power aspects of the adult-child relationship are not so evident. This allows for the development of cooperative relation, as opposed to authoritarian relation, which in turn enables the unfolding of moral reasoning.

The relation between child and adult as such does not allow for equality. And since equalitarianism is born of the contact of children with one another, its development must at least keep pace with the progress of cooperation between them.

(Piaget, J., 1932, p. 275)

It is cooperation which leads to the primacy of intentionality, by forcing the individual to be constantly occupied with the point of view of other people so as to compare it with his own.

(Piaget, J., 1932, p. 189-190)

The important aspect of peer relationships is that they can provide a milieu in which students can explore and learn about relationships, about morality, about caring, about community, about what it means to be interdependent. James Younnis, writing about relationship development, supports the idea
that peer relationships have the potential to form the basis for practical learning about moral issues.

By working together to establish and maintain relationship, peers can on their own evolve those principles which supply the logical material of what one would ordinarily call the backbone of mature morality.

(Youniss, J., 1980, p. 234)

Peer relationships are commonly inferred to exist within peer groups, especially when the population being discussed is that of adolescents. The influence of the peer group in adolescence can have negative connotations. Laurence Steinberg, writing about views of the peer group in adolescence in the 1970s, found that some authors were attributing a large number of the problems of adolescence to the peer groups.

Growing problems - such as youth unemployment, teenage suicide, juvenile crime and delinquency, drug and alcohol abuse, and premarital pregnancy - were all attributed to the rise of peer groups and the isolation of adolescents from adults.

(Steinberg, 1993, p. 160)

These findings have been questioned, however, and the totally negative view of peer groups has been superseded by one in which peer groups are seen as more complex and having possible negative or positive effects, as Steinberg goes on to state.

Contemporary adolescents spend more time in peer groups than adolescents did in past eras. But we do not know if today’s young people are any more susceptible to the influence of their friends than their counterparts were previously, nor do we know if teenagers are
any worse off because peer groups have come to play a more prominent role in modern society. In fact, studies of peer pressure indicate that their friends are likely to pressure them not to use drugs or engage in sexual activity. Adolescents do, however, report a good deal of pressure to drink alcohol, and this pressure increases during the adolescent years (Brown, Clasen, Eicher, 1986). Adolescents exert both positive and negative influence on each other, and it is incorrect to describe the peer group as a monolithic, negative influence.

(Steinberg, 1993, p. 162)

A peer group is not a homogenous entity but can be very complex. Peer groups vary greatly in their qualities and characteristics; of importance for an adolescent is finding a peer group which is supportive of his/her needs. Philip and Barbara Newman support this point, commenting on the role of peer groups in the social development of adolescents.

We hypothesize that adolescents learn through becoming a member of a peer group to assess group structure and norms and select the particular group or groups with which they would like to affiliate. For adolescents, the structure may include patterns of dominance, dating, and relationships with others outside the group. Associated with these patterns are norms or expectations for the behaviour of the peer-group members. As adolescents discover their positions in the hierarchy of the group, they learn how they may advance within it and what behaviours are expected of members at various levels. On the basis of this information, they must decide whether their personal growth is compatible with the peer-group affiliation they have made. There is some evidence that being a member of a supportive peer group is
linked to well-being. The peer group serves as a source of social support and helps to buffer members from stress.


There are many different types of peer groups as well as many different social roles to be "played" within a peer group, meaning that many different types of relationships can exist. According to Ladd, a complicating factor in the quest to understand the milieu which is constructed by peer relationships is that these relationships may take many different forms.

Children's relationships with peers may take many different forms, such as friend, acquaintance, classmate, and team-mate. Moreover, the form of relationship children develop with peers may change over time or differ, depending on their age or length of acquaintance.

(Ladd, G.W., 1989, p. 1)

Youniss and Smollar claim that of the many types of relationship which the student can be a part of, friendship, and especially close friendship, provides the ideal relational closeness within which social development can occur.

... a close friendship has perhaps the greatest potential for contributing to social development simply because, during adolescence, it is marked by a high level of emotional involvement and importance.

(Youniss, J., Smollar, J., 1985, p. 94)

Not only do close friendships provide a good context for social development in adolescence but they are also a need, related to the need to belong (Maslow, 1970) discussed earlier. Philip Rice comments that adolescents need close friends.
The need for close friends becomes crucial during adolescence (Yarcheski and Mahon, 1984)... Adolescent's first needs are for relationships with others whom they can share interests (Hortascu, 1989). As they grow older, they desire a closer, caring relationship that involves sharing mature affection, problems, and their most personal thoughts (Pombeni, Kirchler, and Palmonari, 1990). They need close friends who stand beside them and for them in an understanding, caring way. Friends share more than secrets or plans; they share feelings and help each other resolve personal problems and interpersonal conflicts (Werebe, 1987).

(Rice, P., 1996, p. 270-271)

Of prime importance for adolescents is the ability to pursue peer relationships which are, or can become, close friendships. According to Rice, friendship is closely related to caring. In attempting to find a more comprehensive definition of friendship in the literature, however, difficulties arise similar to those found when attempting to define the concepts of community and caring. Barbara Fehr confirms this comment.

Everyone knows what friendship is - until asked to define it. Then, it seems, no one knows. There are virtually as many definitions of friendship as there are social scientists studying the topic.

(Fehr, B., 1996, p. 5)

Those authors who do attempt to outline their definition of friendship usually provide an exposition of the attributes which friends display in relationship. These attributes may include affection, confiding, receiving assistance, reliable alliance (trust), and shared activity (Davis and Todd, 1985). A further refinement of friendship is the close friendship. Close friends can be defined
as "more" than friends, the definition being largely a matter of degree. They possess the same attributes as a friend, but these attributes may be developed to a deeper level (Fehr, 1996, p. 102-103).

Practice, within the peer group supplies information based on real situations, as opposed to hypothetical dilemmas (Kohlberg, 1981) or context based dilemmas where other peoples lives are studied, as Reimer, Paolitto and Hersh comment,

Hypothetical dilemmas ... are not based in fact, but they are believable. The major value of hypothetical issues is that students have less personal involvement in them; thus they are more willing to risk public discussion of them and to generalize principles involved... Content based dilemmas can demonstrate to students moral dimensions of the lives of people they are studying ... Real or practical dilemmas maximize emotional involvement and thus personal interest in the topic.

(Reimer, J., Paolitto, D.P., Hersh, R., 1983, p. 209)

Each has its advantages and disadvantages, however in the context of caring, the real or practical data are more able to make clear the complex context within which, in reality, the moral judgment must made and action taken. Practice in real situations is supportive of education in an ethic of care because it focuses students on relationships and context, much more than hypothetical dilemmas or context specific situations. Reflecting on that practice can occur in isolation of others, or it can involve the thoughts and perspectives of others, including the cared-for, by way of dialogue. Noddings is a clear proponent of dialogue as a worthwhile educational strategy in this area.
Dialogue is essential in moral education from the care perspective. It is a means by which we evaluate the effect of our attempts to care. Through dialogue we learn more about the other, and we need this knowledge to act effectively as carers. As we try to care, we are helped in our efforts by the feedback we get from the recipients of our care.

(Noddings, N., 1995, p. 191)

Berman's other two processes (perspective taking and perspective taking dialogue; and learning to manage conflicts effectively) both require practice and dialogue to be effective. Noddings' focus on practice and dialogue can be construed as very broad and, in general educational terms, these strategies could be put into place to achieve virtually any curriculum objective. Also broadly applicable is Noddings' fourth component of moral education from the perspective of caring: confirmation. Confirmation involves looking for the best in the acts of an individual and affirming and encouraging that part of their action which one believes is good and has good intentions behind it.

When we confirm someone, we spot a better self and encourage its development. We can do this only if we know the other well enough to see what he or she is trying to become. Formulas and slogans have no place here. We do not set up a single ideal or set of expectations for everyone to meet, but we identify something admirable, or at least acceptable, struggling to emerge in each person we encounter. The person working toward a better self must see the attribute or goal as worthy, and we too must see it as at least morally acceptable. We do not confirm people in ways we judge to be wrong.

(Noddings, N., 1992, p. 25)
There are two further strategies which can take place within the context of practice, dialogue and confirmation. These two strategies are more specific to moral education. They are detailed by Berman who refers to them as perspective taking and conflict resolution. These strategies involve specific situations which can be structured by the teacher in a practice scenario. Berman states that perspective taking moves students through four phases of development.

They move from a focus solely on themselves to one that takes either the self's or the other's perspective, then to balancing the two perspectives through reciprocity, and finally, to balancing the perspectives through finding mutual goals. Considering another's perspective is the force that moves this development.

(Berman, S., 1997, p. 92)

This four phase process culminates with the student being more able to understand the Gemeinschaft relationship and interdependence which exists between individuals. The ability to find and work towards mutual goals based on all perspectives is an acknowledgment of community, as opposed to a process which would not acknowledge and include all perspectives. Being able to take the perspective of another or others is a crucial ability when it comes to resolving conflict. Berman comments,

Many researchers have pointed to conflict as the stimulant to perspective taking and social and moral growth.

(Berman, S., 1997, p. 98)

Reimer, Paolitto and Hersh describe research which recognises that the teacher has two principle functions in fostering moral development: to create conflict and to stimulate perspective taking.
Research has shown that the teacher can be instrumental in creating conditions to foster moral development. The teacher has two principle functions in this process: (1) to create conflict, the kind of conflict that facilitates growth in students' patterns of thinking, and (2) to stimulate students' ability to take the perspective of others beyond their own.

(Reimer, J., Paolitto, D.P., Hersh, R., 1983, p. 145)

Successful conflict resolution requires the putting into practice of an ethic of care, of taking the perspective of the other parties involved and managing this information within the total context of the conflict.

Participants in groups where conflicts were resolved well gave sincere and accurate consideration to the issues, were sensitive to the needs and contributions of other group members, considered whether certain ways of deliberating were good ways to arrive at a solution, evaluated the practicality and reasonableness of possible solutions, and were concerned that all could agree to proposed solutions.

(Berman, S., 1997, p. 101)

The literature in this area supports the notion that the key to the teaching and learning of an ethic of care is the existence of relationships within which caring exists and is modeled, caring can be practiced, caring dialogue occurs, caring is confirmed, and perspective taking and conflict resolution situations can be constructed, based on an ethic of care.

**Linking Outdoor Education and Caring**

Having identified educational strategies which assist in the development of an ethic of care, the next step in the literature review process asks: "Is
outdoor education a teaching and learning context within which delivery of curriculum in this area is relevant?". The literature in the outdoor education field is quite diverse in its claims about the exact nature of outdoor education. Simon Priest is an example of an author who supports this claim, stating a broad range of areas with which outdoor education has ties.

The broad field known as outdoor education encompasses everything from scaling a major Himalayan peak without oxygen, to taking school children outside the classroom for their learning, to bird watching from the bedroom window. Outdoor education has been described as a place (natural environment), a subject (ecological processes), and a reason (resource stewardship) for learning. It has been called a method (experiential), a process (sensory), and a topic (relationships) of learning.

(Priest, S., 1990, p. 113)

The complexity and breadth of the outdoor education context equates to the existence of similar characteristics in the literature pertaining to outdoor education. Associated areas include camping, adventure education, environmental education and experiential education. Priest's comments: that the major topic of outdoor education is relationships, that the major method is experiential and that the place it most commonly occurs is in the natural environment, create a vision of an educational context which contains many opportunities for the development of understandings about community and caring. David Hopkins and Roger Putnam, speaking in the area of adventure education, support this vision for outdoor education.

The outdoors is also a powerful medium for exploring the nature of community. When on a sail training boat, or a mountain expedition we are also engaged in constructing intricate and intense social
relationships. In the pursuit of challenging physical objectives we are often engaged in creating social structures which underpin our physical successes. These temporary societies are a microcosm of the wider community. In many ways these situations are experimental social laboratories where we can explore social relationships at a level of intensity unusual in more sedate settings. This gives us the opportunity at times to behave differently, to try out a variety of social roles and see very clearly the impact we can have on others and to experience the support that is part of community living.

(Hopkins, D., Putnam, R., 1993, p. 12)

Although framed in language representative of a Gessellschaft type interdependence, Hopkins' and Putnam's comment points towards an educational context within which students can play a major role in determining the nature of the social situation. Outdoor education has many links with the more general area of camping. Camping has been seen as synonymous with outdoor education for many years, as comment Freeberg and Taylor.

[M]any parents and educators regard outdoor education as a camping program. The terms, outdoor education and camping are used synonymously.

(Freeberg, W., Taylor, L., 1961, p. 181)

Mary-Faeth Chenery, in her research on the dynamics of camp as a caring environment, specifically focusing on the model of summer camps in the United States, comments,
Caring is not necessarily an outcome of camp, at least one that campers think to mention, but it is certainly a feature of camp, an experience that people at camp feel.

(Chenery, M.F., 1991, p. 85)

The literature in the area of camping provides direct links between camping and caring. Chenery goes on to identify a series of hypotheses about how caring is nurtured in camps.

[What we may be seeing in camps is a synergistic effect of support for the development of caring through many different channels. Caring appears to emerge through the combined impact of support from written, spoken, and sung statements; from the modeling of caring directors, counselors, older campers, and peers; from feedback about caring; from planned and unplanned opportunities to care; from participation in teamwork; from looking for the positive in people; from learning respect; and from personal restraint with respect to the environment.

(Chenery, M.F., 1991, p. 91)

These hypotheses provide a window through which to view the links between the outdoor education context and the educational strategies which support the development of an ethic of care, as identified previously. Within the hypotheses identified by Chenery are clearly identifiable examples of modeling, practice, dialogue, and confirmation. Perspective taking and conflict resolution exist in those of Chenery’s hypotheses concerned with planned and unplanned opportunities to care.

The notion of working with peers, to which Chenery alluded, is further supported in the outdoor education and experiential education literature.
Nicholas Gair believes that an important aspect of outdoor education pedagogy is the "self-led peer group expedition" (Gair, N., 1997, p. 34). Denise Mitten also supports this premise, introducing the concept of teamwork amongst students.

A goal of many outdoor programs is to help participants learn more about being part of a group, which includes establishing relationships between leader, members, and each other, as well as working together as a team to accomplish tasks.

(Mitten, D., 1995, p. 82)

Gair and Mitten intimate that the students in the outdoor education group take a major role in the conduct of the expedition which they are undertaking. This creates the context for the practice of an ethic of care within the peer group, amongst the students themselves. The further development or refinement of the peer group, as a context for practice in caring, to become a friendship group receives little attention in the outdoor education literature, although Colin Mortlock, writing in the field of adventure education, does state,

The challenging wilderness journey is potentially an outstanding way not only of developing friendship, but of emphasizing the need for people to work together. Experience can soon show both that lives may well be put further at risk by selfish and thoughtless actions, and that success will best be achieved by efficient teamwork.

(Mortlock, C., 1994, p. 80)

And Denise Mitten, writing in the experiential education literature, makes anecdotal comment which incorporates the term "friendship" and alludes to the possibilities of outdoor education in the area of friendships.
On outdoor trips I have observed that many people attempt to make connections quickly. For example, two people who do not know each other before an outdoor trip can seem like fast friends by dinner the first night.

(Mitten, D., 1995, p. 82)

Most comment is, however, about the broader concept of relationship. The gap in the outdoor education literature regarding information about friendship provides a relevant focus for further study. This thesis is thus concerned with investigating the effect of participation in an outdoor education course on friendship amongst those students involved.

Hopkins and Putnam's earlier comment on the construction of intricate and intense social relationships in pursuit of challenging physical objectives points toward an ideal context for real, practical conflict creation and resolution which involves perspective taking and incorporates feelings and emotions. Further evidence supporting this point is supplied by Nicholas Gair when discussing the occurrence of situations during outdoor education trips which require problem solving.

Another interesting aspect of the group's mental approach to the venture is how they respond to critical moments on the expedition when they are required to face a very real problem. All sorts of events, throughout the duration of the venture, will require the group to exercise their collective problem-solving abilities. At each point there will, naturally, be several different opinions from different members of the group as to how exactly to deal with the problem. How does the group decide what action to take? Is there fair and 'democratic' debate, or is a more random and arbitrary decision made? Does the
quality of debate change at different stages of the venture, for example, when the weather is bad, or when group members are feeling tired and irritable? 

(Gair, N., 1997, p. 29-30)

Gair's example of a situation from an outdoor education trip provides further evidence of real opportunities for conflict resolution and perspective taking. Key to the relevance of the conflict resolution and perspective taking processes in these situations is the notion that the group has responsibility for achieving a satisfactory outcome to the conflict and that the outcome is of direct relevance to the tangible, practical and real goals of the trip. These process are further assisted by way of some of the other constraints which exist during an outdoor education experience including the intensity and the ongoing nature of the trip., Gale Orford, linking the outdoor education and camping literature, relates information supporting this.

[T]he intensity of the trip or camp speeds up the processes of personal relationships because of the closer living and obvious interdependence, and because it's not possible to escape to Mum and Dad at the end of the day.

(Orford, G., 1993, p. 30)

The processes which support conflict resolution and perspective taking are based fundamentally on an experiential learning method, the method of outdoor education as previously stated by Priest. Priest and Gass describe experiential learning and its relationship to outdoor education more fully.

Experiential learning processes place clients as close as possible to the experiences for learning. Educators create situations because they believe that the "direct" experience is more valuable for the
transmission of knowledge than more "vicarious" forms of learning, such as lectures... Experiential learning is also based on the belief that change occurs when people are placed outside a position of comfort (e.g., homeostasis, acquiescence) and into a state of dissonance, or the difference between the current situation and desired future. In such a state, people are challenged by the adaptations necessary to reach a new state of equilibrium, yet are also supported through such processes by leaders and peers.

(Priest, S., Gass, M.A., 1997, p. 136)

Placing students close to the experience of relationships, which Priest (1986) claims is the fundamental topic of outdoor education, requires placing them amongst their peers and having them see the peer group as the context within which the learning will occur, a point supported previously by Gair and Mitten.

Also of great importance in the process of experiential learning is the ability to reflect on actions taken so as to attempt to improve on them in future situations where they are relevant. Mortlock comments on reflection during the outdoor education expedition, making links with the strategy of perspective taking, which can often be difficult when the situation is a real one.

Expeditions often allow time for this much needed personal reflection, although the stress of the challenge can sometimes make seeing the other person's viewpoint hard to accept.

(Mortlock, C., 1994, p. 82)

The other aspect of teaching about caring is to model an ethic of care and to create a climate within which it is possible to practice an ethic of care,
including the element of encouragement or confirmation as espoused by Noddings. This is very possible in outdoor education and is dependent on the role modeling provided by the teacher, and the cultural expectations of the teacher. Gale Orford comments about this role of the outdoor education teacher or group leader.

When a trip leader takes care in responding to a question or situation, then the message we are giving is that caring is something we value, and we are showing how to practise it.

(Orford, G., 1993, p. 32)

Orford goes on to emphasise the importance of the outdoor education teacher's conscious structuring of the learning environment and modeling of particular forms of behaviour.

Outdoor education can make a difference in how people perceive a part of the world and their place in it, and it can provide a different perspective on how we usually live compared to what might be possible. If these things are important, and working towards a 'sophisticated modesty' is a worthy goal, then we must not waste learning opportunities in our programs. As outdoor educators, it is absolutely imperative that we are clear about our purpose, that we work to create a learning environment that constantly reminds participants about this message; and that we do our best to model behaviour that shows we are trying to integrate it into our lives.

(Orford, G., 1993, p. 32)

Orford's comments, and the comments of all the authors related to the field of outdoor education quoted above, are complemented by the outcomes of the research in camping completed by Chenery. Chenery's work led to the
development of a theoretical statement which detailed a range of strategies which can be used to pursue the development of an ethic of care. These strategies provide a coherent summary of the relationship between the literature in the broad field of outdoor education and the literature in caring.

A theoretical statement was proposed, which asserts that participation in camp programs leads to the development of positive attitudes and skills and caring social behaviors through the collective effects of:

1. feedback from encountering the basic nature of camp, which includes being away from parents and home, not having television, and simple living;
2. feedback and information from participation in group living, working together, decision-making, program activities, planned and unplanned learning opportunities, and forums for discussion;
3. feedback and information from observation of positive role models and value statements and from experiencing a supportive environment and fun;
4. the stimulation and support of a caring context through camp; and,
5. time to process the feedback and information received.

(Chenery, M.F., 1991, p. 117)

The outdoor education literature, along with the literature in the associated areas of camping, adventure education, and experiential education, when investigated in conjunction with the literature on caring, community and friendship, points to a particular capacity for outdoor education in achieving objectives in the areas of community and caring. The outdoor education teacher has the potential to positively effect an individual's understanding and practical application of an ethic of care. This would be through his or her
modeling of behaviour based on an awareness, understanding and belief in
an ethic of care, and by way of the structuring of particular teaching and
learning strategies, including perspective taking and conflict situations along
with the time for dialogue and reflection, within the outdoor education context
which students will experience. Outdoor education is well suited to the
creation of realistic conflict scenarios and to the conduct of dialogue about
this conflict because of its immediate relevance to students. Outdoor
education thus seems to be well structured to deliver outcomes in the areas
of caring and community. This determined, the process of reviewing the
literature progresses to the issue of the relevancy of outdoor education in
attempting to achieve educational outcomes in these areas within the school
as a whole. If other areas within the school address these issues
satisfactorily there may be no need to conduct more classes specific to these
issues. Literature which directly deals with the success of schools in
delivering outcomes in the areas of community and caring is sparse. The
work of John Goodlad provides a response, based on detailed research.

The goals set forth for schools are particularly idealistic in the social,
civic, cultural and personal domains. It is here that we find the most
altruistic expectations for understanding differing value systems;
developing productive and satisfying relations with others based on
respect, trust, cooperation, and caring; developing a concern for
humanity; developing the ability to apply the basic principles and
concepts of the fine arts and humanities to the appreciation of
aesthetic contributions of other cultures; and developing an
understanding of the necessity for moral conduct. And it is here that
we find statements about developing the ability to use leisure time
effectively, to criticize oneself constructively, to deal with problems in
original ways, and to experience and enjoy different forms of creative
expression. I conclude that schools in our sample were contributing

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minimally to the attainment of such goals. With respect to some they were rather neutral. With respect to others, they contributed negatively.

(Goodlad, J., 1984, p. 239)

Goodlad’s comments strongly support the view that community and caring are not being successfully achieved as educational objectives within schools at present. It is interesting to note that Goodlad’s study does not mention outdoor education as a part of any school curricula within his study. No other relevant literature could be identified which dealt with outdoor education and its achievements in schools in the areas of community and caring, as compared to other subject areas. This lack of information revealed a gap in the literature relevant for further study. This thesis is thus concerned with the differences which exist between outdoor education and all other classes at school in terms of learning in the areas of community and caring, best expressed as the development of an ethic of care.

Gaps in the Literature

The literature review process identified two gaps in the literature which this thesis will attempt to investigate in order to provide further information.

1. The first concerns the effect of participation in an outdoor education course on friendship amongst those students involved.

2. The second concerns the possible differences which exist between outdoor education and all other classes at schools in terms of the development of an ethic of care.
CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

Conceptual Framework

Determination of a conceptual framework for the research project preceded the development of specific research questions. This framework is supported by the literature review process which identified specific areas within which little or no research has been conducted. This framework allowed the major constructs and participants, and the relationships between them, to be identified. The conceptual framework laid the basic foundation for the construction of the research questions.

A conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied - the key factors, constructs or variables - and the presumed relationships among them.

(Miles, M., Huberman, M., 1994, p. 18)

The conceptual framework for this study, in narrative form, is:

This study aimed to investigate the phenomenon of caring as it is experienced by students in Year 9 within two different contexts at school: outdoor education and other classes. The phenomenon of caring is influenced by the nature of the relationships between students. This led to the comparison, within these two contexts, of the relationships between close friends and between people who are not close friends, defined as other people, were also compared within these two different contexts.

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The conceptual framework for this study is represented graphically below in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 - Graphical Representation Of Conceptual Framework For This Study.**

This conceptual framework led to the construction of the main research question:

*Is outdoor education the best context within the school for students to experience caring relationships?*
What is Caring amongst Peers?

In beginning the process of searching for some answer to this question it was necessary to analyse the question in order to determine the component parts. It was clear that some comparison had to be made between the outdoor education class and other classes at school. It became evident that before this comparison could be made, a definition of caring which was clear and practically relevant for the participants needed to be determined. This requirement for a relevant definition of caring led to the first research question:

1. What constitutes "caring" for students, when it is between peers?

Outdoor Education and Other Classes at School

Once the experiential components of caring had been identified in an answer to the first research question, the comparison between outdoor education and other classes in the Year 9 curriculum could be made. The possible differences in the caring relationships between close friends and other people were introduced at this stage as well. This led to the development of the second research question, which is comprised of two parts.

2. Is there a difference between outdoor education and other classes at school in the caring that occurs between: (a) a student and his/her close friends and (b) a student and other people who are not his/her close friends?
Answers to these questions would provide an answer to the main research question.

**Overview of Method**

The research design used in this study was developed in response to the perceived demands of each research question. Methods of data collection fall into two broad categories: qualitative and quantitative.

... qualitative and quantitative methods are tools, and their utility depends on their power to bear upon the research questions asked.

(Kvale, S., 1996, p. 69)

A comparison of the two styles is provided by W. Lawrence Neuman (1997, p. 329) in Table 1:

**Table 1 - A Comparison Of Quantitative And Qualitative Research Methods.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative</th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Test hypothesis that the researcher begins with.</em></td>
<td><em>Capture and discover meaning once the researcher becomes immersed in the Data.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts are in the form of distinct variables.</td>
<td>Concepts are in the form of themes, motifs, generalizations, taxonomies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Measures are systematically created before data collection and are standardized.</em></td>
<td><em>Measures are created in an ad hoc manner and are often specific to the individual setting or researcher.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data are in the form of numbers from precise measurement.</td>
<td>Data are in the form of words from documents, observations, transcripts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Theory is largely causal and deductive.</em></td>
<td><em>Theory can be causal or noncausal and is often inductive.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures are standard, and replication is assumed.</td>
<td>Research procedures are particular, and replication is very rare.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further to the distinction made in the table, Neuman describes the two approaches from the perspective of the researcher.

A quantitative researcher assumes that he or she can conceptualize sociological concepts as variables, and that he or she can develop objective, precise measures with numbers that capture important features of the social world. By contrast, a qualitative researcher focuses on subjective meanings, definitions, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of specific cases. He or she attempts to capture aspects of the social world (e.g., sights, odors, atmosphere) for which it is difficult to develop precise measures expressed as numbers.

(Neuman, W.L., 1997, p. 329)

It was decided that both qualitative and quantitative techniques would be employed in this study in order to answer the research questions posed, although the quantitative method was used to collect the data which were most significant in answering the main research question: Is outdoor education the best context within the school for students to experience caring relationships? This use of both approaches concurrently has been supported by Matthew Miles and A. Michael Huberman (1994, p. 40), "... we have to face the fact that numbers and words are both needed if we are to understand the world."

The combined use of both styles in the one study has been attempted historically (Bogdan, R., Biklen, S.K., 1992, p. 7) and viewed positively
(Neuman, W.L., 1997, p. 14). Steinar Kvale makes the point that the whole of the research process combines the two approaches.

An investigation starts with a qualitative analysis of the existing knowledge about a phenomenon and the development of qualitative concepts and hypotheses of the specific study. The phases of data collection and data analysis that follow can be mainly qualitative or quantitative, often with interaction. The final phase, reporting the results, is predominantly qualitative: furthermore, tables and correlation coefficients require qualitative interpretations of their meanings.

(Kvale, S., 1996, p. 69)

This study combines the two styles in such a way that the qualitative style, searching for a detailed and relevant definition of the concept of caring, supports the quantitative style, which uses the concept of caring as a variable and compares it in two contexts, with the additional variable of friendship.

All aspects of the methodology, as detailed in the following sections, was scrutinized and deemed acceptable by the relevant Ethics Committee at the University of Melbourne.

**Investigating the First Research Question**

It was decided that the first research question:

*What constitutes "caring" for students, when it is between peers?*
required the collection of data utilising qualitative methods. This was because this question seemed to require a more inductive process in order for a satisfactory answer to be established. Referring to the distinctions made by Neuman in Table 1 above:

- the process involved the collection of the data in interviews such that they were in the form of transcripts;
- meaning was captured and discovered once the researcher had become immersed in the data;
- concepts were identified in the form of themes;
- measures were specific to the individual setting and researcher;
- analysis included extracting themes from the data.

One aspect of the research process used in answering this question which was more quantitative in nature is that the research procedures were particular and replication may be possible. The procedure followed was that of psychological phenomenology (Giorgi, A., 1985).

The qualitative approach was employed to determine a definition of caring. Within this approach there are a number of possible strategies. Five major methods are referred to by John Creswell (1998): biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. A basic form of the psychological interpretation of the phenomenological method was chosen for this aspect of the study. This method was chosen as it lends itself to the description of meaning.

... a phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon.

(Creswell, J., 1998, p. 51)
Within phenomenology there are various approaches, the psychological being one. The psychological approach focuses on individual experiences, rather than group experiences (Creswell, J., 1998, p. 53).

The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions, general or universal meanings are derived, in other words the essences or structures of the experience.

(Moustakas, C., 1994, p. 13)

Much of the development of the psychological phenomenological approach can be attributed to Amedeo Giorgi (1985). According to Giorgi, the psychological phenomenological approach contains four analytical steps.

The method contains four essential steps; expressed most generally they are as follows: (1) One reads the entire description [that is, the transcript of the focused interview] in order to get a general sense of the whole statement. (2) Once the sense of the whole has been grasped, the researcher goes back to the beginning and reads through the text once more with the specific aim of discriminating "meaning units" from within a psychological perspective and with a focus on the phenomenon being researched. (3) Once "meaning units" have been delineated, the researcher then goes through all of the meaning units and expresses the psychological insight contained in them more directly. This is especially true of the "meaning units" most revelatory of the phenomenon under consideration. (4) Finally, the researcher synthesizes all of the transformed meaning units into a consistent statement regarding the subject's experience. This is
usually referred to as the structure of the experience and can be expressed at a number of levels.

(Giorgi, A., 1985, p. 10)

Preceding, and leading up to, the execution of Giorgi’s first step is the collection of the data. This was achieved in this study via the use of in-depth interviews. These interviews aimed to elucidate the phenomenon from the experience of the subject.

The purpose of the qualitative research interview as discussed here is to understand themes of the lived daily world from the subjects' own perspectives. The structure of the research interview comes close to an everyday conversation, but as a professional interview it involves a specific approach and technique of questioning. Technically, the qualitative research interview is semistructured: It is neither an open conversation nor a highly structured questionnaire. It is conducted according to an interview guide that focuses on certain themes and that may include suggested questions. The interview is usually transcribed, and the written text together with the tape recording are material for the subsequent interpretation of meaning.

(Kvale, S., 1996, p. 27)

This interview process was followed in this study. Each interview was structured by two questions:

1. Please describe for me as fully as possible one situation in which another student in Year 9 cared for you. This situation should be related to school.
2. Please describe for me as fully as possible one situation in which you
cared for another student in Year 9. This situation should be related to
school.

Students were presented with these questions at the minimum a few days
before the interview so that they could begin thinking about them. The
questions were built upon during the interview in order to elicit more
information in terms of the descriptions of the situations. Six interviews were
conducted. The subjects were selected at random, three boys and three girls,
using a random number sequence, from those students who had consented
to being part of the study. Three boys and three girls were selected to avoid
gender becoming another possible variable. This selection process differs
from that normally employed in phenomenological studies, and more closely
represents that used in quantitative style research projects. Subjects for
phenomenological studies are more commonly chosen based on their ability
to provide detailed description of the phenomenon under investigation.

Subjects are chosen who are able to function as informants by
providing rich descriptions of the experience being investigated.

(Polkinghorne, D., 1989, p. 47)

The number of subjects in a phenomenological study can vary widely. Six
students were selected for the study because it was felt that this number
would provide enough information on which to determine a basic meaning of
the phenomenon.

The number of subjects selected for phenomenologically based
studies varies considerably. At one end of the continuum is van
Kaam's (1969) use of 325 written descriptions from high school
students in his study on the experience of "really feeling
understood"... At the other end is Konig's (1979) use of three subjects to generate the data for his study of the experience of "being suspicious".

(Polkinghorne, D., 1989, p. 48)

Each interview was taped on audiotape and then transcribed. Transcriptions were all performed by one person, not the researcher, with the instructions to transcribe the interviews verbatim. This stipulation was important as the transcriptions then became the data for further analysis, more than the taped interviews or the memory of each interview itself. The process of transcription can alter the data as it involves moving from one symbolic medium to another.

Transcribing involves translating from an oral language, with its own set of rules, to a written language with another set of rules. Transcripts are not copies or representations of some original reality, they are interpretative constructions that are useful tools for given purposes. Transcripts are decontextualized conversations, they are abstractions, as topographical maps are abstractions from the original landscape from which they are derived.

(Kvale, S., 1996, p. 165)

Once available in transcript form, the data were than analysed following Giorgi's psychological phenomenological method outlined above. Meaning units relevant to the theme of caring were identified for each interview and possible interpretations of each meaning unit were developed. Each interpretation was presented to the participants, alongside the relevant meaning unit, for verification. Participants were asked to pass judgement on the researcher's interpretation of each meaning unit. This judgement was in reference to the precision of the interpretation of the researcher in
extrapolating a specific meaning from the description provided by the participant in the interview.

This technique is considered by Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 314) to be "the most critical technique for establishing credibility." This approach, writ large in most qualitative studies, involves taking data, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions back to the participants so that they can judge the accuracy and credibility of the account.


The interpretations of the meaning units relevant to caring were then used in the construction of a questionnaire for application in a survey.

**Investigating the Second Research Question.**

The quantitative approach was employed to answer the second research question:

*Is there a difference between outdoor education and other classes at school in the caring that occurs between: (a) a student and his/her close friends and (b) a student and other people who are not his/her close friends?*

This approach was used because it allowed a larger number of participants to be involved, as compared with the interview strategy used in answering the first research question. Referring to the distinctions made by Neuman in Table 1 above:

- the study began with a question from which hypotheses were derived and the aim was to test these;
- distinct variables needed to be defined so that the test which was developed specifically isolated these variables;
the measures were created before data collection and the main form of the data was as numbers;
the method was created such that the ability to replicate the study is a possibility;
analysis was conducted by using statistics and discussing how the information they reveal relates to the hypotheses.

The strategy employed in the quantitative style was that of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed using the results of the method applied to the first research question. Each experiential component of the caring phenomenon identified was incorporated into two reciprocal statements. Two reciprocal statements were used to take into account the understanding developed by Nel Noddings (1992, p. 15) that caring is a relation based on interdependence, rather than a one way expression of feeling via action. A carer and a cared-for are required. In this caring relation Year 9 students care for their Year 9 peers and are cared for by their Year 9 peers. An example of the reciprocal statements as used in this study is:

- I helped other people when I saw that they were in need.
- Other people helped me when they saw that I was in need.

Each experiential component identified in the qualitative approach in answer to the first research question was used in the development of a pair of reciprocal statements. Twenty two components of caring were identified leading to the development of forty four statements. These statements were converted into questions via the use of Likert scales. Likert scales were developed historically to provide an ordinal level of measure of a person's attitude; ordinal measures indicate a difference, plus the categories can be ordered or ranked (Neuman, 1997, p. 147, 159). The Likert scale used in this
study was the five rank order: always, often, sometimes, rarely, never. This scale was applied to each caring component statement to create a question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I helped other people when I saw that they were in need -</th>
<th>always often sometimes rarely never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other people helped me when they saw that I was in need -</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each question was then applied independently to outdoor education and to classes at school. The Likert scale was duplicated for each different context:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARING</th>
<th>- in outdoor education:</th>
<th>- in classes at school:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I helped other people when I saw that they were in need -</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other people helped me when they saw that I was in need -</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The issue of friendship was another variable which needed to be taken into consideration in the construction of the questionnaire. The importance of friendship as a context for the development of caring attitudes and behaviours has been identified (Youniss, J., Smollar, J., 1985, p. 94). The "close friendship - other people" dichotomy referred to in the research question resulted in the questionnaire being structured as two parts, one which focused on close friends and another which focused on other people. In the first part of the questionnaire, entitled "Close Friends and Caring", each statement derived from the answers to the first research question were completed using "close friends" as the relational partner to the individual.

Part 1 - Close Friends and Caring
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARING</th>
<th>- in outdoor education:</th>
<th>- in classes at school:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I helped my close friends when I saw that they were in need -</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My close friends helped me when they saw that I was in need -</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second part of the questionnaire was titled "Other People and Caring", with each question focusing on "other people" as the relational partners to the individual.

**Part 2 - Other People and Caring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARING</th>
<th>- in outdoor education:</th>
<th>- in classes at school:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I helped other people when I saw that they were in need -</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other people helped me when they saw that I was in need -</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
<td>always often sometimes rarely never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questionnaire was administered to forty two students. This number was arrived at via the use of all those students who consented to be part of the study. Students completed the questionnaire in a school classroom, being exempted from a normal class during their school day. A small number of students were absent on the day. The questionnaire was mailed to them and they were asked to complete and return it. The timing of the administration of the questionnaire was such that it fell after students had completed their outdoor education five day course. Because each class completes outdoor education as a unit, one class at a time, the time between their outdoor education course and the administration of the questionnaire was, in some
cases, up to two school terms. In other cases it was relatively recent. Instructions were provided to participants to help them complete the questionnaire correctly. These instructions included information about the anonymity and non-assessment aspects of the questionnaire, how the questionnaire was developed, the interpretation of the terms "close friend" and "other people", and how to complete the questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix 2.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited by a number of factors and issues connected with the research process. The process of determining the research questions, through constructing the methodology to analysing the results involves decision making in an often ambiguous context. There are advantages and disadvantages to each course of action and a route must be determined which most beneficially navigates the many possible choices, delivering an outcome which is ethically supportable.

There are a range of limitations attributable to both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis procedures generally. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to detail all of these limitations. The limitations specific to the particular qualitative and quantitative methods used in this study will be discussed.

Specific Qualitative Limitations

The methodological process of psychological phenomenology relies heavily on the interpretative abilities and perspectives of the researcher. The researcher attempts to validate the data by presenting his/her interpretations
as to the meaning of participants comments back to the participants and asking them for comment. This process itself may involve certain relational complexities which may bias the data. In this study the relation between the teacher as researcher and the students involved is obviously not an equal one. Students are culturally bound to believe that the work of the teacher is correct, or more accurate than interpretations they themselves have made.

The psychological phenomenological process is one which can be employed to develop detailed interpretations of particular phenomena. In this study the process was applied at a very shallow level of meaning interpretation. No generalised meaning incorporating all the components identified by the participants was attempted (step 4 in the process identified by Giorgi). As there were few overlaps in the specific experiential components identified it could be assumed that further components could have been identified given a larger number of interviews and interviewing procedures which went to more depth than was achieved. The process of identifying and prescribing meaning to particular points made in the interviews could also have been applied in more depth. Content validity was thus compromised because the definition of caring, as expressed in the experiential components identified, and used as a measure in the questionnaire, was not necessarily complete.

A further point is that, as subjects are normally chosen in the psychological phenomenological process for their interest and ability to investigate the phenomenon, as informants (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 47), the random method of selection of interview subjects used in this study may have limited the quality of the data collected.

*Specific Quantitative Limitations*
The second part of the data collection process, based on the use of a questionnaire, was limited by specifics related to the sampling process. The sampling process for the administration of the questionnaire was not random but made use of every student who had consented to be a part of the study. This non-random procedure may have resulted in data that were statistically skewed. Students who consented to being part of the study could have been representative of the population, however it is more likely that they were not representative, being students who were more willing to take on extra responsibilities in their daily work schedules. One reason for the use of all consenting students was the relatively low number of students who were willing to take part, caused in part by the expectation of extra work requirements for those involved.

Forty two participants consented to complete the questionnaire. Of these only thirty seven were completed without any errors. The total population size of Year 9 students at St Paul's was 150. The sample size was approximately 25%. This is a small sample size relative to the recommended sampling ratio for small populations.

One principle of sampling sizes is, the smaller the population, the bigger the sampling ratio has to be for an accurate sample. For small populations (under 1000), a researcher needs a large sampling ratio (about 30 percent).

(Neuman, 1997, p. 222)

Celia Reaves (1992, p. 338) determined that a population size of 150 requires a sample size of 110 (approximately 75%) to enable an accuracy of 95%. Generalising from the sample to the population of St Paul's Year 9 students would not be an accurate generalisation.
A further difficulty is the length of time between the student's experience of
the outdoor education course and the administration of the questionnaire.
For some students the questionnaire was administered two school terms
after their outdoor education subject was complete.

By their very nature questions asking about past behaviours assume
accurate memory for events as well as a willingness to report these to
a researcher.

(Breakwell, G., Hammond, S., Fife-Shaw, C., 1995, p. 185)

Students questionnaire responses may have been inaccurate
representations of their experiences because of the this time difference.

Construct validity of the questionnaire has not been determined. The
questionnaire has only been used once, and that is in this study. Consistency
of the questionnaire in providing a measure of caring for close friends, other
people, in outdoor education and in other classes at school, is yet to be
ascertained.

Issues of Triangulation

The blending of both qualitative and quantitative methods was achieved in a
manner which provided for very little overlap in the way each variable was
investigated. The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods to
investigate the same variable is known as triangulation.

In social research, triangulation means using different types of
measures, or data collection techniques, in order to examine the same
variable.

(Neuman, 1997, p. 151)
The lack of overlap meant that data collected were not verified by any other data collection or analysis techniques within the study. Variables were investigated using only one method. Triangulation was not successfully applied.

*Issues of Context Specificity*

Generalising from the sample to the population of Year 9 students at St Paul's has been shown to be statistically inaccurate due to the size of the sample relative to the population. To generalise beyond the population of students at St Paul's would also be difficult because the sampling process only included students who had experienced the one style of outdoor education course.

Outdoor education curriculum at Year 9 at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School could be classed as relatively unique in that no uniform curriculum exists for outdoor education courses in any population beyond a particular school or commercial educational organisation delivering outdoor education curriculum. This situation would require broad sampling techniques to enable generalisations to be relevant beyond the school or organisation. Another aspect of the Year 9 outdoor education curriculum at St Paul's is that the explicit curriculum focus is on caring for other people. This focus should deliver positive results in the area of caring for others. Further details about the outdoor education curriculum at Year 9 at St Paul's can be seen in Appendix 1.

Another complication related to the context is that the researcher was also the teacher of the outdoor education subject which was being investigated. The researcher could therefore be said to have a vested interest in seeing
particular outcomes achieved. This may have resulted in some bias effecting stages of the research process.
CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS

What is Caring?

The first research question asks: What constitutes "caring" for students, when it is between peers?

The students interviewed described a range of situations which they thought were caring. These situations were in two categories, consistent with the view of caring as a relation, and as distinguished in the interview questions: caring for another student in Year 9 and being cared for by another student in Year 9. The meaning units and the interpretations provided by the researcher, as corroborated by the relevant participant, are shown in Table 2 and Table 3 below. These tables provide a view of the interpretative style of the researcher.

Table 2 - Caring For Another Student in Year 9.

| Student: | This one is PE [physical education]. I thought about it. I was in PE and there was groups and there was one person left over 'cause everyone was in two's and Michael didn't have a group, so me and Andrew asked him to join our group. So he was included with us and it was a group of three and we played the sport together. |
| Researcher interpretation: | You were including Michael so that he didn't feel left out. |

------------------------------

Student: I guess one of the times that happened more recently was when one of my friends was really, really upset because she had found that she had this condition that she might become a hunchback unless
she had this operation, but that might not help it anyway. So I was just sort of sitting there and helping her and telling her that everything was OK and that nobody would care if she was a hunchback and everything like that. So I don't know how great she feels about it now because nothing you can really say can make that better, but I think that it was sort of important that I was there for her.

Researcher interpretation: You were comforting other people when they weren't feeling happy.

******************************

Student: Yeah well, This is another one with John. He's not too clever at Maths where as I'm, you know, have been sort of at the top of the class for the last few years. And he was having a bit of trouble studying with his last exam. So I went up to his place one Saturday and just took him right through the whole lot. There is about four chapters on the exam.

Researcher interpretation: You helped him when he was having trouble with something.

******************************

Student: I can't remember the chapters now. I think that it was algebra, there is the first four topics that we did at the start of the year. For the first semester Maths exam, and we went over those and just the diagnostic tests at the end of the chapter and went through the exercises and showed him the formulas and how to work it out. I didn't just show him the answer, like you know gave him the steps to work it out.

Researcher interpretation: You helped him to understand what was going on.

******************************
Student: I'll have to think about that one. There is a few times. I suppose with Mary again, there was this one time where she got really low in her Maths test, it was quite recent actually, and she just like felt really down about herself like she was just, like I suppose you could say that she was sort of a bit jealous of me 'cause I was getting better marks than her at that time. But you know she was feeling really down 'cause she wasn't doing as good as what she normally does. She was getting lower marks and that. And I just kind of like, tried to help her and like I really tried to help her in class and like show her a few of the questions. And really, really tried to help her out and I really sort of encouraged her a bit and really tried to understand what it was like. I mean like I only got 56% on my English exam recently so I know what it is like to get a low mark you know when you are really trying to strive to do your best and that and you get a really low mark and a get really low outcome...

Researcher interpretation: You were helping her when she was having trouble with something.

Researcher interpretation: You were encouraging her.

******************************************************************************

Student: Yeah and really like so that she understood it fully, like, 'cause some of the time you sit there and the teacher is going through it and she doesn't have time to stop. To sort of elaborate with you. So I just sat with Mary and said look, like this is how you do it.

Researcher interpretation: You were trying to help her to understand what was going on.

******************************************************************************

Student: Yeah Mary was doing heaps better. I think that she understood it then, so it really helps out when you really understand something. I can understand like with English, I'm not very good with my paragraphing and that Mary helps me with that also. So I'll scratch your back and you scratch mine sort of thing.
You were trying to help her to improve what she was doing.

Student: Well there have been similar, like at camp there have been people that have needed help with all of like getting their bags ready and packing their bags and you find that you do it much quicker if you all help each other out and work together talk about it together. So I think that I've helped other people with like going up and checking like everyone has got their bag ready and that type of thing.

Researcher interpretation: You were helping them with their things.

Student: Outdoor Ed. yeah. Mainly with everything. I've tried to make sure that I'm putting in my own amount of time to everybody.

Researcher interpretation: You were doing your fair share of the work.

Student: Yeah, it took me a while to think of this one. In PE last year, no this year sorry, well we were playing this soccer game and if it touches the ground its soccer and its like netball if it's off the ground. And Andrew cleaned up Lisa and like we could have got a goal, but I went over and was helping her and she was like on the ground.

Researcher interpretation: You helped her when she was hurt.

Student: I was just, I went over and was patting her on the back and stuff and helping her out and we could have got a goal, but...
interpretation: You helped her even though you missed out on an opportunity to help yourself.

Table 3 - Being Cared For By Another Student In Year 9.

Student: Yes. When I was sick for about four days and I wasn't at school. I didn't tell anyone at school to collect work for me or anything, and Norman and Chris, they both work together, they collected work for me.

Researcher interpretation: They were trying to help you when you were sick.

Student: Yeah well I sort of thought on camp when Gary, when he was setting up the tent and everything like that, he was like checking on everybody and stuff.

Researcher interpretation: He was checking to see how people were feeling.

Student: Everybody was pretty stuffed and cold and nobody really wanted to be there. Everyone was just standing round under the tarp feeling pretty miserable. But Gary got out there and Gary set up the tent.

Researcher interpretation: He was helping other people when nobody else really wanted to help.
Student: Because I think that he just saw that everybody needed something and he thought that nobody else is going to do it so I will.

Researcher interpretation: He was doing something to help when he saw that other people were in need.

***************************

Student: Yeah, like going out into the wind and stuff. And I think he was one of the last people. Like he didn't go on the first four wheel drive out. He waited and packed up and everything, which I thought was pretty unbelievable that he would do that. 'cause he was stuck for another hour I think, than everybody else.

Researcher interpretation: He was putting the needs of other people before his own needs.

***************************

Student: And I lost all my fitness in that, and we were doing a few laps of the one point six kilometre track that we do and everyone just took off and I'm just saying could someone stay back with me and they go oh no, no you can keep up. And then just the rest of the group took off and then John sort of stayed back with me until I could sort of slowly jogging catch up with the other guys.

Researcher interpretation: He was keeping you company.

***************************

Student: 'Cause at the time I wasn't really well enough to keep up with them and that. That's probably one of the main things that I can remember.

Researcher interpretation: He was looking after you when you weren't well
Interviewer: Good. So basically what happened was that you were feeling that you couldn't keep up with the group on the run, so John saw you were having difficulty. Did you yell out to him, or did he just see that you were having difficulty?

Student: He just came back to me.

Interviewer: So you didn't ask him to.

Student: I didn't ask him.

Interviewer: He just came back and then jogged with you?

Student: Yeah

Researcher interpretation: He helped you without having to be asked.

Student: Right, recently I lost my lap-top. I left it outside the room that I was working in at the time and it wasn't there when I came out to pick it up again. And I was quite distressed and I found it really hard to try to find it. I'd been about everywhere trying to find it and no one's come up with it, but all my friends in class and that have just been supporting me and saying don't worry you'll be OK and we'll find it and we'll help you out and like I'd been really worried about it and they really just sort of picked me up a bit by saying don't worry and we'll help you find it. Mary's been coming around with me and she's been walking around to try and find it.

Researcher interpretation: They were supporting you.

Researcher interpretation: They were trying to make you feel better.
Student: Yeah well like at lunch time she's come down with me to student services before and like we went to my Home Eco teacher, and she's just like really helping me out to try and find it.

Reseacher interpretation: She was giving of her time to help you.

***********************

Student: Yeah same with Abby. Abby's been walking around with me and helping me as well and Katherine and Bessie have just been saying don't worry about it you'll be fine in class.

Reseacher interpretation: She was reassuring you.

***********************

Student: OK well I've got two. One topic would be giving up your own time to help another person and people have done that for me, when not long ago we have been doing a lot of exam work and homework and everything and I've been having trouble with a bit of it and not as in I can't do it, but I've been having trouble keeping up with, "Gosh I've got homework" you know and people have taken up their time, like my friends have taken up their time to come up to me and say, "Look I know how you feel and if you need any help with any of it" and we've talked to each other on the phone about our homework and then we've decided you know on Friday night we'll go to a movie or whatever and get away from the homework for a while, but then at the same time we feel good about our homework, do you know what a mean. We've helped each other to get through it.

Reseacher interpretation: They were giving their time to help you.

***********************

Student: Well not long ago I was having a bit of trouble with my homework and home and sitting down by myself and someone that I don't
usually talk to came up to me and approached me and said "Look are you feeling OK, are you coping with everything and do you need someone to talk to?" and I'm like oh wow someone cared for me and I know that people are there caring about you and then when people do that to you, you feel like doing the same to them because I don't know...

Researcher interpretation: They were checking to see if you were feeling OK.

Researcher interpretation: They were checking to see if you needed someone to talk to.

--------------------

Student: Yeah, you feel like you want to, you feel, you know that they made you happy and you feel I'd like to make someone feel happy like that.

Researcher interpretation: They were trying to make you feel happy.

--------------------

Student: Yeah, and I had no idea 'cause I didn't know that it was on because I was away for a couple of days, like I was sick and yeah well I had no idea and Kelly she like really helped me out, like she helped me study and stuff like the day before and after.

Researcher interpretation: She was helping you when you were sick.

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Student: She just sat like, 'cause I didn't understand it and I like asked her and she said "Yeah that's cool!" and she like showed me all the ways to do it and the different answers and ...

Researcher interpretation: She helped you with the work you were doing.

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Interviewer: Oh great that's pretty nice of her. So you didn't ask her she just did it?
Student: I said like I was struggling and she like said, "I'll help".
Researcher interpretation: She helped you without being asked.

In summary, the experiential components of caring as described by students and interpreted by the researcher are listed below in Table 4:

Table 4 - Experiential Components Of Caring.

1. helping someone when they are sick
2. including someone so that they don't feel left out
3. checking to see how someone was feeling
4. helping someone when no-one else wants to help
5. helping someone when you see they are in need
6. putting the needs of someone else before your own
7. comforting someone when they aren't feeling happy
8. keeping someone company
9. helping someone without having to be asked
10. helping someone when they are having trouble with something
11. helping someone to understand something
12. supporting someone
13. trying to make someone feel better
14. giving your time to help someone
15. reassuring someone
16. encouraging someone
17. helping someone improve what they are doing
18. checking to see if someone is feeling OK

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19. checking to see if someone needs someone to talk to
20. trying to make someone feel happy and that someone cares for them
21. helping someone with their belongings
22. doing your fair share of work to help someone

The psychological phenomenological research process, as used in this study, was not taken to its end point: a coherent statement which represents the structure of caring. A more general and incomplete application of this process has been attempted by Barbara Tarlow (1996, p. 57) who, following eighty-four interviews identified eight caring themes which she claimed constituted overlapping phases of the caring process: time, be there, talking, sensitivity, acting in the best interest of the other, caring as feeling, caring as doing, reciprocity. Tarlow states that the caring process is structured as follows:

To begin caring, there must be people present, time to do the tasks of caring, and a vehicle for facilitating the process - talking. Next, the caring person has to be sensitive to the needs of the other, act in the best interest of the other, be emotionally invested, and, most important, do helpful things for the other. The person cared for must then respond in such a way as to perpetuate the process, which involves reciprocity.

(Tarlow, B., 1996, p. 57)

Each of these themes can be applied to the basic meaning units about caring identified in this study. The reciprocity theme, while not directly present in the meaning units, is approached via the questioning process used in the interviews. Caring was investigated as a "caring for" and "being cared for by" relational concept. The results of the investigation of the first research question, however, stand as those basic meaning units represented in Table
4. These themes identified by Tarlow can be more easily represented as a list, as in Table 5 below:

Table 5 - A Summary Interpretation Of Tarlow’s (1996) Themes Of The Caring Process.

Time - to do the tasks of caring;
Being - there present for the other;
Talking - a vehicle for facilitating the process;
Sensitivity - to the needs of the other;
Acting - in the best interests of the other;
Feeling - emotionally invested;
Doing - things to care for the other;
Reciprocity - response from the cared for to perpetuate the process.

Differences in Levels of Caring Between Outdoor Education and Other Classes

The results from the investigation of the first research question were used to construct a questionnaire. This questionnaire was applied to the investigation of the second research question. The second research question asks: Is there a difference between outdoor education and other classes at school in the caring that occurs between: (a) a student and his/her close friends and (b) a student and other people who are not his/her close friends?

This research question was expressed as two types of hypothesis. One type, the null hypothesis \( (H_0) \), states that there will be no change following the actions conducted in the experiment. The second type, the alternative hypothesis \( (H_1) \), states that there will be some form of change following the
actions of the experiment, the treatment. The aim of the experiment is to
determine which hypothesis should be rejected.

Part (a) of the second research question can be expressed as:

Null Hypothesis: \( H_0 \)
Mean of "caring for close friends in outdoor education" = Mean of "caring for close friends in other classes at school".

Alternative Hypothesis: \( H_1 \)
Mean of "caring for close friends in outdoor education" \( \neq \) Mean of "caring for close friends in other classes at school".

Part (b) of the second research question can be expressed as:

Null Hypothesis: \( H_0 \)
Mean of "caring for other people in outdoor education" = Mean of "caring for other people in other classes at school".

Alternative Hypothesis: \( H_1 \)
Mean of "caring for other people in outdoor education" \( \neq \) Mean of "caring for other people in other classes at school".

A t-test was used to compare the means of the questionnaire responses, comparing the means of the responses for outdoor education and the means of the responses for other classes for both research questions: close friends and other people. The t-test provides a t statistic which represents the difference between the two means. This allows the determination of the probability, utilising the t distribution, that the means could be the same.
A t-test (as opposed to a z-test) was used because the variability of the total population was not known, only the variability of the sample. The population variability is assumed to be a normal distribution. The sample variability approaches the normal distribution: the larger the sample the closer the approximation. The degrees of freedom is the measure used to express how closely the t distribution approximates a normal distribution. The degrees of freedom measure is closely related to sample size.

A two tailed t-test was used as the direction of the effect was not known for certain. If the direction of the effect had been known for certain (positive or negative), for example if the mean of the outdoor education responses was definitely to be more positive, a one tailed t-test could have been used, however in a two tailed t-test it is more difficult to reject the null hypothesis, making the test more stringent.

The t statistic is calculated as a ratio being:

\[
\frac{\text{the difference between the two means}}{\text{the difference expected by chance (standard error)}}
\]

A particular t statistic thus appears at a particular place along the t distribution (approximating the normal distribution). A value of t close to zero would equate to a situation in which the two means were quite similar, or so similar that any difference could not be said to have occurred outside the realms of chance. A large value of t, be it positive or negative, suggests a situation in which the two means are quite different, even allowing for the occurrence of chance.

For a two tailed t-test, the percentage of the area beneath the t distribution curve which lies beyond (further towards the tails) a particular t statistic (positive and negative) is equated with the probability that the two means
being compared could be equal. The closer the t statistic is to zero (centre of the distribution) the more area is beyond this t statistic in both positive and negative directions. If t = 0 then the probability that the two means are equal would be 100%. A large value of t would equate with a much lower probability that the two means are equal.

The t-test thus provides the probability (p) that the means being compared are the same. A result of p=1 (100% chance) would equate to two identical means. The lower the value of p, the less likely that the means are identical.

The significance of the p value in rejecting or accepting the null hypothesis is determined via the status of the p value in relation to an alpha level. Alpha levels statistically define the term "very unlikely" in the phrase "it is very unlikely that the null hypothesis is correct". "By convention alpha levels are very small probabilities, commonly .05 (5%), .01 (1%), or .001 (0.1%)" (Gravetter, F., Wallnau, L., 1996, p. 234). If the value of p is less than a particular (common) alpha level then it would be said that it is very unlikely that the null hypothesis is correct.

The basic statistical results for this study are presented below.

**Part (a) second research question.**

Mean of "caring for close friends in outdoor education"  = 170.0945946
Mean of "caring for close friends in other classes at school"  = 169.9459459
Sample size = 37
\[ t \text{ statistic} = 0.048413073 \]
\[ p \text{ (two-tail)} = 0.961654639 \]

\[ t(36) = 0.05, \ p=0.9, \ \text{two tailed} \]
The null hypothesis (mean of "caring for close friends in outdoor education" = mean of "caring for close friends in other classes at school") is NOT REJECTED in this case as it is very likely that the null hypothesis is correct. This implies that caring for "close friends" is virtually the same in outdoor education and other classes.

Part (b) second research question.

Mean of "caring for other people in outdoor education" = 154.2027027
Mean of "caring for other people in other classes at school" = 136.2567568
Sample size = 37
\( t \) statistic = 4.935601901
\( p \) (two-tail) = 0.0000182887

\( t(36) = 4.9, p<0.001, \text{ two tailed} \)

The null hypothesis (mean of "caring for other people in outdoor education" = mean of "caring for other people in other classes at school") is REJECTED in this case as it is very unlikely that the null hypothesis is correct, and very likely that the alternative hypothesis is correct. This implies that the level of caring for "other people" in outdoor education is significantly higher than caring for "other people" in other classes.

Additional calculations were carried out to investigate whether there were any differences within each of the two contexts: outdoor education and other classes, between caring for close friends and caring for other people. The hypothesis statements were:

For the outdoor education context:
Null Hypothesis: $H_0$
Mean of "caring for close friends in outdoor education" = Mean of "caring for other people in outdoor education".

Alternative Hypothesis: $H_1$
Mean of "caring for close friends in outdoor education" ≠ Mean of "caring for other people in outdoor education".

Mean of "caring for close friends in outdoor education" = 170.0945946
Mean of "caring for other people in outdoor education" = 154.2027027
Sample size = 37
$t$ statistic = 2.559487283
$p$ (two-tail) = 0.0148281

$t(36) = 2.56, p<0.05$, two tailed

The null hypothesis (mean of "caring for close friends in outdoor education" = mean of "caring for other people in outdoor education") is NOT REJECTED in this case as it is very likely that the null hypothesis is correct. *This implies that the level of caring for "close friends" and the level of caring for "other people" are very similar in outdoor education*

For the other classes context:

Null Hypothesis: $H_0$
Mean of "caring for close friends in other classes at school" = Mean of "caring for other people in other classes at school".

Alternative Hypothesis: $H_1$
Mean of "caring for close friends in other classes at school" ≠ Mean of "caring for other people in other classes at school".

Mean of "caring for close friends in other classes at school" = 169.9459459
Mean of "caring for other people in other classes at school" = 136.2567568
Sample size = 37
\[ t \text{ statistic} = 6.098187513 \]
\[ p \text{ (two-tail)} = 0.0000005138 \]

\[ t(36) = 6.1, \ p < 0.001, \text{ two tailed} \]

The null hypothesis (mean of "caring for close friends in other classes at school" = mean of "caring for other people in other classes at school") is REJECTED in this case as it is very unlikely that the null hypothesis is correct. This implies that the level of caring for "close friends" in other classes was significantly higher than the level of caring for "other people" in other classes.

Result Statements

These statistical results are summarised in the following statements:

- The level of caring for "close friends" is virtually the same in outdoor education and other classes.

- The level of caring for "other people" in outdoor education is significantly higher than caring for "other people" in other classes.
• The level of caring for "close friends" and the level of caring for "other people" are very similar in outdoor education.

• The level of caring for "close friends" in other classes is significantly higher than the level of caring for "other people" in other classes.
CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

The results achieved in this study reveal important aspects of the outdoor education context. It is important to remember at this stage that the design of the study does not allow for confident generalisation beyond the immediate context investigated. This stated, the implications for outdoor education teaching practice are meaningful because the particular context investigated yields results sought by other outdoor education teachers.

The results of this study support the thesis that outdoor education is the best context within the school for students to experience caring relationships and thus to learn about community. This was determined by investigation of student understanding of the term caring, which was described as a method for strengthening or achieving community, and investigation of student perception of differences between outdoor education and other classes at school in the caring that occurs between: (a) a student and his/her close friends and (b) a student and other people who are not his/her close friends.

When operating within the outdoor education context, student's caring for people other than their close friends was not deemed to be significantly different from student's caring for their close friends. This was different to the context of the normal classroom where student's caring for their close friends was significantly more common than their caring for people other than their close friends. Caring was thus much more uniform in outdoor education across all those involved in the group or class, and approached a level similar to that experienced between close friends.
Outdoor Education, Camping and the Classroom.

Following this outcome a sampling of seven students, three boys and four girls, was asked why this difference between outdoor education and other classes, in the area of the experience of caring, could possibly exist. The student written responses, which are recorded in full in Appendix 3, show a marked resemblance to the results of the work of Chenery (1991) when investigating camps. Chenery (1991, p. 94-103) identified twelve key ideas related to why attendance at camp promotes certain change in campers, following interviews with campers, staff, directors and alumni. In these interviews people were asked how they believed that camp was able to help campers change. Links can be made between the ideas deduced by Chenery and the views of the students participating in outdoor education. Examples of these links, where found, are portrayed below in Table 6, with excerpts from outdoor education students' responses placed alongside the relevant ideas of the Chenery research.

Table 6 - A Comparison Of The Chenery Research On How Camping Produces Change In Participants Juxtaposed With The Comments Of Outdoor Education Students About The Reasons Why Outdoor Education Is Different To Other Subjects At School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chenery ideas on how camp helps campers change.</th>
<th>Outdoor education student responses to why the outdoor education context is different.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. At camp you are away from your parents and you have to do it on your own, so you learn to.</td>
<td>&quot;[W]hen they’re out camping they haven’t got their parents and guardians to look after them. They’ve got the teachers, but sometimes they need more than that so they help each other out and rely on other people as well as themselves.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. At camp, there is no television, so you</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The simple living of camp creates resourcefulness and clarity in campers; the low tech environment requires campers to look inside for entertainment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Group living, with friends and counselors, encourages changes in campers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Positive role models influence changes in campers at camp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Camp's approach to learning and its activities and activity structures lead to growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Having to work together helps campers change at camp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Having time to listen, to talk, to reflect, to relax, to work with individuals, is a major element of the power of camp to help campers change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"When you're on camp you are trying to work as a group and get as much co-operation and help going, for the camp to be an enjoyable experience. Each person is depending on other people to help them with jobs like tents, cooking food, etc., so there is a sense of belonging for each person on the camp."

"I believe that outdoor education is different to normal classes in school because what we are taught on camp is put into practice. A lot of things we are taught during classes sometimes don't really have an impact on the individual person unless they go out there and experience for themselves, whereas at camp everything we are taught we experience therefore it has a larger impact."

"You cater for everyone's needs, you make everyone feel comfortable. You are not alone on outdoor education camp, you are considered by the rest of the group members as being part of the group. You have a responsibility to care and consider other people's needs and emotions. You depend on everyone putting in their fair share of help and ideas."

"You ... spend time with your outdoor education group and learn about their needs and how easy you can offend people."
9. The distinctive supportive environment of camp enables campers to change.

"In outdoor education we seem to act like different people around each other than we do at school; we sort of act like family. We all talk like we are all good friends when we are around the fire and this develops into everyone watching out for and caring for each other."

10. The fact that camp is experienced as fun helps campers change.

"When you are in the bush you want your week/camp to be enjoyable and you want to be always having fun instead of worrying about picking on people or putting them down. So I feel that we all care about how other people are feeling and most of the time try to make them feel wanted so that they can have an enjoyable week as well."

11. The opportunity to make choices helps campers change.

"Outdoor education is different to normal classroom activities because you group together to cook, decide on activities for the group that everyone is happy about."

12. Forums to discuss issues help campers learn and change.

"It also gives us a chance to be responsible; for example - we have to cook our own food, look after all our stuff, organise everything that we do, whereas at school everything is organised for us."

These comments reveal the close connection between the camping context and the outdoor education context. This relationship has been accepted for many years, as stated earlier by Freeberg and Taylor (1961). This similarity between the educational strategies that exist in camping and those identified by students, randomly chosen for interview following the determination of results of this study, is of great importance. The revelation, based on the responses of these outdoor education students, is that the teaching strategies which exist in the camping/outdoor education context do not exist in the "normal" school classroom. This result is indirectly corroborated by
Goodlad, who chaired a research investigation into more than 1000 classrooms in the United States in the 1970s.

Faced ultimately with taking charge of their own classrooms, it appears that large numbers of secondary teachers resort to practices designed to keep students passive and under control just at the time when adolescents should be taking more charge of their own education. The more "professional" values acquired are not forgotten, it appears. They are held in what often turns out to be a permanent state of abeyance... Thus, it appears that even teachers who have been exposed to new practices presumably related very positively to student achievement do not necessarily use them effectively in their classrooms. The irony in all this is that too few of the kinds of engagements we want young people to have with knowledge occur in the classroom setting.

(Goodlad, 1984, p. 192)

Goodlad’s comments are supported by Howard Gardner.

[T]eachers are often encouraged - at least at the rhetorical level - to take the initiative and to be forceful and imaginative in their teaching. In fact, however, they feel caught in a bind, for adhering to the regulations is so time consuming and exhausting that little time or energy remains for innovation. Risking censure or worse, a few teachers will ignore the regulations in order to pursue a more individualized program of instruction. Most teachers, however, will achieve an uneasy truce, with both their superiors and their students, by adopting "defensive teaching." Adhering to the rules, not making excessive demands on anyone (including themselves), asking students mostly to memorize definitions and lists rather than tackle
challenging problems, they will maintain control over their classrooms, but at the cost of educational inspiration.

(Gardner, 1991, p. 140-141)

The constraints of the school and classroom setting, caused by innumerable factors which are beyond the scope of this study, create a context within which teaching strategies which can achieve goals in the area of caring and community are difficult to put into place. It would appear that the outdoor education/camping context is unique in an educational sense in terms of what it can achieve and how it can accomplish these goals in this area of caring and community, when compared to what is achievable in the "normal" school classroom. This unique ability should place outdoor education at the top of the list of those subjects which schools could offer to achieve educational goals in the areas of caring and community, areas which many schools espouse as critically important to them as organisational values and educational objectives.

*Outdoor Education and Friendship*

A significant result of this study was that students cared for people other than their close friends in outdoor education to a level approaching that at which they cared for their close friends, both in outdoor education and other classes at school. This result suggest that the outdoor education context effects relationships positively. Comment from students Abigail and Robin, asked post the results of the study for reasons why the study would have arrived at this result (see Appendix 3) include some evidence for the notion that outdoor education improves student friendships in two ways: it helps students to make new friends and it helps them to strengthen the bonds with current friends.

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"Outdoor education is really good for making friends and getting to
know people better. I know that over the years I've made quite a few
friends on camp."

(Abigail)

"Outdoor education develops our understanding of our natural
environment and fellow friends."

(Robin)

The following comments from Jane and Susan point towards the fact that the
outdoor education context helps to remove some of the exclusivity which
often exists between friendship cliques.

"Outdoor education is different because you become closer as a
whole group, instead of just having little friendship groups."

(Jane)

"I think that people are more friendly and caring in outdoor education
because they aren't in their friendship groups which make them act
nastily to the people they don't particularly like."

(Susan)

Nigel makes an interesting comment which places the development of
friendship before, in time, the development of caring behaviours.

"We all talk like we are good friends when we are around the fire and
this then develops into everyone watching out and caring for each
other."

(Nigel)
All of these comments, along with the results of the study, point towards the outdoor education context being very conducive to the development of friendships based on an ethic of care. With the knowledge that close friendship is an important relational context for adolescents in terms of their social development (Youniss, Smollar, 1985), outdoor education becomes a significant subject for student's social development.

Community and Caring as the Missing Links in Outdoor Education

The philosophical foundations of outdoor education as an area of study have been questioned and discussed for decades (naming a representative sample of authors in chronological order: Freeberg and Taylor, 1961; Hammerman and Hammerman, 1968; Smith, 1970; Ford, 1981; McRae, 1990; Mortlock, 1994; Dahlgren and Szczepanski, 1998). Building on the metaphor of shallow and deep that has been applied to environmental education and environmentalism in general (Naess, 1973), Andrew Brookes asks critical questions about the shallow and the deep in outdoor education.

How much of outdoor education could be considered deep in the sense that it makes a unique contribution to serious educational problems?

(Brookes, A., 1993, p. 8)

Brookes questions the claims made about outdoor education in the general outdoor education literature.

Outdoor education promotes environmental awareness, that's deep, or Environmental Awareness, which is deeper. It's Experiential Education, which is unique and deep as well. But environmental
awareness covers everything from getting wet when a kayak capsizes (awareness of the river environment) through to university geography. Sitting through one of my lectures and staying awake is an experience, but not a particularly unique one. Most of the cliched claims made about the value of outdoor education are disposed of just as easily, although they may not often be challenged. At outdoor education conferences and in outdoor education journals, it is unusual to find serious questioning of the claims made about outdoor education.

(Brookes, A., 1993, p. 8)

Brookes summarizes his concerns with the claims made about the nature of outdoor education in Table 7, below.

Table 7 - A Comparison Of The Range Of Meanings Attributed To Outdoor Education And The Possibilities For Deep Outdoor Education (Brookes, A., 1993, p. 10).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning of &quot;outdoor education&quot;</th>
<th>Deep outdoor education?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to live and travel in the bush.</td>
<td>Gives us lots of content to teach, but takes it for granted that there are good reasons for bush travel. Does not provide such reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying topics or subjects relevant to bush travel/living (geography, ecology, history, physiology, skills acquisition, etc.)</td>
<td>These subjects are not unique to outdoor education. To claim these as deep educational content of outdoor education would be to reinvent existing subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to look after others in the bush.</td>
<td>Again, this is necessary if one is to take others to the bush, but does not justify taking others to the bush.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to teach in the outdoors.</td>
<td>If teaching outdoors has a deep contribution to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying or examining (as opposed to engaging in) outdoor education (e.g., studying adventure, or studying recreation).</td>
<td>To be taken seriously such study must assume that the value of bush travel is an open question. Such study may reveal there is no deep outdoor education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental science excursions, geography excursions, school visits to the park, the museum, etc.</td>
<td>These are established good teaching practices in these disciplines. There is nothing clever in re-labeling them &quot;outdoor education&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging in outdoor education; leading to either a unique form of knowledge (c.f. art as a unique form of knowledge) or a unique form of learning.</td>
<td>Deep outdoor education. But what is it?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brookes' questions the circular nature of the arguments which exist as justifications for the existence of outdoor education. The justification, identified by Brookes, which is most closely associated with caring is that which claims that outdoor education can be "learning how to look after others in the bush". Brookes argument is that learning how to look after others in the bush is necessary, but does not justify taking others to the bush, i.e. learning how to look after others in the bush would seem necessary only if one is to take others to the bush, so taking them to the bush to learn how to look after each other in the bush is a circular argument. The argument and the justification take on more meaning, and lose their circular nature, if we expand the meaning attributable to outdoor education which Brookes supplies here to include learning how to look after ourselves, others and the bush. This incorporates the more accepted focus of outdoor education on relationships between self, others and the environment (Mortlock, 1994; Priest, 1986). Taking others into the bush helps them to learn how to care for the bush. It is a simple living context, with respect to interpersonal
relationships, in which to learn about caring for self and others as well. Through this focus we may then be approaching a deeper form of outdoor education. If we were to progress further to incorporate more understanding of "why" we would look after ourselves, others and the bush, then this notion of outdoor education may be deeper still.

A focus on caring for self, others and the environment, all as parts of the larger community, has the potential to bring together all the disparate parts of the outdoor education milieu. The two largest classifications within this outdoor education milieu are regarded by a number of authors as adventure education and environmental education.

Historically, there have been two approaches to outdoor education, each with a primary focus on a different pair of the relationships. Adventure education programs, involving outdoor pursuits, have traditionally concentrated on the intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships. They have been successful in bringing about positive changes in individuals through overcoming wilderness challenges. Environmental education programs, involving ecological studies, have traditionally concentrated on the ecosystemic and ekistic relationships.

(Priest, 1986, p. 14)

Adventure education focuses more on the relationships between self and others. Environmental education focuses more on the relationships within the environment, which some see as incorporating humans and others see as exclusive of humans. Bringing adventure education and environmental education together within outdoor education cannot be accomplished by a focus on relationships as the subject matter alone. The four different types of relationship which Priest has mentioned must be seen to be a part of a larger sense of relationship which is epitomized by the concept of community. The
assumption made here is that the concept of community incorporates both people and the environment; that a sense of community includes our relationship and interdependence with the natural environment as well as with other people and ourselves. Judy Friesem supports this assumption, notably in the literature associated with outdoor education.

I believe that the concepts that underlie natural communities are the same that underlie human community. In the human community, as in the natural world, we are intricately and intimately interdependent. Nothing, no one, lives alone. Salmon needs insect which needs leaf litter in the stream which comes from the tree which is home to eagle which needs salmon. It goes backwards, forwards, and through time— all are woven together. As so too it is with us. Much as we may want, at times, to extricate ourselves from the fabric of our community, we cannot. We are strongest together, with differences, with disagreements. We recognize our interdependence, and we cultivate our sense of belonging, even (especially) if we do not agree.

(Friesem, J., 1994, p. 35-36)

Friesem makes the connection between people, the environment, and caring, commenting,

For the past 17 years I have been an environmental educator, learning and teaching about the marine and wetland environments. I have worked with people of all ages who know a lot about environmental issues, but still act as if what they do does not make a difference. We understand in our head, but not always in our heart. I have come to believe that we do not need to know more, we need to care more. Wendell Berry, essayist and farmer, has said, "There is an uncanny resemblance between our behaviour towards each other and our
behaviour towards the Earth." And so my focus has shifted a bit, learning how to build consensus and acceptance, even to celebrate our differences. It is my belief that only as we begin to heal ourselves can we begin to heal the Earth.

(Friesem, J., 1994, p. 34)

This link which caring, as the concept underlying positive development of community, provides between the many parts of outdoor education has also been mentioned by Peter Martin.

Within the diversity of outdoor education, one of the commonalities which I believe may bind the profession is an ethic of care - care for humanity and non-human nature.

(Martin, 1999, p. 2)

If these beliefs and assumptions are acceptable, then deep outdoor education could involve learning how to care, and why we should care, for ourselves, others and the environment. As Brookes concludes,

Deep outdoor education would provide insights into taken for granted aspects of modern life and the life of schools. It ought to offer alternative understandings of the nature of knowledge, the role of science, the ways in which nature should be valued, the relationships between individual and the wider community.

(Brookes, 1993, p. 16)

Taking on the development of curriculum and teaching practices which aim towards the growth of a sense of community by way of learning about caring for self, others and environment will help outdoor education teachers to achieve the goals of a deeper, more critical outdoor education. This
development is taking place within the current climate of outdoor education teaching where the move towards outdoor education as a specific subject is proceeding. A range of authors, specifically those writing about outdoor education in the American context before 1970, label outdoor education as not a particular subject but a method of education. Freeberg and Taylor provide a good example.

Outdoor education is not a separate discipline in the curriculum such as History, English, Arithmetic, and other school subject-matter areas. There are no clearly defined principles and objectives specifically designed for outdoor education. General principles and objectives must be formulated within the framework of education and the school curriculum. Each specific subject matter area must be carefully studied and analyzed to discover how and when direct learning experiences outside the classroom will make textbook learning more meaningful. Outdoor education is not intended to replace textbook learning. It is not a substitute for abstract teaching. Rather, it is a method that can be successfully and intelligently introduced by all teachers, in all subject-matter areas, to supplement and complement written and oral expression.

(Freeberg, W., Taylor, L., 1961, p. 91)

Freeberg and Taylor promote outdoor education as a method, which Priest (1990) described as experiential. The comment made is that experiences outdoors, or outside the classroom, strengthened by the use of experiential learning methods, will assist students to learn about any subject matter. Outdoor education thus described is equivalent to experiential education. Smith, et. al. support the basic message of Freeberg and Taylor but allude to some aspects of knowledge the outdoor experiences can be designed to focus on.
Outdoor education is a means of curriculum enrichment through experiences in, about and for the outdoors. It is not a separate discipline with prescribed objectives like science and mathematics; it is simply a learning climate which offers opportunities for direct laboratory experiences in identifying and resolving real-life problems, for acquiring skills with which to enjoy a lifetime of creative living, for attaining concepts and insights about human and natural resources, and for getting us back in touch with those aspects of living where our roots were once firmly established.

(Smith, Carlson, Donaldson, Masters, 1963, p. 19)

Again, Smith et. al. refer to the experiential nature of the method, but they also identify specific educational areas to which this method is being directed: "Identifying and resolving real-life problems; acquiring skills with which to enjoy a lifetime of creative living; attaining concepts and insights about human and natural resources; getting us back in touch with those aspects of living where our roots were once firmly established.". Outdoor education has thus evolved from being solely identified as an experiential learning method to being identified as an area of knowledge which has its own educational aims that are best and most commonly addressed via experiential learning. The comments of Smith et. al., made in the 1960s, are the precursors to the development of the more refined subject emphasis of outdoor education. Priest (1990) advanced the discussion on outdoor education as a subject early in the 1990s.

In outdoor education, the emphasis for the subject of learning is placed on relationships concerning people and natural resources.

(Priest, 1990, p. 113)
The results of this thesis have further refined the subject emphasis of outdoor education. Outdoor education teachers should place their subject emphasis on teaching an ethic of care so as to strengthen the relationships between self, others and the environment, as interdependent members of a larger whole, all connected by a sense of community.

*Future Investigations*

Outdoor education is a relatively young subject area which has grown from practical application and is now searching for its epistemological roots. This search will involve the continual asking of many questions. This study has found answers to some of these questions, but also opens up further areas for clarification and thus investigation.

The development of an ethic of care has been pursued in this discussion as a favourable focus for the subject of outdoor education. Caring, used in a formal educative way, is a fairly new concept for academic discussion in outdoor education, although many outdoor education teachers would focus on it to some degree in their daily work with students. Discussion and practical work must begin on the development of specific teaching strategies which support the development of an ethic of care within the outdoor education context, beyond a vague agreement on its importance. It is not enough to rely on the holistic educational benefits of the outdoor education context without thinking more about how this context can be refined and directed towards the achievement of particular educational goals. Discussion must also begin which further questions the validity of an ethic of care, based on the outcomes of practice and research into this practice. Deeper, more philosophical questions should also be asked, which may be beyond the immediate scope of outdoor education: Why is an ethic of care important? Why is community important?
From an outdoor education perspective more information is required about the appropriate application of an ethic of care to the relationship between people and the environment. Authors in the area of caring (Berman, 1997; Fuller, 1992; Noddings, 1984, 1992, 1995) do include the environment in their explorations of an ethic of care, pointing positively towards this notion. Authors in the area of community also stress the place of the environment, as well as people, in our understanding of community.

Community, as a discipline, extends and enlarges the technical disciplines by looking at them within the perspective of their uses or effects. Community discipline imposes upon our personal behavior an ecological question: What is the effect, on our neighbors and on our place in the world, of what we do? It is aware that all behavior is social. It is aware, as the ecologists are aware, that there is a unity in the creation, and that the behavior and the fate of one creature must therefore affect the whole, though the exact relationships may not be known.

(Berry, W., 1972, p. 156)

More information is required, however, especially regarding whether the outdoor education context is a suitable context for learning in this area.

Also worthy of further research is the notion of friendship development in and through outdoor education. An outcome of this study was the recognition of a higher level of caring for people other than close friends in the outdoor education context relative to the normal classroom context. A study focusing on friendship development specifically and the reasons why and how the outdoor education context positively effects this development would reveal valuable information for outdoor education teachers.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Year 9 Outdoor Education Teaching Strategies at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School

Outdoor education curriculum is sequential. This means that at each Year level we focus on a piece of the larger outdoor education curriculum, while still being aware of the specific focus at that Year level. Over the three years, Year 8, 9 and 10, we build up to a point at which students are well prepared to take on VCE outdoor education studies if they wish.

At Year 9 our community focus is on the "other people" part of the larger community. Students are expected to build on their understanding of the "myself" part of the larger community, maintain their commitment to the "environment" part of the larger community, while expanding their focus to include other people.

At Year 9 our caring focus is on acting by leading, building on the Year 8 focus of offering, as well as cooperating and volunteering. We ask students to care for other people, as well as themselves and the environment.

Experiential Education

The concepts of community, caring, needs, responsibilities, and ways of acting, can be difficult to work with educationally. Classroom based teaching of these concepts can handle the theoretical nature of the concepts, but for students to really understand them it is essential that their learning is based in doing and then reflecting on what they have actually done. For real understanding to be achieved and for real meaning to be made in this area, doing and thinking about what one has done are better than pure thinking alone.

The doing aspect of outdoor education is the trip. The thinking begins on the preparation evening and is continued all through the trip via discussions. The thinking is also a focus when the students are asked to complete their assessment: presentation assessment

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towards the end of the trip and reflection assessment following the trip. The presentation assessment asks students to create something to present to the group, based on their experience of a situation when they cared for another person during the trip. The reflection assessment asks students to think about what they learnt about caring, and specifically caring for others, during the trip.

The Teacher's Role

At Year 9 level the role of the teachers in each group is to manage the broader constraints within which students must work, hopefully, autonomously. The teachers provide a caring role model but hope that students, also, will act as caring role models for each other. The aim is to create the space for each student to choose to act on their responsibility for the community as a whole. The teachers will direct the educational flow of the curriculum by creating the opportunity for group discussion when appropriate, although students are encouraged to also create these forums.

The teacher's role is closely aligned with the achievement of the aims of the practical components of the curriculum, as detailed above and in the practical assessment section of Assessment chapter.

Two Groups

Each class group is divided into two groups for outdoor education. This is to help in the management of a number of areas. Being away from the more controlled context of the school based classroom, smaller numbers of students means a safer number of students to manage. Group discussions form a very important part of the outdoor education curriculum and it is much easier for students to be involved in these discussions when the group is of a more manageable size. In a context where the students are expected to lead, it is easier for the students to succeed in leading where the group size allows for more easy communication amongst the members of the group.
Bushwalking

Bushwalking was deliberately selected as the main educational medium for outdoor education at Year 9.

Bushwalking involves a group of people working together to all successfully complete a journey. Thinking about and caring for other people is very important to the ultimate success of the journey. Rather than a disconcertant group of individuals walking closely together along a track, we aim for a concordant group of people all doing their best to care for each other, as well as themselves, completing a journey together as successfully as is possible. The natural environment also plays a large role in bushwalking as the group must learn to find their way using a topographic map and watching the lay of the land.

The distances prescribed for each group to walk each day are not long, by the standards of most school group bushwalks. The length of the walks was kept short to allow more time for the students to take on the leadership of the group, and this process does take time! If the distances were longer it would require more teacher leadership for the distances to be covered.

Camping

The teaching strategy of bushwalking melds very well with that of camping. The group must still work together to organise their living situation. Caring in this context retains its more complex nature. The idea that the needs of the individual exist in some sort of balance with the needs of other people and the environment, becomes more pronounced. Tenting, cooking, cleaning, packing, unpacking, toileting, all these tasks are managed by the group rather than by individuals only looking after themselves.

The act of living is a core part of outdoor education teaching strategies. Many of the responsibilities of living involve an overlap between one's own personal needs, the needs of other people and the needs of the environment. Toileting in the bush is a good example. It
takes more than one person to dig a toilet hole. Each person who uses it must use it correctly to leave it in serviceable condition for others. The environment also benefits from correct use.

Group Discussions

An important assumption in the development of an answer to the question: "Why is it important to care for the other people?" is that it is more beneficial educationally for the students, as a group, to develop the answer to this question themselves, through the curriculum, rather than being asked to memorise a predetermined set of responses.

Group discussions are a very important part of the curriculum in outdoor education. They are opportunities to think about, discuss and develop, as individuals and as a group, ideas which are of relevance to the curriculum. Group discussions at Year 9 are usually initiated by the teachers, however students are strongly encouraged to call group meetings. They are conducted beginning with each student writing their ideas/view point on the question in a half exercise book. These ideas are then verbalised in the group forum. Following everyone's, including the teachers', ideas being put forward, the group discusses the issue.

The following group discussions take place during Year 9 Outdoor Education, designed to help the students to create a set of reasons in answer to the question "Why is it important to care for the other people?":

"GROUP ISSUES"
Time: At any stage during the week - multiple discussions may be had.
Aim: To sort through any group management issues experienced during the week, such as speed the group is walking, fairness of the campsite roles, etc.
Process: Ask students to give the group a mark out of ten for the particular issue. This issues may be as broad as "How you think the group is going at this stage." Students write this mark in their books and explain why they have given this mark and what improvements could be made, if any. Students are asked to share this information with the group. Once all this
information has been shared students are asked to discuss the issue (or issues identified) and reach consensus on possible action.

"THINGS I DO TO CARE FOR OTHER PEOPLE ALREADY"
Time: Tuesday morning recommended.
Aim: To have students link caring for the other people with things they do in their own lives already.
Process: A group discussion pre-empted by the questions: What do you do to care for the other people at home/school? Why do you do these things? Students to write answers in their books. Answers to be shared with the group. An initial list (will be built upon during the week) of reasons as to why people do these things created on "whiteboard".

"CARING FOR OTHER PEOPLE ROLE MODEL"
Time: Tuesday morning recommended.
Aim: To have students think further about how and why people care for other people.
Process: Students asked to write about a person they know or have heard about whom they think would be the most caring person for other people. They need to also give reasons as to why they chose this person. Share stories after written. Group can ask questions of story tellers to gain more information.

"HOW DO THEY FEEL ?"
Time: Begin Tuesday morning, continue Wednesday morning, discuss Thursday morning - to allow for development of the idea during the week.
Aim: To have students think more about how another person, someone whom they don't know well or normally think much about, is feeling and experiencing what is happening in the group during the week (perspective taking).
Process: Ask students to think about the person in the group whom they know least, boy or girl. Ask them to write about how this person would have been feeling during the trip as it has been going, writing from the perspective of this other person. Inform the students that this will be CONFIDENTIAL. Repeat this process on Wednesday and Thursday mornings.
After the Wednesday morning commentary is complete, ask students to write an answer to
the question: What can I do to improve the way this person is feeling during the trip? Encourage students to take on some of these actions.

After the Thursday morning commentary is complete, ask students to write an answer to the question: How does "putting yourself in the shoes" of someone else help you to care for them? Discuss the students' thoughts, leading into the Reflection Assessment - Q.2 (c).

"IS A COMMUNITY EXCLUSIVE ?"

Time: Wednesday morning, extending to Wednesday afternoon.
Aim: To have students think through the complications of community and caring when the community extends beyond the small outdoor education group; when the small outdoor education community could be seen as an exclusive group, rather than extending the processes of community development beyond the small group. Specifically directed at the fact that the two groups will meet for lunch today (Wednesday).

Process: (1) Students asked to write about what the meeting with the other group at lunchtime today (Wednesday) will be like and why. These ideas are shared and discussed within the group. A second question is put to the group: "How can we make the meeting a positive situation for everyone?" Students write answers to this question, giving reasons why their idea should be adopted. Ideas about how to make the meeting positive for everyone are shared and discussed. Teachers make comment on the issue of exclusivity and inclusivity with regards to community. Caring for others means caring for people outside of your friendship group. (2) This discussion can be continued following the lunchtime meeting. Students are asked to write about how the meeting went and why, and what could have been done to improve the meeting, if anything. These ideas are shared and discussed.

"THE 'WHY BOTHER CARING FOR OTHER PEOPLE ?' DEBATE"

Time: Thursday morning recommended.
Aim: To have students develop a more fully thought through rationale for caring for the other people.

Process: 1. A role play situation is developed where the teachers play neighbouring campers, sharing the same campfire with the students. These neighbouring campers are struggling with their bushwalk and when camping, one is not waiting for the other, one
expects the other to do all the work around the campsite, etc. Students are asked to "convince" these campers (the staff) that it is important to care for each other during the bushwalk and then everything will be much better. Staff act as devil's advocates in discussion. Staff attempt to summarise the points of the students into a short list of reasons. These reasons can be added to the "whiteboard" list being constructed during the week.

2. Following the role play and completion of the list of reasons why it is important to care for other people, which has been developed through the week, students are asked to divide into four groups. Each group takes on one of the reasons outlined above and develops a role play situation which uses an example to explain this reason. These role plays are then performed in front of the whole group.
Appendix 2 - Questionnaire

YEAR 9 - "STUDENTS CARING FOR EACH OTHER"

QUESTIONNAIRE

THIS IS NOT A TEST AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ANY MARKS

THE RESULTS ARE ANONYMOUS - PLEASE BE HONEST

The following statements about caring were developed from the comments of Year 9 students when they were talking about caring for, and being cared for by, other students in Year 9.

For each of the statements below I would like you to circle either always, often, sometimes, rarely or never for both columns - telling me about the caring that goes on in outdoor education and in classes at school.

For example:
If you rarely helped your close friends when they were sick when you were in outdoor education and sometimes helped your close friends when they were sick in class at school, you would circle:

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There are two sets of questions:

1. The first set asks you to answer the questions with your "close friends" in mind - people you hang around with regularly.

2. The second set of questions asks you to answer with "other people" in mind - people who are not your close friends.

Please complete both parts of the questionnaire and then hand your questionnaire in.
If you have any questions - please ask at any time.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.
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Thanks for your time and assistance.

Please return your questionnaire.
Appendix 3 - Student Responses Following Study Results

A sample of seven students, three boys and four girls, were asked: "Why is there a difference in the caring that they exhibit and experience, between outdoor education and other classes at school?"

Thomas:

"I think that outdoor education is different to other classes in the caring way because in outdoor education you are in the bush with the same people for 5 days and nights instead of being around 150 people for about 6 hours a day. When you are in the bush you want your week/camp to be enjoyable and you want to be always having fun instead of worrying about picking on people or putting them down. So I feel that we all care about how other people are feeling and most of the time try to make them feel wanted so that they can have an enjoyable week as well."

Bob:

"Outdoor education is different to normal classroom activities because you group together to cook, decide on activities for the group that everyone is happy about. You cater for everyone's needs, you make everyone feel comfortable. You are not alone on outdoor education camp, you are considered by the rest of the group members as being part of the group. You have a responsibility to care and consider other people's needs and emotions. You depend on everyone putting in their fair share of help and ideas. On the first day of camp everyone is shy and unsure of what to expect. By the end of the camp the group has overcome all problems and everyone is equal."

Abigail:

"I believe that outdoor education is different to normal classes in school because what we are taught on camp is put into practice. A lot of things we are taught during classes sometimes don't really have an impact on the individual person unless they go out there and experience for themselves, whereas at camp everything we are taught we
experience therefore it has a larger impact. Also, because we are on camp for a full week we see the changes that occur; for example - if rubbish is left behind. It also gives us a chance to be responsible; for example - we have to cook our own food, look after all our stuff, organise everything that we do, whereas at school everything is organised for us. Outdoor education is really good for making friends and getting to know people better. I know that over the years I've made quite a few friends on camp."

Susan:

"I think that people are more friendly and caring in outdoor education because they aren't in their friendship groups, which make them act nastily to the people they don't particularly like. Also, when they're out camping they haven't got their parents and guardians to look after them. They've got the teachers, but sometimes they need more than that so they help each other out and rely on other people as well as themselves. Also they're with the group for a whole week, so they bond fairly well."

Nigel:

"To me outdoor education has more caring in it because we all need to care and help out each other to survive the week. If we did not all help each other out we would not eat tea, get to places and have a healthy and fun camp. In outdoor education we seem to act like different people around each other than we do at school; we sort of act like family. We all talk like we are all good friends when we are around the fire and this develops into everyone watching out for and caring for each other."

Robin:

"Outdoor education is different from other classes at school because it is conducted outside of the school grounds. Outdoor education deals more with issues that we, as maturing young adults, need to know about. Outdoor education prepares us and gives us instruction in dealing with other people, our environment and ourselves. By learning and mastering these skills, students find that relating to others during other school classes is easier and comes more naturally. Other classes at school tend to develop our minds, bodies and skills in regards to education for good jobs. But
outdoor education develops our understanding and respect for our natural environment and fellow friends."

Jane:

"Outdoor education is different because you become closer as a whole group, instead of just having little friendship groups. You also spend time with your outdoor education group and learn about their needs and how easy you can offend people. When you're on camp you are trying to work as a group and get as much co-operation and help going, for the camp to be an enjoyable experience. Each person is depending on other people to help them with jobs like tents, cooking food, etc., so there is a sense of belonging for each person on the camp."
Author/s: Quay, John J.

Title: Students caring for each other

Date: 1999

Citation: Quay, J. J. (1999). Students caring for each other. Masters Research thesis, Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne.

Publication Status: Unpublished

Persistent Link: http://hdl.handle.net/11343/38992

File Description: Students caring for each other

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