

Class, Gender and Habitus: A 'Bourdieuian' perspective of social reproduction and change in the contemporary sports field with a focus on adventure climbing.



A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by  
publication (PhD)

by

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## **Declaration**

Candidate's declarations:

I, David Holland-Smith, hereby certify that this thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)], Abertay University, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This work has not been submitted for any other qualification at any other academic institution.

Signed [candidates signature].....

Date.....

Supervisor's declaration:

I, Dr James Moir hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Abertay University and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Signed [Principal Supervisors signature].....

Date.....

## **Certificate of Approval**

I certify that this is a true and accurate version of the thesis approved by the examiners, and that all relevant ordinance regulations have been fulfilled.

Supervisor.....

Date.....

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my supervisors Dr. James Moir and Dr. Wallace McNeish for their insightful guidance in completing this thesis. I would also like to thank Dr. Scott Hardie for his support as a colleague and manager in providing the time and space to work on this project.

I would also like to thank my co-authors for their contribution to the included papers and the editors and peer-reviews for their feedback and comments, which further improved the quality of the published work.

Finally, I would like to thank Sue and my family for their support.

## **Dedication**

Dedicated to Clarice Rayner.

## **Abstract**

The thesis draws upon six published and peer reviewed papers and a peer reviewed book chapter. An overview of each paper is followed by the publication and then an explanation of how each has contributed to the emerging research profile and methodology.

There follows a critical overview and rationale of the developing and emerging research profile and the move from a constructivist grounded methodology to a Bourdieuan theoretical and methodological position. This thesis focuses on the process of social reproduction and change in the contemporary mountaineering and climbing field. A central theme in this thesis is the relationship between social structure and individual agency. The adoption of the Bourdieuan approach represents a conceptual break with previous understandings of action, agency, objectivism, subjectivism, the individual and society. Habitus becomes a main mechanism to explore and analyse the process of social change and reproduction in the contemporary climbing and mountaineering field.

Habitus makes it possible to understand and account for the dynamic and spontaneous actions of individuals as well as the process of social reproduction and change. At the centre of the process of social change is the relationship between the habitus and the field. It is through a detailed analysis of the relationship between the habitus and the field that is possible to understand the process of structural change and the conditions where individuals are most likely and able to challenge doxa.

In the modern climbing context, women, particularly from the middle classes, are becoming empowered through the transformation of their bodies and the construction of often complex and contradictory identities. These women are placed to take advantage of new emerging social relations and opportunities occurring as a result of hysteresis. However, this has implications for the identities and position of established climbers, particularly men whose habitus was formed under a previous set of objective conditions, but also other women from subordinate social positions.

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## **Introduction**

As a means of introduction, I will outline the structure of the thesis. Chapter 1 provides a thematic overview of each paper, the research focus and methodology. Each paper presented is followed by an account of how this has contributed to the emerging publication profile. The thesis has drawn upon six published and peer reviewed papers and a peer reviewed book chapter. The first three papers are studies dealing with different areas of adventure sports – climbing, surfing and kayaking. These papers have a common focus and domain of analysis exploring participants' subjective and socially constructed realities. The four later papers draw upon a Bourdieuan analysis to link the structural and the hermeneutical. Habitus becomes a main mechanism to explore and analyse the process of social change and reproduction in the contemporary climbing and mountaineering field.

Chapter 2 covers the development of the research profile with a focus on critically analysing and evaluating the emergent methodological, theoretical and conceptual issues. The chapter starts by giving a general overview of the developing and emerging research profile and the move from a constructivist grounded methodology (Charmaz, 2006) to a Bourdieuan neo-structuralist position (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Wacquant, 2011). Bourdieu emphasises the importance of empirical process and the construction of the research object. Epistemic reflexivity provides a rigorous approach to examining the nature of sociological analysis and emergent theory. Habitus becomes both topic and tool (Wacquant, 2011) through which to understand my own researcher positioning and a scaffold around which to organise my own empirical and ethnographic research. The adoption of the Bourdieuan approach represents a conceptual break with previous understandings of action, agency, objectivism, subjectivism, the individual and society (Mottier, 2002). In Bourdieu's Theory of practice (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990), he emphasises the dialectical relationship between structure and agency that is manifest in the habitus. The habitus is both a structured structure and a structuring structure.

The author acknowledges the main criticisms levelled at Bourdieu's theoretical perspective as being deterministic and emphasising structure at the expense of individual agency and subjectivity (Calhoun, 1993). However, despite this, certain feminists have started to reengage with Bourdieu's social theory, because they see clear parallels with feminist approaches to epistemology and methodology (McCall, 1992; Skeggs, 2004). Habitus makes it possible to understand and account for the dynamic, fluid and spontaneous actions of individuals as well as the process of social reproduction and change (Krais, 2006; Skeggs, 1997) where subjects are the complex amalgamation of history and current social positioning. Class and gender are always there as part of the implicit understandings that individuals bring to social relationships and interactions. There is always potential for individual, agency, reflexivity and change. Bourdieu's theory offers the potential for analysis of symbolic power not offered by any other social theory.

At the centre of the process of social change is the relationship between the habitus and the field. Bourdieu introduces the concept of hysteresis and Don Quixote effect to explain the process of social change because of a mismatch between the habitus and the field both at a structural level and at a specific field and individual level. It is through a detailed analysis of the relationship between the habitus and the field that is possible to understand the process of structural change and the conditions where individuals are most likely and able to be agentic, reflexive, challenge doxa and transform their identities.

Field theory provides a way of understanding the complex relationship between the social field, habitus and capital. Fields are social spaces with their own regulatory principles where struggles over different forms of capital take place. In this context, symbolic capital becomes important in determining the value and status of different forms of capital. Symbolic capital is at the centre of these struggles because it defines and establishes the legitimacy of the social order. This thesis gives considerable attention and emphasis on hierarchy in the climbing field based upon the gender, class and the symbolic order.

This thesis considers the process of social change within the contemporary climbing field especially in relation to gender and social class. It is clear to see

that women, particularly from the middle classes, are becoming empowered through the transformation of their bodies and construction of often complex and contradictory identities. These women became positioned to take advantage of new emerging social relations and opportunities that have occurred because of broader structural and historical change. This has implications for the identities and position of established climbers, particularly men whose habitus was formed under a previous set of objective conditions but also other women from subordinate social positions.

## **1 An outline of the emerging research profile.**

This thesis is based on six peer-reviewed papers and one peer reviewed book chapter. This chapter will start by providing an account and thematic overview of each of these papers, their research focus and methodology. Each paper presented is followed by the publication and outline of the how the paper has contributed to the emerging publication profile.

### **1.1 ‘You don’t understand us!’ An inside perspective on adventure climbing. (2013) David Holland-Smith and Steve Olivier.**

The focus of this paper is the inside perspective on risk-taking of a small group of elite Scottish adventure climbers. This paper frames the concept of risk from different psychological and socio-cultural perspectives and brings together different areas of research on risk and climbing. This paper starts by considering climbers’ complex and often-contradictory relationship with risk-taking as well as different perspectives including outside and media representations of them as risk takers. These elite climbers are involved with specific climbing media either, as the subject of media reports or directly involved in writing articles, guide books, reviews, films or commercial promotions aimed at other climbers and outdoor enthusiasts.

Elite climbers stress their rational engagement with climbing where they emphasise skilled performance and being in control in adventure climbing situations. Two competing discursive strands are identified – ‘the rational manager of risk’ and ‘the sensation seeking adrenaline junkie’. Emerging themes explored and illustrated strategies and practices around managing risk, ethics, competence, performance and their relationship with the mountain environment. This paper provides an insight into these climbers’ involvement with risk-taking that is a valued part of climbing practice central to the identity of elite climbers.

The researchers wanted to explore the perspectives on risk-taking of a select group of male elite adventure climbers in the Scottish context. Nine elite male climbers were recruited between the age of 27 and 45 years. All these

climbers identified themselves as experienced and elite performers. The rationale for this was to obtain rich and detailed qualitative data. Initial questioning started by asking broad background questions such as how they became involved in climbing, their motivations and early formative experiences and then moved to address core issues related to their attitudes toward risk, risk-taking and risk management strategies. The themes provided a template for guiding the interview and was emergent in nature. Following a thematic analysis, these themes formed the basis of the paper and analysis. Throughout the data collection and analysis a reflexive journal was kept. Further follow up interviews were conducted and participants were invited to comment on draft versions of the analysis.

### **1.1.1 Author contributions**

The researchers shared a similar subject position to the participants and took into account how this might affect emerging interpretations. Both authors worked towards gaining agreement around the emerging analysis. This was reflective in nature and required a high degree of interpretive and theoretical sensitivity. The first author designed the study and methodology, collected the data using semi-structured interviews and produced the initial analysis. The second author acted as a critical discussant, reviewed the emerging themes and analysis, and reviewed the drafts of the manuscript produced by the first author. Following collaborative discussions, the first author drafted the final version of the paper. The second author guided the first author through the peer review and publication process.

Due to copyright restrictions pages 6-20, comprising a published journal article, have been removed from this e-thesis.

Redacted journal article:

Holland-Smith, D. and Olivier, S. (2013). 'You don't understand us!' An inside perspective on adventure climbing, *Sport in Society*, 16(9), pp.1091-1104. doi: 10.1080/17430437.2013.790889

### **1.1.2 The contribution of this paper to the emerging research profile.**

This paper (Holland-Smith and Olivier, 2013) informed subsequent papers: Why coach? A Case Study of the Prominent Influences on a Top-Level UK Outdoor Adventure Coach (Lorimer and Holland-Smith, 2013) and 'All the places we were not supposed to go': a case study of formative class and gender habitus in adventure climbing (Holland-Smith, 2015). Themes emerging from the first study (Holland-Smith and Olivier, 2013) provided a basis for the in-depth case study (Lorimer and Holland-Smith, 2012). The initial part of the interview covered the participants' background. This included the early informative experiences shaping patterns of engagement and career trajectory. These issues are revisited in subsequent studies, as the focus for the research. A single in-depth case study, drawing on a biographical approach (Lorimer and Holland-Smith, 2012) examines the influences that led an individual (Jack) to become and remain an outdoor adventure coach. Although this study includes substantial material related to career trajectory and coaching in an adventure context, Jack is typical in profile to many of the elite climbers interviewed (Holland-Smith and Olivier, 2012).

### **1.2 Why Coach? A Case Study of the Prominent Influences on a Top-Level UK Outdoor Adventure Coach (Ross Lorimer and David Holland-Smith, 2012).**

This research examines the influences affecting the development and trajectory of an elite high-level outdoor adventure coach and performer. The value of this single case study is discussed in relation to the insights it provides as to why certain coaches enter and stay in coaching careers. The key themes identified in this study are the importance of early formative experiences, grounded in the family and education around significant individuals – parents, coaches and teachers who provide opportunities, social influences, values central to motivation and the foundations of aspirational trajectories as performers and coaches. The key emergent themes are: early formative experiences; passion

for the sport and context; sharing the passion and legacy; entanglement of sport, lifestyle and career; and the need and desire to stay involved.

It is acknowledged there are some limitations with the use of single case study designs (Jones, Armour and Portrac, 2003). A biographical research paradigm employed in this study enabled the exploration of the participant's subjective realities (Dowling Naess, 1996) and identified the integration, connection and movement between the past, present and future, decisions and turning points that have shaped his social trajectory. To collect data an informal interview was used. A provisional framework was developed but no specific questions were prepared in advance. The participant (Jack) was encouraged to talk and discuss his involvement in coaching as an elite performer, as well as what he found enjoyable and motivating. This approach allowed issues to emerge and was reflective in nature (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). In this context, the interviewer (Holland-Smith) became an active listener (Sparkes, 2000).

In the context of this single case study, the issues of validity become complex. Firstly, the interviewer shared a similar subject position to the participant and there was a danger that he could influence the interpretations, emerging themes and analysis. To increase the validity and trustworthiness (Sparkes, 2000) the first researcher acted as critical discussant (Delmont, 1992) and adopted a method previously used in similar case studies (Jones, Armour and Portrac, 2003). During the process of thematic analysis, both authors worked towards gaining a consensus regarding the central themes. The purpose was to reduce the potential biasing from a single subject case study design and increase the validity of the themes and findings (Patton, 1990). The findings were checked against the participant's own perspectives. The issues of inter-subjectivity in this research are important but it is only possible to gain a partial insight into another's subjective reality. The high level of 'ecological validity' makes it difficult to make generalisations or apply the findings to a broader demographic. It is important to recognise that this case study has some similarities with other elite coaches. This research taps into the participant's social reality and conveys the richness of the affect, behaviours and cognitions of human experience.

### **1.2.1 Author contribution**

The first author provided input to the introduction and literature related to coaching. He acted as corresponding author and guided the publication and peer review process. The second author designed the study and methodology, produced the research proposal and submitted this for ethical approval. The second author conducted the interview, collected the data and thematic analysis. The first and second researchers (authors) worked collaboratively in writing the discussion and analysis.

Due to copyright restrictions pages 24-36, comprising a published journal article, have been removed from this e-thesis.

Redacted journal article:

Lorimer, R. and Holland-Smith, D. (2012). Why coach? A case study of the prominent influences on a top-level UK outdoor adventure coach. *The Sport Psychologist*, 26(4), pp.571-583. doi: 10.1123/tsp.26.4.571

### **1.2.2 The contribution of this paper to the emerging research profile.**

This paper (Lorimer and Holland-Smith, 2012) provides an important link between different papers addressing social class and participation in adventure sports. *Why Coach? A case Study of the Prominent Influences on a Top-Level UK Outdoor Adventure Coach* (Lorimer and Holland-Smith, 2012) identifies the issues of class and participation both in coaching and performance. It is possible to see the importance of early family and educational experiences shaping the skills, attitudes, motivations and aspirations of young coaches. Holland-Smith (2015) starts to examine how formative experiences have shaped engagement and participation in adventure climbing in terms of social class and gender. This paper draws upon the Bourdieu's framework to explain the process of class and gender social reproduction in adventure sports. It goes some way in explaining the possible reasons for particular practices and patterns of participation across gender and class.

Before going on to outline, 'All the places we were not supposed to go': a case study of formative class and gender habitus in adventure climbing (Holland-Smith, 2015), I will return to two earlier papers. These papers focus on surfing and the environment (Holland-Smith, Love and Lorimer, 2013) and the dark side of social capital and volunteering in Rugby (Whittaker and Holland-Smith, 2014). These two papers are important in developing some of the theoretical perspectives in 'All the places we were not supposed to go': a case study of formative class and gender habitus in adventure climbing (Holland-Smith, 2015).

### **1.3 British Surfers and Their Attitude and Values Toward the Environment (Holland-Smith, Love and Lorimer, 2013).**

This paper examined the attitudes and values of British surfers towards the environment. The findings suggest that the surfers in this study (n=8) were motivated to engage in pro-environmental action and evaluates key psychological perspectives in explaining the complex relationship between attitudes and behaviour. However, there is an inherent dilemma where pro-

environmental behaviour seems to be influenced by a range of conflicting factors such as cost (Banberg and Schmit, 2003), individualistic attitudes (Macnaughten, 2003) and performance rather than purely by pro-environmental concerns (Stern, 2000). Despite being aware of the inherent risks and impact surfing has on the environment, surfers remain unwilling to give up the activity. Identity seems to be influential in shaping their behaviour and values (Proshansky, Fairbian and Kaminoff, 1983; Christensen et al, 2004). Such insights are valuable to environmental campaigns, policy makers and pro-environmental action groups in targeting their campaigns. These are not just issues affecting the surfing community but seem to reflect broader attitudes amongst outdoor activists.

The methodology used followed a similar approach to the previous research. A questionnaire given to 50 participants generated the themes for the semi-structured interview. This questionnaire asked general questions about their attitudes toward the environment and concern about specific issues. The responses were analysed and repetitions in responses provided themes and categories explored in detail by a smaller group of surfers who had indicated their willingness to be interviewed. This provided the basis of an interview template to guide the interview but allowed themes and issues to emerge and to generate theory. Emergent data were thematically analysed.

The second researcher (Love) was a regular surfer and had a close affiliation with surfing. This enabled him to probe and explore the emerging issues in-depth. However, there was an awareness that he also shared a similar subject position to the participants that this could bias his interpretations and analysis. The issue of validity became potentially problematic and there was a requirement to demonstrate trustworthiness (Sparkes, 2000). The first (Holland-Smith) and third researcher (Lorimer) acted as critical discussants. Their role was to ask probing theoretical questions of the data (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). The participants reviewed the themes, following the initial analysis, to ensure data validity and fidelity.

### 1.3.1 Author contribution

The second author designed the research project with the first author. He collected the data, conducted the interviews and preliminary data analysis using a thematic analysis and produced the first draft of the paper. The first author guided and supervised the research, and collection of data. This included the research design and methodology, ethical submission and data analysis. Following the first draft of the paper, the first author redrafted the manuscript for publication including additional theoretical perspectives, recoding of themes and re-analysis of the data and discussion. The third author acted as a critical discussant and reviewed the emerging interpretations and analysis. He provided guidance on the publication and peer review process.

Due to copyright restrictions pages 40-45, comprising a published journal article, have been removed from this e-thesis.

Redacted journal article:

Holland-Smith, D, Love, A. and Lorimer, R. (2013). British surfers and their attitudes toward the environment. *Ecopsychology*, 5(2), pp.103-109. doi: 10.1089/eco.2013.0020

### **1.3.2 The contribution of this paper to the emerging research profile.**

This paper highlights the complex relationship between attitudes and behaviour. Psychologists have started to consider the importance of identity construction on individual and group behaviour. The inherent contradictions and dilemmas identified in this paper reflect the complexity of social life and the distributed nature of identity construction. For example, lifestyles and patterns of action become practices associated with the norms of particular subcultural groups and are best understood through the meanings, values and identities constructed by the people who belong to them and participate in them (Rinehart, 2000; Thomlinson et al, 2005). Identities are also intimately connected with place. Place identity becomes important in meeting and satisfying an individual's biological, psychological, social and cultural needs (Protansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983: 59). Holland-Smith and Olivier (2013) consider elite climbers complex and contradictory relationship with the media, their identity and status as rational managers of risk and their relationship with the environment. Surfing is a sport that has many similarities with climbing and other adventure sports where there is an emphasis on risk-taking, management and performance by elite performers (See Partington et al., 2009). Lorimer and Holland-Smith (2012) examines the formative influences shaping identity, career trajectory and relationship and attitudes towards the environment. Later papers (Holland-Smith, 2015, 2016, and 2017) address the issue of identity, gender, class and social change through the Boudieuan framework of habitus, field and capital.

#### **1.4 Exposing the dark side, an exploration of the influences social capital has upon parental sports volunteers (Whittaker and Holland-Smith, 2014).**

This is the first paper to develop a Bourdieuan perspective on social capital as a core theme of the dark side of social capital and social reproduction as a process reinforcing social identity, exclusive ties and a dominant social hierarchy. It acknowledges the role social capital can play in contributing to long-term policy objectives and the development of civic society more generally. In theory, it has the potential to increase civic engagement, contribute to social inclusion and provide a positive contribution to the social good. Underpinning these policy assumptions are specific conceptualisations of social capital based around Putnam's functionalist notions of social capital. This paper critically addresses these assumptions and questions 'The New Right's' and 'New Labour's' neoliberal social and sports development policies through empirical evidence and Bourdieuan frameworks.

To increase trustworthiness and to avoid biasing a process of bracketing was used (Gorgi, 1975, 1997). Both researchers discussed the emerging themes to achieve a consensus in their interpretations. To ensure a higher degree of validity participants were asked to comment on the analysis and complete a personal diary. The diary recorded the level of contact (social position), frequency of interactions, times, places, activity, new or existing contact, and what was discussed. This was used to systematically map the phenomena (social capital) being studied. The participants were eight males (n=8) aged between 38 and 48 years, and all engaged in sports volunteering at various rugby clubs across central Scotland. Whilst no gender requirement was stipulated for recruitment, this all male group reflected the male dominated orientation of the sport (Rugby) but also the socio-demographic of typical rugby clubs: white male and middle-class professionals (Sibson, 2010). These professions included management, engineering, construction and education.

### **1.4.1 Author contribution**

The first author collected the data and carried out the research. Data was analysed by the first author and the second author acted as a critical discussant. The second author provided guidance and supervision of the research process including design, methodology, and theoretical perspectives and drafting the proposal. The first author drafted the first version of the paper. The second author redrafted this and prepared it for publication. This involved a re-analysis of the data and recoding, providing additional theoretical perspectives around social capital and Bourdieu. The first author acted as corresponding author. The second author guided the first author through this process. The second author made changes to the final manuscript before publication.

Due to copyright restrictions pages 49-58, comprising a published journal article, have been removed from this e-thesis.

Redacted journal article:

Whittaker, C.G. and Holland-Smith, D. (2016) .Exposing the dark side, an exploration of the influence social capital has upon parental sports volunteers, *Sport, Education and Society*, 21(3), pp. 356-373, doi: 10.1080/13573322.2014.923832

#### **1.4.2 The contribution of this paper to the emerging research profile.**

Whilst this paper deals with the issues of social capital and social reproduction within the context of rugby and sports volunteering, it provides important theoretical developments informing later papers. Rugby is typical of many mainstream sports in respect to its organisation, close connection with national governing bodies, codification and white, middle class 'hyper-masculine' culture. This hyper-masculine culture typifies a particular form of physical body culture based around strength, power and aggression. The potential for serious injury and risk are evident but seen as a legitimate and integral part of this sport practice and culture. Rugby is typical of the dominant hegemonic masculinised sport culture. Masculine identity formed in this context reflects the dominant view of masculinity and sport. In many respects, this is in contrast to alternative sports such as climbing and other so-called lifestyle sports. Because of this, Exposing the dark side, an exploration of the influences social capital has on sports volunteers (Whittaker and Holland-Smith (2014) provides an important counter perspective through which to make sense of the differences and similarities in the process of social reproduction, identity construction, patterns of participation, inclusion, exclusion and social change. Later papers (Holland-Smith, 2016, 2017) develop and discuss the contested concepts of social capital around emerging technology and social media within the context of the new practices of climbing in relation to class and gender.

#### **1.5 'All the places we were not supposed to go': a case study of formative class and gender habitus in adventure climbing (Holland-Smith, 2014).**

This paper starts by briefly charting the process of social change in the climbing field. Climbing and mountaineering became an established recreational activity in the early part of the nineteenth century strongly aligned with the values of the dominant social class – the grand bourgeoisie (see Beedie, 2008; Brown 2009). Following post world war development (WW1 and WW11) the entry of working class in to the climbing field resulted in a clear break in climbing traditions and a

new culture emerged as a basis for entry and hierarchy but retained a strong association with dominant traditions. Further change occurred post 1960 with the rise of globalism, commercialisation, new forms of consumption and neoliberalism. There emerged a new professional class including more women and young people bringing different values and influences to bear on the climbing and mountaineering field. This study draws upon Bourdieu's concept of ontological complicity and fit between the habitus and the field to frame this process of social change and the changing cultural field of climbing. This study explores the origins of these cultural practices as well as broader changes related to gender, class and formative experiences, in the family and education, have shaped engagement with adventure climbing.

The methodology replicated previous research (Holland-Smith and Olivier, 2013). This paper follows a grounded research design in generating interview themes, conducting interviews and collecting rich data. The themes comprised of participant background: current climbing activity; early formative experiences and their influence on motivations and attitudes towards adventure; family and education. These themes replicated and revisited some of the emergent themes generated in the single case study (Lorimer and Holland-Smith, 2012).

The participants were (n=6) males aged between 38 and 54 and (n=4) females aged between 49 and 54 years. All were from professional backgrounds, had a degree and postgraduate level of education and were experienced adventure climbers. Bracketing, discursive validation, critical engagement with the emerging themes and member checking during the process of analysis was used to address validity.

Due to copyright restrictions pages 61-71, comprising a published journal article, have been removed from this e-thesis.

Redacted journal article:

Holland-Smith, D. (2015). 'All the places we were not supposed to go': a case study of formative class and gender habitus in adventure climbing, *Sport, Education and Society*, 21(8), pp. 1176-1192. doi: 10.1080/13573322.2014.994177

### **1.5.1 The contribution of this paper to the emerging research profile.**

Through this study, it is possible to see where the elite male climbing culture based around climbing performance, control and rational engagement with risk, outlined in earlier studies (Holland-Smith and Olivier, 2013), and emerged as the basis for status, hierarchy and identity in the contemporary climbing field. Education and the family are closely associated with the middleclass habitus and social reproduction. Participants recognised the instrumental role of education in shaping their social trajectories and capacity to follow specific careers and gain status in the climbing field. This paper explores the fit or ontological complicity between the fields and the habitus of the family, education and adventure that contribute to social reproduction and change. Lorimer and Holland-Smith (2012) provides a case study of an elite coach and illustrates the formative influences on his career trajectory and the importance of early formative experiences and socialisation. Holland-Smith (2015) explores social class but also the issues around differences in gender socialisation, gender habitus, expanding opportunities, identity transformation and change. Later studies: (Holland-Smith, 2016, 2017) address the issue of identity, gender, class and social change through the Boudieuvian framework in the contemporary climbing field.

### **1.5.2 Author contribution**

This was a single author publication.

## **1.6 Social capital, social media and the changing patterns of participation in climbing (Holland-Smith, 2016).**

This paper develops Bourdieu's instrumental perspective on social capital, social change and reproduction in the contemporary climbing context. This study develops the process of social change and hysteresis by considering the broader cultural, economic and political influences such as globalism, neoliberalism, technological innovation and new patterns of consumption since the early 1960s. These constitute the broader field of influence and power acting upon the specific climbing social field. The development of new forms of climbing particularly sport and indoor climbing walls during the 1980s and 1990s coincided with new forms of media and technology. New forms of adventure became visible and available to a mass-market consumer (middle class women and young people) replaced the traditional climbing practices and hierarchy.

The final paper, Holland-Smith (2016) 'Social capital, social media and the changing patterns of participation in climbing', draws upon empirical data collected over the course of this research and supplemented by additional interviews to explore participation, social networks, relationships, and use of social media.

Participants, at the time of the study, were active in a range of different climbing disciplines and used climbing walls on a regular basis. These participants were either in full time higher education or in professional employment. They consisted of (n=6) males between the age of 20 and 55 and (n=5) females between the age of 19 and 54 years. The semi-structured interviews followed the same protocol as described in previous studies. The researcher kept a reflexive diary and notes as part of this research project. The researcher took the position of an active participant immersed in the climbing context.

The researcher has been an active adventure climber for over 30 years. However, after a period of inactivity, he became re-involved in climbing, visiting local climbing walls, sport climbing, and traditional venues across Scotland. This involvement further enhanced his understanding of the contemporary climbing

context and culture. Notes and recordings were collected retrospectively reflecting his interpretations of the climbing context and culture as well as contextualising the interview and interpreting responses. Additionally, the researcher also accessed media and social media sites related to climbing such as the BMC and Scottish Mountaineering Council.

Due to copyright restrictions pages 75-92, comprising a published journal article, have been removed from this e-thesis.

Redacted journal article:

Holland-Smith, D. (2016). Social capital, social media and the changing patterns of participation in climbing, *Sport in Society*, 20(9), pp.1101-1117. doi: 10.1080/17430437.2016.1269078

### **1.6.1 The contribution of this paper to the emerging research profile.**

This paper revisits a core theme of social capital developed by Whittaker and Holland-Smith (2015), previously discussed, in the context of rugby and volunteering. However, this paper evaluates different forms of social capital and relationships within the modern climbing context including face-to-face interactions, virtual and social media networks. A common feature of social capital is that social networks have value economically and socially that can potentially bring about a range of benefits and opportunities to those included in these networks and have the capacity to use them. It is argued that this particularly benefits a broadening middle class who invest in capitals and resources and not only do they gain access to a privileged position in the climbing field it also further contributes to their continuing social reproduction and the exclusion of others from different social positions through a process of bonding and inward-looking associations. The process of hysteresis and social change has implications for the emergence of new opportunities, social repositioning positioning and identity construction within contemporary climbing reflecting a complex, dynamic and contested social field.

### **1.6.2 Author contribution**

This was a single author publication.

### **1.7 ‘Social capital, social media and gender class reproduction’; Women, subcultures and the changing patterns of participation in climbing (Holland-Smith, 2017).**

The peer reviewed book chapter: Holland-Smith (2017), is an extension of this study and develops the theme of women’s participation. This study is theoretically driven and presents an analysis of the contemporary climbing culture drawing on a historical and Bourdieuan framework bringing together some of the themes that have emerged in the course of this research project.

A brief outline provides an overview considering the issues of gender, class and social change, a historical analysis of the changing culture and habitus of climbing and mountaineering. Such a perspective enables a more reflexive and situated analysis of women in the climbing context including the changing social position of women in climbing and adventure. Although women have a long history in climbing and were from similar social positions to their male counterparts, their involvement and history remained submerged under a male dominated history and tended to represent them as weak, vulnerable and socially limited. In terms of feminist perspectives and theory, the politics of the body has become more salient in their social analysis of power and reproduction. Modern climbing technology, climbing walls and social media enabled women to physically transform their bodies, increase their visibility and challenge the perception of women in climbing, sport and socially. Social media had a democratising effect and enabled women to influence climbing practices and define it in their own terms. The media were not just shaping women they were also agentic in shaping representations and discourse in complex and often-contradictory ways. Through the new and emerging climbing practices and the flexibility offered by indoor climbing walls enabled women to integrate different aspects of their lives such as work, careers and domestic labour with leisure (Scranton, 1994). Women's identities reflect the multiplicity of their social positioning, cultural practices and increasingly complex forms of construction (Donnelly, 2006; Wheaton 2010).

This chapter draws upon social media and social capital theory to develop and reinforce the analysis presented in previous papers dealing with social capital (Whittaker and Holland-Smith, 2015); social media and social capital in climbing (Holland-Smith, 2016). Specific social media sites illustrate how social media has contributed to social change, transformation and empowerment of women but also contribute to social reproduction of class social position and exclusion through social bonding.

### **1.7.1 Author contribution**

This was a single author publication.

Due to copyright restrictions pages 96-111, comprising a published book chapter, have been removed from this e-thesis.

Redacted book chapter:

Holland-Smith, D. (2017). 'Social capital, social media and gender class reproduction: Women, subcultures and the changing patterns of participation in climbing', in Kilvington, D. and Price, J. (eds.), *Sport and discrimination*. London: Routledge, pp 230-244.

## **2 Beyond Structure and Agency: From grounded theory to Bourdieu's theory of practice.**

Chapter 1 has outlined the six individual papers and book chapter. The first three papers (Olivier and Holland-Smith, 2013; Lorimer and Holland-Smith, 2013; Holland-Smith, Love and Lorimer, 2012) are concerned with exploring the subjective and socially constructed realities of the participants. They draw upon social psychological and micro sociological perspectives dealing with the intra and inter micro domains of analysis. In terms of methodology, these papers draw upon an emergent and a constructionist grounded approach (Charmaz, 2006) where issues emerged organically in the research process.

These papers deal with social phenomena. Individuals are social, live in social worlds and actively make sense of their social worlds and themselves. From a micro sociological and social psychological position, individuals are the product of their social environments but are also agentic in shaping their social worlds. Emerging theoretical and methodological issues relate to the structural and hermeneutic relationship. The emergent grounded approach (Charmaz, 2006) moves towards a neo-structuralist orientation inspired by the work of Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990).

This focus on structure and agency integration can be illustrated by the perspectives of Norbert Elias's figurational sociology (1939, 1987), Anthony Giddens's structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) and Pierre Bourdieu's field theory (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990). These perspectives present very different takes on both the structure and agency debate and the integration of different domains of analysis. For Elias social structures are the product of human activity and individuals are the product of social figurations and processes. Elias demonstrates how structural and historical change is closely associated with behavioural and psychological change as an ongoing process (Elias, 1939 / 1987). He demonstrates a concomitant change at the macro level with change in personality, interaction and behaviour at the micro level as an indissoluble interrelationship (Elias, 1939/ 1987). In terms of agency, these have restrained

the individual and their ability to act on their impulses. Elias opposes the compartmentalisation of social structures such as cultural and economic and the dichotomy between structuralist and interactionist theories of society. Most significantly, Elias's Figural or process sociology advocates the explanatory interdependencies between different academic disciplines such as biology, psychology and sociology to produce a more congruent and coherent reading of human beings across different theoretical frameworks as well as a dialogue between different perspectives and domains of analysis (Elias, 1939/1987, p.96).

Giddens's structuration theory attempts to integrate structure and agency as a recursive process. There is no sense in which social structures determine social action and vice versa (Giddens, 1984).

'The constitution of agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality. According to the notion of the duality of structure, the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize. Structure is not 'external' to individuals...structure is not to be equated with constraint but is always constraining and enabling' (Giddens, 1984, p. 25).

Individuals are reflexive and self-monitoring but develop routines in search for ontological security to rationalise the world. Giddens rejects the notion that social structures exist independently of individual consciousness but exist in the minds and practices of individuals. These structures have structuring properties across time and space in the form of rules and resources that make social practices possible. In terms of agency, Giddens generally advocates individual desires motivate actions but acknowledges that not all action is conscious. There is a permeable relationship between practical consciousness and discursive consciousness. Most importantly whilst the individual agent is the instigator and perpetrator of social action, actions often have unintended consequences. Agency makes no sense without social power and social structures are both enabling as well as constraining. Central critiques of

Giddens's structuration theory has been the emphasis he places on individual agency and the neglect of social structure (Sjoberg, 2005) but also its ad hoc quality and difficulties in applying it in empirical research (Craib, 1992).

Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (1977, 1990) provides a way of understanding social structure as existing as a real objective form outside of the individual but also in the minds and practices of individuals. Habitus provides a way of linking real social structures with the psychology, cognitions and practices. He presents a concept of personhood that is rather stable and consistent product of social structures and in a psychological sense a collection of dispositions, traits and states. In terms of a psychological orientation, Bourdieu does not specify what this is or how it operates at a psychological level. There are very close associations with Bourdieu's concept of habitus and schema theory. Schema theory as an underpinning model of individual cognition could accommodate the dynamic nature of habitus and Bourdieu's notion of habitus as a structured structure and structuring structure. In other words, how social structure and individual agency can be reconciled in terms of understanding how the social shapes the individual and how the individual shapes the social (Maton, 2014, p49).

Whittaker and Holland-Smith (2014) use Bourdieu's instrumental perspective on social capital to consider the processes of social reproduction. Later studies consider the issues of agency and structure through Bourdieuan field theory and reflexive sociology. Subsequent papers (Holland-Smith 2015, 2016, 2017) use field theory to explore the origins of meanings in adventure through a historical analysis of social fields and broader structures of power, class and gender. Here habitus provides a means of linking the macro structural with the micro interactions, practices, cognitions and perceptions of individuals. Habitus becomes a central topic and tool (Wacquant, 2011; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) for linking and analysing the relationship between the structural and the hermeneutical.

Individual and social change is a product of changes in the broader fields of power and individuals change because of structural change (Hysteresis). There

is a sense in which individuals are the product of social and structural forces and this orientates how they think, behave and perceive the world. However, this is not without its difficulties and limitations. The extent to which this is a creative and generative process has provided the basis for the major critiques of Bourdieu's work. A central criticism made of Bourdieu's work has been his capacity to deal with individual agency and inconsistency in human action.

This body of work challenges this structurally determined orientation of social change. Habitus and socialisation cannot adequately explain the inconsistencies of human action and behaviour. Given the right conditions and circumstances, individuals have the capacity to initiate change, resist and transcend social structures through reflexivity. Social change is not entirely a product of hysteresis and structural changes in the social field, but a central part of what it is to be a human agent and to respond creatively, reflexively and even unconsciously to the unpredictable and unfolding social conditions.

## **2.1 From a constructionist grounded theory to Bourdieu's theory of practice.**

There is a close methodological connection between Bourdieu's field theory and grounded theory. They are both concerned with empirical processes, data collection and analysis in the building of theory based on emerging understandings. However, there are some important differences between Bourdieu's theoretical and methodological approach and grounded theory.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) first developed grounded theory as a specific method of social enquiry. According to Weed (2009), grounded theory should follow a systematic research strategy. The grounded method is an iterative process guided by the emerging analysis and not priori assumptions. The detailed coding process in the research process seeks to conceptualise the investigated phenomena. Constant comparison between data and data, codes and concepts build emergent theory. Literature is data and accessed as issues emerge. When saturation and theoretical density has been achieved, the process is complete. At the micro level, grounded theory requires the interplay of induction and deduction in the form of abduction (Charmaz 2006). The

papers presented in this thesis follow an iterative and emergent process but would not conform to the exact requirements outlined by Weed (2009) to constitute a pure grounded theory but a grounded approach.

The terms reliability and validity are traditionally associated with positivistic research and some qualitative papers still refer to these terms. Smith and Sparks (2009) have proposed fit, work, relevance and modifiability as alternative criteria to evaluate qualitative research. These case studies and papers, in this thesis, all deal with the issues of fit. Emerging theory evaluated its capacity to offer an analytical explanation to the questions, issues and problems in the specific phenomena under investigation. Participants checked emerging interpretations to establish if they were relevant and representative of their concerns and perspectives. Finally, the researcher acknowledges the provisional nature of emerging perspectives and the need to accommodate new insights and perspectives in the process of building substantive theory.

A number of different forms of grounded theory have emerged around different ontological and epistemological areas (Glaser and Strauss 1967, Strauss and Corbin 1990, and Charmaz, 2006). These constitute three main variants of grounded theory (Weed, 2009). According to Weed (2009: p. 8) these three variants of grounded theory - Glaser and Strauss (1967), Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Charmaz (2000) move progressively from the positivist realism (Glaser and Strauss 1967) to an interpretive and constructivism position (Charmaz 2006). Individual papers in this thesis, offer a detailed insight into a specific social phenomenon from the inside perspective of a small group of participants. This constructionist grounded theory focusses on the construction of meaning through the interaction of the researcher and the researched (Charmaz, 2006). According to Weed (2009), this constructivism position, adopted in this research, is potentially limited in its capacity to create a formal theory and generalisation. However, Bourdieu provides a means of linking the micro constructivism perspective more effectively with structural domains of analysis.

Bourdieu emphasises the importance of empirical processes in the construction of the research object. Here the role of epistemic reflexivity as a method is to question the theoretical presuppositions underpinning empirical reality (Wacquant, 2011). Potentially this position, challenges the assumption of the neutrality of the researcher and the tacit priori understandings informing researcher's understandings and construction of social phenomena. Epistemic reflexivity provides a more rigorous approach to examining the nature of sociological analysis and emergent theory. Such a position has implications for the application of grounded theory. Bourdieu's approach to the empirical generation of theory enables the linking of micro substantive theory generated through the empirical process. Secondly, it provides a means of linking the micro and macro levels to broader domains of analysis. In doing so, it provides the possibility to link substantive theory with formal theory applicable to different contexts and areas of social research.

## **2.2 Bourdieu's Theory of Practice**

Bourdieu's theory of practice remained an ongoing project throughout his intellectual career in which he developed many of his key sociological and theoretical concepts such as habitus, capital and field. These concepts can be found throughout his work and follow a particular line of development. Two particular text remain important in the evolution of his theory of practice. These are his *Outline Theory of Practice* (Bourdieu, 1977) and *The Logic of Practice* (Bourdieu 1990).

According to Mottier (2002), Bourdieu turned away from hermeneutics to an emphasis on symbolic language, social power and structure (Bourdieu, 1991). This represented a conceptual break with previous understandings of action, meaning but also objectivist and subjectivist approaches. Different positions have informed Bourdieu's work reflecting his aim to address what he saw as the false opposition between objectivism and subjectivism, the individual, and the social (agency, structure). His central aim was to construct a theory of practice that avoided the subjectivist's neglect of structuralism and the Structuralism's neglect of agency and action.

Habitus is central to Bourdieu's sociological approach. Bourdieu (1977) emphasises the dialectical relationship between structure and agency that is manifest in the habitus. On one hand, the habitus is the product of social structures but also structures practices and reproduces the social field. Habitus is both 'opus operatum' and 'modus operandi' (Bourdieu, 1977).

Formally, Bourdieu defines habitus as the property of individual agents, groups or institutions that comprises of a structured and structuring structure (Bourdieu, 1994, p.170). Bourdieu (1990) emphasises the significance of the relationship between the habitus and the field in providing a different mechanism for understanding the dialectical relationship between the socially structured and the socially structuring - the 'opus operatum' and the 'modus operandi'. Through this dialectic, Bourdieu (1990) gives an indication of how individual behaviour can be structured and regulated without being compliant to rules.

This structure comprises of a system of dispositions, which generate perceptions, beliefs and feelings shaped by the objective structure of the field. However, habitus does not act alone, we are not just pre-programmed by the structure of the field rather practices and agency are the result of a double relationship between the habitus and the field. Bourdieu's approach allows for agency and creativity. Individuals do not just respond in mechanical ways, habitus is adaptive and responsive to unfolding contexts, and situations reflecting the capacity of individuals for structural improvising derived from the habitus. Habitus also acts below the level of individual consciousness governed by practical logic capable of sustaining different and contradictory logics. Habitus provides the principles and the basis on which individuals make choices and engage in strategic responses. Bourdieu states:

'the habitus tends to generate all the reasonable common-sense behaviours which are possible within the limits of these regularities and which are likely to be positively sanctioned because they are objectively adjusted to the logic characteristic of a particular field, whose objective future they anticipate' (Bourdieu, 1990, p55).

### **2.3 Feminist critiques of Bourdieu**

Bourdieu's concept of habitus has been criticised as being deterministic and incapable of taking into account the process of social change (Mottier, 2000). In terms of gender, this equates to masculinity with domination and femininity with subordination and the status of gender becomes reduced to a dichotomy. According to Mottier (2000, p. 351), such inequalities cannot simply be reduced to gender differences. The conceptual weakness in Bourdieu's work is that it focusses on the construction of gender without an adequate analysis of gender power.

Bourdieu presents social class in terms of the amount and volume of capital yet at the same time uses class affiliations to explain variations in cultural capital and cultural activities. Bourdieu's explanations for the relationship between personal dispositions and social positioning has been criticised as being complex and unclear (See Skeggs, 1997). Bourdieu's work has been criticised for its lack of attention to individual action and subjectivity (Calhoun, 1993) that would allow for reflexivity and critical agency. From his accounts, it becomes difficult to see how social change can take place when he presents them as part of an unconscious process.

### **2.4 Feminist appropriations of Bourdieu and the issues of social change.**

Despite the criticisms levelled at Bourdieu, some feminists have started to reengage with Bourdieuan social theory. The parallels between feminist approaches to epistemology and methodology and Bourdieu's perspectives are particularly useful (McCall, 1992; Skeggs, 2004). Bourdieu presents a fundamentally different paradigm for gender, class and the process of social change.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus provides a conceptual tool for analysing the relationship between the individual and the social world. Habitus makes it possible to understand and account for the dynamic, fluid and spontaneous

actions of individuals as well as the processes of social reproduction and change (Krais, 2006; Adkins, 2004, p.6). For example, Reay (1997, p.227) presents habitus as dynamic and adaptive and women as subjects who are a product of a complex amalgamation of their history and current social positioning. Other empirical studies (Skeggs, 1997) demonstrate a great variation between women's objective gender and class positions and their habitus.

Formal categories of class are too simplistic and inadequate to explain the complexity of social positioning and identities (Reay, 1997; Weir, 1996). Bourdieu has enabled feminists to reengage critically with the issues of social class and other forms of difference such as race and sexuality (Lovell, 2004; Moi, 1999; Fowler, 2003; Reay, 1997; Ohl, 2000). According to Skeggs (2004), Bourdieu's work offers the potential for an explanation of power not offered by any other social theory. He has consistently worked with three main strands: the linking of objective structure to subjective experiences; his metaphoric model of social space; and reflexivity as a means of expressing the positions from which subjects and researchers speak. This reflexivity has become central to feminist theory and social critiques (Moi, 1999; Skeggs, 2004).

In Bourdieu's dynamic perspective, there is always some potential for symbolic struggle, political action and social change (Krais, 2006: p.30). Reflexivity is not just presented as a question of the subject's capacity and potential to reflect but the prevailing social conditions under which an individual can and will challenge 'doxa' (Bourdieu, 2000). Habitus is a generative rather than a determining structure, which enables a creative relationship between the subject and the world, but also at the same time gestures towards a layer of embodied that is not amenable to self-fashioning (McNay, 1996). According to Bourdieu (1990: p.69), this is because the agent never completely knows what they are doing and what they do has more sense / meaning than they realise. Class and gender are always there as part of the implicit and taken for granted understandings that individuals bring to their relationships with others (Reay, 1997; McNay, 1996).

The author's later papers and research (Holland-Smith, 2015, 2016, 2017) has engaged with Bourdieu's theoretical perspectives and feminist appropriations of Bourdieu's work to understand gender, class, social positioning, the process of social change, agency and identity transformation in the contemporary climbing and mountaineering context. In using Bourdieu's perspectives, the author acknowledges the criticisms made of Bourdieu's work but also its potential to provide a basis for the development of new insights into the dynamic and fluid nature of social change, through a detailed understanding of the relationship between the habitus and field. This will be illustrated and discussed by drawing upon specific examples in the published papers.

## **2.5 Researcher positioning and reflexivity a sketch for self-analysis. Habitus as tool and topic.**

Habitus is central to Bourdieu's sociological approach; field theory and philosophy of practice provided a way of analysing the social world empirically. According to Maton (2008, p.50) habitus plays an important role in constructing the objects of our investigations and providing a way of thinking relationally about them. Its main contribution to this process is to shape our sociological gaze by providing new insights and ways of seeing social phenomena.

In this reflexive process habitus has become both a topic and tool through which to make sense of my personal experience and as a scaffold around which to organise my observations and ethnographic research (Wacquant, 2011). Habitus became a methodological device where the habitus becomes disclosed through immersion and engaging with the process of climbing at a practical and unconscious level. It is through the direct process of acquiring the habitus and practice of climbing that the climbing field became understandable. The logic of this process was to push the limits of participation to the point where it turns to observant participation (Wacquant, 2011, p.87). Here theory and method merge through the ethnographic process and I became one of the socialised bodies whose change and transformation gave me a practical, tactile and sensory grasp of my subject's realities. Wacquant (2011, p. 88) explicitly advocates that the body of the sociologist should become an intelligent organism central to the

understanding of intellectual practice and knowledge of the social world. Here the concept of habitus served as both a means to enter the context and as a way of resisting and avoiding subjectivist introspection. According to Bourdieu, there is always the danger of turning logical terms of analysis into reified phenomena (Bourdieu, 1994) and, observed by sociologist, is not the same as the view and perspective of participants on the ground (Bourdieu, 1977). According to Wacquant (2011, p.91) social theory is always driving inquiry where the vector of knowledge goes from the rational to the empirical. Engaging in observation is necessary in order to convert the propositions and theoretical presuppositions about an empirically existing entity. The social researcher should constantly question the nature of the sociological analysis, the relationship with the world that presupposes, and the instruments of construction that is the hallmark of epistemic reflexivity (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

The researcher shared a similar subject positioning with many of the participants and co-researchers. I am a white middle-class professional who occupies an established position in the climbing field. I have over 30 years climbing experience; have membership of climbing organisations such as the British Mountaineering Club (BMC) and full membership of the Association of Mountaineering Instructors (AMI). As an active climber and mountaineer and I have climbed throughout the U.K and Europe. In addition, I am an established academic. These two positions contrast as a cultural producer. In conducting this research, the researcher re-entered the climbing field, after an extended period of climbing inactivity, as a participant observer.

To recognise and acknowledge social positioning requires a critical reflexivity or epistemic reflexivity (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu (2007) further develops this reflexivity in his 'Sketch for Self-analysis'. This starts by emphasising the requirement to understand the social fields and conditions shaping in the course of our specific social trajectory. In Bourdieu's case, he sketches an analysis to explain his own intellectual trajectory and sociological practice. Central to this self-analysis is a reflexive process accounting for his unique habitus forged in different and often contradictory contexts. Through this

process, Bourdieu demonstrates how his theory of practice is applicable to everyday life and most importantly how to take one's self as an object of investigation and study (Bourdieu, 2007). He states that 'to understand is first to understand the field with which and against one has been formed (Bourdieu, 2007, p.2).

Through this process, I have been able to chart the development of my climbing habitus and understandings of the climbing field. Different participant's voices as well as how reflections on my own experiences informed the emerging perspectives. I have become more aware of my social positioning and 'sociological gaze' as an 'insider' immersed in the same social fields and contexts as the participants. I have become engaged in a reflexive struggle to provide an authentic insight into this social world. Understandings of a familiar social field and its practices have changed in fundamental ways. The familiar has become unfamiliar and the complex has become accessible. As a researcher, I have started to become aware of my historical and socially situated positioning. Certain accounts have a high degree of resonance with my experiences. Some of them have been validating and confirming and others have been challenging. I have become sensitive to how his experiences have influenced my own aspirations, career trajectories and habitus. I have been able to critically view his own habitus through the perspectives of others and see new possibilities for personal change and transformation.

## **2.6 Field Theory.**

The social field represents the more structural part of Bourdieu's social theory. Climbing has historically encompassed a set of traditions and rules defining its practices (Beedie, 2008; Brown, 2009). Climbing as a social field is a locus of social struggle between a number of different and competing social positions including class and gender. Fields possess their own regulatory principles and constitute a space where struggles over different forms of capital take place. These structures and relations define what is possible and what is not possible for agents and the basis for the social order and hierarchy in the climbing field. Individuals depending on their own position and respective portfolio of capital

represent the specific quantities, and structures of resources they can put to productive use in the internal economy of a specific field. The interrelationship between social fields and habitus is important in understanding how symbolic capital operates within the economy of symbolic goods.

The modern climbing field is a highly differentiated and contested social field. This reflects a changing social field where new forms of climbing emerged as a response to class change in the post war period (WW1 & WW2). This resulted in a creative response to climbing practices emphasising climbing ability and performance as a basis for entry and status in the climbing field (Brown, 2009). By the early 1970s, climbing had become a highly differentiated field based around specific climbing games ranging from bouldering to Himalayan expeditions (Tejada-Flores, 1978). Each game had its own specific rules around risk and adventure. As a climber progresses through this hierarchy, from bouldering to the expedition game, there is a corresponding increase in the risk and adventure elements establishing a clear hierarchy and differentiation between different practices and games.

The contemporary climbing field subsequently experienced further changes because of the impact of globalism, commercialism, consumption, neoliberalism and technological innovation, which continued with increasing intensity into the 1990s, with the emergence of indoor climbing walls and social media affecting the practices of climbing and participation adding to the complexity and contestation in the climbing and mountaineering field. (Holland-Smith, 2015, 2016, 2017).

## **2.7 Symbolic capital and conversion strategies in climbing field.**

Bourdieu identifies different forms of capital: economic, cultural, social and symbolic. In this context, the role of symbolic capital becomes important in determining the value and status of different forms of capital in any social context or field. Economic, cultural and social capital are symbolically converted in the social field to reflect the rules and value of that social field and the assumptions about their usefulness and status (Bourdieu, 1977).

In this context, culture becomes a resource used in relations and power struggles, particular to the economy of the field, where position holders struggle to increase their holdings of capital enabling the exercise of power over those with less. According to Bourdieu (2001, p, 9.) misrecognition is central to symbolic power struggles. Bourdieu (1990) defines misrecognition as schemas of knowledge and understanding of the social world that does not include a knowledge of their own creation. All social hierarchies are dependent on maintaining their legitimacy through misrecognition. At the centre of these struggles, is symbolic power to construct reality as a natural and self-evident truth anchored in the legitimacy of the social order and laid down from the perspective of the dominant. This process is important in understanding the social order and the relationship between the dominant and the dominated. In this relationship, power must remain masked because it makes it easier to maintain power. The concept of symbolic capital focuses on the ways the arbitrariness of the possession of economic, cultural and social capital often remains unrecognised through the systematic classification inherent in the habitus (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

Economic capital directly equates to money but can be transformed in to other forms of capital such as cultural capital and vice versa. Cultural capital exists in three forms. The incorporated (embodied state), the objectivised form and the institutional. The incorporated cultural capital is a particularly durable form of cultural capital requiring time intensive labour and cannot be delegated, because acquisition is the work of oneself. Incorporated cultural capital is a particularly high-status form of capital in the climbing context and takes the form of specific skills, attitudes and dispositions.

In the climbing context, institutionalised cultural capital takes the form of certification and formalised qualifications such as being a mountain guide or mountain instructor and enables comparison across social institutions and individuals. This form of cultural capital is dependent on symbolic capital to convert the incorporated skills and dispositions into culturally legitimated and valued assets. There are examples of specific struggles over status and positioning within the modern and contemporary climbing field. The modern

contemporary climbing field has become a highly differentiated and contested field. The objectified cultural capital exists in the form of material artefacts.

## **2.8 Gender, class and the symbolic order.**

Historically, women have been involved in climbing but were almost exclusively from the same upper and middle classes as their male counterparts. The history of women's climbing had become a forgotten history (doxa), submerged beneath a male dominated history. Such accounts presented women as physically weak, vulnerable and with social limitations reinforcing particular stereotypes of femininity. In this context women's bodies became objectified by masculine gazes and other's discourses and were restrained in terms of being able to define and take control of their own bodies (cf: Jarvinen, 1999).

For feminists, drawing upon Bourdieu's theoretical perspective, the politics of the body became important to their analysis of power and social reproduction (Krais, 2006; McNay, 1999; McLeod, 2005; McCall, 1992). The symbolic gender order, and how it has become embodied in the bodies of both males and females, reflects the historical power relations in their production and legitimation (Mottier, 2002). This is perceived as natural, biologically given, rather than socially constructed (Bourdieu, 1990, 2001) resulting in legitimation and veiling of the social process and structures of production and reproduction (McCall, 1992). Bourdieu emphasises that it is through the process of legitimation and misrecognition the dominated unwittingly contribute to their own domination and subjugation. According to Bourdieu (2001) women occupy the position of dominated in social spaces as bearers of the feminine habitus that signifies subjection even when they have the same high levels of social, cultural and economic capita as their male counterparts.

According to Lovell (2004, p.49), women as social producers have their own position in social spaces as a subfield of social power. Their position as the dominated gender of the dominant class (Bourdieu, 2001) is difficult to recognise because gender hierarchies of domination occur at every level of the general social field. Stratification of gender functions as a secondary vertical

overlay on the stratification of social class and operates as a hidden form of cultural capital resulting in the misrecognition of gender (Skeggs, 2004, p.23). From accounts (Holland-Smith, 2015) it is possible to see how young women climbers from similar social backgrounds, with similar portfolios of cultural and economic capital as their male counterparts, not only engage in different strategies for accumulating capital and status but also have their own specific positions, social spaces and subfields within the broader climbing field.

Men tend to dominate the political and cultural practices in the climbing field because they recognise their specific stake. Women's status, even when they share similar social status and position as their male counterparts, is as capital bearing subjects (Bourdieu, 1993). In this context women not only gain status and opportunities by virtue of association with elite male climbers they also become markers of taste through the display and conversion of economic, cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1984). In this context, the male gender habitus (*Libido Dominandi*) becomes the dominant form of cultural capital that is recognised and systematically legitimated and is able to turn female dispositions and habitus to their advantage. In this context, women do not have the same opportunities to express themselves as their male counterparts and are inclined to defer to male climbers. In the extreme cases, they exclude themselves from certain forms of climbing practice and follow climbing and developmental trajectories that conform to their feminine habitus.

## **2.9 Empowerment of the female body and the process of social change in the contemporary climbing context.**

This body of work gives some clear illustrations of resistance and transformation in the contemporary climbing context. Although women recognise that climbing remains a male dominated field they are reflexive and engage in strategies to accumulate, status, power and position. Women are starting to challenge the male dominated culture on their own terms. There are examples where they use opportunities to accumulate capital and demonstrate that women can be subjects with capital accumulating strategies (Moi, 1991, 1999; Reay, 1998; Fowler 2003). The physical act of climbing and training has

led to profound transformations of the body in terms of objective and subjective experiences (Brown, 2006). Modern climbing technology has contributed significantly to the empowering and transformation of the female body. Accounts by Plate (2007) and Chisholm (2008) provide graphic illustrations of the physical transformation of the female body celebrating physically, power and strength. Although women such as Plate and Lyn Hill are still aware that climbing is still a male dominated field and sport they and other women are starting to define climbing in their own terms and through their own distinctive styles and cultural capital.

This process of capital accumulation benefits those advantageously positioned and have the capacity to reap the benefits of capital accumulation, but also the profit accumulation of the dominant class as a whole. This is often at the expense of subordinate groups and classes including other women and especially working-class men (Fowler, 2003). Consequently, instead of encouraging inclusion and inclusiveness, has resulted in the tightening of exclusive bonds and ties. In the context of different climbing contexts, social capital becomes instrumental in maintaining and accumulating economic and cultural capital. Movement into and across different social fields is facilitated by different forms of capital. In these contexts, the middle class social networks act as an important catalysis for social mobility, in relation to education, work and leisure. The middle class tend to invest in sociability and the cultivation of capitals and habitus that maintains their privileged position and enhances their access to social, cultural and economic resources. Social media represents particular forms of social capital used in the climbing context to build personal profiles, identity construction and to maintain and accumulate further capitals and status.

## **2.10 Habitus, as tool and topic: The development and change in habitus and practice in adventure climbing.**

It is possible to illuminate the process by which climbers internalise and shape the adventure habitus. Climbers do not automatically become acquainted with the adventure habitus. Early formative experiences and socialisation provides

the basis of the adventure habitus, motivation and social trajectory (Bunn, 2015).

### **2.10.1 The Don Quixote effect and personal transformation and change.**

The relationship between the habitus and field becomes important for understanding the complexity of social change and transformation at the individual level. Bourdieu emphasises the dialectical relationship between the habitus of the field and the incorporated habitus of the individual. The social field and the individual are the product of their own specific and unique histories. Most importantly, they are both evolving. Because of this, there are varying degrees of match or mismatch (ontological complicity) between the habitus of the individual and the field. In fact, it becomes a matter of the degree of fit (Hardy, 2008.). Where there is a mismatch, between the incorporated habitus and the habitus of the field, a Don Quixote effect prevails, and this rupture facilitates a potential process of change and transformation within the individual and their habitus. From this perspective individuals change in response to structural change (Brown, 2009). However, these structural changes create conditions of crisis, and dissonance required for change.

### **2.10.2 Tension and conflict between habitus and field (The cleft habitus).**

Paul's example (see, Holland-Smith, 2015) illustrates how the specific adventure educational context enabled him to express his natural physical prowess and being one of the lads. Paul negotiates and navigates his social trajectory in a way that was face saving. Paul recognises that his trajectory is instrumental in gaining institutionally valued cultural capital in the form of high-level educational and professional qualifications. For Paul and others making this transition would mean a change in their habitus to a new habitus, from which there would be no return.

Tensions and contradictions exist between Paul's social positions, as one of the lads resisting the core values of education and seeing the value of education as a means of achieving career aspirations. This represents a particular cleft habitus. For Paul and George their social positioning is complex

in the sense that they already have some of the required skills, dispositions and habitus and see education as a realistic possibility. Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Bourdieu, 1996) illustrate this in relation to entering higher education. For example, working class men and women do not endeavour to enter certain career paths or follow certain trajectories because they see them as the preserve of those with certain forms and volumes of cultural and economic capital. In this context, it is possible to see the tension between two positions. Paul and George are between their old class and gender habitus and the new middle-class education habitus. The adventure education habitus provides a bridge and a way of managing this transition.

All the young women had a high degree of ontological complicity between their class habitus and the educational habitus. For the young women, adventure activities altered the normal gender role expectations and dynamics. Adventure and its pedagogic practices provided new opportunities to access new social fields and experiences where gender roles and expectations were suspended. Under these conditions, women tended to engage and embrace the new opportunities to construct new identities and accumulate new forms of cultural capital, in the form of adventure dispositions that potentially transformed their gender habitus. Here it is possible to see the gender habitus as a reflection of gender opportunity structures and socialisation, reflecting historical power and construction legitimating existing power relations. Whilst these experiences were transformative and instrumental in the process of the construction of new identities, this seems to be conditional on conformity to the dominant orthodoxy of power (Bourdieu, 1990; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). For these women, the opportunities to engage in adventure activities were through culturally validated routes such as Duke of Edinburgh Award and adventure education trips. This way of accessing adventure conforms to their feminine habitus – Amor feti- and accepting their fate.

In contrast, the young men demonstrated a propensity to seek out risk and adventure. Here young men demonstrate their capacity for resistance and taking control in line with the gender habitus (Libido Dominandi). It has become clear from the accounts that early formative experiences and socialisation

become influential in shaping gender and class habitus and engagement with adventure sports. Bourdieu defines this as the primary class habitus. Subsequent habitus is built upon this and it never really loses its influence. This represents a part of the habitus that has most inertia and is most resistant to changing field conditions and subsequent experiences. Each individual habitus is the result of a unique personal history; experience and portfolio of capitals. These examples illustrate how gender is a vertical overlay of class and works independently of class.

### **2.10.3 Education, pedagogic practice and cultural transmission.**

The formal education of the school and its pedagogic practices have a close homology with the middle-class habitus. Educational practices and pedagogic practices reinforce middle class values and have the symbolic capital to confer legitimacy, power and position. Adventure education in Bourdieuan terms constitutes a particular social space for the transmission of the adventure habitus. This educational habitus encompasses a range of different philosophies related to experiential education, personal development, adventure and risk.

Adventure education represents a specific form of pedagogic practice that is horizontally organised and structured. Its progressive and invisible pedagogic practices veil the inherent power relationships between the educational institution, teachers and pupils. Through the pedagogic practices, the power relations and the class educational values become misrecognised. The adventure habitus becomes particularly effective in transmitting the values of the educational institution, the values of adventure as well as the gender habitus. The hidden curriculum, through its pedagogic practice is instrumental in reinforcing the central ethos, values and intrinsic values of being in the outdoors. The main feature of adventure rests upon preserving the feelings of freedom, choice and voluntarism. Secondly, it veils and masks the relationships of power and control in the educational context and field. Paul recognising the powerful experience of freedom to run down Fairfield illustrates this. Young women report on their experience of being free from role and gender

expectations. Fletcher (2008) recognises a close association between the class values and the adventure habitus. According to Fletcher (2008) these specific skills are valued by this class position because adventure becomes a social site for the display and accumulation of capitals appropriate for this particular class membership and confers distinction and status (Bourdieu, 1984). These specific dispositions relate to the development of self-discipline, self-reliance, deferred gratification, asceticism and the capacity to deal with discomfort, the willingness to face risks, deal with uncertainty and to pursue continuing improvement and development. Teachers were influential in providing new opportunities and experiences that were formative and transformative. Case studies illustrate how new opportunities, context and experiences brought about personal change and transformation.

#### **2.10.4 Habitus and agency**

Here habitus is dynamic and continually adapted by individuals in the face of contradictory situations unfolding in the social world and contexts. It functions below the level of consciousness and language and the scrutiny of individual will but individuals do not respond mechanically. Habitus emphasises the individual's capacity for improvisation deriving from the habitus (Bourdieu, 1994:p. 183) where Individuals act intentionally but without intension. Practical logic is capable of sustaining a multitude of contradictory meanings and logics because the overriding context of practice is practical underpinning the difference between formal logic and practical logic. The habitus provides the principles and structures shaping individuals and the basis by which they make choices and engage in strategic manoeuvres.

#### **2.11 Hysteresis: Structural change and personal change. Revisiting the relationship between habitus and field.**

The relationship between habitus and field is central to Bourdieu's accounts of social reproduction and change (Maton, 2008, p.57-58). Bourdieu explains the process of social change as being a consequence of the relationship between habitus and the field. As a concept, hysteresis describes the specific disruption

between the habitus and because of external structural influences and instruments acting on specific social fields. In times of social stability, habitus and field are in a state of homology and change takes place slowly in response to new conditions. However, in times of rapid change or crisis, habitus must respond to abrupt change but this takes time for the new stable structures to emerge. This explains the time lag in specific field conditions to respond to changes in the border social field. Changes occurring outside the specific field, in the border field of power, affect both the specific field and individuals within that field.

### **2.11.1 Hysteresis and social change.**

There are specific examples of changes in the broader field of power affecting the climbing field (see, Brown, 2006; Holland-Smith, 2017). For example, technology and new forms of media provided a gateway through which external cultural values could enter the climbing field. Because of the disruption, and new influences entering the cultural field new structures and opportunities started to emerge in the modern climbing field around new forms of climbing such as sport climbing and indoor climbing. Young people and women from middle class social positions were best equipped in terms of cultural, economic and symbolic capital to recognise, assert themselves and take advantage of these new field opportunities. Education, family and class habitus contribute significantly in giving this group an advantage in making adjustments and having the dexterity to take advantage of these new opportunities.

The emergence of a new social class position challenged the domination of the traditional climbing elite and their established cultural practices. This new group not only started to take advantage of new opportunities emerging within the climbing field they started to redefine the ethics, values and practices of climbing. These elite experienced new forms of cultural capital entering and reshaping the field. Examples of this relate to the practice of bolting in sport climbing (see Bogardus, 2012). Practices established within the indoor context were starting to cross over into traditional climbing contexts. For this traditional dominant group, social change has brought with it the loss of identity,

community and familiarity acquired under previous habitus field conditions. Elite adventure climbers comment on their loss of identity and the growing trend towards individualisation and anonymity where the collective has become increasingly individualised (Wheaton, 2010). Change more generally has resulted in identities that are becoming increasingly fragmented, multiple, personal, self-reflexive and subject to constant change (Wheaton, 2010). Most significantly, for the elite climbers a more materialist set of values based around performance has increasingly replaced the traditional values and spiritual connection with nature.

It is difficult to understand Women's leisure as being separate from other areas of their lives such as work and domestic roles (Scraton, 1994). New forms of social capital have enabled women to maintain weak ties across different domains – work, domestic and leisure, and to do this outside of the specific social context and fields. Climbing walls and 'indoorisation' has provided a context that enables women to integrate their leisure activities with work and family. These contexts are family friendly and accommodate the specific lifestyle requirements of professional women and some men. Women can now access these new forms of climbing without the time intensive process of acquiring the skills required in traditional forms of climbing and without leaving the urban environment. This form of climbing requires less valued forms of human and cultural capital, involves lower levels of risk, and because of this lacks authenticity and status.

In addition, social media provided women with an opportunity to develop the potential in new forms of social capital and networks. This is particularly significant for professional, middle class women. However, these connections and ties are still around specific middle-class interests. Middle class forms of cultural capital are prerequisites for entry, and facilitate the integration of careers, family and leisure. It is important to note those women's interpersonal relationships and identity construction differs from men's identity construction with its emphasis on performance. Women's experience of climbing different from men's – especially when climbing with other women. Women are doing climbing on their own terms and challenging the orthodoxy of practice within the

climbing field. Social media has enabled women to promote and construct different identities to their male counterparts.

Women are also starting to cash in their cultural and incorporated/ embodied capital for economic capital and status. In this changing culture and their changing position within the climbing field, women's bodies have become important forms of cultural and economic capital. Wheaton (2010) states that women have become a targeted commodity. In this context, it is possible to see women as agentic in shaping images, representations and discourses of themselves in often complex and contradictory ways.

In contrast, those from subordinate and dominated groups tend to move in the direction of the dominant group or worse move further into economically and culturally deprived field positions. The hysteresis effect provides opportunities for the already dominant group to succeed further and cash in on the new market of economic and cultural capital (Hardy, 2008, p.139). However, even for the dominant group, social change brings with it the potential loss of identity, community and familiarity acquired under previous habitus field conditions (Ibid, p141). Most importantly, the process of hysteresis provides an explicit link between field transformation (structural change) and individual and subjective responses to that change at a personal and individual level (Hardy, 2014 p, 144-45; Bourdieu, 1999)

## **2.12 Risk through the Bourdieuan lens**

Sport contains manufactured risks. In relation to adventure sports, practices and ethics preserve natural risks and dangers occurring in the natural environment. These sports offer different experiences that are hard to find in mainstream sports (Breivik, 2010). Adventure climbing is about risk seeking, in remote natural environments, where there are real objective dangers and risks. This unpredictable and changing environment provides the context and opportunity for skilled climbers to develop mastery, test and demonstrate their skills (Llewellyn, Sanchez, 2008). It is important to recognise that adventure climbing

carries with it the real possibility of serious injury or even death (McNamee, 2008, Breivik, 2010).

Climbers acquire their skills over an extended period of climbing in different contexts. Consequently, climbers place great emphasis on being able to manage risk and is an important part of their identity (West and Allin 2010; Holland-Smith and Olivier, 2013). These skills and competencies are important in defining climbers' position, status and identity. Elite climbers emphasise their skilful engagement with risk-taking where they deploy psychological and technical skills to navigate the boundaries between being in control and out of control, safe and unsafe (Holland-Smith and Oliver, 2013). Their strategies, for dealing with technically difficult and objectively dangerous climbs, illustrates a rationalist orientation expressed as conscious deliberation and planning. In this context, risk-taking becomes a strategy generating principle (*habitus*) - where climbers act intentionally but without intention (Bourdieu, 1990), in conformity with their own relative positioning, and in accordance with these field specific rules that they all tacitly recognise and value (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Bunn, 2015).

In this context, climber's identity, construction becomes a position taking strategy. Different risk cultures are used to legitimate positions and create distinction in the climbing field. For example, the process of maintaining cultural boundaries and differences between controlled skilful climbing practices and those they associate and define as being irrational, foolhardy, irresponsible 'sensation seekers' and 'adrenaline junkies'. The interplay between two competing discourses are identified – the rational manager of risk and the irresponsible adrenaline junkie. The discourse of the 'adrenaline junkie' has a strong association with deviance and drug culture. The issue of addiction is associated with medical and scientific discourse. Zuckermann (1994) has referred to sensation seeking and risk taking as an addiction. Such associations tend to obscure alternative social and cultural interpretations (Lupton, 1999). The logical extension of this discourse implies being out of control, potentially deviant and irrational. These characterisations contrast against dominant rationalist narratives associated with risk aversion (Breivik, 2010). According to

Douglas (1966, 1969) these notions serve to construct cultural boundaries between individual bodies, between social groups, within and between communities, are culturally specific, and work to establish ideas about self and others. The perception of voluntary engagement with risk in adventure climbing is irrational, foolhardy, irresponsible and even deviant (Lupton 1999; Breivik 2010; Holland-smith and Olivier 2013).

Risk is not necessarily negative and signals something that can be developed and cultivated as a form of cultural capital. It is valued because of its application to other life situations such as work and professional roles. For example, Giddens's concept of cultivated risk would see this form of risk taking as part of a lifestyle choice and identity (Giddens, 1991). Such a perspective presents the individualisation of society and the increasing opportunities offered by modern society and the breakdown of structural constraints. Risk sports become a particularly sought-after signal of who one is and the basis for identity and lifestyle projects (Giddens, 1991). Risk taking also points to the possibility and freely chosen opportunities for fulfilment that may not be available to all people due to their economic circumstances and social positioning (Breivik, 2010, p.4; Langseth, 2011). Risk taking in climbing also, corresponds to highly valued skills and dispositions in the economies of modern industrial society (Lying, 2005; Breivik, 2010; Fletcher, 2008; Langseth, 2011). Crossley (1991) views desire as socially constructed and draws upon a Bourdieuan perspective. Desire to take risks is seen as part of the process where individuals are socialised into a culture or field where risk taking entails cultural and symbolic capital in line with the cultural values of late modernity (Langseth, 2011, p.638). Simon (2002) has argued that we have started to embrace risk and that risk-taking has become an important requirement of the neoliberal economies of modern industrial society. It is through the voluntary engagement with risk taking that climbers are able to demonstrate their status and distance from necessity.

### **2.13 The quest for excitement: Control and decontrolling of emotions in adventure sports.**

In returning to the work of Elias and the civilizing process, Elias demonstrates the increasing control both at a structural and individual level that has affected the ability and capacity of individuals to follow and express their impulses. Breivik (2010, p.3) states that this is at odds with human nature, and with what he describes as 'l'homme sauvage', that is not content with this security and control. From the perspectives of the civilizing process and the compensatory model at the heart of modern society there is an emphasis on risk aversion and safety and modern society has become too safe and predictable. Elias and Dunning (1986) have argued that whilst society's rules have become much stricter and restraining, at the same time there emerged cultural forms such as football where these routines and control gave way to the more spontaneous expressions of emotions and impulses. The civilizing process perspective, balances freedoms and excitement against control. In this context, risk sports provide a compensation and counterbalance to the constraints of modern industrial society. It is possible to see mainstream sports such as rugby as conforming to a highly organised, codified and mimetic form of risk and violence. Sport becomes a socially ascribed and legitimate conduit for the socially acceptable expression of impulses and emotions in modern society.

According to Breivik (2010, p. 3-4) the quest for excitement and risk is easy to observe and is alive and well and there is increasing unease and dissatisfaction with some aspects of the control and safety orientation in modern society. There is a sense in which alternative adventure sports resist the imposition of mainstream cultural values, especially when it comes to rules and regulation around engagement with risk. It is possible to see certain forms of adventure (indoor climbing and possibly sport climbing) as socially prescribed vehicles and mimetic forms of expression of excitement and manufactured risk. Adventure Climbers engagement with risk is authentic, has real consequences, and they resist or distance themselves from mimetic forms of adventure and climbing although they would see their engagement with risk not only as a counter balance to too much rationalisation and control but also in some cases

as a form of counter cultural resistance and even deviance. Elite climbers seem to place a great deal of emphasis on being in control. This would seem to be contradictory to the idea of compensation for a society where there is too much safety and control. However, there is a difference from being subject to systems of control and being in control. Being in control can be seen as a compensation and escape from being controlled.

Connected with this perspective is the concept of deep intrinsic motives for engaging with risk that bring with it its own satisfactions and rewards such as flow experiences (Csikszentmihaly, 1992). These experience and emotional states are not readily available in modern industrial societies and are indicative of particular autotelic experiences where there is a merging of action and awareness, being in the here and now, immediate feedback, a matching of skills and demands of performance, mastery and competence. Participants of adventure sports value these experiences and are a major motivation for participation (See Partington et al, 2009).

Climbers continually experience a broad range of different phenomenological and emotional states. For example, they experience periods where they can consciously reflect and contemplate over the decisions they make, at other times they are making decisions moment to moment when immersed in the process of climbing. Being in control is associated with deep intrinsically motivational and pleasurable experiences indicative of flow and peak performance. In contrast, other times, they experience fear and being out of control, which they report as being unpleasant. The climbing experience is characterised by moment-to-moment changes in hedonic tone. However, these intense emotions and psychological states are not available to all and are the preserve of those who have particular skills, human and cultural capitals, economic capital, and opportunities to engage with risks and adventure sports.

#### **2.14 Summary conclusions and future research problems.**

The narrative has outlined the development of the research profile and a critical evaluation of its development. In terms of methodology, early papers focus on

an approach aligned to a constructionist grounded approach (Charmaz, 2006). However, later work moves towards a structural analysis where there is an integration between the structural and the hermeneutical inspired by Bourdieu's theory of practice (1977, 1990). Bourdieu's theory of practice represented a conceptual break with previous sociological approaches in his attempt to resolve what he saw as the false dichotomy between objectivism, subjectivism, the individual and the social. His concept of habitus has provided a way of linking the macro structures with the micro interactions, practices and cognitions of the individual. The relationship between the habitus and the social field becomes a central conceptual framework to understand the process of social change and reproduction. In terms of methodology, there has been a shift away from a constructionist grounded approach (Charmaz, 2006) to a critical epistemic reflexivity (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Wacquant, 2011) where habitus becomes both topic and tool.

The author acknowledges the criticisms and potential weaknesses of Bourdieu's concept of habitus. On balance, the strength of Bourdieu's perspective has been its potential to present a different paradigm for gender, class and the process of social change. Feminist appropriations of Bourdieu demonstrate the capacity for habitus to account for a creative, dynamic agency and the subjects as a complex amalgamation of history and current social positioning. Bourdieu's particular explanation of symbolic power is unique and not offered by any other social theorist.

The later papers (Holland-Smith, 2015 2016, 2017) have recognised the potential in Bourdieu's work to accommodate, symbolic struggle, political action and social change. A central emerging issue has been the recognition that reflexivity is not just a case of the individuals' capacity for reflexivity but the prevailing structural and field conditions under which individuals can and will challenge doxa. Here Bourdieu's perspectives provide the means of understanding the complexity of social change through a detailed analysis of the relationship between the habitus and the field. The hysteresis effect deals with the broader structures of power and changes in the habitus of the specific field. The Don Quixote effect is concerned with the lack of relationship or fit

(ontological complicity) between the individual and the social field. Under these conditions, the individual faces a crisis where they become aware of their social positioning and are most likely to engage in reflexivity, transformation and social change.

Structural change provides space and opportunities for new forms of cultural activity. Middle class women and young people have taken advantage of new opportunities in the climbing field because they have the required forms of capital and resources to do this. Their positioning and associated portfolio of capital is a product of their homology with education, middle class values and cultural capital providing them with the resources and capacity to take advantage of new opportunities. This is also indicative of middle class strategies of capital accumulation and investment through sociability, building social networks and social capital. Social media has provided women and young people, from middleclass positions, with new forms of social capital and resources they can put to productive use in their advancement and accumulation of capital. New climbing locations and practices are generally more family friendly and accommodate the needs and roles of women, particularly professional middle-class women with families. Now women can access these new forms of climbing (sport climbing and indoor climbing) without the time intensive process of acquiring the skills required in traditional forms of adventure climbing and mountaineering.

Women as social producers have their own spaces and positions as subfields of social power in the climbing field. It has been possible to see how gender functions as a secondary vertical overlay of social class and how women from similar social class position as their male counterparts engage in different strategies of capital accumulation. Climbing is still a male dominated field but women can gain status through association with elite male climbers and even on their own terms. Women are becoming more visible and starting to cash in their cultural and incorporated capital in the symbolic economy of the contemporary climbing field. Women are becoming agentic in shaping images and representations of themselves in often complex and contradictory ways. They have and use symbolic capital to shape and define themselves and to

challenge the traditions, values and practices of the climbing elite. This has resulted in change for the climbing elite including their loss of identity, community and familiarity acquired under previous habitus field conditions.

It is possible to see transformation and change in the climbing field and how this has empowered young women, particularly from the middle class. However, in terms of gender positioning, middle class women are still the dominated faction of the dominant class. Most importantly, the empowerment of the dominant class often has negative implications for other women belonging to subordinate class positions (Fowler, 2003). The hysteresis effect provides opportunities for the already dominant group to succeed further (Hardy, 2008). In this context, it is possible to see the instrumental process of bonding and exclusion associated with social capital and networked resources that result in the exclusion and marginalisation of others with less capitals.

This research has highlighted some key areas for future research development in terms of methodological and conceptual issues. These specifically relate to a detailed investigation of the broader power relationships and the process of change in the specific fields and habitus.

The emergence of new practices related to 'indoorization', individualisation, commercialisation, consumption and performance are already affecting the adventure culture in fundamental ways. These changes are starting to cross over into other cultural and leisure activities. Building on this research and acknowledging the changing field of adventure future and ongoing research could explore recent development in adventure tourism in the more remote and areas of Scotland such as the northwest and islands. These changes seem to be affecting local cultural life, communities, economy and identity. In these rural communities, a number of new discourses are emerging around adventure tourism, commercialisation and consumption. This has implications for sustainability and sustainable practices.

A new class of professional, mobile urban-based adventurer with different cultural capitals and disposable economic capital has started to replace the

traditional outdoor adventurer. The growth of adventure tourism reflects a changing social field and new opportunities but with real consequences for those who have traditionally lived in these remote rural economies. This research has the potential to inform emerging policy on economic development, community empowerment, land reform, leisure, tourism and culture.

This proposed research should build upon methodological approaches identified in the thesis where the researcher adopts a reflexive approach and position in the research process (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Bourdieu, 2007; Wacquant, 2011). Through this process, the researcher can better challenge the presuppositions underpinning empirical reality and tacit priori understandings regarding the nature of adventure tourism. This requires deep immersion in the social context where the habitus becomes both topic and tool and observation turns into observant participation.

### 3 Appendices

1. **David Holland-Smith & Steve Olivier (2013) 'You don't understand us!' An inside perspective on adventure climbing, *Sport in Society*, 16:9, 1091-1104, DOI: 10.1080/17430437.2013.790889**

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